

The Secrets to an Energetic & Abundant Life

*A Simple Guide to Understanding
Chinese Medicine*



Written By:

Paul J. O'Brien

B.A., N.C.E.H.S., Dip. Acu, Dip. OBB, Cert Clin. Med. M.AFPA., M.CThA

www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com

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Printed in the Republic of Ireland

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Cover design and book format by **Paul O'Brien**

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Introduction

Today more and more people are looking to lead healthier, more balanced and energetic lives. In a world where we are constantly pressurized and in demand, never have enough time, and seem under constant stress, many of us struggle to enjoy good health. Maybe that's why you picked up this book?

If you are like my other patients and the other people that have read this short book, then you are looking for way to enjoy a healthier energetic life, free from chronic illness, pain, or fatigue. Most of my patients and readers don't want to have to choose between being on medication for the rest of their life, or suffering from nagging health problems they just have to put up with. And I'm willing to bet neither do you.

- You want to live life unlimited in its potential.
- You want to enjoy boundless energy.
- You want your body to be a symbol of the vitality and strength you feel.
- You want to be free of niggling aches and pains or serious chronic health problems
- You want to be free of medication and drugs
- You want to return to the energy and vitality of youth.



If you're nodding your head and saying yes to any of these, then the chances are that you are sick and tired of being run down and denied the quality of life that you deserve due to various health problems. The good news is the information in this book could change your life.

Within these pages you will learn about a fascinating ancient treatment method called Chinese Medicine. This is a proven ancient form of healthcare has been practiced for thousands of years and has helped literally billions of people, and it could help you. My goal in offering you this information is to:

- Provide you with a clear overview of this incredible healing system
- Create a sense of empowerment in you from showing you that there are indeed natural solutions to your current health problems
- Finally I'd like to encourage you to be proactive about your health and treat it as a top priority for the rest of your life and enjoy the health and energy that comes with it.

Having suffered from chronic health problems myself I know firsthand how frustrating and challenging it can be to struggle with chronic health issues. But the good news is there are simple solutions. There are answers. I've changed my life and enjoy amazing health and energy using the tools I am going to share with you in this book, as have the hundreds of patients I have treated in my private practice, and you'll hear some of their stories later, for now though, I'd like you to think thank you for taking the time and interest in yourself to read this material.

In my practice I've seen time and again over the years that health problems, big and small, are often warning signs from within ourselves that we need to change the way we currently do things.

Learning to live a life of abundant energy and happiness has a lot to do with learning from your health concerns and the feedback your body is giving you, not just pushing them away or judging them as negative, or simply suppressing them with drugs without actually solving the problem.

The holistic approach in my practice, and that you will learn about in this book, has been for my patients, where true healing begins.

The information contained in these pages can be your blueprint for a new way of understanding your body and mind, and a roadmap to a new energetic and illness free life.

If you have any questions or would like to pursue this form of healthcare, please refer to the end of the book on page 57 where there is information about my practice. Let's begin!

Chapter 1

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR BEST INVESTMENT

Your health is your wealth. It's a cliché I know, but for a reason. It's very true. Think about it for a moment; is there anything more important than your health? Take stock of your life, even when things are going well in the other vital aspects such as work, marriage, finances, etc., can you enjoy these when you are run down, ill or simply not feeling yourself? We can't really enjoy life when struggling with physical or emotional health problems.

Making that decision to invest in yourself first is a big step, especially when we are so used to putting everyone before us. All too often we just "suck it up", deal with it and get on with our stressful lives, helping others to resolve their problems and make life easier for them but not for ourselves. And while it is always good to help others, what good can you truly be if your aren't at your best and have run yourself into the ground? We become more careless and inefficient at work, we snap at loved ones, and can't enjoy our relationships with our friends or partners.

Investing in your health is the starting point of a powerful transformation, not just in yourself and your health but in the health and happiness of those around you. Making your health a priority and dramatically improving your quality of life in the process, sets the stage for success in every dimension of your life. Work productivity increases, money is made easier, you truly get to enjoy the time you spend with family and friends and can engage more in all the fun and fulfilling activities life has for us.

With more energy come increased confidence, mental clarity, and improved physical health. You find yourself ably to gracefully handle the daily the stresses and challenges of the modern world, which would have previously overwhelmed you. Composure, control, and peace become the foundations of your life rather than isolated experiences.

Being proactive and committing to your health in this way will lead to not only immediate improvement in your life, but will also set the stage for greater vitality and resilience as you age. There is a strong preventative aspect to claiming optimal health right now that keeps you feeling young, energized and invigorated. From the time we are young we are taught to put off our own needs until our bodies and minds are screaming at us for acknowledgment.

We ignoring the small back pain until we realize we can't get out of bed because of sciatica. We put up with the small headache and down painkillers till we have a blinding migraine that leaves you in bed for days because it doesn't respond to medication. We wait until we are given a



wakeup call that usually comes in the form of illness or worsening health problems that forces you to stop.

But **what if you did something about it right now?** What if you decided to **make yourself a priority** and care enough about you to take the steps necessary to optimize your current state of health, thereby preventing future problems? What is preventing you from living a life of boundless energy and radiant health right now?

These are powerful questions to ask yourself. Today most of us are caught in a constant game of negotiation with ourselves to buy more time to put off the most important things in life. We think we have time to postpone our deepest needs for health, peace, and balance.



What I am saying is that in order to lead an energetic and abundant life in our modern world it is vital that you commit right NOW to your health as a top priority. This means:

- Working with the right holistic and allopathic (Western) medical practitioners
- Eating a healthy whole foods diet (that's not a diet like Weight Watchers, Atkins, South Beach or those other fads, but consistent delicious healthy food)
- Exercising 3-4 times a week (this can be done properly in a little as 4 minutes. I don't recommend spending more than 20 minutes a week exercising).
- Taking time each day to be present using relaxation techniques
- Freeing yourself of any limiting beliefs that undermine your health and quality of life

As with everything in life, and particularly those things that are important to us such as our health it is essential that you surround yourself with a community of people that can inspire and guide you in the direction of optimal health and life. We all need this kind of guidance or else we easily feel alone and confused. And as you will see, a skilled acupuncturist can be an incredibly helpful resource to achieving an energetic and abundant life.

- Let's review the main points here, and then we will jump into an exploration of Chinese Medicine and how it can help you achieve your health goals:
- Your health and quality of life depend on the choices you make every of every day
- You can choose to claim a much higher level of health right now

- You can do this by freeing harmful beliefs, establishing healthy lifestyle patterns, and allying yourself with a team of skilled holistic and allopathic medical practitioners
- NOW is the only moment we have; putting off your deepest needs will create bigger problems down the road

How Do I Know if I'm a Good Candidate for Acupuncture Treatment?

You would likely receive great benefit from this form of care if you are:

- Struggling with chronic health issues that haven't responded to other forms of care
- Interested in reducing dependence on Western drugs and medications
- Looking for alternatives to conventional forms of treatment
- Seeking ways to optimize your health on all levels of being
- Fed up with the conventional healthcare model
- Looking for ways to grow spiritually and emotionally
- And perhaps the most important point: You are interested in taking responsibility for your health to make the changes that will create a life of greater balance and purpose



Chapter 2

THE BRILLIANT BENEFITS OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

As I mentioned earlier, Traditional Chinese medicine has been practiced for thousands of years and is used around the globe by millions of people. One of the reasons that this form of medicine has survived for so long and has been adapted to different so many different cultures is that it offers a vast and potent repertoire of healing benefits that are so widely needed in our modern world.

You may have noticed that acupuncture has enjoyed an enormous surge of interest lately, as the media is really catching onto the widespread benefit that this treatment option is offering to so many people. I myself have been featured a number of times in national Irish publications such as the Irish Independent, Irish Times, Irish Examiner, Evening Herald and more due to the incredible results I have achieved with my patients in a number of fields.

But What Exactly Can Chinese Medicine Do For You?

Well listing the benefits of Chinese Medicine alone would cover a book, so here's a small sample of the primary benefits supported by clinical evidence and which my patients and I enjoy:

- Substantial increase of energy
- Relief and resolution of chronic pain
- More restful sleep patterns
- Less cravings, habitual behaviors, and addictive tendencies
- Reduction or elimination of chronic illness and stress
- Emotional balance, increased joy and motivation
- Increased mental clarity and memory
- Improved athletic performance
- Enhanced metabolism and rapid fat loss
- Reduction of infertility, miscarriage and pregnancy problems



Chinese medicine can effectively treat a number of chronic health problems, from anxiety and depression to chronic pain and PMS, to infertility to weight loss.

The list of conditions treated by this medicine is vast to say the least, but many are covered and discussed in detail on my website – www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com

Most of my patients report a deep feeling of peace that stays with them for many hours or days after acupuncture treatment. More importantly they find that this feeling of peace becomes the foundation for their life rather than an occasional experience.

Chapter 3

WHAT IS CHINESE MEDICINE AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

An ancient form of healthcare, Traditional Chinese medicine has been practiced throughout the Asian world for 5000 years. As a result of its long healing history and the success it enjoys, Chinese medicine is perhaps the most widely used form of medicine throughout the world. Since its development centuries ago billions of people around the world have used it as their primary form of care. Traditionally speaking there are five main branches of Chinese medicine:

- Acupuncture
- Chinese herbal medicine
- Nutrition
- Qi gong
- Feng shui

In this volume we will be covering the first two of these in some depth (please see my additional guides on nutrition etc). Traditionally speaking, Chinese medical theory holds that these five branches form the foundation of a healthy and balanced life.



