

## SUPPLEMENTING FORMULA 4

### Zuǒ Guī Wán 左歸丸 (Left-Returning Pill)

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治真陰腎水不足，不能滋養營衛漸至衰弱，或虛熱往來自汗盜汗，或神不守舍血不歸原，或虛損傷陰，或遺淋不禁，或氣虛昏運，或眼花耳聾，或口燥舌乾，或腰痠腿軟，凡精髓內虧津液枯涸等證俱，速宜壯水之主以培左腎之元陰，而精血自充矣，宜此方主之。大懷熟地（八兩）、山藥（炒四兩）、枸杞（四兩）、山茱萸肉（四兩）、川牛膝（酒洗蒸熟三兩，精滑者不用）、兔絲子（制四兩）、鹿膠（敲碎炒珠四兩）、龜膠（切碎炒珠四兩，無火者不必用），右先將熟地蒸爛杵膏，加煉蜜丸桐子大，每食前用滾湯或淡鹽湯送下百餘丸。

It treats the insufficiency of the true yīn and kidney water, inability to enrich and nourish the yíng-construction and wèi-defense, which gradually develops into debilitation and weakness; there may be recurring vacuous heat with spontaneous sweating and night sweating, failure of the spirit to keep to its abode and failure of blood to return to the source, vacuity detriment with injury to yīn, incessant incontinence or strangury, qì vacuity with cloudiness and dizziness, flowery vision<sup>179</sup> and deafness, dry mouth and dry tongue, or aching waist and leg weakness; with any of these, as long as [one sees] signs such as internal exhaustion of essence and marrow, as well as desiccation of the fluids, urgently, one should strengthen the governor of water, so that the original yīn of the left kidney can be fostered; as a result, the essence and

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<sup>179</sup> I.e., blurred vision.

blood will naturally be replenished. One should govern it with this formula.

Shú Dì [Huáng]	298 g	Large pieces from Huái [Qing] region <sup>180</sup>
Shān Yào	149 g	Stir-fried
Gǒu Qǐ	149 g	
Shān Zhū Yú	149 g	Using only its pulp
Chuān Niú Xī	112 g	Wine-washed and steam-processed; for those with seminal efflux, remove it
Tù Sī Zǐ	149 g	Processed
Lù [jiǎo] Jiāo	149 g	Broken into pieces, stir-fried into beads <sup>181</sup>
Guī [Bǎn] Jiāo	149 g	Broken into pieces, stir-fried into beads; unnecessary in the absence of fire

For the [above ingredients],<sup>182</sup> first steam Shú Dì [Huáng] until it is thoroughly softened, and then pound it [along with other ingredients] into a paste. Afterwards, add processed honey<sup>183</sup> and make it into pills about the size of Chinese parasol seeds.<sup>184</sup> Before each meal, ingest 100 or more pills with hot water or diluted salt water.

<sup>180</sup> This likely refers to Huáiqing Prefecture 懷慶府, a region where Dì Huáng has been cultivated throughout history, which is located in modern-day Qinyáng City, Jiāozuò Prefecture, Hénán Province.

<sup>181</sup> We are not sure what this preparation involves. A possible traditional preparation method would utilize a powder, such as Huá Shí (Talcum) or Gé Fēn (Meretricis seu Cyclinae Concha Pulverata); broken pieces of Lù Jiǎo Jiāo would be placed on the powder and heated, as it heats up, it would melt and turn into beads along with the powder it contacts with; the rest of the powder would then be removed by sifting after the processing, leaving behind only the beads.

<sup>182</sup> Originally, the line is “右 to the right,” because the original text is written vertically and from right to left; thus, “to the right” means the previous sentence/paragraph. This has been changed to “above” reflect the change in writing format.

<sup>183</sup> Typically, the honey is processed by bringing it to a low boil and letting it simmer to remove the water content. Once the color turns amber, test it by scooping up a small amount of the honey (usually with a chopstick) and letting a drop of it fall into a cup of cold water. If the drop of honey softens, disintegrates, or dissolves, it is not ready yet and still requires more simmering; if the drop hardens and preserves its shape, it is ready.

