

TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

This form of medicine has its origins dating back to approximately 200 BC. In that time period, with far less technology and a more basic understanding of the body, the Chinese began to formulate an amazingly insightful, systematic, and accurate method of medical diagnosis and treatment. The understanding of the body was simple, concise, and has shown itself to be able to be used along-side the more modern and conventional knowledge we now apply to medicine.

One concept that is unique to Traditional Chinese Medicine is the observation that there is energy that flows through the body, called “Qi” (Pronounced “chee”). Qi is the energy that animates the functions of life that are always occurring in our bodies. There are two main forms of Qi referred to as “Yin” and “Yang”. Both Yin and Yang have their own characteristics. Yin is responsible for cooling, nurturing tissues, moistening, descending movements, governs internal concerns, and calms. The responsibilities of Yang are heating, encouraging the activity of body functions, drying, ascending movements, governing external concerns, and contributes to excitation.

It is when the Yin and Yang are in balance in the body, that the energy maintains health and healing.

Using this discovery of Qi, the Chinese then asked very simple yet important questions (Called the “Eight Principles”) when they were attempting to understand a medical condition. They asked whether the condition was either Hot or Cold, Wet or Dry, Internal or External, and whether the condition appeared as an Excess or Deficiency (in relation to either Yin or Yang).

When the organ or tissue of concern was clearly identified and the imbalance of the Qi understood, the condition was then treated by encouraging the Yin/Yang balance back to health for that specific organ or tissue.

To encourage these Excesses or Deficiencies of Yin and Yang back into balance, the Chinese would use diet (certain foods having energetic qualities), herbs (with Yin/Yang qualities), and also acupuncture which directly influences the flow of Qi along defined channels called “meridians”. There are major meridians associated with each major organ. Therefore, specifically influencing the Qi for any given organ can happen through the use of acupuncture treatment along that meridian.

This system of diagnosis and treatment can seem strange to western thought and culture, yet the simplicity of this type of medical approach is one that has increasingly proven itself over millennia, and is still widely used today in the most advanced hospitals and clinics throughout eastern Asia. For a physician, it is a great tool that provides a fresh perspective into a medical case. And that always benefits the patient.

MAKING A DIAGNOSIS:

A diagnosis is made after taking into account all relative information about the symptoms and health concerns, and by taking certain key observations to help the doctor make the case clear. These include looking at the tongue and taking pulse readings.