Acupuncture theory is premised upon the concept of Qi (pronounced Chee), which loosely translates as energy, life force, or function. Qi is the primary fundamental energy of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Qi is both the physical and non physical and is often seen as the life-force, the energy that animates all life and cannot be reduced to simple science.

It is described in different ways by different cultures, for instance the Japanese refer to it as “Ki”, or spirit, and is often found as a central tenet of martial arts such as the Kiai in Shotokan, a Spirit Shout that is used to call to action the whole physical and spiritual aspect of an individual and focus that intention and energy. In India they call it Prana, the life breath and a core focus of Yoga and Meditation. Even in Irish and Celtic Mythology we recognize this energy and called in Danu.

Qi escapes true definition, but it the basis for the varying levels of Yin and Yang, 2 expressions of Qi in Chinese Medicine that are used to regulate the functions of life. Chi is in essence what separates the living from the dead. It is the breath of life, the divine spark that enables life to live.

It's helpful when first trying to understand the concept of Qi is to consider the possibility that there is an immaterial level of reality that Western science cannot quantify or categorize. TCM and Acupuncture theory suggests that many of our physical and emotional problems begin at this energetic level of function that is more subtle than our brain chemistry or organ function.

Interesting we have seen an acceptance of such an idea in the Western Scientific model, in areas such as Quantum physics for instance, which shares a very similar understanding of the material world and the human body. Quantum Physics has shown that when we break down any material object into its smallest components, it is reduced to pure energy. This is no different to the beliefs of many of these ancient Eastern cultures. While our bodies may seem solid they are in fact energetic configurations that are constantly changing. Acupuncture is premised upon this understanding. The point of Acupuncture treatment is to manipulate the flow of these energy configurations that the Chinese call Qi within our bodies in different ways to induce a therapeutic effect.

By working on this deep core energetic level, the physical or material level can be directly and dramatically affected. In fact, according to acupuncture theory, many forms of imbalance or disease cannot be fully healed simply by intervening on the material level. Look at a cold or flu for instance. Despite the common occurrence and frequency of this illness Western Medicine has no cure or treatment to heal the body – instead it prescribes medications to **conceal the SYMPTOMS** of this condition.

It covers it up, it doesn't treat it, and in time, the body heals itself, while the drugs hide the symptoms caused by the disease. Acupuncture and TCM focus on the root cause of these imbalances and disharmony's, and resolve the symptoms by resolving the underlying problem. In Acupuncture the underlying energetic component has to be addressed in order to treat the root cause of the problem.

In TCM and Acupuncture, the Qi (energy) in our bodies spreads from head to toe. This energy runs along meridians, which are channels of Qi that flow throughout the body, like rivers and the energy pools and gathers at specific locations along them. These locations where Qi gathers are called acupoints, or acupuncture points and are typically the places where acupuncture needles are inserted to induce various therapeutic effects. There are approximately 365 basic acupoints on the human body, with many additional and extra points for specific conditions as well as those located on the ear etc. Each meridian corresponds to one of the major internal organs. Here is a list of the 12 major meridians that run through the body:

- LUNG
- LARGE INTESTINE
- SPLEEN
- STOMACH
- BLADDER
- KIDNEY
- HEART
- SMALL INTESTINE
- SAN JIAO
- PERICARDIUM
- GALL BLADDER
- LIVER

There are numerous acupoints on each of these 12 meridians. For instance, the Heart meridian has 9 acupoints while the Bladder Meridian has 67. Each of these 365 points have names, metaphors, and images associated with them that help the acupuncturist utilize them in different ways. For instance a point called Gall Bladder 20, located on the back of the head is called the Gates of Consciousness – and is used not surprisingly, in cases of insomnia. Finally each of the

meridians travels through specific regions of the body with defined origins and end points. Typically, an acupuncturist will insert tiny needles into a number of the acupuncture points on the meridians based on the diagnosed imbalances present. For instance a severe headache or sharp migraine may be caused by excess activity along the Liver and Gall Bladder meridians. A well placed needle towards the start of that meridian in a point called Liv-3 often resolves headaches quite quickly.

What does the needle do?

Acupuncture is surprisingly relaxing, allowing both the muscles of the body and the mind to unwind and de-stress. The insertion of the needles is painless and because of size and does not present any discomfort. Once the needles are placed along the meridians patients often feel a sensation of warmth, a pleasant tingling or pressure as the energy begins to move and flow. It is a deeply relaxing sensation and only last few seconds as the body once again becomes balanced.

Some people are reluctant to pursue treatment because it involves the use of needles. Don't worry, in the hands of a well trained acupuncturist, there would only be minimal, if any, discomfort. I find patients frequently ask me 'did you *really* just put a needle in?' after it is inserted because the procedure is so gentle, many find the experience fascinating. Most patients are in fact, surprised by how little they feel as the needles are inserted.



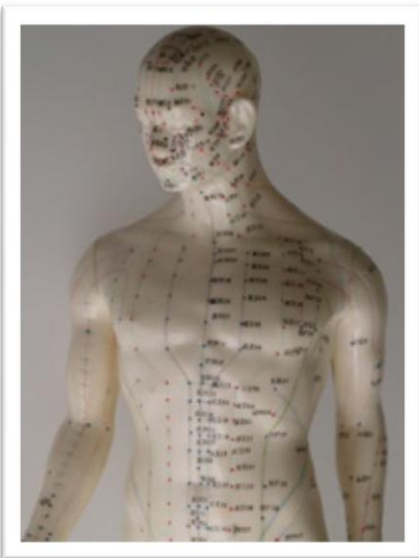
After the needles are in, there is typically a sensation of a pleasant warm tingling, or warmth. Alternatively some may feel a gentle heavy pressure like in a good massage or a mild achiness as the blockages are moved. This only lasts a few seconds and just lets you know that Qi and energy are being moved and the treatment is working. All in all, acupuncture should be a pleasant, deeply calming, and safe experience. The needles are hair thin and are used only once, then disposed into a biohazard container.

Most acupuncturists use stainless steel needles which are said to disperse energy and get the Qi moving effectively throughout the meridian that is being worked on. The needle is used as a medium for transferring and manipulating Qi in various ways. There are some acupuncturists who are so skilled at working with Qi that they don't even need to use a needle to do so. They can simply use their hands or, even more remarkably, the power of their faculties of awareness, to induce the desired energetic shift that needs to occur for healing to take place. I make use of such skills in my clinic when performing Qi Gong releases, a needleless technique that is used to rebalance damaged tissue, bones and organs. For the most part however I, as do many acupuncturists prefer to use needles, simply because this is the easiest medium to utilize for changing the energetic of the body.

Chinese Medicinal theory sees all of the major organs of the body as an interconnected network. This means, for example, that the function of your kidneys can have a direct impact on the function of your lungs. It is this inter-relation in TCM that gives it its holistic basis.

Unfortunately in Western medicine there is a tendency to reduce the focus down to one isolated component or symptom without regard for how this may affect others aspects of the body and the organism's functioning as a whole. In acupuncture theory, all of our internal organs are part of an inseparable matrix of function; they all have important roles to play that directly influence the health of the other organs in the body.

This also allows the Acupuncturist to make a varied choice in his needling prescription. If appropriate he can use a point on the Spleen meridian for instance to have a direct effect on the Heart meridian. An acupuncturist can equally sedate or disperse Qi by using a point on the Liver meridian and thus help the kidneys function better. Finally an acupuncturist can work directly on the meridian that reflects the person's symptoms. For example, acupuncture points on the Lung meridian can be used for treating asthma. How an acupuncturist decides which points to needle is based on their diagnosis, training, expertise, and knowledge.



Aside from the elements of moving Qi and regulating the functions of the organs, I view acupuncture as I'm sure many other acupuncturists would as a method of anchoring and focusing the body's own immune response and healing systems on a particular area that needs attention. In this manner acupuncture breaks the unhelpful and un-resolving cycle of chronic pain, imbalance, or weakness.

The human body is a miraculous organism, capable of self-healing and correcting a near infinite number of conditions, particularly when it is prompted and guided the right way. And this is the focus of all holistic medicines including Traditional Chinese Medicine – a non-invasive, gentle, yet potent method of intervention that naturally offers to the body what it needs to heal itself.

Chinese medicine, as do nearly all forms of holistic treatment, begins with the theory that every human being has an innate resource of wisdom, strength, and health that can be tapped into at any moment. TCM and Acupuncture is simply a very old and very effective way of identifying what resources are needed and of making contact with this incredible innate power. A favorite analogy of mine is to compare acupuncture to an orchestra. A conductor leads the musicians and they make the music. In the same way an acupuncturist may conduct or direct your body's healing resources, but it is you, the instrument of health, that creates the healing. Ultimately each of us must be held accountable for our health and quality of life.

If life circumstances have caused us to feel alienated from this inner wisdom, then we can certainly turn to acupuncture as a way to reconnect with ourselves and awaken to our full potential. But acupuncture is not intended to be a cure-all for our health problems nor is it a magic bullet that will make all of our pain go away.

A skilled acupuncturist will engage in a therapeutic relationship with the patient to help educate them about how they can take responsibility for their symptoms or imbalances. This approach is very different from Western medicine in which the patient is typically offered a pill to suppress or

alleviate their symptoms. While allopathic (Western medicine) care is certainly warranted for acute and life-threatening conditions, it fails at truly offering a deep level of support to the millions of patients with chronic, stress-related issues like anxiety, insomnia, pain, and digestive disorders to conditions such as fertility, pregnancy induced problems, weight loss and spinal problems.

By putting the responsibility and power in the hands of the patient through effective education and treatment, Chinese medicine is mainly intent on treating the root cause of our health conditions.

