



August 2016

Bi Yan Pian Update

Dear Valued Customers,

Many of you have asked why it has taken so long to get Bi Yan Pian back in. The answer is that we pride ourselves on offering authentic Chinese medicine, and are unwilling to offer you anything less. We know that our being out of stock can be frustrating and inconveniences you and your patients. We are very sorry for the lengthy stock-out of Bi Yan Pian. Please know that we have been doing everything we can to bring it back in as soon as possible, and plan to have it back in stock in November if not sooner. Here is the situation:



Due to land-use reform, last year the Guangzhou Qixing Pharmaceutical Factory was forced by the Chinese government to relocate. Qixing has manufactured our Plum Flower® Bi Yan Pian for over 20 years. The Guangzhou Pharmaceuticals Corporation (GPC), which owns Qixing and over 20 other TCM and drug manufacturing facilities in and around Guangzhou, has not yet determined if and when it will rebuild. Unfortunately, as its other factories are at full capacity and unwilling to accept smaller orders like ours (primarily because the costs, manpower, processes, testing, etc. are the same, but much less profitable) we were forced to switch manufacturers, and it has taken many test runs and adjustments for the new manufacturer to replicate the original.

The manufacturing of authentic Chinese medicine is both an art and a science. Our products are not just ground herbs made into a pill, tablet, or capsule. Nor are they simply blended extracts. Our formulas start with careful selection of high grade herbs that must meet pharmacopoeia standards for quality and authenticity, which are verified by testing. Then the raw herbs are processed and extracted together. In the case of Bi Yan Pian, certain ingredients are first decocted in a water-alcohol solution to carefully extract volatile oils and other active ingredients that are later added back into the formula. Those ingredients plus others then go through a purified water extraction process to pull out yet other compounds. Filtration, blending, and concentration follow. The ratios, timing, and temperatures of each step needs to be well-defined and precisely controlled to attain and preserve crucial chemical markers and active ingredient levels. Furthermore, the excipients used, tableting pressure, and drying process are all designed to achieve a timed release and maximum therapeutic value. Each step needs to be designed, studied, executed, and tested successfully to achieve the therapeutic magic that makes our Bi Yan Pian so effective.

The development of these manufacturing and quality control processes start in the laboratory, and may work theoretically or even in laboratory production batches, but still fail in actual production. Throughout these processes, samples are taken and tested, measurements recorded, and if at any stage the result doesn't meet our standards, it is rejected and the process begins again at raw material sourcing. Unfortunately, it has taken more than a year of development and testing, and literally over a million rejected tablets to achieve the level of quality we expect of a Plum Flower® product.

Fortunately, we are just about there. We sincerely thank you for your patience and understanding, and look forward to offering this wonderful product again soon.

Respectfully,
Yvonne Lau, President