

TCM

Traditional Chinese Medicine

&

Acupuncture



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About the Author



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“As a practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine, I believe that the integration of medicine and patient education is the most effective approach to solving healthcare issues; since it offers the opportunity to focus on symptomology, healing, and the conscious and subconscious mind.” Dr. Rick

Dr. Colmer is a former United States Marine; a Magna Cum Laude graduate from Concordia University Wisconsin; and a Cum Laude graduate from the Midwest College of Oriental Medicine.

Dr. Colmer graduated with honors from Guangzhou International University located in Guangzhou, China, where he received his doctorate in Traditional Chinese Medicine. He has been practicing alternative medicine since 1993 when he began his training in TCM.

Dr. Colmer served as a clinical supervisor for the Midwest College of Oriental Medicine. As a National Board Certified practitioner, he is currently licensed in both Wisconsin and Illinois while maintaining a private practice in Lake Villa, IL.

This e-book was designed to answer your questions regarding Traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture. Please feel free to contact Dr. Colmer regarding any health issue you may be experiencing..

Thank you and have a happy and healthy day!

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION		4
CHAPTER 1	Integration	7
CHAPTER 2	The World Health Organization	10
CHAPTER 3	What is Qi?	15
CHAPTER 4	Theory	19
	Diagnostics	20
	Treatment Expectations	22
CHAPTER 5	Auriculotherapy	24
CHAPTER 6	Massage	27
CHAPTER 7	Herbs	29
CHAPTER 8	Moxibustion	34
	Guasha	36
	Cupping	37
CHAPTER 9	Relationship to Western Medicine	39
	What to Look for in a Practitioner	40
CHAPTER 10	Common Questions	44
CHAPTER 11	A Word About Supplements	48
CHAPTER 12	Diet	52

This e-book is not intended as a medical diagnosis or an attempt to convince anyone to take supplements or herbs instead of medication. If you are taking medication, seek the professional advice of your healthcare provider prior to using herbal or nutritional supplements. Never attempt to self diagnose.

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INTRODUCTION

This e-book is an attempt to explain the general practice of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine. Subjects include: basic understanding regarding treatment, relationship to western medicine, possible side effects, treatment options, what to look for when seeking a competent board certified (NCCAOM) acupuncture therapist. It also includes some ideas regarding diet, and nutritional supplements.

Today's modern society offers a sense of freedom to explore new and fascinating methods of treatment for those who seek integrated medical therapies. Within the past 44 years, or shortly after President Nixon's visit to China (1972), a new breed of healthcare provider has emerged and evolved. These newest members to the field of medicine practice an ancient form of therapy known as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Their success rate is so admirable that the Chinese newspaper "China Daily" made claims that "In many cases, American students are trained at a level superior to their Chinese counterparts" (Nov. 2002).

The rate of success is partly due to the fact that the new schools emerging here in the United States, train students in TCM in conjunction with

western medicine technique. Students are taught to interpret the human body in terms of integrating modern advanced medical techniques with those of the ancient doctors.

The efficacy of TCM predates the Common Era with texts that describe its existence for more than twenty-five hundred years. In the United States alone, there are more than one hundred reputable academic institutions currently teaching TCM programs to suit the needs of those who seek a different approach regarding health care concerns. Acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, Chinese massage therapy (Tui-Na) and Chiropractic care are four of the most common therapies on the rise. The number of individuals seeking relief through alternative therapies is increasing throughout the world.

Traditional Chinese medicine is becoming increasingly popular, especially within the senior sector. One of my research studies utilizing a descriptive survey questionnaire, demonstrates a high interest in Complimentary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) for individuals fifty years and older. It is important to note that today's "Baby Boomers," will soon be in the age group of those who experience the greatest number of illnesses. This is not to suggest that the senior population is the only age category experiencing illness. There are no guidelines to the age an individual will need some form of medical attention.

The following chapters will address questions in regard to the various alternative modalities that

exist within Traditional Chinese Medicine. If you have any questions regarding information received in this e-book, please do not hesitate to contact me via e-mail at: colmerphd@gmail.com.



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CHAPTER 1

INTEGRATION

Modern hospitals throughout China are in the process of re-establishing the integration of TCM with modern medical techniques. Guangzhou International University Teaching Hospital is one of the hospitals located in China where doctors of TCM learn and complete their medical internships. Only a handful of American practitioners actually complete an internship in a Chinese TCM hospital.



Guangzhou International University Teaching Hospital

When a practitioner studies TCM in China, he or she, absorbs the Chinese philosophical basis of healing. Unlike TCM internships in America, students learn firsthand what this form of medicine represents to those who have experienced its existence for thousands of years.



In the above photo, the Chinese doctor is performing a type of massage therapy that combines Western chiropractic adjustments with Chinese massage therapy (Tui-Na). Interestingly, he is using his feet to make the appropriate adjustments. Other departments within the Chinese hospital use various forms of allopathic medicine (Western Techniques) in combination with TCM. It is common for patients to see doctors of modern techniques and doctors of ancient techniques during the same hospital visit. Medicines such as antibiotics may be prescribed along with an herbal formula. By utilizing multiple forms of therapy, the patient

increases his or her ability to defend against or overcome disease. Patients are offered a variety of options to accommodate their spiritual, academic, and common perception of medical treatment.

There are a growing number of hospitals in the United States that are introducing TCM therapies. Some hospitals such as the cancer centers, integrate specialized clinics designated for alternative therapies that include TCM.

