

Herbs that should avoid metal

This list is not exhaustive, but based on a reasonable search through the most common materia medicas, including the *Ben Cao Gang Mu* (Comprehensive Outline of the Materia Medica), *Ben Cao Bei Yao* (Essentials of the Materia Medica), *Ben Cao Qiu Zhen* (Seeking Accuracy in the Materia Medica), the *Ben Cao Cuo Yao* (Synopsis of Materia Medica), the *Jing Yue Quan Shu* (Complete Texts of [Zhang] Jing-Yue) and the *Yi Xue Ru Men* (Introduction to Medicine.)

That said, practitioners should note an important general statement from Li Shi-Zhen. In the preface to the *Ben Cao Gang Mu*, Li Shi-Zhen said: *Any of the grassy or woody herbs, and any of the tonifying herbs, all should avoid metal, as Metal overcomes the life-giving expressive qi of Wood, and will cause damage to the Liver and Kidneys.*

時珍曰：凡諸草木藥及滋補藥，並忌鐵器，金性克木之生發之氣，肝腎受傷也。

In the *Ben Cao Gang Mu* section on metals, Li Shi-Zhen repeated: *Any grassy or woody herbs should avoid metal utensils, and this goes especially for substances that tonify the Kidneys, otherwise they will end up draining the Liver and Kidneys. This is probably because damage to Liver [due to Metal overcoming Wood] will then involve the mother qi [and Wood is the son of Water] and make it even more weak.*

時珍曰：凡諸草木藥皆忌鐵器，而補腎藥尤忌之，否則反消肝腎，蓋肝傷則母氣愈虛矣。

The list:

Bai Shao	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Bai Ji Li	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Cao Guo	<i>Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Chi Shao	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Chong Wei Zi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Dang Shen	<i>Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Gu Jing Cao	<i>Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Gua Lou Pi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Gua Lou Ren	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
He Shou Wu	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Huai Hua Mi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Long Dan Cao	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Ma Huang	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Mai Men Dong	<i>Yi Xue Ru Men, Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Mu Gua	<i>Ben Cao Qiu Zhen, Jing Yue Quan Shu</i>

Mu Dan Pi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Ou Jie	<i>Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Qian Cao Gen	<i>Ben Cao Cuo Yao, Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Ren Shen	<i>Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Rou Dou Kou	<i>Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Rou Cong Rong	<i>Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Sang Bai Pi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Bei Yao</i>
Sang Ji Sheng	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Shan Yao	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Shi Chang Pu	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Shi Liu Pi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Sheng Di Huang	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Shou Di Huang	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Su Mu	<i>Ben Cao Bei Yao</i>
Tian Hua Fen	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Tian Men Dong	<i>Yi Xue Ru Men</i>
Wu Wei Zi	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Xi Yang Shen	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Xian Mao	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Xiang Fu	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Xu Duan	<i>Ben Cao Bei Yao</i>
Xuan Shen	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>
Yi Mu Cao	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Cuo Yao</i>
Ze Xie	<i>Ben Cao Cuo Yao, Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Zhi Mu	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu, Ben Cao Cuo Yao, Ben Cao Bei Yao, Ben Cao Qiu Zhen</i>
Zhu Ling	<i>Ben Cao Gang Mu</i>