

# AROMATIC SUBSTANCES THAT OPEN THE ORIFICES

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**Sources:**

- Bensky, D. (2004). *Chinese Herbal Medicine: Materia Medica*. Seattle, WA: Eastland Press. pp. 947-963
- Wiseman and Brand (2008). *Concise Chinese Materia Medica*. Paradigm Publications. pp. 377-386

## Aromatic Substances that Open the Orifices

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These herbs treat severe shen problems due to Heart orifices being misted by heat, cold, or phlegm.

**Closed Syndrome (aka Block Patterns):** unconsciousness, coma, or delirium with whole-body rigidity (tight mouth, clenched fists, etc). Both the eyes and the mouth are closed. The orifices are being blocked by an excess pathogen.

There are Hot Closed Disorders and Closed Cold Disorders.

**Open Syndrome (aka Desertion Patterns):** unconsciousness with a relaxed body, spontaneous sweating, uncontrolled urination, closed eyes and open mouth. The orifices are open, and the yang (or yin) is running away. This condition is treated with herbs that tonify Kidney yang.

## Aromatic Substances that Open the Orifices

<b>Taste:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• acrid, aromatic</li></ul>
<b>Temperature:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• warm</li></ul>
<b>Channels:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• HT, SP</li></ul>
<b>Cautions &amp; Contraindications:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not use for abandonment or desertion patterns</li><li>• These are “scattering” herbs that can drain qi. Only use for short periods of time.</li></ul>
<b>Main Action:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Open the orifices and awaken the spirit</li></ul>
<b>Other:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Almost always taken in pill or powder form</li><li>• Combine with other herbs</li></ul>

## Herbs that Warm the Interior and Expel Cold

- shē xiāng
- bīng piàn
- shí chāng pú
- niú huáng
- sū hé xiāng

# shē xiāng

*moschus*

**Temp:** warm

**Taste:** acrid, aromatic

**Channels:** HT, SP, LV

**Dosage:** 0.03 - 0.1 grams (use in pill or powder; do not decoct)

麝香

## 1. opens the orifices and revives the spirit

- for hot closed disorders or cold closed disorders
  - e.g. for heat entering the PC during a warm disease (convulsion, delirium, stupor, fainting), tetanic collapse, phlegm-heat clouding the heart orifices, seizure

## 2. invigorates blood and alleviates pain

- for fixed palpable masses or amenorrhea due to blood stasis
- for heat-toxicity swellings, sores, carbuncles, sore throat
- for injury/trauma or bi syndrome

## 3. hastens delivery

- for difficult delivery, dead fetus, retained placenta

She Xiang is the navel gland secretions of the musk deer.

Contraindicated during pregnancy.

# bīng piàn

*borneolum*

**Temp:** mildly cold

**Taste:** acrid, bitter

**Channels:** HT, LU, SP

**Dosage:** 0.01 - 0.3 grams (use in pills or powders)

冰片

## 1. opens the orifices and revives the spirit

- for impaired consciousness, various types of fainting and convulsions

## 2. clears heat and relieves pain

- applied topically for painful swollen throat, mouth sores, red swollen painful eyes, heat toxicity related sores, sores that fail to close

Use caution during pregnancy (or contraindicated during pregnancy). Do not expose to heat.

# shí chāng pú

## *acori tatarinowii rhizoma*

**Temp:** warm  
**Taste:** acrid, bitter, aromatic  
**Channels:** HT, ST  
**Dosage:** 3-9 grams

1. opens the orifices and quiets the spirit
  - for phlegm-dampness blocking the sensory orifices
  - for deafness, tinnitus, forgetfulness, dulled senses, seizures and stupor
2. transforms dampness and harmonizes the Stomach
  - for fullness in chest and epigastrium, abdominal distention, dysentery with inability to eat

Also used internally or topically for hoarse voice, bi syndromes, abscesses, scab and lichen, and injury/trauma.  
Avoid longterm use.

石  
菖  
蒲

# niú huáng

## *bovis calculus*

**Temp:** cool  
**Taste:** bitter  
**Channels:** HT, LV  
**Dosage:** 0.2 - 0.5 grams

1. sweeps phlegm and opens the orifices
  - for delirium or coma due to phlegm-heat obstructing Heart orifices or warm-heat diseases entering the Pericardium
  - also for wind-stroke, convulsion, seizure
2. clears Liver heat and extinguishes wind
  - for spasm, tremor, convulsion with high fever due to heat entering the Liver
3. clears heat toxicity
  - for painful and ulcerated swollen throat, mouth and tongue sores, abscesses sores, and boils

Contraindicated during pregnancy.

牛  
黃

# sū hé xiāng

## styrax

蘇  
合  
香

**Temp:** warm  
**Taste:** sweet, acrid, aromatic  
**Channels:** HT, SP  
**Dosage:** 0.3-1 grams

### 1. opens the orifices

- for cold-pattern closed disorder
- for wind-stroke or phlegm collapse, epidemic toxin diseases

### 2. relieves pain

- for cold pain with fullness and oppression in chest and abdomen
- applied topically for chilblain and frostbite

Use caution during pregnancy. Do not use for heat-pattern closed disorder.

## Summary

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**she xiang**  
*moschus*

opens orifices and revives spirit  
• for hot or cold closed disorder

- invigorates blood
- hastens delivery

**bing pian**  
*borneolum*

opens orifices and revives spirit

- clears heat toxicity

**shi chang pu**  
*acori tatarinowii rhizoma*

opens orifices and quiets spirit  
• for phlegm-damp blocking orifices

- transforms dampness and harmonizes ST

**niu huang**  
*bovis calculus*

sweeps phlegm and opens orifices  
• for phlegm-heat obstructing orifices

- clears Liver heat and extinguishes wind
- clears heat toxicity

**su he xiang**  
*styrax*

opens orifices  
• for cold-pattern closed disorder

- relieves pain