The number of private practitioners is increasing in every state. Most states have laws governing the criteria for individuals that practice this form of medicine. A list of available practitioners in your area can be found on the Internet. If you know an acupuncturist who is not listed on the Internet, please ask them to do so. This will insure that acupuncturists maintain proper credentials and help increase future growth of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

CHAPTER 2

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO)

The World Health Organization lists seven categories, which include more than forty medical conditions that are treatable using acupuncture therapy.

Categories include:

- Digestive Disorders
- Neurological Disorders
- Musculoskeletal Disorders
- Emotional Disturbances
- Eye, Ear, Nose, and Dental Conditions
- Respiratory Conditions
- Gynecological Disorders

Diseases and symptoms or common conditions within these categories that have been established through clinical trials include:

Adverse reactions to radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy	Allergic rhinitis (including hay fever)
Biliary colic	Depression (including depressive neurosis and depression following stroke)

Dysentery, acute bacillary	Dysmenorrhoea, primary
Epigastralgia, acute (in peptic ulcer, acute and chronic gastritis, and gastro spasm)	Facial pain (including craniomandibular disorders)
Headache	Hypertension, essential
Hypotension, primary	Induction of labour
Knee pain	Leucopenia
Low back pain	Malposition of fetus, correction of
Morning sickness	Nausea and vomiting
Neck pain	Pain in dentistry (including dental pain and tempormandibular dysfunction)
Periarthritis of shoulder	Postoperative pain
Renal colic	Rheumatoid arthritis
Sciatica	Sprain
Stroke	Tennis elbow

Diseases and symptoms or common conditions within these categories where the therapeutic effect of acupuncture has been shown but requires further investigation through clinical trials include:

Abdominal pain (in acute gastro-enteritis or due to gastrointestinal spasm)	Acne vulgaris
Alcohol dependence and detoxification	Bell's palsy
Bronchial asthma	Cancer pain
Cardiac neurosis	Cholecystitis, chronic, with acute exacerbation
Cholelithiasis	Competition stress syndrome
Craniocerebral injury, closed	Diabetes mellitus, non-insulin-dependent
Earache	Epidemic hemorrhagic fever
Epistaxis, simple (without generalized or local disease)	Eye pain due to subconjunctival injection
Female urethral syndrome	Fibromyalgia and fasciitis
Gastrokinetic disturbance	Gouty arthritis
Hepatitis B virus carrier status	Herpes zoster (human-alpha herpesvirus)
Hyperlipaemia	Hypo-ovarianism
Insomnia	Labor pain
Lactation, deficiency	Male - sex abnormal

Meniere's disease	Neuralgia, post-herpetic
Neurodermatitis	Obesity
Opium, cocaine and heroin dependence	Osteoarthritis
Pain due to endoscopic examination	Pain in thromboangiitis obliterans
Polycystic ovary syndrome	Postextubation in children
Postoperative convalescence	Premenstrual syndrome
Prostatitis, chronic	Pruritus
Radicular and pseudoradicular pain syndrome	Raynaud syndrome, primary
Recurrent lower urinary-tract infection	Reflex sympathetic dystrophy
Retention of urine, traumatic	Schizophrenia
Sialism, drug induced	Sjagren syndrome
Sore throat (including tonsillitis)	Spine pain, acute
Stiff neck	Tempromandibular joint dysfunction
Tietze syndrome	Tobacco dependence
Tourette syndrome	Ulcerative colitis, chronic
Urolithiasis	Vasular demtia
Whooping cough (pertussis)	

Diseases and symptoms or common conditions within these categories where controlled trials report some therapeutic effects, but are still worth trying due to the difficulty of conventional methods:

Chloasma	Choroidopathy, central serous
Color blindness	Deafness
Hypophrenia	Irritable colon syndrome
Neuropathic bladder in spinal cord injury	Pulmonary heart disease, chronic
Small airway obstruction	

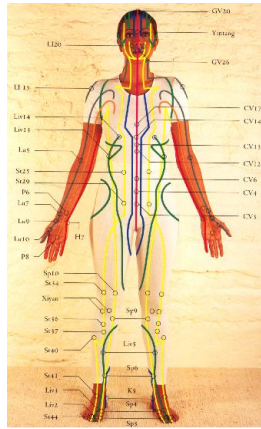
There are many other categories and illnesses that are currently under investigation.



World Health Organization

CHAPTER 3

WHAT IS QI?



Qi (pronounced Chee) is energy that flows throughout the body in specific pathways not associated with the conventional aspect of the spine.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines Qi as:

“Bio-electro magnetic energy that flows continuously throughout the body.”

The National Institute of Health (NIH) has issued the statement:

“The general theory of acupuncture is based on the premise that there are patterns of energy flow (Qi) through the body that are essential for health. Disruption of this flow are believed to be responsible for disease.”

Qi travels in pathways commonly known as channels, but often referred to as meridians by American acupuncturists. There are twelve main channels associated with the internal organs and 8 extraordinary channels.

Each of these channels maintains areas where the energy is accessible. These areas are very small and are commonly referred to as acupuncture points or acupoints. Acupuncture needles in various sizes are inserted into the acupoints to a specific depth in order to create an explicit form of stimulation.

Acupuncturists often incorporate methods other than acupuncture to stimulate the acupoints. Some of these techniques include: acupressure (form of massage therapy), burning moxa (herbs) over the affected site (or attached to the needles), vacuum cupping, guasha (scraping the skin), and electro-stimulation (using micro-current). Practitioners may choose to use one or many additional methods during treatment sessions.