In the Meridian Clinic, this is achieved by offering you not just acupuncture but a range of additional therapeutic treatments, including Qi Gong, Amno Fu, Spinal Diagnosis and Repair, food intolerance assessment, Tuina Massage and more. Each session involves discussing any stresses or strains life has thrown your own, looking at solutions and taking steps towards implementing them, along with advice on nutrition and lifestyle.

Now, this does not mean that you have to believe in these techniques for them to work. It does mean that you have to believe in yourself to reap the full benefits that these strategies have to offer. We have already touched on the fact that Chinese medicine is one of the few truly holistic medical traditions in the modern world.

What does this mean exactly? And how can it help you?

A skilled acupuncturist looks at health and illness differently than does a typical Western doctor. A holistic form of care is one that focuses on:

- The relationship between emotional and physical health
- The subtle ways that energy is distributed through the human body
- The effects of the mind (beliefs, perceptions, attitudes) on the human body
- The role that nature plays in health and disease
- The energetic processes that underlie physical and emotional imbalances

Normally when we think of holistic medicine, we think of the connection between body, mind, and spirit. While this is certainly one dimension of any truly holistic paradigm, holism implies a much broader usage as well. For instance, when diagnosing your various health issues, the acupuncturist will look at:

- Physical imbalances that may be contributing to emotional hardship
- The relationship between your beliefs and predominant emotions
- The degree to which you are engaged with and loving your work
- Dietary habits
- Exercise habits
- Lifestyle Choices
- Social support systems
- Intimate relationships

Each of these factors makes up you your current level of health. Anything that we have attracted into our lives that compounds or worsens our current health issues needs to be considered as a potential avenue for therapeutic intervention from a holistic perspective. In this sense, a skilled acupuncturist often is seen as a health or life coach as much as they are a healer or a doctor.

Account for your individual and unique makeup is the true beauty of holistic medicine. In Western medicine for instance you may have noticed that there are three or four medications that are used for all kinds of anxiety and depression. Prozac, Paxil, Effexor, etc. are standard treatment options regardless of the patient's specific energetic, physiological, and emotional makeup. And in many instances these medications are even prescribed for conditions for which they were not originally intended.

By contrast in holistic medicine, no one is every just placed in a box and given a cookie cutter treatment. Each problem is assessed on the basis of that individual. For example take conditions such as anxiety and depression. In TCM these are considered generic labels, that in no way capture the unique dynamics and subtleties of the individual. An experience of grief-based depression due to the loss of a loved one is dramatically different to the depression felt because of internalized anger and the frustration caused by an inability to express it – yet in Western medicine, these two very different patients would likely receive the same medication.

The holistic medical approach by contrast would offer entirely different approaches designed to complement the specific emotional dynamics of the patient. Holistic medicine treats the person first and the specific disorder is seen as a reflection of an internal disharmony as Chinese medicine asserts that the body mirrors the mind.

A freedom of mind, one that is open to new experiences gives our bodies freedom, and suppressive beliefs and stagnant thinking leads to gradual physical decline. Many people blame their failing health on the aging process. Chronological age has very little to do with the health of the physical body from a holistic perspective. The reason that the body tends to decline as we age is because of the chronic and stubborn nature of our conditioned beliefs and habits. If we choose to enable these beliefs to run our lives year after year, rest assured the body will inevitably undergo a process of degeneration that can be gradual or sudden.

The body becomes less tolerant of imbalanced perceptions and behaviors over time. This is the main reason that age-related physical issues become apparent. It is inspiring to note that many elderly people in the world have maintained a state of thriving physical health that seems to defy their actual age. What accounts for this difference? Positive attitude, self care, strong faith and empowering belief systems.



What can I expect during treatment?

The majority of my patients have been amazed by the sensations they feel during treatment. Some have described a feeling of their body pulsating with a pleasant electrical current, unlike anything they had ever felt before. Others experience a feeling of such profound and deep relaxation they simply nod off and enjoy the most refreshing sleep, (I know that seems hard to believe but many patients do actually nap with the needles in them!)

The common thread among all the feedback I get though is that Acupuncture helps people feel their internal energy. It takes them out of their head and the troubles, stresses and concerns they may have and reconnects them with the intuitive relationship we have with the body. Acupuncture has a habit of deepening out attention and awareness of the body and we can feel the currents of sensation that are created by the movement of Qi and energy within us.

My patients frequently describe how quickly the acupuncture session goes by. Even though they had been lying on the table for 15-20 minutes, they literally feel that only 1-2 have passed. This is a result again of acupuncture's unique way of taking people out of linear time. As the patient's awareness becomes more body-oriented, the normal thought process of cause and effect falls away, and a sense of timelessness ensues. This alone can be a profoundly healing experience in a world where we feel constantly rushed and pressured for time.

If you try acupuncture, you will very likely feel the same way as some many others have and fall asleep or simply sink into a deep relaxation. The rest of the day likely for several days after that, you will feel energized and refreshed, as though your body has just enjoyed a period of deep rest.

Chapter 4

THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF ACUPUNCTURE AND HOW CAN THEY HELP YOU?

The history and theory of acupuncture is over 5,000 years old and a detailed overview would take several volumes and is well beyond the scope of this book, however, it is important to know that there are two main traditions of acupuncture used throughout the world.

The first of these traditions is called **8 principles acupuncture**. 8 principles involves harmonizing imbalances that have developed in the body and is based on the underlying theory of Yin and Yang. The eight principles refer to:

- Yin
- Yang
- Internal
- External
- Hot
- Cold
- Excess
- Deficient

Using these 8 principles an acupuncturist can assess the relative degree of balance within the patient's body and diagnose a vast array of conditions. For example, a patient can have a deficiency of yin, which means that the calming, moistening, and cooling aspects of their physiology have become depleted. In this case, the acupuncturist will nourish yin in order to calm and cool the patient.

Eight principles acupuncture is the predominant form of treatment in the modern world with the majority of acupuncturists trained in this manner. It has been proven to be an effective method of diagnosis, distilling complex problems to simple, understandable solutions. Treatments based on Eight Principles Acupuncture can clear out various symptoms by harmonizing the underlying imbalances of the body.

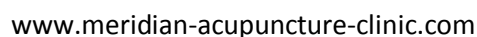
Often used by Acupuncturists for treating pain-related concerns such as frozen shoulder, headaches, low back pain, and sprains and strains, and has often been used to reduce or eliminate pain medications. It is however capable of diagnosing and outlining treatment protocols for a much wider variety of conditions, from skin problems to hormonal imbalances, and from colds and flu to infertility. It has no side effects and is considered a very safe and effective form of treatment for both chronic and acute conditions. In cases of muscular pain and injury, the primary method of healing is through the stimulation of blood flow and increasing circulation to damaged tissue thus promoting quick repair on a cellular level.



Used for internal medical conditions, it works

While it is certainly useful for chronic health issues, many acupuncturists also utilize five elements acupuncture, a second style of diagnosis and treatment, for a more detailed diagnostic evaluation. The Five element system has its roots in pre-Communist Chinese medicine, and born out of the philosophical and cultural traditions that embraced the powerful reality of nature when broken down to its observable base constituents, as the belief was held that the our emotions and relation to our health, body and mind, could be reflected in the interrelationships present in nature. .

Below is a basic chart that illustrates the Five Element Theoretical Model:

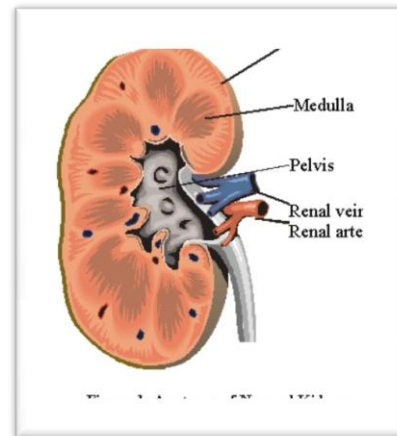


This model is particularly useful in understanding the connection between the physical problems we may present with and the underlying psychological traumas and difficulties that rise from them, and vica versa,

An easy example to explain and a useful illustration is that of Kidney's and Bladder. In **Western Medical Terms**, the primary functions of the kidney s are to regulate the body's fluid volume, mineral composition and acidity by excreting and reabsorbing water and inorganic electrolytes. This helps balance these substances (which include sodium, potassium, chloride, calcium, magnesium, sulfate, phosphate and hydrogen) in the body and keep their normal concentrations in the extracellular fluid. Body fluid volumes, which are regulated by the kidneys, are related to blood volume and the blood pressure in your arteries.

The kidneys perform a wide range of vital functions in the healthy body, such as:

- Removing wastes and water from the blood
- Balancing chemicals in your body
- Releasing hormones
- Helping control blood pressure
- Helping to produce red blood cells
- Producing vitamin D, which keeps the bones strong and healthy



The bladder meanwhile, takes the waste produced by the Kidney's and flushes it out of the body via urination. So what Element could possibly represent this in the 5 Element system? Easy Water. The Water Element is defined as follows –

Emotion: Fear, anxiety

Color: blue

Season: winter

Sound: groaning

Odor: putrid

Distorted belief: 'My purpose is not powerful enough to change the world. I am subject to the whims of fate.'

Water in Balance: Purpose and potential fulfilled, feeling the fear and doing it anyway, power

So how do the Kidney's correlate to this – well it's easy to see from a physical standpoint – we pee (processing fluid and water along with waste products). But let's look at it in more detail.

According to Traditional Chinese Medicine the physical function of the Kidneys and Bladder is just the same as the Western. It cleans and filters the blood and excretes the waste from the body – BUT it also does a whole lot more – in fact the Kidneys are the fundamental basis of your very existence.

