
**Traditional Chinese medicine —
Vocabulary —**

**Part 2:
Processing of Chinese Materia Medica**

Médecine traditionnelle chinoise — Vocabulaire —

Partie 2: Transformation des matières médicinales chinoises

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Foreword

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Introduction

Chinese Materia Medica has been around for thousands of years and is widely used as a natural method for processing decoction pieces, healthcare products and natural remedies. The first recorded monograph of Chinese Materia Medica, *Shennong's Classic of Materia Medica (Shen Nong Ben Cao Jing)* in the second century, listed 365 Chinese Materia Medica species, including herbs, animals and minerals. In 1596, the *Compendium of Materia Medica (Ben Cao Gang Mu)* was published with 1 892 Chinese Materia Medica species. Chinese Materia Medica spread from China to its neighbouring countries thousands of years ago and has just found its way to other countries worldwide in recent decades. Today, Chinese Materia Medica has gained popularity and widespread use, with the global Chinese Materia Medica trade steadily growing.

However, no International Standards for Chinese Materia Medica terminology have been published up until now, resulting in almost every Chinese Materia Medica term being translated in several different ways. This has hindered international education, academic exchanges and trade. The need for an International Standard for basic vocabulary for Chinese Materia Medica has become imperative.

This Chinese Materia Medica document is provided to facilitate international academic exchange, research and development, management and trade.

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Traditional Chinese medicine — Vocabulary —

Part 2: Processing of Chinese Materia Medica

1 Scope

This document defines terms for the theory, technology and methods of Chinese Materia Medica processing. It is not applicable to Kampo medicine.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>

— IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

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3.1 General 总论

3.1.1 discipline of Chinese Materia Medica 中药学

branch of knowledge which incorporates the basic theories, sources, origins, collection, processing, properties, functions and clinical application of Chinese Materia Medica under the guidance of traditional Chinese medicine theories

3.1.2 discipline of Chinese Materia Medica processing 中药炮制学

subject that studies the theories, procedure, specifications, quality standards, history and current state of Chinese Materia Medica processing

3.1.3 Chinese Materia Medica 中药

medicinal parts of medicinal plants, animals, and minerals after preliminary processing, which are used as raw materials in Chinese medicines

Note 1 to entry: This includes the raw materials used to make decoction pieces.

Note 2 to entry: Preliminary processing can include washing and drying. Large and bulky items can also be cut into smaller pieces or shorter lengths.

[SOURCE: ISO 18668-1:2016, 3.2, modified — Note 2 to entry added.]

3.1.3.1 raw material 药材

collected unprocessed material

3.1.3.2

decoction pieces 饮片

prescription medicines processed from Chinese Materia Medica under the direction of traditional Chinese medicine and processing methods for Chinese medicines

Note 1 to entry: They can be directly used in clinical practice or for the production of prepared medicines.

[SOURCE: ISO 18668-1:2016, 3.3, modified.]

3.1.4

Chinese Materia Medica nature 药性

therapeutic properties of a Chinese Materia Medica item

3.1.5

Chinese Materia Medica processing 炮制

炮炙

physical or chemical technique of converting Chinese Materia Medica into decoction pieces based on the theory of pharmacology of traditional Chinese medicine, the nature of Chinese Materia Medica, and the need for dispensing, preparation and clinical application

3.1.6

adjuvants 辅料

additives added during the processing of Chinese Materia Medica

Note 1 to entry: Adjuvants are included, for example, to enhance therapeutic effect, reduce toxicity, relieve side effects, adjust medicine properties and affect physicochemical properties.

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3.2 Chinese Materia Medica nature (中药药性类)

3.2.1

four properties 四气

four Chinese Materia Medica properties: cold, hot, warm and cool

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3.2.1.1

cold property 寒性

cold medicinal property to clear heat

Note 1 to entry: Cold property is applied in "treating hot with cold".

3.2.1.2

hot property 热性

hot medicinal property to dispel cold

Note 1 to entry: Heat property is applied in "treating cold with heat".

3.2.1.3

warm property 温性

warm medicinal property to dispel cold

3.2.1.4

cool property 凉性

cool medicinal property to clear heat

3.2.1.5

neutral property 平性

medicinal property without identifiable cold, hot, warm or cool properties

3.2.2

five flavours 五味

five medicinal tastes: pungent, sweet, sour, bitter and salty

Note 1 to entry: Each of the five flavours has different therapeutic effects.