Your acupuncturists will create a treatment strategy that allows the body’s energy to move

freely within the channels. If the channel is blocked or there is some form of stagnation, most individuals eventually experience pain. Blockages do not necessarily result from problems associated with Qi. Stagnations may also result in excess phlegm, damp, cold, and heat and eventually create problems with the flow of Qi.

To put this into perspective, try to imagine a river flowing freely. Now, imagine placing a dam across the most abundant area of water. All life forms on the downside of the river will be affected because it no longer receives the necessary nutrition for survival. Eventually, all plants and creatures wither and die. There are areas where the water pools and sustains enough nutrition to keep life forms alive in that specific area. Eventually, it too, dries up and withers away. The human body reacts in a similar fashion. Blocked energy within the channels, like a dam on a river, deprives the body of its essential force. Soon the blockage becomes larger and creates pain. Sometimes, the energy flourishes in one specific area creating either an excess condition at that location or a deficiency condition somewhere along the channel. The energy that is pooled may also create pain if not released. As you can see, it is important to re-create a steady flow of energy to avoid unnecessary pain.

TCM Practitioners include herbal remedies to enhance the treatment. Some treatments only require the use of herbal medicine. The same philosophy of energy within the body holds true with the use of herbs. Herbs are prescribed in

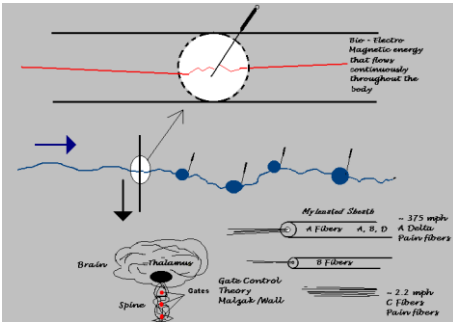
accordance with the illness and are to be used as specified. Chinese herbal medicine is very potent and should only be used when prescribed by a licensed practitioner.



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CHAPTER 4

THEORY



There are five established theories explaining the mechanisms of acupuncture.

The gate Control Theory is perhaps the most common and is based on perception, which is controlled by an area of the nervous system that regulates impulses and eventually is interpreted as pain.

The body consists of three different types of nerve fibers; A-fibers, B-fibers, and C-fibers.

A-fibers are classified into three groups: the A-alpha carries information related to muscle sense; the A-beta carries information related to touch; the A-delta carries information related to pain and temperature. A-fibers can travel up to 375 mph. B-fibers are similar to A-delta fibers but are much slower. C-fibers carry information related to pain and itch and are the slowest in transferring signals to the brain.

C-fibers travel at approximately 2.2 mph. A-fibers are large and have a lipid-myelin sheath.

C-fibers are much smaller and do not have a myelin sheath.

If we touch a hot stove, our A-beta fibers send an instant message to the brain letting it know that we have touched something. A fraction of a second later, the A-delta, B-fibers, and C-fibers relay messages of pain. By blocking the A-fibers, ultimately closing the gates located on the spine and the thalamus, we are able to control pain. Signals from the C-fibers are no longer permitted to relay pain messages that cause painful stimulation.

Scientific studies also indicate that when acupuncture points are stimulated; the body releases endorphins, strengthens the immune system, and promotes blood circulation, allowing the body to balance the nervous system, endocrine system, and the immune system.

Continued use of acupuncture may result in reduction and/or elimination of pain.

DIAGNOSTICS



Millions of American patients for the relief or prevention of pain and many other medical/health conditions have used acupuncture and/or TCM. Traditional Chinese Medicine has its own diagnostic methods equivalent to other forms of medicine. Patients are required to fill out a medical history form that is almost, if not, identical to the ones found in their personal physicians office. It is important to complete the

entire medical history. Some conditions are a result of injuries that may have occurred many years prior to the date of seeing your practitioner.

Next, your TCM practitioner will perform a series of observation techniques and strategies to determine the situation/symptoms, the objective, assessment/evaluation, and the proper procedure to correct the problem. A tongue diagnosis will be included, which is common in TCM. There are many health indications that can be detected through this form of diagnosis. Some patients have conditions that they are not aware of which are discovered through the Chinese Tongue diagnosis. The TCM pulse diagnosis includes twelve (12) pulse positions that are used to determine dominant conditions. This is a very complicated system and is used to reveal the simplest to the most complex conditions. Palpitation is the final step and is very important, especially for conditions such as Fibromyalgia.

Many TCM practitioners will perform a series of Western diagnostic techniques that include a blood pressure examination, pulse rate, and body temperature. It is not necessary to perform Western diagnostic techniques when performing a TCM examination, so do not be alarmed if your therapist does not check your condition in terms of Western medicine.

Conditions that have been diagnosed by your family physician have limited or no bearing on the Chinese diagnosis. Most illnesses do not have the same name or fall into the same category. An

illness may be described in terms of yin or yang, excess or deficiency, hot or cold, or some other category that does not share the same analogy as Western medicine. TCM terminology is based on the root cause. For example, Diabetes is termed as wasting/thirsting disease. Since TCM attempts to correct the root cause of disease or illness, it is important to indicate the acute and chronic symptoms that are associated with the condition, which may include an evaluation of symptoms that no longer appear as evidence of the presenting condition.

The AcuGraph (Computerized Evidence Based Diagnostics for energy balancing), is a great tool to help resolve your issues. More will be discussed in a future chapter.

TREATMENT EXPECTATIONS



The number one question: “What can I expect from my treatment?” Most people react differently to the various modalities that exist within TCM. There are many factors involved. The duration, severity, intensity, cause, symptoms, etc. have a great deal to do with the success of any treatment.

