



**Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)** uses various herbs to support **mood** and manage **stress**, many of which may influence **serotonin**—a neurotransmitter linked to mood stability and stress regulation.

Here's an overview of some of these herbs and their potential effects:



## Herbal Ingredients with Potential Serotonin Effects

### HE HUAN PI (ALBIZIA BARK)

Known as "happiness bark," He Huan Pi is traditionally used to calm the mind, ease stress, and support balanced mood. It is often found in tea or tincture form.



### GAN MAI DA ZAO TANG (LICORICE, WHEAT, AND JUJUBE DECOCTION)

This blend of licorice, wheat, and jujube is commonly used to relieve anxiety and restlessness, helping to balance mood by potentially reducing cortisol. It is typically prepared as a decoction (a concentrated herbal tea).

### XIAO YAO SAN (FREE AND EASY WANDERER)

Traditionally used for mood support, Xiao Yao San targets "liver qi stagnation," often experienced as stress, tension, or mild depression. It is commonly consumed as a daily tea.



### YUAN ZHI (POLYGALA ROOT)

Known for "calming the heart and mind," Yuan Zhi may help balance mood by acting on neurotransmitters related to stress and anxiety. It's often found in powdered form or capsules.



### **FU LING (PORIA)**

Known for its calming and anti-inflammatory effects, Fu Ling is used for stress and anxiety relief and supports digestive health. It's often included in TCM formulas in powdered form.

### **DAN SHEN (SALVIA ROOT)**

Used to "invigorate blood and calm the mind," Dan Shen may support mood regulation by promoting relaxation. It is frequently found as a tea or tincture.



### **GOU TENG (UNCARIA)**

Gou Teng has calming effects on the nervous system and may influence serotonin activity, potentially supporting mood balance. It is typically available in tincture form.

### **SUAN ZAO REN (ZIZIPHUS JUJUBA SEED)**

This herb is used to promote restful sleep and reduce stress, addressing sleep-related mood disturbances. It is often used as a tea before bed.



### **BAI SHAO (WHITE PEONY ROOT)**

Bai Shao is used to "soften the liver" and ease irritability, with anti-inflammatory and blood-nourishing effects that support relaxation. It's commonly found in TCM formulas for mood support.

### **DANG GUI (ANGELICA SINENSIS)**

Also known as "female ginseng," Dang Gui is widely used for circulation support and mood-related symptoms. It's often combined with other herbs in tincture form.



### HE HUAN HUA (ALBIZIA FLOWER)

Similar to Albizia bark, He Huan Hua promotes relaxation and emotional stability. Known as the "Tree of Happiness," it is traditionally used in tea or capsule form during emotional stress.



### FU SHEN (PORIA)

A mild sedative, Fu Shen is often used to stabilize mood by acting on neurotransmitters tied to stress and sleep. It is typically included in TCM formulas and often paired with Chenpi (aged tangerine peel).

### HUANG QI (ASTRAGALUS)

Primarily known for immune support, Huang Qi's adaptogenic properties also help with stress management, potentially supporting serotonin. It's usually available in powdered form.



### CHAI HU (BUPLEURUM ROOT)

Chai Hu is commonly used for "liver qi stagnation," which often appears as stress or tension, and may indirectly support serotonin by reducing stress. Typically found in TCM formulas, it's available in pill or tea forms.

### WU WEI ZI (SCHISANDRA)

An adaptogen with calming effects, Wu Wei Zi supports mood balance by influencing neurotransmitter activity. Known as the "five-flavor fruit," it is valued in TCM for liver support, immune boost, and mental calm, and is often taken as a tincture, powder, or tea.



### Getting the Most from TCM Herbs

Many people today are exploring alternative approaches like TCM for mental health, drawn to its holistic focus on mind-body balance. TCM herbs that help calm or ease tension are popular for managing stress, mood, and sleep, offering a more natural option alongside conventional treatments.

Since some TCM herbs can interact with serotonin or other mood-related medications, it's wise to consult a healthcare provider if you're combining them with other treatments.

