

Traditional Chinese Medicine

By Fang Mu, LAc., OMD

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) attaches great importance to the unity of the human body and its relationship with nature, and holds that the human body itself is an organic whole, having very close and inseparable relations with the external natural surroundings. TCM includes many modalities:

- Herbs and Teas
- Acupuncture
- Cupping (the use of small heated suction cups placed on the skin to draw toxins from the body)
- Moxibustion (a combination of herbs and acupuncture)
- Heat lamps
- Massage
- Chinese exercise.

On the basis of observation, listening and taking pulses, in the light of TCM, considering also the nature and location of the complaint and relationship between pathogenic factors and the vital energy, the TCM practitioner can determine the corresponding therapy best suited to begin treatment for the patient according to the conclusion of an overall differentiation of symptoms and signs.

TCM physicians do not focus their main attention on the similarities and dissimilarities between diseases but on the differences between the syndromes the patients have. Generally speaking, the same disease may require different treatments depending on the patient's needs, both physical and mental. The root idea underlying TCM is that the body, in order to maintain health, must function in a balanced manner. When the body energy does not naturally flow or when the energy is blocked, illness occurs and some intervention is needed to regain the natural balance that restores health and circulates the energy again. A simple explanation of this from nature is the illustration of the "flower." When the flower is over-watered, it becomes waterlogged and dies; when it doesn't get enough water, it dries up and dies. It needs the proper balance of soil, sun, food and water to flourish. So it is with the human body; it needs to be in proper balance to enjoy good health. This is the foundation of TCM—the complete being must be in balance.

There is a wide spectrum of people who benefit from TCM: people with different congenital disabilities such as cerebral palsy; post-birth disabilities such as M.S., accident

victims, and those with aging disabilities such as stroke, dementia or Alzheimer's. Those who have had surgery have been known to heal faster; TCM has helped people suffering all types of pain and stress. People with allergies, colds, sore throats, ear, and eye problems have also found relief. Treatment is not necessarily speedy, but it is profound

Case Studies

Eight years ago, a young 30-year-old man had an accident that left him paralyzed from his back down. He often fell from his wheelchair and suffered from a lot of pain and fatigue. He wanted to try acupuncture for pain relief. The diagnosis was "Bi" since his body connection had been broken due to the accident. A combination of Chinese herbs and acupuncture helped him, promoting blood circulation, removing blood stasis, dispersing swelling and pain. In the course of treatment, his middle back started to have feeling, he was able to jump up the two steps from his wheelchair and teach other disabled persons how to play golf.

A girl of 22 suffered face palsy when she was born. The surgeries helped the left side of her face, but the right side was still palsied and the eye could not close. According to TCM, this palsy is caused by a blockage of the flow of Qi through the channels. A combination of acupuncture, herbs, a healthy diet and exercise was used. After a few months, the muscles on the right side of her face started to move and her right eye started to close.

Another woman, 65 years old, was washing dishes 6 months ago when suddenly she fell. It seems that her knees were unable to support her body and her legs became paralyzed. She had no pain and could not find the cause. The Chinese diagnosis is for this is called Wei. After five treatments of acupuncture, she started walking again. The acupuncture was able to strengthen her body energy and allow her to regain harmonious well-being.

Fang Mu, L.Ac. Oriental Medical Doctor, received her medical doctor degree for acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine in 1986 from Jiangxi University of Traditional Chinese Medicine in China. She is board-certified in the U.S. and in NC, and is a nationally certified Chinese herbalist. You may contact her at Mu Chinese Acupuncture & Herbs in Oak Ridge, 336-643-8838, www.MuAcupuncture.com. See ad on page 11.



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