During your treatment, the patient can expect to feel a little anxiety until the first needle is inserted. “Relaxed,” is the number one response

once the needles are in place. As soon as the patient relaxes, they feel a sense of warmth, gentleness, tiredness, or excitement. Treatment may take anywhere from twenty minutes to an hour or more. Some TCM practitioners offer gentle music and a dimmed light to help create a relaxed atmosphere. It is not uncommon for patients to fall asleep during treatment.

When the treatment is complete, the patient may feel a sense of well being, and in most cases, much more relaxed than when they entered the office.

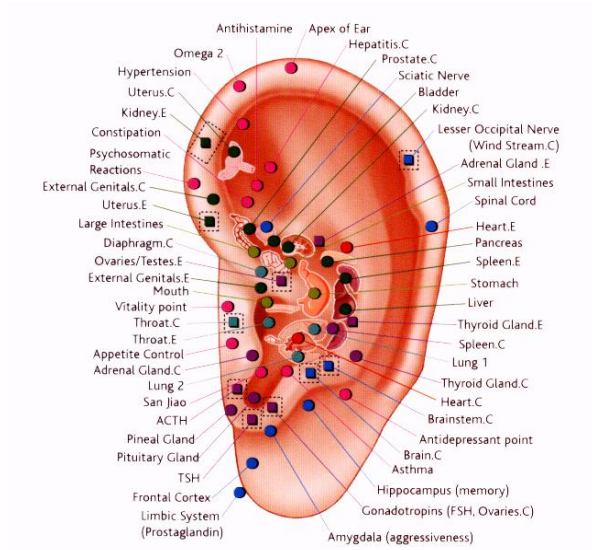
Some individuals begin responding immediately. Others may feel some sort of response the next day. Do not be alarmed if you do not feel anything after the initial treatments. In many cases, a patient will begin to feel some form of physiological change after 4-6 treatments. If you begin to feel relief prior to that, it would be in your best interest to continue through the course of treatment until the body maintains homeostasis. A course of treatment to reach the proper level of homeostasis is generally 12 treatments. Stopping prior to the completion of the suggested treatment plan, may offer less than satisfactory results and returned visits for more treatment.

If you are basing your treatment on the AcuGraph, it could result in a longer duration of treatment sessions.

CHAPTER 5

AURICULOTHERAPY

Auriculotherapy is effective for a variety of conditions. Most common treatments include: Back pain, headaches, arthritis, shoulder pain, knee pain, ankle sprain, carpal tunnel syndrome, tennis elbow, Fibromyalgia, TMJ, vertigo, dizziness, shingles, tinnitus, xerostomia, IBS, incontinence, jet lag, and addiction. Check with your healthcare provider who performs auricular medicine to get a list of other treatable conditions.



Auriculotherapy can be performed with acupuncture needles or electrical stimulation or the combination of the two. Dr. Oleson at UCLA

Medical Center in California has effectively researched the effects of auricular medicine (Auriculotherapy) when used on over 315 medical conditions. The department of anesthesiology at UCLA School of Medicine demonstrates that auricular acupuncture along with electro stimulation of specific acupoints is proven extremely effective for the treatment of chronic pain, narcotic withdrawal, smoking, weight control, and hearing loss.

There are numerous articles published by such researchers regarding the efficacy of auricular medicine.

Auriculotherapy is performed by a variety of healthcare practitioners including acupuncturists, chiropractors, biofeedback therapists, dentists, medical doctors, naturopaths, osteopaths, nurses, physical therapists, and psychotherapists.

COMMON QUESTIONS REGARDING AURICULOTHERAPY

- ***Why Auriculotherapy?***

Auricular therapy is a healthcare modality in which the external surface of the ear, or auricle, is stimulated to alleviate pathological conditions in other parts of the body.

- ***Does Auriculotherapy Hurt?***

No. Minimal pressure is used to identify and treat acu-point locations. Some redness may appear on the ear.

- ***Is Auriculotherapy Safe?***

Yes. There are no dangers related to infection. Individuals with pacemakers, or pregnant women, may not receive Auriculotherapy. Acupuncture needles are not used, except in rare instances and are then used under the same guidelines as standard acupuncture therapy.

- ***How Long Does A Treatment Take?***

Visits range from 20 to 30 minutes.

- ***What Can I Expect To Feel During My Treatment?***

A deep sense of comfort, relaxation, and a tingling sensation in the ear and surrounding areas.

CHAPTER 6

MASSAGE THERAPY

Massage is a methodical procedure of manipulation performed on the body's soft tissue, bones, and Qi. It is considered one of the oldest systems of treating illness. Medical records evidencing the use of massage exist dating back 3000 years in China, ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome.

There are many forms of massage therapy throughout the world. Practitioners of Oriental Medicine generally combine two or three forms within their scope of practice.

The Western form is based on specific techniques designed to stimulate muscles and tendons with roots in European tradition. The Eastern form is based on the body's energy system or Qi. Sports massage is a fairly new approach combining Western and Eastern forms.

Like other forms of massage therapy, Chinese Tui-Na (pronounced twee-na) massage uses a variety of hand techniques. A large number of TCM practitioners include the use of liniments or ointments to enhance the affect of manipulation. Some liniments are strong in nature and can create an uncomfortable sensation on the skin. Inform your therapist if you experience even the slightest sense of irritation. He or she will be more than happy to accommodate you. Some TCM practitioners include oils created for specific

conditions. In this case, you may want to request information regarding where and when they were created along with a list of herbs included in the preparation. Most TCM practitioners take additional course work designed to enhance their knowledge regarding herbal liniments and keep a list in their office, so don't be afraid to ask for a copy.

