



# Living Medicines

Founded by  
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## Understanding Colds and Flu in Chinese Medicine

by Tamara Wolfson, L.Ac

Chinese Medicine recognizes all the various kinds of symptoms associated with cold and flu viral infections and categorizes them into two distinct patterns of illness. The terms used for these umbrella patterns fall under the rubric of External Pathogens and are categorized as either Wind Cold or Wind Heat. This is an important distinction as their treatment principles and guiding herbal formulas are quite different.

### **The Mechanism:**

In theory, it is Wind that carries the pathogenic factor into our body, whether it be cold or hot in nature. Both are seen as external pathogens, meaning the cold or heat is trapped between the person's skin and muscle layers hence the guiding treatment principle is to Release the Exterior and Expel Wind. If we do this early enough in the conditions evolution, we may be able to stop the invasion. If the pathogen is due to a bacterial infection, appearing early on as Wind-Heat, we may not however be completely able to stop the pathogen altogether. Chinese medicine will still however be able to alleviate symptoms, shorten the course of the infection and prevent complications.

In Chinese medicine, it is vital to approach these External conditions very seriously, as in this system of medicine, if Wind is allowed to penetrate beyond the muscle layer into the Interior of the body, many diseases may arise.

**Why does Wind invade?** This is due to either to the body's Qi being either temporarily and relatively weak or to the pathogenic factor being quite strong. Temporary and relative Qi weakness can be due to lack of sleep, overwork, excess sexual activity, irregular diet, stress or any combination of these factors. A strong pathogenic factor can enter the body no matter how strong the body's Qi is.

Often, symptoms will begin as wind-cold and then will transform into wind-heat within a couple of days, though it may also begin as wind-heat. If allowed to progress, both of these conditions may transform into another presentation, called phlegm-heat in the lungs, which is characterized by coughing and the copious production of thick yellow sputum. At other times, wind may combine with dampness and affect the stomach, causing a stomach flu with vomiting and diarrhea.

## Chinese Medicine: Wind Cold

Treatment: Pungent Warm Herbs to Release the Exterior and cause sweating  
In this system, we sweat to expel the pathogenic cold invasion and circulate Qi to restore balance. We use different formulas depending on what the chief symptoms being experienced are.

Enters through the skin  
Aversion to cold and shivering, chills  
Occipital headache and/or stiff neck  
No sweating (or very little)  
Sneezing  
Low grade fever  
Stuffy or runny nose

Body ache  
Scratchy throat  
Malaise  
Eye soreness  
Beginning cough  
Clear discharge

For this kind of condition, formulas containing cinnamon twig, ginger root, asarum (which is similar to ginger), kudzu root, and licorice are used.

These are the different basic formulas used depending on the leading symptoms involved.

**Formula Ma Huang Tang:** strong chills, no sweat, wheezing, stiff neck

**Formula Jiu Wei Qiang Huo Tang:** fever and chills no sweating, headache & stiff neck, body aches, slight thirst

**Formula Xiao Qing Long Tang:** fever and chills no sweating, cough, wheezing, copious white sputum, difficult to expect, fullness in chest, body aches, difficulty breathing lying down

**Formula Chuan Qiong Cha Tiao** (with Green Tea to escort herbs up):  
headache, nasal congestion

**Formula: Ge Gen Tang:** fever and chills no sweating,  
stiff neck and back, cannot move the head

**Touch of Sun Products**  
Clear Throat; Lymph Clear

When there is weakness and deficiency in the body resulting in  
resolving the pathogen, the guiding formula is:

**Formula Gui Zhi Tang:** fever and chills not relieved by sweating,  
sensitivity to wind, stomach qi can be upset resulting in dry heaves.



## Chinese Medicine: Wind Heat

Treatment: Pungent Cool Herbs to Release the Exterior and cause sweating.

Enters through the nose and mouth

Fever

Sweating

Sore throat

Headache

Irritability

Dry cough-nonproductive,  
slight yellow mucous

Running nose with  
yellowish-colored mucus

Dry mouth

Thirst

For wind heat, typically herbal formulas containing chrysanthemum flowers, mulberry leaf, mint, peppermint, honeysuckle, forsythia buds, burdock seed, and licorice are used.

**Formula Yin Qiao or Gan Mao Ling:** fever, slight or no chills, headache, cough, sore throat

**Formula Zhong Gan Ling:** high fever

**Formula Chuan Xin Lian:** *bad* sore throat

**Formula Sang Ju Yin:** slight fever, cough, slight thirst

**Han's Honey Loquat Syrup** can be used for dry, unproductive cough

### Touch of Sun Products

Clear Throat; Lymph Clear

### Prevention

The best prevention is to eat well, get plenty of sleep and exercise and keep your throat covered with a scarf. Also, if you are prone to catching colds, *Yu Ping Feng Wan*, *Jade Screen*, is an excellent formula for building the defensive Qi of the body. Consider taking this throughout the cold and flu season.