Now that's a big statement but the Kidney's are seen as the Essence of who you are and the basis for your life span, vitality and reproductive function. This begins with your "inherited constitution" or Jing Qi. What this refers to is your genetic makeup. When you were conceived

your parents gave you part of their energy in the act of reproduction – in biological terms this is the fusion of the egg and sperm to create life. In western medicine we see it as combining of different DNA strands to produce a new unique one based on the genetic structure of your parents. This is what dictates your future growth, development and predisposition to illness etc. In Chinese medicine they use the term Jing Qi to explain DNA. As such any genetically inherited medical conditions are a result of weak Kidney energy in one or both of your parents at the time of conception.

This is why the Kidneys are seen in TCM terms as the Vital Essence of who you are – it's your very genes, your DNA.

This in turn houses and controls your own sexual function and vitality. And aside from the problems mentioned in the opening paragraphs of this chapter like a dull headache, back or knee pain, sciatica, bladder problems, excess sweating, a lack of motivation or low energy levels, a problem with the Kidneys affects your libido and sexual function. Literally you won't have the motivation or energy to get up and this can later impact your prostate health. Women aren't off the hook either by the way – and often a problem with the Kidneys can lead to erratic or delayed menstruation.

Welcome to the House of “Zhi”

Finally, as we learnt previously each organ must have both physical and mental emotional components and in this case the Kidneys are vitally connected to the “Zhi”, or our mental drive, and courage and the determination to succeed with our goals and dreams. Thus one's ability to step into the ring and face down a seemingly stronger opponent, to compete and strive to be better, the drive and determination to train harder and to make greater sacrifices for our art is fundamentally tied up with the health of our Kidneys. That means that when the Kidneys are weak, we become more timid, alert, afraid and easily startled. We can find ourselves jumping at the clash of plates, the feint of our opponent, and more.

Now this may seem unlikely, that a physical organ like the Kidneys and Bladder can relate to and control our courage and fear, but look to nature and it becomes obvious and apparent. For instance an animal in the wild, say a deer is relaxed and grazing, suddenly a twig snaps, and slight smell of a predator is caught in the wind – what is the reaction of the deer? The same as man, the adrenalin system kicks in bringing with it the much talked about fight or flight – the deer afraid for its life and continued survival runs, but not before losing bladder control, defecating. This serves two purposes. The first, excreting any excess waste lightens the body and means the deer can run away faster. Secondly it helps to dissuade the predator from pursuing.

Fundamentally, human beings are still animals and we have a similar response. We have wonderful phrases in the English language that reflect this, “I was so scared I nearly wet myself”, being one of them. Of course, which organs are responsible for that reaction – your Kidneys and your Bladder. The surprising thing is that human's living in the modern world react to work and social stress in much the same way as a deer being stalked save on a much lower but longer term level. Think of the feeling you get before a high level presentation before the

company director, the hands sweat and people generally go to the bathroom beforehand. Fear, anxiety and worry all affect the Kidneys and Bladder on both a physical and emotional level.

As you can see the 5 Element system provides your acupuncturist with a detailed and clear roadmap in helping to uncover the complex issues regarding to your health. One of the first issues that must be dealt with in nearly every case though is dealing with shock and stress.

Clearing Shock

Taking the patient out of a state of shock is the first priority of any treatment using five element acupuncture, but shock isn't what you think it may be. Most of us think of Shock as something we see on a medical or police drama after an accident on, incident – “You can't ask her any questions now detective she's in shock”, is said right before the cutaway to a person sitting curled up rocking back and forth – this is called Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and is understandably very serious, but that's not what I am referring to.

Shock, can be obvious as in the case above, but often, it is far more subtle. Do you remember the example of the Kidney's being susceptible to fear and the fight or flight response? Well as I mentioned then our bodies respond to our current environment of, work, social responsibilities, bills, etc as stress, as being stalked constantly – this over time can produce a low grade but very chronic and inset form of shock. In this case we are defining shock as loss of awareness of present moment reality.

How many us of today feel like we always have to be somewhere else, always worried and concerned about some past or future event, rushing from A to B and back again, juggling a thousand responsibilities and facing ever looming deadlines? How often with all this going on are you actually in the present moment?

This type of shock and constant stress leads to many of our chronic health problems as these natural concerns prey upon our mind and undermine our physical health, and problems with our physical naturally give rise to more stress! That cycle needs to be broken and action taken immediately and using acupuncture this can be cleared instantly or within a few weeks of treatment and can be visibly and objectively measured using muscle tests.

When the shock clears I often hear the same things from patients, “I feel like my old self” or “I feel like I have myself back.”

Many of us in today's modern world are in this constant state of assault and stress, we can we can get on with it, put up with the low grade back pain, or poor quality sleep, use coffee and sugar to get us through the day - survive it, but we often don't thrive, nor do we really get to enjoy the vitality of our lives.

We can function and make it through the day, but we are not deeply connected with a strong sense of purpose and the profound satisfaction of living life fully. **This is why 40 million Americans** have been diagnosed with anxiety and depression and why countless more carry chronic and extreme amounts of stress, pain, insomnia, and hormonal imbalances.

Chapter 5

PATIENT EXPERIENCES AND CASE STUDIES

A Look at Liver Qi Stagnation

The following case study is an excellent example of how the how a patient's physical, emotional and spiritual health all interacts. Louise, a 36 year old woman presented to my clinic with problems becoming pregnant. Apart from not being able to conceive, Louise also presented with a series of additional complaints, including irregular periods, cold extremities, and occasional gastric problems.

These symptoms had persisted for a number of years, and there seemed to be no resolution. Louise and her husband had consulted a fertility clinic; an experience neither enjoyed, but, they were relieved to find that there were no apparent physical problems that could prevent conception. Still it hadn't happened for them and they were concerned, and took action.

Louise, a pharmacist by trade, knew all too well the effects of medication on the body and wanted to approach this problem with a more holistic approach. This was re-inforced by the cold attitude she'd experienced with the fertility clinic. I've found that while many doctors and western medical personal offer fantastic work, often times the human factor is overlooked and people are just simply reduced to an economic list of symptoms, rather than as complete person with their own complexities and subtle patterns.

In speaking with Louise it became apparent that there were both physical and emotional imbalances at play that were preventing her becoming pregnant. The symptoms she presented with indicated stagnation of blood, a slowing down or blockage of the blood and hormones necessary to regulate optimal health. In particular I identified this as a blockage of the Liver, which is significant in fertility cases (for more on that please see my articles on Fertility and Pregnancy here).

How this physical blockage came about however was I felt the result of significant emotional stress. It transpired the Louise had lost her father after a long battle with chronic illness. Louise as a primary care provider and loving daughter had been deeply upset, and stressed by the loss.



From a 5 element perspective this makes a great deal of sense, as the Liver is associated with the Wood element – sinuous with both spring, re-birth and new growth. Emotionally associated with frustration, (directed at the poor medical care her father received, and the injustice of losing her father), it was only natural that the Liver was out of balance and presenting as a problem preventing the smooth flow of Qi and Blood that leads to a successful pregnancy.

After just a few treatments there was remarkable change in Louise's constitution and it was clear she was on the road to better health and that pregnancy would soon follow. Her eyes had a new light in them and she began to express herself more fluidly and easily. Her energy levels improved and the blockages and digestive complaints she was suffering from completely disappeared.

Each session took Louise closer to a state of resolution, balance, acceptance and joy, an emotional reflection of the breakdown of the Liver Qi Stagnation and a return to healthy free flowing natural state. We'd sit and talk about anything that was troubling her and share in her joy's and successes over the weeks that followed and on each session we encouraged the Liver to release and relax the blood and Qi.

To give you a sense of the treatment we used with Louise and how it helps the names and functions of the points have been included here:

Liver 3 is called "**TAICHONG**" meaning "**Great Rushing**", is associated with the free movement of blood, as its name may suggest. In cases of frustration and anger, we dam up our emotions and this has a physical effect of damming up and blocking the smooth flow of blood and energy that is vital for our body's functions, including conception. In needling this point we return the proper rushing flow to the blood and energy.

Gall Bladder 34 is called "**YANGLINGQUAN**" meaning "**Yang Mound Spring**", is associated with freeing any blockages or pent up emotions that are causing a physical blockage. It is an essential point in treating all disorders of stagnation and deficiency of blood. This is reflected in the unequivocal statements in the *Song of Points for Miscellaneous Diseases* which says

"Pain of the lateral costal region, you only need Yanglingquan GB-34",

...and the *Ode of Essentials of Understanding* which says

"When there is pain of the lateral costal region and of the ribs, needling Yanglingquan GB-34 will alleviate the pain promptly".

This makes it an excellent point in the treatment of painful menstrual cramps and other problems of that nature.

Kidney 3 is called "**TAIXI**" in Chinese, the translation of which is "**Supreme Stream**", is associated as its name suggest with returning the free flow of vital life essence to the body. Both the Penetrating and Conception vessels are nourished by and have their root in the Kidneys, and the *Essential Questions* says

“the vessel of the uterus connects with the Kidneys”

As such Kid-3 may be used when Kidney deficiency leads to disharmony of these extraordinary vessels resulting in irregular menstruation and conception difficulties.

Kidney 6 is called “**ZHAOHAI**” in Chinese, the translation of which is “**Shining Sea**” is, according to the *Essential Questions...*

“the vessel of the uterus connects with the Kidneys”.

The Sea to which it refers is the blood flow and energy of the abdomen and uterus. The Kidneys dominate sexual development and are the origin of the Conception and Penetrating vessels, and normal functioning of the uterus depends in the first instance on a harmonious Kidney function. As such Kid-6 is indicated for a wide variety of disorders of menstruation (irregular menstruation, amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea), fertility (chronic cold of the uterus leading to infertility) and childbirth (difficult labour, persistent flow of lochia, postpartum dizziness and pain).