Tui-na is a form of massage therapy that is designed to help cure illness. Due to the nature of the techniques, a TCM practitioner may be a little more aggressive than a practitioner of the Western based systems. Some patients feel a heavy sensation the next day. This is normal and usually subsides within a day or two resulting in an improved condition.

If your acupuncturist performs Tui-na before, during, or after your acupuncture treatment, it will generally be limited to the area treated or used for relaxation purposes.



CHAPTER 7

CHINESE & WESTERN HERBAL MEDICINE

Herbal therapy is perhaps the oldest form of medicine on earth. Every culture has or has had some form of herbal remedies. Some countries use herbs as their only means of therapy. Many of today's medicines are derived from herbs that were discovered in remote areas of the planet.

Chinese herbalism is perhaps one of the most sophisticated systems in the world. Herbal formulas may contain single herbs or tens of herbs. Too much of one herb can cause death and too little may do nothing for the body. The study of Chinese herbs is rigorous and limited to those who maintain a Master of Science degree or higher in Oriental Medicine. DO NOT accept Chinese herbs from persons selling at flea markets or any other surplus environment. DO NOT share herbal formulas with anyone else. One wrong herb in a formula can cause a serious reaction including death. Herbal formulas are designed for the individual. Patent herbal formulas are less dangerous but may have serious side effects for persons taking prescription drugs. Some herbs are dangerous in any form. Ma Huang (ephedra) faced scrutiny and was removed from the market due to accidental deaths that could have been avoided if a licensed healthcare provider had prescribed the product in accordance with the presenting illness. Chinese medicine practitioners

prescribe ephedra for bronchial conditions and for short term use only.

There are many other herbs that can be poisonous if not taken properly. Some herbal formulas are far more potent than Western prescription drugs. Scientists from all walks of life are researching Chinese herbal medicines. Ask your practitioner which herbs are contraindicated with the pharmaceutical drugs you are currently taking.

The following charts offer simple guidelines regarding herb/drug interactions for the purchase of herbs from local health food and vitamin stores.

Some herb/drug interactions occur in the following categories:

<i>If you have any of these conditions:</i>	<i>Be cautious using the following herbs</i>
DIABETES	Garlic Ginger Ginseng Hawthorn Ma Huang Nettle
HYPERTENSION (High blood pressure) HYPERTENSION continued	Devil's Claw Ginseng Goldenseal Hawthorn Licorice Ma Huang Squill Yohimbe

DEPRESSION	Kava-Kava Valerian
Allergies to ragweed, pollens, etc.	Chamomile Echinacea Feverfew Yarrow Goldenrod St. John's Wort Slippery Elm

*Information provided by U.S. Veterans Health Care
(Developed by Patient Education Advisory Subcommittee)*

<i>If you are taking these medicines:</i>	<i>Check with your healthcare provider before using these herbs</i>
ANTICOAGULANTS (Warfarin)	Alfalfa Chamomile Cinchona Bark
ANTIPLATELET DRUGS (Aspirin, NSAIDs, ticlopidine, clopidogrel))	Clove Oil Ginkgo Garlic Ginger Ginseng Feverfew
CNS STIMULANTS (Decongestants, Ritalin, caffeine, theophylline, appetite suppressants)	Guarana Kola Ma Huang St. John's Wort Yohimbe
CNS DEPRESSANTS	Hawthorn

(Alcohol, opioids, benzodiazepines, antihistamines)	Kava-Kava Skullcap Valerian
ANTIDEPRESSANTS (Tricyclics, SSRIs, MAO inhibitors)	Ginseng Ma Huang Passion Flower St. Johns Wort Yohimbe

As long as your therapist maintains an updated list of drug/herb interactions, the use of herbal medicine is relatively safe.

Try to locate a TCM practitioner who prescribes herbs that meet or exceed American standards. Request that he or she prescribe herbs from companies such as KPC, K'an Herbs, or Blue Poppy. All of their products meet or exceed current American standards. If something goes wrong with your health due to a foreign herbal preparation, you may not have any recourse.

With this in mind, it is important to discuss the efficacy of acupuncture when administered with herbs. Since it is almost impossible and obviously too expensive to have acupuncture treatments on a daily basis, you may need to be supplemented with some type of herbal formula or nutritional supplement. The success of your treatment will be far greater when herbal formulas are included. The formulas are designed to change the energy in your body. Acupuncture treatments can be reduced to

two times per week and more often than not, once per week.

Herbal plasters (patches) are becoming popular. You can purchase these items at almost any drug store. The patches from Asian countries appear to be more effective due to the thousands of years of research behind their products. If you cannot locate Asian made patches, American patches will suffice. These are products for temporary use only and are primarily used to control pain.



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CHAPTER 8

COMMON MODALITIES



MOXIBUSTION

Is the burning of herbs either directly over an acupoint or a series of acupoints. The herbs are often burned on the end of acupuncture needles as well. The primary purpose is to move the blood and warm the area affected.

Moxibustion is perhaps one of the oldest therapies in TCM. It is often used as a form of health maintenance. Some Chinese scholars claim that by burning moxa over a few known acupoints, the body will be rid of disease and you will live a much longer life.

The herb used in moxibustion is: *Artemisia Vulgaris* - a species of *Chrysanthemum*. The leaf is bitter and acrid, producing warmth when used in small amounts and strong heat when used in large amounts. The various forms used include: a wool form, moxa cones, and moxa sticks. The wool form looks like a ball of wool and actually feels like cloth. It is often placed on the end of a needle to create warmth in the acupoints. This is the purest form and most expensive. The cone form is cone shaped and generally burned over the acupoints. The stick form is held above an acupoint or series of acupoints. It is also used to warm large muscle areas.

