

ActiveHerb's Guide: Chinese Herbal Medicine for Weight Loss

If you are concerned with your weight, you are not alone. Two thirds of US adults are reported to be overweight and one third are clinically obese.

Weight control is a complex matter involving not only biology but also life style. Researchers have made tremendous progress over the years on what and how molecules interplay in our body to regulate weight. However, any weight loss drug that is based on the knowledge is still years down the road.

Miracle weight loss drugs do not yet exist. The last weight loss prescription drugs approved by FDA are Meridia in 1997 and Xenical (or currently its over the counter version Alli) in 1999. Meridia works by creating a feeling of fullness and thus reducing food intake, but it is linked to increases in blood pressure and heart rate. Alli can block the fat absorption, but it causes diarrhea and bloating. A new weight loss drug called Acomplia that was approved for weight loss in Europe was finally rejected by FDA. It causes 5-10% of weight loss in most participants after 1 year. However, it is linked to depression, vomiting and nausea in 20% patients.

Various diet programs like low fat diets and low carb diets may reduce weight according to several studies. However, such diets are unbalanced in nutrition and long term uses may cause depletion of certain essential nutrients and harm the body. The low carb diet pioneer Arkins declared bankrupt on August 2005.

Herbs are commonly used for weight loss as well. The most famous herb is ephedra (Ma Huang in Chinese). It belongs to a metabolism stimulant and is blamed for causing heart valve problems in numerous cases, which led to the ban by FDA. Although ephedra is a Chinese herb, it is very important to know that traditional Chinese medicines (TCM) have never used it for weight loss as a single herb. Instead, it has been used in combination with other herbs in herbal formulas to deal with health concerns other than obesity.

As obesity becomes epidemic, people turned to TCM for herbal remedies that may control weight or lose weight. In the theory of TCM, obesity is mostly due to the accumulation of Dampness and Phlegm. Dampness may be understood as water retention whereas Phlegm is not limited to its common meaning but also includes the accumulation of unwanted products (like an excess of fat and food residues) from metabolism of the body. The Dampness and Phlegm occur when the process of food intake, digestion, adsorption and transportation is not balanced. For example, one eats too much; the transportation function is poor. Therefore, eliminating phlegm and expelling dampness has been recognized as a main strategy in Chinese medicines to lose weight and has achieved satisfactory results.

Numerous Chinese herbal formulas have been shown to help manage weight. As a major provider of Chinese medicines, ActiveHerb has made them available in our collection. Please check the list below and learn more about each formula for a suitable choice. Consultation with a doctor is advised.

1. **Fang Feng Tong Sheng Pian (Wan):** The herbal formula is one of the most recommended Chinese medicines for weight loss in China. The Chinese medicine increases metabolism, induces sweating, reduces swelling, purge the food stagnation.
2. **Weitaless™ (Jia Wei Fang Feng Tong Sheng Pian):** is our enhanced form of Fang Feng Tong Sheng Pian (Wan) and is more adapted for weight loss. Weitaless includes several additional herbs such as hawthorn for enhanced action in weight loss. Both Chinese herbs are suitable for those who are overweight with a solid expanded waistline, with good appetite, and with the tendency of hypertension.
3. **Shen Ling Bai Zhu Pian (Wan):** A highly regarded Chinese herbal formula that nourishes the Spleen, replenishes the Qi energy, and removes the dampness. As the phlegm and dampness seen in obesity is often attributed to the poor function of the Spleen, Shen Ling Bai Zhu Pian may be applied to and are found effective in weight loss. It is most suitable for those who sit most time in the office or on sofa, are tired of moving or excising, has loose skin and soft muscles. More often seen in women.
4. **Bao He Wan (Pian):** A primary Chinese medicine for food indigestion. It may be used for weight control when food indigestion is a cause of overweight.
5. **Fu Fang Shan Zha Jiang Zhi Wan (Pian):** The Chinese Hawthorn herbal formula is specially made for helping with reduction of the fat (lipids) and it is suitable when the fat is a main concern in weight management.
6. **Xiao Cheng Qi Wan (Pian):** The classic Chinese medicine helps bowel movement to clear the food stagnation in the intestines and thus may assist the effort in losing weight.

Most Chinese herbal remedies work mildly and gradually to adjust your weight. This is in contrast to fast weight loss which is often associated with side effects because the function of the body is not adjusted properly at the same time. It should be noted that while they help lose weight life style adjustments such as diet and exercises remain crucial in achieving the goal of weight control.

All Chinese Herbs ActiveHerb carries are 100% natural herbal remedies. They are time-tested and safe, contain no pharmaceuticals, no preservatives, no artificial colors.

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