Ren-6 is called “**QIHAI**” in Chinese, the translation of which is “**Sea of Qi**”, another reference to the Sea of Energy that fuels our bodies vital resources. By virtue of its dual actions of tonifying and regulating qi, Qihai REN-6 is able to treat a variety of gynaecological disorders. Uterine bleeding, persistent flow of lochia and post-partum bleeding may be due to failure of the qi to hold the blood, and along with irregular menstruation and dysmenorrhoea may also involve blood stasis, either as a sequela of haemorrhage or as a consequence of qi stagnation.

Bladder-23 is called “**SHENSHU**” in Chinese, the translation of which is “**Kidney Shu**”, this is the Back Shu point, a super charger if you will for the Kidneys. Unlike the other points mentioned so far this point does not move across the meridians or channels to achieve its effect, but goes directly to the source.

The uterus depends on the Kidney essence for its growth, maturation and nourishment, the Penetrating and Conception vessels are both nourished by and have their root in the Kidneys, and the *Essential Questions* says...

“the vessel of the uterus connects with the Kidneys”

Shenshu BL-23 is indicated for a variety of disorders of the uterus including irregular menstruation due to Kidney deficiency, chronic cold of the uterus giving rise to taxation, ‘emaciation in women due to sexual intercourse

Du – 4 is called “**MINGMEN**” in Chinese, the translation of which is “**Gate of Life**”. According to the *Classic of Difficulties...*

“The mingmen is the residence of essence ... and stores semen in the male and connects with the uterus in the female”.

This is a vital point for strengthening our own inherent life force energy and in bequeathing it to a new life.

As you can see from the treatment plan above the focus of acupuncture is to both heal the body and mind. This treatment was combined with some dietary recommendations and some lifestyle changes, all as equally important in the process of healing.

In only just 12 weeks since she began her treatment Louise became pregnant. Realizing the importance of maintaining and building upon the great work she had begun, she continued her treatment through her pregnancy (for more on that, please check out my articles on the subject here – www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com), and gave birth to a beautiful healthy baby girl.

Acupuncture can help someone to deeply heal both the mind and the body, and I hope this case study can give you a sense of that. Profound and immediate change can occur as a result of discovering and acknowledging our core dysfunctional beliefs, in Louise's case the frustrations and anger she felt, and needling in order to return balance to both body and mind.

This is why acupuncture can be so helpful for a myriad of chronic health problems.

A skilled acupuncturist can diagnose the deepest roots of our problems and offer gentle and effective resolution. This ancient system of medicine can address the underlying energetic imbalances that cause and sustain our health problems. One's overall health and life begins to feel much better when this level of treatment is effectively addressed. In this way, acupuncture can simultaneously heal the mind (frustration and anger in this case) and the accompanying physical imbalances, (menstrual problems, IBS, headaches etc). In so doing, the entire web of disharmony is resolved.



Chapter 6

AN OVERVIEW OF CHINESE HERBAL MEDICINE AND HOW IT CAN HELP YOU

Chinese herbs have also been used in conjunction with Acupuncture or as a standalone treatment for thousands of years to help in the healing of physical and mental disorders. As one of the primary branches of Chinese medicine many people find herbs to be an excellent addition to their treatments, as they provide a quick and effective results when used skillfully, supporting and enhancing one's health with no side effects.

Current medication and drugs promoted by the pharmaceutical industry focus mostly on proving a symptomatic band-aid as opposed to truly resolving a medical condition. Think of the common cold. Rather than treating the actual virus at work, drugs are used to suppress the symptoms, such as fever, shivering, sweating sneezing, coughs, and runny noses all of which are methods used by the body to expel the invading virus.

By contrast the Chinese Medical use of herbs is focused on strengthening the foundation of one's health rather than just patching things up. In this manner herbal medicine works from the inside out; it treats the core issues that underlie our symptoms, which will either sooner or later rectify the symptoms themselves. Western drugs on the other hand work from the outside in. They offer immediate symptomatic improvement without directly addressing the deeper cause of the symptoms.



Now of course there are certain cases where this is warranted and most definitely necessary, but even still it is acknowledged that the long-term use of Western drugs for chronic health problems can be detrimental to one's foundation of health.

This is why many people are increasingly turning to natural plant-based medicines and nutrition before going the drug route. It is a gentler, more life-affirming way to heal yourself.

The traditional Chinese herbalist will use a variety of combinations, tailored to your specific constitution and condition and a talented herbalist will combine several herbs to produce a synergistic healing effect, focused on your unique needs.

The joy of the herbal system is in their versatility. One single formula can be prepared to treat a condition such as infertility and resolve the myriad by products of that diagnosis such as PMS, cramping, muscular pain, frustration and depression etc. When the root cause of the

disharmony is addressed all of the symptom s associated with improve and disappear.

Chinese herbs can be used for a wide range of physical complaints and conditions including:

- Chronic pain
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- PMS
- Menstrual cramps
- Weak immunity
- Asthma
- Headaches
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Type 2 diabetes
- Infertility

Of course, Chinese herbal medicine is equally proficient and effective in treating the mental emotional component of our health. It has long been recognized in both Eastern and Western Medicine that numerous herbs offer direct benefits for our emotional and psychological health.

Every substance we ingest be it food or medicine effects us in one way or another both physically and mentally. Oftentimes this can be too subtle to detect. However, when taken in concentrated doses and with enough regularity and sufficiency herbs can tangibly and remarkable effect one's consciousness. Many Chinese herbal formulas work on our mental emotional capacity and can:

- Make you feel psychologically lighter
- Relax and calm your thoughts
- Open your perspective on yourself and life
- Engender patience and calmness
- Boost confidence levels
- Induce more peaceful sleep

Widely regarded as a wonderful complement to acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine provides continual therapeutic input into the body between acupuncture treatments. In so doing it maintains and builds upon the positive momentum created by acupuncture and can further enhance the treatment results.

Can Chinese herbs be taken with my Western medications?



This is a common question that arises in my clinic, and for the most part the answer is yes. Of course any good and responsible practitioner will take a full medical history off you prior to beginning treatment and they will ask you about current medications you may be on. It is important to be completely forthright and honest with your acupuncturist or herbalist about both the prescribed medications you are taking and those you are taking for recreational purposes. With this knowledge in mind your practitioner can adjust any herbs prescribed.

There are some rare instances where Chinese herbs may antagonize Western medications, so it's important to have full disclosure, but in most cases herbs are safe to use with medications as long as they are prescribed by a skilled herbalist.

It's important to note that despite the profound and powerful effect Chinese Herbs can have when properly administered, they are only one part of the holistic view. And it's vital to understand that Chinese medicine asserts that dietary therapy, exercise, and the healing of our environment also play crucial roles in our overall health and quality of health. In order to full enjoy an energetic and abundant life we must complete need every aspect of our health to be acknowledged and working for us.

Many acupuncturists will be able to help you develop a nutritional plan that reflects your unique constitutional needs. In my clinic we even provide a dedicated nutritional program, combining both the best of Chinese dietary therapy and Western science to produce a perfectly tailored diet satisfying all physical and mental emotional needs.

A good practitioner will also show you various breathing exercises or Qi gong (a meditative form of movement) exercises that will enhance your treatment experience. Again in the Meridian Clinic, we offer detailed physical exercise and training, derived from my experience as a martial artist and top personal trainer and fitness author (7 Seconds to A Perfect Body, 2005) as featured on the Top 1% ranked website – www.isometric-training.com

Chapter 7

ABOUT THE MERIDIAN ACUPUNCTURE CLINIC

The Meridian Acupuncture Clinic is the premier Acupuncture Clinic and Oriental Body Balance centre in South Dublin, Ireland. Trained in **Traditional Chinese Medicine**, including **Acupuncture**, **Western Clinical Medicine**, and **Oriental Body Balance** your health is approached in a complete manner, utilizing ancient and modern medicine to produce effective, long lasting and safe results.

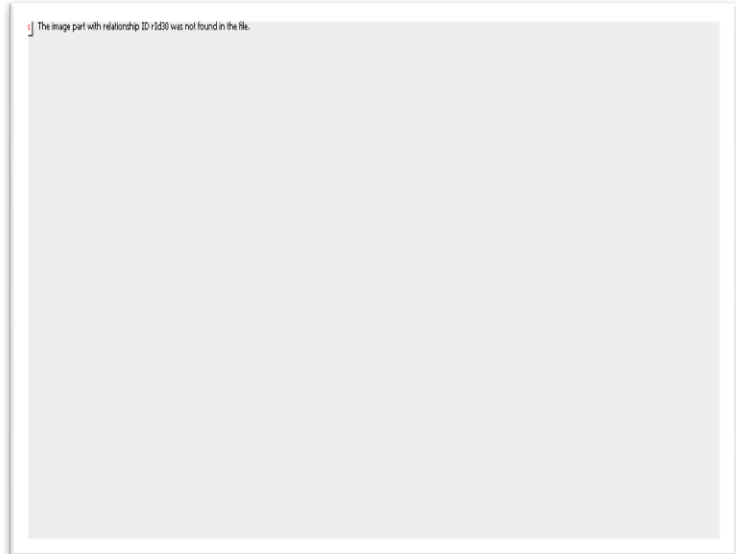
I am committed to providing my patients with the highest standard of care based on an attitude of gentleness, warmth, professionalism, and respect. To achieve this I use a combination of Acupuncture, Chinese herbs, nutritional therapy, physical therapy and various stress reduction techniques so that you can overcome chronic, nagging health problems which cannot or have not been effectively addressed using other means.

