



Chinese Medicine: Treat the Person, Not the Disease

by Shoshanna Katzman

Chinese medicine is a highly developed system of diagnosis and treatment based on a living tradition of successful practical application spanning several thousand years. It teaches that there exists a direct relationship between an individual and their external natural environment, whereby disease results when a deviation from the natural order of life occurs. The underlying principle is that the body heals itself when this natural balance is restored. Thus the purpose of treatments such as acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine and Chinese dietary therapy is to re-establish optimal health through bringing an individual into closer connection to their own internal nature, simultaneously with their natural environment.

Energetic imbalances caused by

nature's forces such as wind, damp, heat, cold are the factors that need adjustment at the hands of a Chinese medicine practitioner. When energetic balance is restored physical healing is the direct result. This is achieved through increased movement of Qi (vital energy) and Blood throughout the body. Then combined with balancing of hormones, strengthening of defensive energy, clearing of blockages, releasing excess, resolving deficiency, boosting vital organ function, as well as calming of the mind and spirit – all entirely determined according to the specific needs of an individual.

As an individualized approach, Chinese medicine treatment views each person from a unique perspective based on a diagnostic framework that arrives at a specific pattern of disharmony used

as the basis for treatment. Predominant energetic imbalances exist related to particular symptoms; however these vary for each individual. Accordingly, a multitude of treatment options exist for a health condition based on the particular energetic and physical characteristics displayed by an individual. The beauty of this ancient paradigm for health and healing is how it addresses the root cause of an illness, not just symptoms.

Prior to providing treatment, a Chinese medicine provider must analyze a whole host of factors in detail prior to arriving at the appropriate Chinese medicine diagnosis, treatment principle and subsequent treatment plan. Information is gathered through questioning and listening – a keen ability learned through years of education, study and application of Chinese medicine theories such as the Five Element, Yin Yang, and Differential Diagnosis. This provides a diagnostic and treatment framework for accurate, safe and effective healthcare.

A practitioner also applies techniques such as pulse, tongue and facial diagnoses to confirm their findings. Information is gathered through a detailed medical history combined with a thorough assessment of dietary and lifestyle habits. Only after all of these findings are collected, assessed and “weaved into a common thread” can a practitioner proceed with treatment.

This is the essence of Chinese medicine; a comprehensive medical paradigm that integrates aspects of a person's previous energetic biography with physical presentations – one that has the potential to create profound changes in an individual's present health picture. There is no longer justification for settling for ill-health. It is essential to explore every treatment option possible until a positive outcome is secured. And especially important to not give up on oneself, there is hope for change – even when one previously thought there was none.

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