

100.1 Introduction

A number of *Polygonum* species are used in traditional Chinese medicine. The following eight entries with six species are officially listed in the Chinese Pharmacopoeia:

- Bianxu, Herba *Polygoni avicularis*, is the dry aboveground part of *Polygonum aviculare* L. (Polygonaceae) collected in the summer. It is used mainly as a diuretic and against eczema by external application.
- Quanshen, Rhizoma *Bistortae*, is the dry rhizome of *P. bistorta* L. collected in early spring and fall. It is used as an antiphlogistic, antidote, and hemostatic for treatment of dysentery and hemorrhagic diseases.
- Huzhang, Rhizoma *Polygoni cuspidati*, is the dry root and rhizome of *P. cuspidatum* Sieb. et Zucc. collected in spring and fall. It is used for treatment of rheumatism, icterus, menostasis, cough, burn, trauma, and ulcer.
- Heshouwu, Radix *Polygoni multiflori*, is the dry tuber of *P. multiflorum* Thunb. collected in the fall and winter. It is used as an antidote and laxative for treatment of carbuncle, abscess, and for treatment of hyperlipidemia.
- Zhiheshouwu, Radix *Polygoni multiflori preparata*, is the processed root of *P. multiflorum*. It is used as a tonic and against hyperlipidemia.
- Shouwuteng, Caulis *Polygoni multiflori*, is the dry canes of *P. multiflorum* collected in the fall and winter. It is used as a sedative and antirheumatic.
- Shuihonghuazi, Fructus *Polygoni orientalis*, is the dry ripe fruits of *P. orientale* L. collected in the fall. It is used as an analgesic and stomachic as well as for the treatment of abscess by external application.
- Liaodaqingye, Folium *Polygoni tinctorii*, is the dry leaves of *P. tinctorium* Ait. collected in the summer and fall. It is mainly used as an antipyretic for treatment of infectious diseases such as measles, laryngitis, mumps, and carbuncle.

100.2 Chemical Constituents

100.2.1 Chemical Constituents of *Polygonum aviculare*

A number of flavone derivatives and their glycosides were isolated and identified from *P. aviculare*, together with the coumarins umbelliferone and scopoletin [1]. The flavones isolated were quercetin, avicularin (100-1), quercitrin [1], vitexin, isovitexin, luteolin, rhamnetin-3-*O*- β -D-galactopyranoside, and quercetin-3-*O*- β -D-galactopyranoside [2]. Avicularin is the major flavone glycoside in *P. aviculare*, with an average content of about 0.2% [3].