Every treatment plan I create addresses each individual's needs and includes various modalities of Oriental Medicine. In so doing I strive to treat not only the symptom, but also the root cause of illness, and thus restore the balance upon which holistic health is based.

A combination of safe, natural, and effective therapies is used to assist you in overcoming health concerns that stem from emotional and physical causes. Rather than just suppressing symptoms, my goal is to help you to heal at the core and make genuine, long-lasting changes that will impact and benefit you forever.

At no time will you ever feel rushed through the healthcare process. I very much believe that knowledge is power and that through truly understanding your complaints you can take power over them and resolve them permanently. In this way I feel education is an essential dimension of healing and I pride myself on being a knowledgeable resource for your questions and concerns.

My goal is to create an environment that will allow for deep trust and relaxation, integrity, and the potential for genuine transformation. To achieve this my primary approach to treatment is via 8 Principal Acupuncture, however, I also offer a variety of modalities and techniques from 5 Elements acupuncture, Japanese style acupuncture, Auricular (ear) acupuncture and many other styles of treatment as well, some of which you can read about below. In this way I can help my patients return to a state of wholeness and vital health by using the best tools for the unique needs of each patient.



As such I do not limit myself to one style of acupuncture or treatment approach; rather I use the best combination of methods appropriate for each person's unique situation to achieve superior results. In addition to acupuncture, I also employ many non-needle therapies. Here is a brief description of some of these highly effective adjunctive therapies.

- Traditional Chinese Medicine
- 8 Principle and 5 Elements Acupuncture
- Chinese Herbal Medicine
- Oriental Body Balance Therapy
- Tuina Massage
- Cupping Therapy
- Moxibustion Therapy
- Nutritional counseling and supplementation
- Guided stress reduction techniques involving hypnosis and NLP
- Amno Fu – Deep Tissue Abdominal and Organ Massage
- Food Intolerance Testing
- Lymphatic Drainage Massage
- Spinal Diagnosis and Repair
- Dynamic Limb re-patterning
- Chi-Qung Releases and Therapy
- Sacro-cranial Balancing
- Specialized 16 Wk Weight Loss Program
- Fitness Training and Health Development

Non Needle Therapies

Chinese Herbal Medicine

As discussed earlier in Chapter 6, Chinese herbal medicines address the underlying causes of illness and they rarely cause unwanted side effects. In my clinic I only prescribe Chinese Herbal medicines which have been tested and re-formulated by reputable Western companies.

These herbal formulas come in several forms including capsules, tablets and liquid tinctures. I also use topical liniments and plasters which are very helpful in reducing pain, inflammation, swelling, and speeding the healing process.

Liniments are liquids applied directly to the skin, while plasters are Chinese herbs embedded in a cloth backing which are applied to the skin much like a large band-aid. These can be particularly effective for treating back pain etc.

I will also frequently prescribe and provide recipes for tea's that can be used to treat a number of conditions made from simple everyday herbs and roots.

Oriental Body Balance Therapy

Understanding the Web of Disease and Injury

Oriental Body Balancing is a comprehensive and advanced system of treatment that fuses both Eastern & Western Medicine, thus enabling us to offer the very best advice and treatment to resolve any complaint on an individual basis.

The most important feature of Oriental Body Balance and the secret behind the astonishingly fast results produced is the unique diagnostic system used that views the body from many different angles to find the root cause of each condition. As I explained earlier, the body is a holistic system, and using OBB I assess the muscles, bone structure, internal organs, food intolerance, lymphatic system, the circulatory system and emotional and psychology health. It is essential that the condition is not just masked (like a pain killer would) but cleared by finding the cause and applying the best therapy.



Each new patient receives a full consultation on their particular problem and then the practitioner will recommend a specific treatment or a range of treatments to suit the condition many of which are discussed below.

But What Makes Oriental Body Balance (OBB) So Successful?

Ultimately the reason for OBB's rapid results lies in the comprehensive accurate diagnosis and focused treatment plans. Diagnosis is everything, without it what are we treating? And this is the primary failing of many medical systems be they Western Clinical medicine, or alternative therapies. Often times, a diagnosis cannot be reached in Western Medicine, or multiple mistaken diagnoses are made before the actual problem is accurately found.

In the complimentary field it is often the case that a poor acupuncturist covers the patient in multiple needles trying to cover all the bases because they haven't truly hammered down the exact problem. A chiropractor may recommend multiple treatments because they have not accurately pinpointed the vertebrae that are misaligned, and a physiotherapist may be unable to resolve muscular pain because they don't take into account the structural problems leading to the muscle spasms.

OBB therapy addresses and solves this problem because of the practitioner's high level of training and wide range of analytical and verifiable tests. Here are some of the key points that make OBB so successful.

1. **The ability to diagnose the body and mind on many different levels** to get to the root cause of somebody's condition using both Eastern and Western techniques

including pulse and tongue, muscle testing, palpation of the cranial system, the abdomen, joints and ligaments, body language, client history etc.

2. **Understanding the true holistic nature of the body** and how the systems interact to cause pain. Bowel conditions causing back injuries and pain. Back problems causing neck, knee or shoulder pain. Stress causing IBS, weight gain and fatigue. Food intolerance causing bloating, emotional issues and predicable injuries etc.
3. **Knowing when and where to apply the correct treatment.** OBB practitioners are skilled in a wide range of treatment modalities ranging from acupuncture and cranial balancing to massage and mobilization. A treatment could include a variety of different techniques dependant on the core diagnostic.
4. **All clients are strongly urged to take personal steps to improve their own health** and well-being to support our treatments. This can include a change of lifestyle habits including food and liquid intake, daily exercise, along with physical and psychological techniques that enhance the clients' over all well-being.
5. **Having a true understanding of the causative factors of disease** with an arsenal of techniques that treat all the systems involved including: immune, lymphatic, circulatory, respiratory, muscular & skeletal, neurological etc.
6. **OBB utilizes muscle testing to prove neurologic change.** By testing a client before and after treatment we can prove our therapeutic intervention has worked, enhancing the client's confidence and understanding

A client once remarked me that she had been recommended to by her doctor to see a physiotherapist for her back complaint. Instead she made an appointment to see me. When the doctor questioned her on this she turned to him and said,

“I go to Paul because he can fix in one session what it could take a physiotherapist 3 months to correct”.

Physiotherapy is a great skill and highly recommended, but simply put, OBB allows you to accurately get to the problem first time and resolve it.

Tuina Massage Therapy

Sore aching muscles, tight knotted tissue, or just in need of some deep relaxation?

If so Tuina will help you tune into your body, relax and rebalance, and unwind tight muscles and leave rejuvenated and refreshed.

Tuina (pronounced Twee-na), is a form a therapeutic massage, including acupressure, mobilization, qi gung and more and derives its name from the first two of its principal techniques. The first is “**Tui**”, literally the pushing maneuver, and refers to a horizontal pushing technique. The second is “**Na**”, literally the grasping maneuver, and refers to an alternating grasping and squeezing technique of muscles between the thumb and index fingers, which is then held or lightly twisted for a time to release tension in the muscle. “**Tuina**”, therefore literally means, “**The pushing and grasping maneuvers**”.



To explain further let's look at two of the standard techniques and one of the joint releases in more detail and I'll elaborate on how these may be used in a clinical setting.

Tui, the Pushing maneuver is very simply a horizontal pushing of technique. You simply rock and release, rock and release. It's extremely gentle and you use the palm of the hands to lightly push the chest, abdominals, back and limbs to create movement in the body. This gentle motion helps to relax the muscles of the patient, adjusts the temperature of the skin, and allows you to introduce yourself to the patient. I often use this technique to help relax a patient and literally get a feel for how their body reacts to palpitation and massage and it often reveals subtle tensions in the muscles.

Chun, the pressing maneuver involves pressing and stimulating tender points on the body (ashi points in TCM) using the fingers, palms, fist and even elbows. This circulates chi and blood flow in the body and regulates the nervous system. I would often use this technique after muscle testing a particular area. For instance, if testing the Quadratus Lumborum and we see both sides (bilateral) weakness this often indicates a weakness of the ICV, and Spleen. If I use Chun, and press into Spleen 9, a point associated with the QL and it is tender this would strengthen the diagnosis of an ICV dysfunction. If when with continued pressing it becomes easier and less tender and on retesting the muscle is stronger it may indicate an organ dysfunction. It is also an excellent technique for quickly and gently re establishing the health of the spine in cases of Subluxation.

Yaw, the rotating movement is performed as a joint release when there is evidence of motor impairment; and involves rotating the unit in a circular motion. For instance the arm is often

mobilized and rotated gently like this in lymphatic drainage of the left thoracic duct to facilitate the movement of stagnant lymph.

Tuina is a deeply relaxing and wonderful therapeutic massage that stimulates and strengthens the immune system, releases tension and stress in the body, clears the lymphatic system and rebalances the spine and bones of the body, relieving pain and leaving you feeling refreshed and invigorated.

Cupping Therapy

Suffering from Back Pain, Sciatica, or muscular pain and spasms, or perhaps a cosmetic complaint such as cellulite?

If so then this is the treatment may be answer you are looking for.



Cupping therapy has been used for centuries across the different continents for healing. And in the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic we have brought this ancient and effective treatment into the 21st century by modernizing its use for present day Western clients and their conditions.

This therapy involves the using warm suction glass jars on an oiled body as a therapeutic massage system and is designed to treat a wide

range of physical problems from pain and muscle spasms to cellulite, colds and flu.

How does it work?

