

## Miso Soup is an Herbal Formula

Scallion and Prepared Soybean (Miso Soup, 200AD)



This formula was first published in a book entitled *Emergency Formulas to Keep up One's Sleeve* by Ge Hong in 200 AD. Ge Hong was a famous Daoist alchemist. Alchemists took an esoteric approach to longevity. They were known to utilize highly toxic substances in a search to find the elixir of immortality. They were also famous for self intoxication and iatrogenic morbidity! Ge Hong's book took a very different approach and used common herbs to treat common illness.

### Herbs

The White Bulb of Spring Onion (*Cong Bai*), Fermented Soybean (*Dan Dou Chi*)

### Indications

Mild fever, slight chills without sweating, headache and stuffy nose.

### Action

We can utilize this formula as a treatment for mild colds, especially if caught in the early stages. In this case we are looking to induce a mild sweat. The spring onion does this beautifully and without a strong and over bearing response. While at the same time the fermented soybean has two actions.

The fermented soybean helps push out the pathogen and nourishes the fluids of the body as a way of moisturizing. We know that many fermented products are beneficial to our immune system, so from a more modern perspective we can see how fermented soybeans could help provide a better environment for our gut, which in turn directly supports our immune system. The moistening effect cannot be under estimated either. When we are sick it is all too common to be under hydrated.

Herbal formulas are often modified to fit a more individualized situation. In the case of Scallion and Prepared Soybean you might consider adding two more ingredients at home. For a situation with abdominal pain or digestive upset or even lack of appetite feel free to add fresh ginger and brown sugar. The ginger will harmonize the stomach while the sugar will provide a sweeter quality and further hydrate the body. If you have maltose at home this would be a better choice. Feel free to take this in addition to inducing a sweat using a hot shower or bath. You could drink several bowls of the soup throughout the day. This formula is geared for mild colds in the early stage. It could be a helpful way to stay hydrated and provide some potent nutrients in a more severe situation but wouldn't be considered a primary formula for something more significant.

Contributed by Todd McCloskey