### Touch of Sun Products

Lymph Clear; Flu Shield

### Airmune

Airmune is an effervescent, unique immune system booster. Airmune is ideal for people who are frequently in high risk areas (crowded spaces like airports and schools, etc.). Airmune contains 17 herbs and nutrients.



## Dietary Recommendations

For the initial stages of **Wind Cold**, before the presence of too much heat in the upper body, spicy, circulating foods and drinks can be very helpful.



Here are some ideas:

Miso soup with spring onion and fresh ginger

Chicken soup with garlic, onion, carrot, zucchini, green bean, potato & cayenne

Cabbage soup with garlic, onion, tomato, potato, lemon, cayenne

Ginger tea: 2 inches simmered in 1 quart of water for 10 minutes

Cayenne tea: ½ tsp. cayenne, juice of 1 lemon

Hotty totty: 1 cup black tea, 1 oz brandy or scotch, 2 Tbsp. honey, juice of 1 lemon

For **Wind Heat** including strong fevers and sore throats:

Pears (steamed or raw)

Broth soups (such as above, without the cayenne, daikon, turnip, rutabaga)

Fresh veggie juice: carrot, apple, celery, beet, cucumber, spinach, parsley, lemon

Chlorophyll-rich foods, green tea, sauerkraut

**For both conditions:** Drink lots of saline water and get plenty of rest.

Avoid: dairy, heavy meats, fried foods, sweets, or stimulants, and no tonic herbs

## External Applications

• **CHEST AND NECK RUBS:** to open bronchial passages and move congestion: oregano, pine, myrrh, cedar, eucalyptus, peppermint

Take a dollop of pure olive oil, about the size of a nickel. Add 3-4 drops of pure essential oil. Mix well and apply to sides of neck and/or chest.

• **MUSTARD POULTICE:** for tight, cold, chest congestion

1-2 Tbsp. mustard seed powder; 1-2 Tbsp. flour

Enough water to make a paste

Cover a piece of flannel cloth that can be folded over. Place on chest.

Caution: This can burn the skin so keep an eye on it. Move when it starts to get too warm.

• **TOFU POULTICE:** for fever

Mix ½ pound tofu with 1 tsp. freshly grated ginger and 1 tsp. flour. Roll up into cheesecloth and place on forehead. Turn as it becomes warm and draws the heat out. Change every two hours.

• **VAPOR TREATMENT:** to open nasal and bronchial pathways

You can make a vapor to inhale by adding a few drops of eucalyptus oil to boiled water and place your head, covered with a towel, over the mixture for 20 minutes.

# Western Medicine: The Common Cold

## Cause: Viral Infections

*The common cold is a viral infection of the lining of the nose, sinuses, throat, and large airways*

Common viral infections such as an upper respiratory infection (URIs) can typically be detected by the following:

Runny nose	Body aches
Sinus congestion	Rash
Cough	Earache
Low-grade fever	Diarrhea
Headache	10-14 days of symptoms at most
Sore throat	No antibiotics or anti-viral medications can
Watery eyes	hasten recovery from the cold. Most coughs do
Chills	not need an antibiotic.
Difficulty sleeping	

## Bacterial Infections

In some cases we become more concerned that the infection may be caused by a bacterial infection. Bacterial infections may be the result of "secondary infection" (meaning that the virus initiated the process but a bacteria followed) when the symptoms:

Persist longer than *two weeks*

High, persistent temperature

Fever gets worse a few days into the illness rather than improving

Chronic cough

Localized redness, heat, swelling and pain

Bacterial infections can be much more severe as bacteria can cause organ damage or other severe complications. This is why in **SOME** cases, antibiotics are suggested.

Common bacterial infections can be related to the following conditions:

Otitis Media (bacterial inner ear infection)	Acute Cholecystitis (bacterial infection of the gall bladder)
Conjunctivitis/Pink Eye (bacterial infection of the superficial eye)	Intra-abdominal Abscess (bacterial collection located in the abdominal cavity)
Sinusitis (bacterial sinus infection)	Abscess general (bacterial collection located anywhere under the skin)
Strep throat or pharyngitis (bacterial throat infection)	Urinary Tract Infection (bacterial bladder infection)
Cellulitis (bacterial skin infection)	Urethritis (bacterial infection of the urethra)
Septic Arthritis (bacterial joint infection)	
Pneumonia (bacterial lung infection)	
Acute Bronchitis (bacterial infection of the lung passageways)	Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (bacterial infection of the female reproductive organs)