<sup>184</sup> I.e., 0.6-0.9 cm (about 0.2-0.3 inch) in diameter; roughly the size of a piece of soybean. Note: for those who are interested to make honey pills, we highly suggest learning how to make pills properly and safely from seasoned practitioners before attempting to make it on their own, as it is very easy to get burned by the

如真陰失守虛火炎上者，宜用純陰至靜之劑，於本方去枸杞、鹿膠，加女貞子三兩、麥冬三兩。如火燥肺金乾枯多嗽者，加百合三兩。如夜熱骨蒸，加地骨皮三兩。如小水不利不清，加茯苓三兩。如大便燥結，去兔絲加肉蓯蓉三兩。如氣虛者，加人參三四兩。如血虛微滯，加當歸四兩。如腰膝痠痛，加杜仲三兩鹽水炒用。如藏平無火而腎氣不充者，加破故紙三兩，去心蓮肉胡桃肉各四兩，龜膠不必用。右凡五液皆主於腎，故凡屬陰分之藥無不皆能走腎，有謂必須導引者皆見之不明耳。

- For those with upward blazing of vacuous fire due to the inability to safeguard the true yīn, it is suitable to utilize a formula that is purely yīn and absolutely still; thus, remove Gǒu Qǐ and Lù [Jiǎo] Jiāo from this formula, add 112 g Nǚ Zhēn Zǐ and 112 g Mài Dōng.
- For those with dryness and frequent cough due to fire scorching the lung metal, add 112 g Bǎi Hé.
- For night heat [effusion] and steaming bone, add 112 g Dì Gǔ Pí.
- For inhibited and turbid urine, add 112 g Fú Líng.
- For dry and bound stool, remove Tù Sī [Zǐ] and add 112 g Ròu Cōng Róng.
- For qì vacuity, add 112 – 149 g Rén Shēn.
- For blood vacuity with mild stagnation, add 149 g Dāng Guī.
- For ache and pain in the waist and knees, add 112 g brine-fried Dù Zhòng.
- For those typically without any presence of fire in their zàng-viscera, when the kidney qì fails to be replenished, add 112 g Pò Gù Zhǐ,<sup>185</sup> as well as 149 g Hú Táo kernels and 149 g Lián [Zǐ] with plumule removed; Guī [Bǎn] Jiāo is unnecessary.

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molten honey. For those who nevertheless wish to attempt, make sure to let the honey-medicinal mixture cool down to a comfortable and safe temperature before rolling (if it cools down completely, it will become hardened and unworkable, so it should be at a very warm to borderline hot temperature), also, apply some oil on the palms or gloves would make it less sticky and messy. Alternatively, pill rollers and pill-making machines are available for those who are willing to invest in clinic equipment. As of the time of writing in 2021, Lorraine Wilcox's Youtube channel provides invaluable insight and instructions as to how to prepare processed honey and honey pills. We strongly recommend those who are interested to make honey pills to learn from her videos or courses.

<sup>185</sup> I.e., alternate name for Bǔ Gǔ Zhī 補骨脂 (Psoraleae Fructus).

For all [modifications above], in general, all of the five humors<sup>186</sup> are governed by the kidneys;<sup>187</sup> thus, for any medicinals that pertain to the yīn aspect, without exception, they can always reach the kidneys. As for the sayings that one needs a guiding [medicinal to reach the kidneys], they are all based on the lack of insight.

### SUMMARY VERSES

[See Supplementing Formula 2]

### CRITIQUE BY CHÉN XIŪYUÁN

左右歸二丸彙集藥品頗純，然亦是尋常服食之劑，若真正腎虛病服之必增痰，多氣壅、食少、神昏、心下悸、吐血等病。蓋以方中廣集陰柔之品，每令陰氣上瀰而天日不見，讀內經者自知之。余嘗與及門談及二方，謂景岳算得過一箇好廚手。左歸丸即廚子所造八仙菜，用燕窩、蘭腿、猪脊髓、猪懸蹄、鴿子蛋、遼海參、香菌、雞汁烹煮。右歸丸又加椒薑大辛之味，及火炙一二品在內，不特可口，而且益人。若因其益人而與病人食之，未有不作脹留熱而增病者。余故曰：景岳為廚中一好手，為醫中一壞手也。今以此二方媚富貴家者，皆割烹要人之術也。至于自註云治真陰腎水不足，不能滋養榮衛漸至衰弱等句，不通之甚！

The two pills, Zuǒ Guī [Wán] and Yòu Guī [Wán], gather together rather coherent medicinal substances; however, they are also formulae that are taken in ordinary times. If one were to take them when the kidneys were truly vacuous, then it would certainly make phlegm more copious and would typically cause diseases

<sup>186</sup> Yè 液 (humor) is specifically the thicker and turbid fluids in the human body, as opposed to jīn 津 (liquid), which is the thinner and clear fluids.

<sup>187</sup> From *Nànjīng* Question 40, “經言肝主色，心主臭，脾主味，肺主聲，腎主液。According to the canonical statement, the liver governs colors, the heart governs smells, the spleen governs flavors, the lung governs sounds, and the kidneys govern humors.”

such as qì congestion, reduced appetite, clouded spirit, palpitations below the heart, and ejection of blood.

Truly, these formulae gather together wide arrays of soft-yīn substances. Every time, they will cause the yīn qì to overflow upwards; as a result, the sun in the heavens will no longer be visible. Those who have studied the *Nèijīng* should naturally understand this.