Methods of burning include: burning on a slice of ginger, burning on a slice of garlic, burning on salt imbedded in the navel, and using moxa sticks.

Ginger: the TCM practitioner places a thin slice of ginger on the acupoints and burns a moxa cone or moxa wool directly on the ginger slice. This method is primarily used to treat diarrhea, abdominal pain, and painful joints.

Garlic: the TCM practitioner places a thin slice of garlic on the acupoints and burns a moxa cone or moxa wool directly on the garlic slice. This method is primarily used to treat boils and insect bites.

Salt: the TCM practitioner fills the patient's navel with regular table salt. Places a small ball of moxa wool on top of the salt and ignites it. This process is repeated 3-4 times in succession. This method is primarily used to treat abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, hernia pain, and prolonged dysentery.

Stick: the TCM practitioner uses the moxa stick to warm large areas. The stick, which resembles a cigar, is held approximately one half to one inch from the area treated and passed along the area until the patient feels a sense of warmth. It is especially good for those who suffer from joint pain (arthritis).

There are many other applications in which moxibustion techniques are effective. Your therapist may use moxa in every treatment or wait until they feel it is appropriate. There are no set

rules for use. Some practitioners do not use moxibustion techniques due to the strong odor while burning. Smokeless moxa exists but appears to be less effective.

You should not use moxa if you are experiencing a fever. If you are pregnant, ask your therapist to avoid the abdominal region. Never allow anyone to burn moxa on your bare skin. Not only is it dangerous, it is illegal in many states.

Ask your practitioner for more information concerning the use of moxa.

GUASHA



Guasha is a technique that involves scraping the skin. This form of therapy is very popular for patients who present with the common cold or congestion. It requires the use of a ceramic soup spoon or specific guasha tools manufactured in hard plastics.

Rubbing alcohol, medical liniments, Vaseline, or massage oils are applied to the body prior to scraping. In the case of congestion, your therapist will apply one of the ointments evenly on your upper back. The edge of the soup spoon will then be used to scrape the skin in a downward motion. The area of the back that is treated will turn bright red in color. This is a normal reaction so do not be alarmed. Your back may turn slightly purplish in color and remain discolored for several hours.

Even though this may appear to be painful, most patients feel no real discomfort. If you experience pain, inform your therapist and he or she will make appropriate adjustments.

The theory is to bring the pathogens to the surface of the body to rid the body of illness. This form of therapy is beneficial for all age groups.

CUPPING



Small cups are placed on the surface of the body and a negative (vacuum) form of pressure is applied. The cups are manufactured in plastic, glass, and bamboo. Bamboo is the oldest method and seldom used.

When using glass or bamboo, the TCM practitioner ignites a cotton swab that has been soaked in rubbing alcohol and then placed inside the cup. After a few seconds, the cotton and flame are removed from the cup and the cup is applied to the surface of the body creating the vacuum suction.

More commonly, plastic cups are applied to the surface of the body and a hand pump is used to create the vacuum. The advantage of using plastic cups with a hand pump is that it allows the therapist to adjust the level of vacuum, which is necessary for applying cups to sensitive areas of the body. It is the preferred method when acupuncture needles are inserted at the same location.

Cupping techniques are used to help reduce swelling and decrease the level of pain. There are two main techniques: Stationary and sliding. Stationary cups are placed on small areas and remain in the same location for the duration of the treatment. Stationary cups usually leave a mark that is circular and resembles a bruise as some of you may have witnessed during the Olympics. Swimmer Michael Phelps displayed brownish circles on various parts of his upper body due to cupping. The marks usually disappear within a couple of days. Sliding cups are moved along large areas of muscle (i.e. back). A lotion is placed on the area to be treated, preventing any marks or uncomfortable sensations. The appropriate level of vacuum is applied and a sliding motion is used to move the cup along the surface.

Cups are primarily applied to injuries of the back, shoulders, abdomen, and legs. Some TCM practitioners use cups over the entire body; however, facial techniques may leave dark marks that could remain for several days.

Cupping therapy is suggested for gastrointestinal disorders, vomiting, diarrhea, lung disease, muscle disorders, and pain.

CHAPTER 9

RELATIONSHIP TO WESTERN MEDICINE



It is important to note that acupuncture is premeditated by individual circumstances.



What this means is that the root cause of illness is the main focus for treatment. Patients may demonstrate different root causes for the same illness.

In acute conditions, the therapist will often use aggressive techniques to prevent any further damage to the body. Treatment is intended to correct the condition before it reaches the next level. This process allows the therapist to address the immediate symptoms prior to addressing the root cause. The patient feels relief and the body becomes stronger and more susceptible to restoring energy. If a person waits too long, the condition may become chronic in nature.

When addressing chronic conditions, the therapist will generally treat the root cause and the symptoms at the same time. This allows for a more thorough approach but requires more treatment sessions. The healing process is slower than in the case of acute conditions even though the acute condition requires a dual approach system.

Ironically, modern illness can be treated utilizing the same techniques of ancient therapists. The reason; the human energy pathways have been consistent throughout time.

Western medicine often addresses the symptoms of illness allowing the body to correct itself without the side affects. Patients are often required to take prescription medication until the body can heal itself. Unfortunately, there are conditions that require a lifelong journey of prescribed drugs. This is not to suggest that Western medicine techniques are not effective. On the contrary, Western medicine is very effective in its approach and superior in terms of surgery and medical testing.