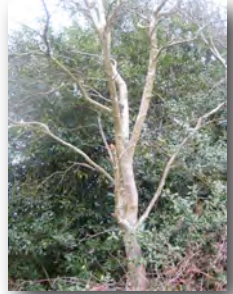
# Helpful Western Herbals

## Elderberry

Elderberry works as a simple cleanser and as an antioxidant. It is also a diaphoretic, diuretic, and hepatic. Elderberry's use as a flu remedy dates back to Roman times. Current research shows that Elderberry stimulates antibody protection causing a reduction of flu symptoms. Elderberry disarms the neuraminidase enzyme, which flu viruses use to penetrate healthy organism cells. Lab studies on Elderberry with the HIV, herpes, and Epstein-Barr viruses have all been encouraging.

## Cherry Bark

Cherry bark extract is produced after the bark is stripped from the tree and dried. The extract from cherry bark has a long history of being used to treat persistent coughs. According to the "*Essential Book of Herbal Medicine*," it is the prussic acid in cherry bark that helps to loosen and release phlegm that contributes to irritating coughs. Cherry bark has been especially useful in the treatment of bronchitis and whooping cough.



## Marshmallow

Marshmallow—a herb that grows in North America and Europe, has been used for centuries as a sore throat remedy. Like slippery elm, marshmallow contains mucilage, which is thought to coat and soothe sore throats. Herbalists recommend marshmallow root tea for sore throats.

## Licorice

The herb licorice is a common ingredient in herbal teas for sore throat.

## Slippery Elm

For sore throats, herbalists use the inner bark of the tree. The inner bark contains mucilage, a gel-like substance that swells when it is mixed with water. The mucilage is thought to coat the throat, reduce irritation, and soothe sore throat.

## Osha

A sacred and indispensable herb to many tribes of Native Americans. Osha has been used for centuries in ways similar to Echinacea. It is antibacterial, antiviral, carminative, diaphoretic, diuretic, a decongestant and immunostimulant. It is a specific treatment for viral infections, colds, flu, sore throat, and upper respiratory congestion, even in tuberculosis. Should be taken at the first observation of symptoms.



## **Echinacea**

Echinacea is the purple Kansas cone-flower and was considered the best remedies available for rattlesnake bites, infections, colds and flu by the native American Indians. Pieces of echinacea root have been found in archeological digs from villages that were over



200 years old. Its active constituents have been shown to strongly stimulate various activities of immune function such as increased interferon activity which protects our cells against viral attack, and increased killer T-cell function, which can remove invading organisms.

In the old days, echinacea used to be called a "blood purifier." Now we know that the immune constituents of echinacea stimulate our body's phagocytes (cell-eaters) to engulf bacteria, virus-infected cells and wastes, recycling them and clearing them from the blood. This blood-purifying activity is important, because it can help prevent infections of bacterial, viral and fungal origin. This part of the immune system is the main focus area for echinacea. Echinacea has become the herb of choice for such ailments as candida infections, strep throat, infected wounds, urinary tract infections, bronchitis, and for colds and flu.

## **Golden Seal**

Golden seal is a member of the buttercup family and has a bright yellow horizontal root or "rhizome" which is the part used in medicine. The plant was another favorite herb with the native people of America. According to early accounts from the diary of Lewis and Clark made on their trip to Oregon, Indian doctors used the root for infections and as a wash for any kind of eye irritation or infection. Today, herbalists still widely recommend golden seal for many kinds of infections, inflammations and irritations of the mucous membranes. The mucous membranes are the "slime-producing" coating of our entire digestive tract, upper respiratory tract and urinary tract. They act as a protective barrier against bacteria, viruses and other kinds of mechanical irritation. When we have a urinary tract, upper respiratory tract or bowel inflammation or infection, it is mainly the mucous membranes which are first affected. Golden seal works well with these infections, bringing in more immune energy and increasing the micro-circulation to the "surface" (right beneath the membranes), which can help eliminate wastes and speed up the healing process. In Chinese medicine, golden seal is considered "cooling" because it lowers inflammation and removes heat. Golden seal is also a good bitter tonic, and can help promote strong digestion and increase the production of enzymes and hydrochloric acid.

Sinus infections (sinusitis)

Eye infections or irritations

Mild bowel irritations and inflammations

Hay fever

Upper respiratory tract infections

Urinary tract infections

Colds and flu

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**FRIDAY**            3pm - 7pm            Shiatsu            David  
Combination Session with David & Tamara Available

**SATURDAY**            2pm - 6pm            Acupuncture        Tamara

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