3.2.2.1**pungent taste** 辛味

acrid taste which has the functions of dispersing, moving qi and blood

3.2.2.2**sweet taste** 甘味

taste of sugar which has the functions of tonifying and replenishing, harmonizing the middle energizer, adjusting the medical properties, releasing spasms and relieving pain

3.2.2.3**sour taste** 酸味

vinegar taste which has the action of astringing and consolidating

3.2.2.4**bitter taste** 苦味

heavy salty taste which has the action of clearing heat, downbearing counterflow qi, promoting defecation, eliminating dampness and preserving yin

3.2.2.5**salty taste** 咸味

taste of salt which has the action of purging and relaxing bowels to promote defecation, softening hardness and dissipating bindings

3.2.2.6**bland taste** 淡味

very light, dull, sour, bitter, sweet, pungent, salty or astringent taste which has the action of discharging dampness and promoting urination

3.2.2.7**astringent taste** 涩味

sharp taste which has the same action of medicines sour in taste, such as sweating, diarrhoea, frequent urination, seminal emission, spermatorrhea and haemorrhage

3.2.3**ascending-descending-floating-sinking functional tendencies** 升降浮沉

four functional tendencies of medicinal materials in the human body, namely upward, downward, outward and inward, which are used to specify their pharmaceutical nature

3.2.4**meridian entry** 归经

theory of medicinal nature which classifies properties and functional locations of medicinal materials, and specifies their therapeutic action on a certain part of the body, under the guidance of the zang-fu viscera, meridians and collaterals theories

3.2.5**seven effects** 七情

seven different effects of compatibility of medicinal materials, namely single use, mutual suppression, mutual restraint, mutual assistance, mutual reinforcement, mutual incompatibility caused by toxins or side effects and mutual inhibition

3.2.5.1**single use** 单行

use of one medicinal material alone for a disorder

3.2.5.2**mutual incompatibility caused by toxins or side effects** 相反

property of two or more medicinal materials which produce toxins and side effects when used in combination

3.2.5.3

mutual inhibition 相恶

property of a medicinal material to reduce the medical effects of another medicinal material when used in combination

3.2.5.4

mutual suppression 相杀

property of a medical material to remove the toxins or side effects of another medicinal material when used in combination

3.2.5.5

mutual restraint 相畏

toxicity or side effects of one medicinal material constrained by another medicinal material when used in combination

3.2.5.6

mutual assistance 相使

two medicinal materials, used together, where one is the primary ingredient and the other is used to enhance the effects of the primary ingredient

3.2.5.7

mutual reinforcement 相须

two medicinal materials used together to enhance medical effects

3.2.6

toxicity 毒性

harmful effects of Chinese Materia Medica on the human body

3.2.7

side effect 副作用

unexpected reaction to a medication

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Note 1 to entry: Side effects are often slight or of little harm to the human body. Side effects may occur even with correctly administered dosages and may disappear after the medication ceases.

3.3 Principle of Chinese Materia Medica processing 中药炮制原理类

3.3.1

processing with opposite materials 相反为制

processing method of applying adjuvants or Chinese Materia Medica that have opposite natures to alleviate or change Chinese Materia Medica natures

3.3.2

processing with similar materials 相资为制

processing method of applying two or more Chinese Materia Medica or adjuvants that have the same or similar natures to increase their therapeutic functions

3.3.3

mutual restraint processing 相畏为制

相杀为制

processing method of applying adjuvants that can restrict the toxicity and side effects of certain Chinese Materia Medica

3.3.4

mutual inhibition processing 相恶为制

processing method of applying adjuvants to ease the strong nature of Chinese Materia Medica, thereby achieving a balanced nature and avoiding damaging healthy qi

3.3.5

shape processing 制其形

processing method to change the shapes of Chinese Materia Medica and to separate the medicinal parts

3.3.6**flavour processing** 制其味

processing method to adjust the flavour of the medicine

Note 1 to entry: This includes elimination of bad tastes.

3.3.7**quality processing** 制其质

processing method to change the texture of a Chinese Materia Medica or medication

3.3.8**nature processing** 制其性

processing method to alter the nature of a Chinese Materia Medica or medication

3.3.9**chemical processing** 化学炮制

processing method which applies chemicals or adjuvants to stimulate change of the components of the chemical materials according to the properties of those materials and the rules of change during the processing of Chinese Materia Medica

Note 1 to entry: Change here includes increase, decrease, transformation or detoxication.

Note 2 to entry: Chemical processing is undertaken to enhance therapeutic effects and reduce toxicity.