As a TCM practitioner of alternative medicine, I believe that the integration of TCM and Western medicine is the most effective approach since both symptomology and healing are addressed at the same time. There are many healthcare practitioners of Western medicine who are now using integrated medical systems. Chiropractors appear to be the most tolerant. Eventually, with hospitals capitalizing on integrated medicine, medical doctors will become more aware of the advantages and patients will have a greater level of satisfaction.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN SEEKING A TCM PRACTITIONER

There are many factors to consider when seeking a competent acupuncturist. Here are some guidelines to assist you in your search.

Most people are unaware of the educational requirements involved in a national board certified acupuncturist. Each state has specific policy's governing the authorization to practice acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine. State governments are currently enacting statutes that authorize only those individuals who have obtained a national board certification from the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) to practice acupuncture. Other states allow medical doctors and chiropractors to practice acupuncture under their current license without the NCCAOM certification. To qualify for NCCAOM certification a practitioner must complete a minimum amount of hours in training, specific to acupuncture.

You may want to ask your therapist approximately how many treatments are required to correct your presenting condition. A course of treatment is based on the individual and not the presenting condition. Some conditions require the practitioner to perform treatment 2-3 times per week. There are some conditions that call for minor adjustments requiring you to visit your healthcare provider once or twice per month until the body maintains homeostasis.

You may be required to include an herbal formula in your daily schedule. Do not be afraid to take herbal medicine as long as your healthcare provider prescribes them. Most NCCAOM practitioners are taught herb/drug interactions. Once again, avoid individuals at flea markets who

tell you that the herbs they sell will cure everything you ail from. It is ludicrous to think that one herb cures everything, and for the most part, these individuals are not trained or licensed to prescribe herbal formulas.

The clinical environment is very important. The surface area used for instrumentation and supplies must be sterile. Your practitioner has passed all clean needle technique requirements set forth by the AAOM and knows exactly how to conform to needle regulations. This is very important! Used needles must be discarded in a medical waste container and never used more than once in any specific area of your body. Some practitioners use needles sterilized in an autoclave. This is perfectly legal; however, most practitioners prefer disposable needles. Never take your needles home with you. Avoid practitioners who offer you the needles after your treatment. This is in violation of federal law, not to mention, you may end up with a dangerous infection.

Age, gender, and ethnicity, have absolutely no bearing on the skills or experience of the practitioner. As mentioned in the introduction, the Chinese newspaper “China Daily,” has made statements suggesting that American practitioners are for the most part, trained better than their Chinese counterparts. This is partly due to the fact that American practitioners with a Master of Science degree or higher, must also learn basic Western medicine techniques. The integration of

medicine is the future. The more we learn together,
the more effective our treatment protocol will be.



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CHAPTER 10

COMMON QUESTIONS REGARDING ACUPUNCTURE & CHINESE HERBAL



- ***Why Acupuncture?***

There are patterns of energy flow within the body known as Qi. The correct flow of Qi in specific pathways is essential for maintaining proper health. Disruption of energy may cause pain or illness.

- ***What Does An Acupuncturist Do?***

Acupuncturists stimulate identifiable points to influence the physiological performance of the body to help restore a healthy balance.

- ***Does Acupuncture Hurt?***

Acupuncture needles are thinner than the human hair and solid in design, creating an even, gentle and almost pain free insertion.

- ***Is Acupuncture Safe?***

Yes. There is little danger of infection. Needles are sterile and used only once.

- ***How Long Does A Treatment Take?***

Visits range from 20 to 90 minutes.

- ***What Can I Expect To Feel During My Treatment?***

Most people feel a deep sense of comfort, relaxation, and a tingling sensation near needle insertion areas.

- ***How Many Treatments Will It Take?***

Treatment is based on the individual not the illness. The main goal is to reduce pain, eliminate illness, and put the body back into the original state of homeostasis.

- ***How Effective Are The Treatments?***

Acupuncture is very effective. As with all forms of medicine, there are a small number of patients and/or conditions that do not respond well. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your illness, consult with your healthcare provider.

- ***What Conditions Respond best?***

The World Health Organization has listed more than 40 conditions that respond well to acupuncture treatments. A long history of Traditional Chinese medicine suggests that it can effectively treat most illnesses.

- ***How Long Will The Effects Last?***

As with all other medicines, the individual and the illness will determine the outcome. No two people respond in the same manner.

- ***What Research Exists Regarding Drug/Herb Interactions?***

Many of the universities are offering grants for the study of Chinese Herbal Medicine. You may try searching your local college or university for current information regarding effectiveness and interactions.

- ***Are Herbs Expensive?***

Depending on your prescription, herbal formulas can range from a few dollars on up.

- ***Are Herbs Prescribed or Purchased Over The Counter?***

Herbs can be purchased at health food stores or prescribed. Your healthcare provider will determine the efficacy and specificity according to your illness.

- ***Are Herbs Sold In Health Food Stores Effective?***

Herbs in health food stores may be effective and should only be used under the guidance of a licensed nutritionist or your healthcare provider.

- ***Are The Herbal Formulas Manufactured or Assembled In America As Effective As Those Manufactured In Asian Countries?***

Absolutely. All formulas contain the same basic ingredients. The United States offers extra inspection criteria to help ensure safety and efficacy.

- ***Is It Safe To Take Herbs From Foreign Countries?***

Herbs from foreign countries are generally safe. However, there is a chance that you may experience side effects or an additional illness due to different inspection standards. Most importantly, if something goes wrong with your treatment due to the foreign prescription, you do not have any recourse and will be forced to suffer the consequences.