Oil is applied to the body with massage strokes to loosen up the tissue; the cups are then applied over the oil on the part of the body to be treated, then the cups are moved in particular ways to produce a deeply healing, stimulating and drawing massage. The cups are warmed and applied to the body thereby creating a vacuum. The suction and warmth has a dramatic effect on the immune system of the body by moving blood and lymph and stimulating the muscle and spinal nerves. The cups are generally applied to the back, shoulders, legs and stomach for a variety of conditions.

The cups are usually left in place for a period of several minutes. From a very quick and rapid placement and removal of the cups called Flash Cupping, to a technique called "Sliding Cupping" where the cups are moved around over a large area – such as your back – to help increase circulation in the tissues.



This is an extremely popular treatment with celebrities such as *Kate Winslet, Richard Gere, Gwyneth Paltrow, Kate Moss, Madonna* and *Sandra Bulloch* regularly enjoying the benefits.

Gwyneth Paltrow seen here after a cupping treatment

What are the Effects?

The effects of Cupping Therapy on the body are numerous. The low pressure pull on the muscles and skin result in an increase of blood circulation, a rise in skin temperature, promotion of the metabolism and cell function in the skin, improved function of the sweat and sebaceous glands, and the removal of stagnant dead blood (think bruising). It also activates the secretion of synovial fluid helping to lubricate and ease stiffness in the joints.

It should be noted that cupping therapy can also increase and help with peristaltic movements and increases in digestive fluids, thus it can be very useful in treating and dealing with digestive complaints.

Used on the back it assists in correcting subluxations and fixations of the vertebrae and plays an excellent role in relieving pain and discomfort of the spine while improving the functions of the internal organs, parasympathetic and sympathetic nerves.

From a TCM point of view cupping moves Qi and Blood, resolves stagnation and can be used to both tonify (strengthen) or drain (reduce) the function of an organ and assist in improving flow of Qi and Blood by resolving blockages in the channels and meridians.



Moxibustion Therapy

Moxibustion involves burning an herb called mugwort or “moxa” directly on or above acupuncture points. Moxa can be used in a number of ways to produce a profound relaxing heat. It can be hovered above the point to provide a light stimulation or piled on small cones or threads above a point on a slice of ginger to create a stronger heating effect.

Like acupuncture, moxa is used for wide variety of disorders and is effective with many conditions. While needles can move energy and build or “tonify” the organ systems of the body, moxa is a way to actually **add** energy into the body’s system.

Moxa produces a sensation of heat and sometimes redness around a particular area, but it is not painful, in fact it has a deeply relaxing effect. In fact one of the most requested treatments in my clinic is moxa rolling. This is where I place the moxa inside a small brass tin, which then becomes soothingly warm. I then roll this tin along the area of treatment like the lower back. This is incredibly relaxing as the warmth of the moxa tin spreads along the muscles producing a deep soothing heat that unwinds tension and calms the mind.

The use of moxa enhances treatment and often allows the practitioner to use fewer needles than would be required without the moxa. Children respond especially well to moxa, and moxa can often be used in place of needles with young kids.

This is an excellent treatment for chronic fatigue, menstrual problems, digestive disorders, arthritis, anemia, muscular pain and more. To give you a more direct example, one of the most interesting moxa techniques is used in extreme cases of diarrhea. To relieve this condition, the acupuncturist puts salt in the navel of the patient as they lie on the couch, and places a cone of direct moxa on top of this. The salt protects the skin and conducts the heat well. This technique is very effective and relieves and regulates the large intestine's re-absorption of water immediately.

Finally one of the most famous preventative moxa therapies, and one I teach to many of my patients is to do indirect Moxibustion (where a moxa stick is hovered over a point) on Zu San Li (Stomach 36), a point on the lower leg. Zu San Li means "Foot Three Miles" and increases endurance, digestive power, and stimulates the immune system.



Nutritional counseling and supplementation

Ever wondered why certain foods make you feel happy and energetic yet others foods leave you drowsy and dull?

Did you ever just crave chocolate only to find yourself apathetic and depressed, or perhaps you craving salty foods but just don't have the motivation to do anything after?

Well if you've ever truly wanted to understand cravings and learn how to maximize your body's help through simple food choices this is the therapy that could help you.

In Chinese Medicine as we've touched on before, diet has a profound effect on the body. Some foods heal and strengthen our bodies, others weaken and compound illness. Here at the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic I believe that one of the most important aspects of maintaining health is enjoying a healthy, balanced, whole foods diet.

Our digestive function is an integral part of the immune system and plays a significant role in a person's sense of well-being. Scientific evidence has demonstrated that there are more serotonin receptors in the gut than in the brain, providing us with modern evidence of this ancient knowledge. As such a functional digestive system is actually one of the crucial key to health and happiness.



Each organ relates to a different taste and flavor and eating foods that support your recovery is a very important part of Chinese Medicine. Therefore, I offer detailed dietary advice based on the function and health of your organs. For instance if suffering from a hot based pathology such as IBS, then enjoying Barley water or watermelon would be of great help in cooling the body. I've written a number of published articles on the subject that you can view on my website www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com

Of course I also approach nutrition from my western medical background and as a top personal trainer and fitness author and offer a specialized weight loss program that incorporates cutting edge sports nutrition and scientifically based principals to support your health and goals. You can learn more about that here – **Perfect Body, Perfect Health Program**

Guided stress reduction techniques involving hypnosis and NLP

Sick of being stressed and suffering from anxiety for no reason?

Tired from the constant state of nervousness, or perhaps just too plain tired to think.

Irrational fears and internal anger making your stomach knotted?

If you suffer from stress be it physical or mental these simple techniques will free your mind and erase deeply imbedded trauma, allowing you to approach life from an energetic and stress free perspective.

The mind is an incredibly powerful tool for making us both ill, and for making us healthy. By changing certain words we often use we can completely change our mindset and view point, and this in turn effects our physical health. An easy example of this is with anger. Many times, people feel angry, and rightfully so – however on occasion our anger is disproportionate to the insult or injury that gave rise to it. This is partly because of habit and partly because of the words we use to convey our emotions.

In times of anger and stress, many people often curse or swear, they shout and scream, and present physical symptoms such as higher blood pressure, flushing of the skin, distention of the eyes etc. As funny as it may sounds the body associates those words with those emotions expressed and with the physical symptoms. In NLP or Neurolinguistic Programming these are seen as triggers, or anchors that ground you and connect you to a given emotional state.



If instead of choosing some curse or strong phrase to express anger you replace it with a simpler, gentler word then your body is denied the trigger that leads to physical and emotional symptoms and escalation. In fact a simple word or phrase can utterly derail the psyching up process necessary to be angry.

Having a positive outlook is vital for both your emotional and physical health and in the Meridian Clinic I work with you to show you and teach you the subtle ways in which you reset these triggers and re=program your response. In so doing we create a more balanced and health approach to stress that rather than making things worse allows the tension to dissipate and relax, preventing the accumulation of chronic stress, frustration and anger that can lead to physical illness.

Amno Fu – Deep Tissue Abdominal and Organ Massage

If you've ever felt bloated and uncomfortable, had problems with digestion and suffered from constipation or diarrhea, or easily put on excess weight, then this is the treatment option for you.

Anmo fu is a traditional oil based massage system that just focuses on the abdomen. While deeply enjoyable and relaxing, its aim is to release all the twists and torsions in the bowels while balancing the internal organs, clearing trapped gases, blockages and releasing waste products. This 30-45 minute treatment is a fantastic system for treating many the many stresses and strains of daily life, which can affect the bowel, lower back and can even treat deep emotional problems.



It is also particularly useful in resolving bad PMS or menstrual cramping and fertility disorders.

How does it work?



Using muscle tests and palpation we diagnose the internal organs for imbalance before applying oil to the area. Then using specific massage and holding techniques we unwind all the different fascia and connective tissue to remove the stress and tension out of the area, increasing the flow of body fluid and blood, balancing valves in the digestive tract and increasing the absorption of nutrients. The massage techniques are followed through 3 times, each time going slightly deeper to reach the correct tissue.

Many of my patients, once they have experienced there first Amno Fu session, make it a priority to enjoy this deeply relaxing and profoundly effective treatment on a monthly basis to ensure their optimal health and well being.

“If there is one treatment I wish I could get done every day it would be this one”

- Martin Q.

Food Intolerance Testing

Do you find yourself frequently bloated, tired after eating or suffering from a sensitive stomach?

Do certain foods sap you of your strength and energy, others perhaps causes reflux or heart burn?

Have you noticed that eating certain things has a negative effect on your overall health?

If so then perhaps you'd like to know exactly what it is that causes these imbalances and what you can do to avoid them. This is where Food intolerance testing may be helpful.



An often overlooked factor in many chronic persistent health problems is that they can be a result of an excessive sensitivity to everyday foods, additives, pollens etc. Unfortunately this can go unrecognized for years leading to needless discomfort and suffering.

Food intolerances-commonly referred to as allergies-are quite frequently a source of irritation and chemical stress, leading to exhaustion, sinus problems, skin conditions, headaches, digestive problems such as irritable bowel syndrome, as well as inflammatory joint conditions including arthritis.

Discovering the hidden reasons why health problems persist is extremely worthwhile, as a sometimes slight modification to the diet or lifestyle can bring real lasting benefits.

In the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic I use applied Kinesiology and muscle testing to assist in making a clear diagnosis of food/drink intolerances and other sensitivities as your body instantly reacts to these stimuli and produces an immediate response within the nervous system reflected by a change in muscles performance.

This simple diagnostic tool has helped many patients make simple changes to their diet resulting in long lasting and profound changes in their health.

Lymphatic Drainage Massage

Do you suffer from frequent colds and flu's?

Constant stiff and aching muscles?

