Liver Happy

TCVM Indications:
- Chinese Principles of Treatment:
  - Soothe Liver Qi, clear Heat, resolve Stagnation

Contraindications: None

Dosage:
- Horse - Regular: 15g twice daily as top dressing on feed
- Concentrated: one 3g bag twice daily
- Dog/Cat - Regular: 0.5g per 10 to 20 lb body weight twice daily
- Concentrated: 0.5g per 30-50 lbs of body weight twice daily

In irritability
- Red Eyes
- Restlessness
- Hyperactivity

Liver Qi Stagnation with Heat
- Pulse: wiry
- Tongue: purple or red

Ingredients and Actions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin Name</th>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bupleurum</td>
<td>Chai Hu</td>
<td>Soothe Liver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angelica</td>
<td>Dang Gui</td>
<td>Move Blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paeonia</td>
<td>Bai Shao Yao</td>
<td>Soothe Liver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus</td>
<td>Chen Pi</td>
<td>Dry up Dampness, move Qi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentha</td>
<td>Bo He</td>
<td>Move Qi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyperus</td>
<td>Xiang Fu Zi</td>
<td>Soothe Liver, resolve Stagnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moutan</td>
<td>Mu Dan Pi</td>
<td>Cool Liver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus</td>
<td>Qing Pi</td>
<td>Move Qi soothe Liver, resolve stagnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardenia</td>
<td>Zhi Zi</td>
<td>Clear Heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licorice</td>
<td>Gan Cao</td>
<td>Harmonize</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Liver Happy acts to clear Heat and soothe Liver Qi to resolve Stagnation. It is based on the classical formula Chai Hu Shu Gan Wan, originally described in Chao Hu Shu Gan Wan from Jing Yue Quan Shu (collected treasures of Zhang Jing Yue) written by Zhang Jie-Beng, 1624 A.D. Mu Dan Pi (Moutan) and Zhi Zi (Gardenia) clear Heat and cool the Liver. Bai Shao (Paeonia), Bo He (Mentha), Chai Hu (Bupleurum), Qing Pi (Citrus) and Xiang Fu Zi (Cyperus) soothe the Liver and resolve Stagnation. Dang Gui (Angelica) moves Blood, and Chen Pi (Citrus) dries Damp and moves Qi. Finally, Gan Cao (Licorice) harmonizes the formula.

Main Herbs in Liver Happy
Liver Happy has been the subject of clinical research in humans. For example, the hepatic effects of Chai Hu (Bupleurum) have been studied extensively. The combination of Chai Hu (Bupleurum) and Gan Cao (Glycyrrhiza), both of which are constituents of Liver Happy, have been shown to satisfactorily treat infectious hepatitis in both adults and children.1 Another study looked at the effects of Chai Hu (Bupleurum), with Luo Han Gao (Momordica) as a flavoring agent, in hyperlipidemia.1 A total of 86 patients received the herbal formula three times daily for three weeks, and this was markedly effective in reducing blood triglyceride levels. Mu Dan Pi (Moutan) has anti-hypertensive effects, as demonstrated by a clinical study in which patients were given a total of 30-45 grams of the herb daily. After five days of treatment, the patients’ blood pressure was significantly reduced.1 Qi Stagnation causes pain, and Zhi Zi (Gardenia) has been clinically proven to have analgesic effects.

Clinical Research on Liver Happy
In one study, 110 human patients with various aches and pains applied an herbal paste (of which Zhi Zi was a major component) topically, and this produced good results.1 Bai Shao (Paeonia) also has significant analgesic effects, both orally and via intramuscular injection, and the combination of Bai Shao (Paeonia) and Gan Cao (Glycyrrhiza) reduces blood glucose in diabetics.1

Pharmaceutical Evidence for the Effects of Herbs in Liver Happy
Scientific studies have shown that many herbs in Liver Happy have protective effects on the liver. Laboratory studies demonstrate that Chai Hu (Bupleurum) has hepatoprotective effects in mouse models of hepatic damage, such as that induced by carbon tetrachloride.2 It decreases both inflammation and resultant liver fibrosis. This herb also promotes discharge of bile, increasing both production and excretion of bile. It is anti-inflammatory (decreasing capillary permeability due to histamine and 5-hydroxytryptamine release) and immunostimulant, with effects on both cellular and humoral immunity, and also has inhibitory effects against a variety of bacteria and viruses, including those that target the liver, such as leptospiroa and some hepatitis viruses.1 The anti-oxidant selenium is known to protect against hepatic cancer due to oxidative stress. Chai Hu (Bupleurum) significantly enhances this effect,3 and the saikosaponins it contains also have direct apoptotic effects on hepatic carcinoma cells.4 Due to these varied and scientifically proven effects, Chai Hu (Bupleurum) is one of the most important herbs for the Liver and a major constituent of Liver Happy. Liver Happy also contains other herbs with proven effects on the Liver. Dang Gui (Angelica) regulates blood flow and protects the liver against the effects of free radicals in models of chronic liver damage,5 and many compounds with significant anti-oxidant activity have been isolated from Bo He (Mentha).6 Xiang Fu Zi (Cyperus) has also been shown to be a powerful scavenger of free radicals.7

Case Study
A 6-year-old Quarter Horse western pleasure riding mare presented for poor performance of 3-4 months’ duration, accompanied by unprovoked outbursts of anger.8 On TCM examination, the mare had a Wood constitution, with very good Shen. Her pulses were strong and her tongue was purple with slight redness on the sides and no coating. Her eyes were red and she was sensitive at acupuncture points GB-20, BL-18, BL-19, BL-54 and the classical equine points Lu-gu and Bai-hui. Based on the history and examination, the mare was diagnosed with Liver Qi Stagnation and Liver Yang Rising, together with local Qi Stagnation at the hips. She was treated with dry needle and electro-acupuncture and the formulas Liver Happy (to treat the Liver pathology) and Body Sore (to treat the local Stagnation). After two weeks of herbal therapy and two acupuncture treatments, the client reported that the mare was performing well with no outbursts of anger, and examination showed that her tongue and pulse were now normal and the point sensitivities were resolved. Liver Happy and Body Sore were prescribed for a further two months to ensure complete resolution of the mare’s imbalance. The client was advised to give the mare Liver Happy again the following spring, because spring tends to aggravate Stagnation in Wood animals and the heat of summer exacerbates Liver Yang Rising.

References