

Complete Collection of Zhang Jing Jue's Treatises

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Swamp Herb # 77 – Tobacco

Acrid taste and warm temperature, with a nature of slight warming, lifting and Yang. When inhaling the smoke, it will likely intoxicate the person. When using this herb, inhale only one or two drags; if the person takes more, then he will become intoxicated. He will pass out for a while before waking up again. In extreme cases, take a gulp of cold water and the person will become awake in an instance.

If the person become agitated with chest constraint, consume white sugar to resolve it peacefully. It is a curious/extraordinary herb! When inhaling, the person has to open up his throat and inhale deeply, so it will arrive directly at the lower burner. When its Qi ascends, it warms the Heart and Lung; when its Qi descends, it warms the Liver, Spleen, and Kidneys; when it is consumed, it will warm the entire body, promotes sweat slightly, and vigorously reinforces the Source Yang.

Treating on the exterior level, it is suitable for all evil Yin and cold pathogens, mountain & jungle miasmatic Qi, wind damp pathogen that blocks the interstitials, pain in the sinews and bones – it is a miraculous herb that is effective in an instance.

Treating on the interior level, it is suitable to strengthen the Stomach Qi, increases appetite, dispels turbid Yin and cold stagnation, reduces fullness and clears food stasis, stops vomit and malaria, eliminates accumulation and parasites, relieves knots and constraint, stops pain, invigorates Qi and clears blood stasis, lifts the sunken below, unblocks and reaches the three burners – which takes effect immediately.

This substance had not been known in the past. It first appeared in the Min and Guang regions (today's Fujian and Guangdong regions, southeast coast of China, at the time it was China's maritime trade center with the rest of the world) during the Wanli Era (1573-1620 AD, when Jesuits came to China & Dutch East India Company formed). After which the herb has been cultivated and farmed in the Wu and Chu region (South/Southeast China, roughly today's Zhejiang, Anhui and Jiangxi regions); although the domestic variants are not up to par with the one obtained from the Fujian region (brought in from overseas?), which is slightly yellow, with a refined texture, called the golden-line tobacco – it has a stronger force and more aromatic fragrance.

I was investigating into how the smoking culture began. I believe it was during the campaign to conquer the Zhen region (today's Hunan region). When the army entered into the deep

miasmatic jungle region, almost everyone contracted some form of illness. There was only one battalion where everyone was healthy. People investigated, and they found out that almost everyone in that battalion smoked tobacco. Thus the practice of smoking tobacco became widespread. In today's southwest region, almost everyone, whether young and elderly, smokes from daybreak until the sunset without any interruption.

When I first obtain this herb, I was especially suspicious and hesitant about it. But after a few tries, I observed and noticed its valuable application, thus here I note this herb's properties and characteristics. This herb has a nature of pure Yang. It moves and disperses effectively. It is miraculous for someone with Yin stagnation. But it is not suitable for someone with excessive Yang, rampant Qi, agitation and fire, or someone with Qi deficiency who sweats excessively.

Some suspects that if this herb could intoxicate a person in a moment, then it must be toxic. Well, today I have smoked tobacco for a long time, I have never heard of the herb bringing harm to anyone. Why is it like that? Its ferocious Yang Qi that can overcome a person. Thus after a person inhales, he becomes intoxicated. This Yang Qi can disperse the evil pathogen, but it must also exhaust the Qi. This is common sense. But the tobacco smoke also scatters easily, after which the person's own Qi will return right away. Tobacco's Yang nature will then remain in the center, which in turn generates Qi. So this is the case where there is tonification within exhaustion. Therefore, people can smoke heavily and no one becomes depleted from it.