Once, I discussed these two formulae with my apprentices. I said that [Zhāng] Jǐngyuè should be regarded as a good chef. Zuǒ Guī Wán is precisely the “eight-immortals dish” prepared by a gourmet chef, which is made from swallow’s nest, Jīnhuá ham, pork spine, pork trotter, pigeon egg, Liáoníng sea cucumber, and chicken broth. For Yòu Guī Wán, it further adds highly acrid ingredients like pepper and ginger, as well as one or two fire-roasted substances. They are not only absolutely delicious but also beneficial for the people’s health. Nevertheless, if they are given to patients solely for the benefit of people’s health, once they are taken, it is inevitable that there will be distension, lingering heat, and an exacerbation of the disease. Therefore, I said, “While [Zhāng] Jǐngyuè is an expert among the chefs, he is a disaster among medical physicians.” For those who charm the rich and prominent families with these two formulae today, they are all practicing the craft of exploiting and tricking the people.<sup>188</sup>

As for [Zhāng Jǐngyuè’s] own annotation with the lines of —“It treats the insufficiency of the true yīn and kidney water, inability to enrich and nourish the yíng-construction and wèi-defense, which gradually develops into debilitation and weakness”— it is entirely illogical.

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<sup>188</sup> Lit., “cutting, cooking, and tricking the people.” It is a clever wordplay on ripping people off as though they are food ingredients.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENTARIES

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### Gù Sōngyuán 顧松園 (c. Early 18th Century CE)<sup>189</sup>

此方壯水之主，以培左腎之元陰。凡精氣大損，年力俱衰，真陰內乏，不能滋溉榮衛，漸至衰羸，即從純補，猶嫌不足，若加苓、澤、滲利，未免減去補力，奏功為難。故群隊補陰藥中，更加龜、鹿二膠，取其為血氣之屬，補之效捷耳。

This formula strengthens the governor of water so that the original yīn of the left kidney can be fostered. In general, with great detriment of the essence qì, decline in strength due to aging, internal scarcity of the true yīn, inability to enrich and nourish the yíng-construction and wèi-defense, and gradual development of debilitation and weakness, [in this case], even if one were to purely supplement, it is still uncertain if that would be sufficient. If one still includes [Fú] Líng and [Zé] Xiè to percolate and disinhibit, it is inevitable that it will reduce the power of supplementation; hence, it will be difficult to produce any effects.

Therefore, in this cadre of yīn-supplementing medicinals, [Zhāng Jǐngyuè] further added the two glues, Guī [Bǎn Jiāo] and Lù [Jiǎo Jiāo], which were selected for being the types of qì and blood;<sup>190</sup> as such, [this formula] is able to produce a rapid supplementary effect.

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### Xú Yùtái 徐玉台 (c. Late 19th Century CE)<sup>191</sup>

左歸宗錢仲陽六味丸，減去丹皮者，以丹皮過於動汗，陰虛必多自汗盜汗也。減去茯苓、澤瀉者，意在峻補，不宜於淡滲也。方用熟地之補腎為君，山藥之補脾、山茱之補肝為臣，配以枸杞補精，川膝補血，菟絲補腎中之氣，鹿膠、龜膠補督任之元。雖曰左歸，其實三陰並補，水火交濟之方也。

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<sup>189</sup> From his 顧松園醫鏡 *Gù Sōngyuán's Reflection of Medicine* (1718 CE).

<sup>190</sup> I.e., animal products.

<sup>191</sup> From his 醫學舉要 *Essentials of Medical Study* (1879 CE).

Zuǒ Guī [Wán] follows the precedent of Liù Wèi [Dì Huáng] Wán by Qián Zhòngyáng.<sup>192</sup>

[Mǔ] Dān Pí is removed because it stimulates sweating too excessively; for those with yīn vacuity, they certainly tend to have spontaneous sweating and night sweating. Fú Líng and Zé Xiè are also removed because the intention [of this formula] is to supplement drastically; as such, those that percolate due to their bland flavor are unsuitable.

Within this formula, Shú Dì [Huáng] supplements the kidneys as the sovereign. As ministers, Shān Yào supplements the spleen and Shān Zhū [Yú] supplements the liver. They are joined with Gǒu Qǐ that supplements essence, Chuān [Niú] Xī that supplements the blood, Tù Sī Zǐ that supplements qì within the kidneys, as well as Lù [Jiǎo] Jiāo and Guī [Bǎn] Jiāo that supplement the origin of dū and rèn [vessels]. Even though it is named Zuǒ Guī (Left Returning), it actually a formula that supplements all three yīn simultaneously, intersecting and relieving both water and fire.

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<sup>192</sup>I.e., the courtesy name of the famed pediatrician Qián Yǐ 錢乙 (his given name).