3.3.10**biological processing** 生物炮制

processing method which inactivates or applies an enzyme or microorganism

Note 1 to entry: This is performed to preserve the effective ingredients in the decoction pieces, to stimulate the enzyme and the active ingredient to increase and transform, to decrease the toxicity and even to transform the toxic constituents into atoxic ones.

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3.4 Assisting material of Chinese Materia Medica processing 中药炮制辅料类**3.4.1****liquid adjuvants** 液体辅料

liquid additives added during processing of Chinese Materia Medica

3.4.1.1**liquor and wine** 酒

beverage made from a fermented substance

Note 1 to entry: The substance includes Chinese sorghum, barley, rice, grapes or other fruit. Liquor and wine, with the main constituent of alcohol, has a sweet, pungent flavour and a hot but toxic nature. It can unobstruct the blood vessels, enhance medicinal functions, conduct the therapeutic effect upward, dissipate cold and eliminate unpleasant smells. Liquor and yellow wine are employed in processing and preparation of Chinese Materia Medica.

3.4.1.1.1**yellow wine** 黄酒

yellow-brown transparent liquid made from the fermentation of rice, millet, wheat or yeast, with an alcohol content between 10 % and 20 % and relative density of 0,98

Note 1 to entry: This liquid has a unique fragrance. The chemical compositions include sugars, esters, acids, amino acids and minerals.

3.4.1.1.2

liquor 白酒
烧酒

strong, fragrant, transparent, colourless distilled spirit made from the fermentation of rice, grain, millet, Chinese sorghum or yeast, with 50% to 70% alcohol content and relative density of 0,82 to 0,91

Note 1 to entry: The chemical compositions include acids, esters and aldehydes.

3.4.1.2

vinegar 醋

yellow-brown to dark brown, transparent, sour liquid made from rice, wheat, Chinese sorghum or lees, composed of 4 % to 6 % acetic acid

Note 1 to entry: Rice vinegar has a unique fragrance and is an ideal choice during processing, and a mature example is best. It has a warm property, a bitter flavour, and functions of dissipating stasis and relieving pain, regulating qi and moving water, removing toxins, eliminating bad smells and enhancing the medicinal function in liver meridian.

3.4.1.3

honey 蜂蜜

golden-brown, semi-transparent, sweet, sticky fluid produced by bees from the nectar of flowers

Note 1 to entry: Honey is fragrant and mainly made of fructose and glucose. It has a neutral property, a sweet flavour and functions of tonifying the middle energizer, moistening dryness, relieving pain, removing toxins and eliminating unpleasant smells. When Chinese Materia Medica are processed with honey, they coordinate to enhance the effect of tonifying the middle energizer and qi, invigorating the spleen and harmonizing the stomach, moistening the lungs and relieving coughs.

3.4.1.3.1

refined honey 炼蜜

purified product of heated honey

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Note 1 to entry: The heating process is aimed at destroying the enzymes, killing the microorganisms, decreasing water content and increasing stickiness. Refined honey can be classified into slightly refined honey, medium-refined honey and fully-refined honey in terms of heating degrees.

3.4.1.4

saline water 食盐水

transparent filtered liquid made from dissolved salts, which contains much sodium chloride and a little magnesium chloride, magnesium sulphate and calcium sulphate

Note 1 to entry: When Chinese Materia Medica are fried with saline water, it can conduct the therapeutic effect downwards to the kidney meridian, tonify the liver and kidneys, downbear deficient fire and promote urination.

3.4.1.5

ginger juice 姜汁

juice made from squeezed fresh ginger rhizomes or boiled dried ginger rhizomes

Note 1 to entry: Ginger has a mild warm property, a pungent flavour, and functions of warming the middle energizer and dissipating cold, unblocking vessels by rescuing yang, drying damp and resolving phlegm, stopping vomiting and removing toxins. When Chinese Materia Medica are processed with ginger juice, their cold properties will be depressed, and the function of fortifying the stomach, stopping vomiting and reducing toxins will be enhanced.

3.4.1.6

liquorice juice 甘草汁

dark-brown, filtered liquid made from decocted liquorice

Note 1 to entry: Liquorice has a neutral property and a sweet flavour, and functions of fortifying the spleen, replenishing qi, clearing heat, removing toxins, dispelling phlegm and relieving tension and pain. When processed with liquorice juice, the property of Chinese Materia Medica will be moderated and the toxins will be reduced.