- ***What Happens If I Have Adverse Reaction To Herbs?***

Immediately consult with your healthcare provider if you experience any side effects while taking herbal medicines. Your healthcare practitioner has specific guidelines for each herbal formula.

- ***Is It Safe To Take Herbs With My Prescription Medication?***

As with all medicines, consult with your healthcare provider prior to using herbs. Some herbs may not coincide with your current medication.

CHAPTER 11

A WORD ABOUT SUPPLEMENTS



Always check with your healthcare provider before adding supplements to your current medication. Some supplements will interact with medications.

Many people believe that by eating a proper diet they do not need to take supplements such as vitamins and minerals. Unfortunately, with the flourishing fast food restaurant business, most Americans do not have a complete or proper diet. The foods we eat no longer share the same value of those in the past. In order to maintain correct levels of vitamins and minerals, we would have to eat a diet that is predominately organic in nature and a variety of servings in each category of the traditional food tree. Dieters almost never maintain the correct vitamin and mineral balance necessary for optimal health.

In order to protect yourself, it is important to take vitamin and mineral supplements. There are many products to choose from and it would be in your best interest to purchase supplements from a healthcare provider.

It is important to note that nutritional supplements are generally divided into two categories: supplements to treat specific conditions

such as arthritis, colds, pain, etc. and those used for general maintenance.

If you elect to purchase vitamins without the advice of a qualified healthcare provider, be aware that some vitamin supplements include herbs. Make sure there is nothing in the formula that may harm you. Bee pollen, for example, appears in a lot of the vitamin supplements and if you are allergic to bee stings, you may want to avoid those products.

The preferred company used by Contemporary Acupuncture is Standard Process. Standard Process supplements are 100% organic. These products may only be purchased through a licensed healthcare provider. You can go to their Web site to request more information regarding all of these products or you can e-mail me at: colmerphd@gmail.com. I would be more than happy to return your e-mail pertaining to availability and costs.

Supplements are not confined to vitamins and minerals. There are amino acids, herbs, antioxidants, omega oils, digestive enzymes, sleep aids, and memory aids just to name a few.

Supplements can be a powerful tool when a challenging illness occurs.

Many over the counter supplement products are currently under investigation. There are a lot of books written regarding the use of supplements in conjunction with medicine. Ask your healthcare provider or local librarian for more information.

The following is a list of products that are popular sellers and may be of interest, but may also be dangerous if taken incorrectly:

Grape Seed	Antioxidant, concentration, mental clarity
St. John's Wort	Depression, moodiness, ADD (do not take with antidepressants)
5-HTP	Moodiness, ADD (do not take with antidepressants)
Melatonin	Sleep enhancer (do not take with antidepressants)
L-tryptophan	Moodiness, depression, sleep, ADD (prescription)
Gaba Calm	Works like anti-convulsant and anti-anxiety agent
Phosphatidyl Serine	Memory enhancement
Gingko Biloba	Energy, concentration, enhance circulation
SAMe	Depression, fibromyagia, and focus
Tyrosine	Energy, focus
Gotu kola	Memory
Inositol	Depression, panic attacks
Valerian	Insomnia, anxiety
Apricot Seed	Expectorant, demulcent, lungs
Astragalus	Stimulant, diuretic, energy
Bupleurum	Antipyretic, anxiety, dizziness, pain in head and chest
Chrysanthemum	Fever, headache, dizziness, inflammation, pneumonia

Dong Quai	Gynecological, antispasmodic
Ephedra	Asthma, bronchitis
Gelatin	Blood tonic
Ginseng	Stimulant, cardiac tonic, liver tonic
Fo-Ti	Energy, diuretic, liver tonic
Licorice	Anemia, forgetfulness, hyperactivity
Peony	Liver tonic, antispasmodic
Rehmannia	Bones, tendons, anemia, uterine tonic
Salvia	Menses, blood stimulant
Scutellaria	Diuretic, laxative, astringent
Tienchi	Hemorrhage, blood pressure, heart rate
Wild Ginger	Menses, congestion in lungs, nose, and head

This information is not intended as a medical diagnosis or an attempt to convince anyone to take supplements instead of medication. If you are taking medication, seek the professional advice of your physician or nutritionist. Never attempt to self diagnose

CHAPTER 12

DIET

Whether you are on a diet or monitoring your daily food consumption, it is important that you take a complete vitamin/mineral supplement.

Popular diets are trendy and enticing. Many people who experience weight loss on popular diets eventually gain the weight back and add a few extra pounds. Why is this? The most popular theory is that diets are designed to be short term and temporary, whereas life style changes are permanent.

If you plan to go on a diet, seek the advice of a professional. Avoid making your decisions based on infomercials, news and/or magazine articles. The hidden information behind the beautiful bodies that are on display in advertisement would be enough to deter most of you from using their diet programs.

It is important that you make healthy food choices.

Simple guidelines published by Eli Lilly Company include:

- Eat smaller portions more often to help control your feelings of hunger and decrease the total amount of food you eat each day.
- Snack on crunchy fruits and vegetables, or low-fat crackers and rice cakes.
- Try not to eat high-calorie “junk food.”

- Control “sweet” cravings by eating fruit such as grapes, peaches, berries, and melons.
- Eat less red meat and more white meat.
- Stay away from fast food and fatty/greasy foods.
- Avoid sugars and starches and high-fat foods.

Acupuncture and/or auriculotherapy can be combined with a healthy weight loss program to safely and effectively obtain desired weight reduction. For more information, please contact us.



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