Or do you play a lot of sports or lift weights?

If so it's likely you have blockages in the lymphatic system which can weaken your immune system and leave you feeling fatigued and sore.

The Lymphatic System is similar to a sewage system in the human body. It is a semi closed system, meaning that it only opens and flows in one direction. Lymphatic fluid circulates in and through several organs, and structures containing lymphatic vessels, including red bone marrow. This fluid, called lymph once in the system, is identical to interstitial fluid and has a number of functions including but not limited to

- The drainage of excess interstitial fluid from tissue
- The transportation of dietary lipids (fat) and lipid soluble vitamins such as A, D, E, and K which are absorbed by the gastrointestinal tract to the blood.
- And finally it facilitates the responses of the immune system as lymphatic tissue initiates the response against particular microbes or abnormal cells.



Frequent cold and flu's as well as excessive physical training can over tax the system leaving your immune system weak and you prone to sickness and injury. Lymphatic drainage massage is a deeply relaxing and enjoyable massage to clear away any blockages in the Lymph system and restoring your natural strength and vitality. This is an extremely popular treatment with athletes and celebrities such as Catherine Zeta Jones.

Spinal Diagnosis and Repair

There are few things worse than a bad back, and spinal problems can cause a myriad of seemingly unrelated problems, from nerve pain and tingling in the limbs, to reflux and digestive disorders. Your spine is the central column supporting your whole body's health. Each organ is regulated and controlled by the nerves between your vertebrae and the slightest pressure pinching on one of those nerves can be chronically problematic.

Simply sitting in chair be it in the car or office is unpleasant. Beside which it isn't a great idea anyway. Chairs aren't really healthy for humans. Aside from the fact that most people slouch in them and develop poor postural habits and straining the upper back and neck with modern devices such as laptops and moving a mouse around all day, the chair itself shortens a muscle called the hip flexor. The hip flexor runs from the leg through the pelvis and attaches to the small of the back. Prolonged sitting shortens it and then pulls our lower back out of alignment and straining to support the full weight of our upper body. It's no wonder sitting down can leave you stiff and sore.

The discomfort of a bad back disseminates outward and is often perceived by our work colleagues as the constant need to shift weight in a futile effort to find a comfortable position leaving us exasperated and annoyed.

Of course standing is equally problematic – if the central support structure of the human body is compromised every movement becomes a burden. Sleeping is no different. All too commonly back pain leads to restless and unfulfilling sleep. We awake to pain, irritability, frustration and exhaustion.

Worse yet, if we are stubborn enough to try and live through it then our co-ordination, concentration and movement are all greatly impaired and the reflexive movements can be compromised leading to greater pain and chronic health problems.

There are many available routes to relief from spinal problems - unfortunately many are ineffective simply because the actual vertebrae problems are misdiagnosed or simply ignored. In the Meridian Acupuncture clinic I use OBB therapies to provide a FULL detailed and accurate diagnosis of spinal health, assessing each vertebra and definitively being able to locate the exact nature of the problem. This is facilitated through applied kinesiology and is very gentle and non invasive.

Once the problem has been located a number of therapies can be applied to repair the area including tuina, cupping, acupuncture, dynamic re-patterning and more which you can read about below.



Dynamic Limb Re-patterning

Back ache, shoulder and neck pain, can be the bane of our life, and many physical and mental emotional dysfunctions can be caused by subtle misalignments of the spinal vertebrae.

You can learn more about the problems caused by these misalignments in the above section on Spinal Diagnosis and Repair.

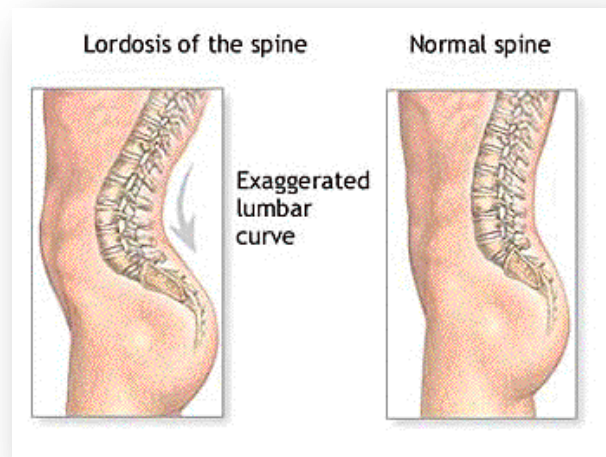
One of the fastest and most effective methods of correcting these spinal problems is with Dynamic Limb Re-patterning.

Dynamic Re-Patterning is used to treat clients who are suffering from subtle compromised movements within the actual mechanical structure of the body.

The spinal column can become prone to movements of the vertebrae which compromise it's structure over the course of one's life. These movements known as Sub Luxation's or Fixation's, can manifest as pain, aches, numbness etc. The Spinal Column is of fundamental importance to our health because it houses the Central Nervous System and this system supplies the vital nerve impulses that tell our organs how to function. As a result any movement within the spinal column can directly influence our entire well being.

Even the act of walking can become compromised when we lose the structural integrity of the pelvic bowl.

Any movement of the pelvis can have a serious impact on our whole structural integrity. A useful analogy to understand this more clearly is to think of the movement of a ship. Direction and function of the ship is dictated by a central rotating column, the mast. When the mast of a ship turns the whole ship turns. The same is true of the pelvis and the spine.



Any deviation from the norm will affect the entire body. What can appear to be a knee or shoulder problem can actually be caused in part by a compromise in integrity of the pelvic bowl or one or more vertebrae of the spine.

A quick and simple test you can perform at home to test the integrity of the pelvic bowl is to lie flat on the floor and have somebody measure the variance of the length of your legs. If one side is longer than the other it may indicate a pelvic imbalance.

Dynamic Re-Patterning uses gentle manipulations that actually re-align the pelvis and the spine. The clients own body, when brought into certain positions, can correct these imbalances. This gentle system can dramatically improve one's gait, posture and general well being.

Chi-Qung Releases and Therapy

Suffering from pain or discomfort?

Recovering from broken bones or injury?

Chi Gung therapy utilizes the body's own energy to produce dramatic and exciting changes in the structure and function of the body and could be the key to restoring you to full health and enjoying a profound sense of energy and well being.

How does it work?

Chi is the primary fundamental energy of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Chi is both the physical and non physical and is often seen as the life-force, the energy that animates all life and cannot be reduced to simple science.

It is described in different ways by different cultures, for instance the Japanese refer to it as "Ki", or spirit, and is often found as a central tenet of martial arts such as the Kiai in Shotokan, a Spirit Shout that is used to call to action the whole physical and spiritual aspect of an individual and focus that intention and energy. In India they call it Prana, the life breath and a core focus of Yoga and Meditation. Even in Irish and Celtic Mythology we recognize this energy and called in Danu.



Chi escapes true definition, but it the basis for the varying levels of Yin and Yang, 2 expressions of Chi in Chinese Medicine that are used to regulate the functions of life. Chi is in essence what separates the living from the dead. It is the breath of life, the divine spark that enables life to live.

Give me an example – an ankle injury

In today's society we often suffer from a range of postural problems and frequently people are prescribed orthopedics, MBT's etc and many needlessly so, leading to compounded problems in the alignment of the feet, ankles, and hip bones, thus reinforcing back pain and postural problems.

Many of these problems can be rectified using Chi Gong releases. All Chi Gung releases involve the movement of energy and can involve both physical movement and/or static intention. The Chi Gung release for the foot involves the later.

The therapist sits in a comfortable upright position, in a relaxed state to facilitate the free and easy moment of their own Chi, the projected intention of which “encourages” a correction of movement in the patients Chi, which may be blocked, stagnant or weak.

If working on the right foot the therapist places their left hand in a cupping motion over the toes, with the thumb resting along the ball of the foot and the fingers covering the toes.

The right hand then is cupped over the leg just above the ankle bone, with the thumb point down along the lower border of the ankle, and the fingers pointing to the little toe.

Once in place, the therapist may explore with intention and perception the different aspects of the foot, such as the muscle tissue, tendons, and even bones.

This simple yet profoundly powerful treatment can be used in any area of the body to promote ease of movement and reduce pain and stagnation. It can be used to help the body re-knit bone after injury and balance out and release any tension and torsions in the spine or bones. Finally it can be used to great effect in treating the internal organs of the body and help them to quickly establish proper balance and energetic function.



Cranial-Sacral Balancing

Headaches, eye strain, problems with the neck and spine, leading to digestive and organ dysfunction plague many people.

Tightness and compression of the bones of the head can lead to deep seated and serious mental and emotional problems.

Furthermore even slight misalignment or compression can create serious neurological dysfunctions.

Luckily such conditions can be easily and effectively treated using cranial-sacral balancing.

The techniques of Cranial-Sacral Balancing were pioneered and developed by osteopathic physician John E. Upledger following extensive scientific studies from 1975 to 1983 at Michigan State University, where he served as a clinical researcher and Professor of Biomechanics.

Cranial-Sacral Balancing is a gentle, hands-on method of evaluating and enhancing the functioning of a physiological body system called the Cranio-Sacral system. Cranio means head and sacral refers to the area at the base of the spine and it includes the brain and spinal cord.

The system is comprised of the membranes and cerebrospinal fluid that surround and protect the brain and spinal cord with the fluid having a rhythmic pulse, similar to blood pressure.



Using a soft touch generally no greater than 5 grams, or about the weight of a nickel, a well trained practitioner can release restrictions in the Cranio-Sacral system to improve the functioning of the central nervous system. Acting on these deep structures a good practitioner can influence motor, pain and coordination mechanisms, the digestive system, the respiratory system, heart function and the endocrine system

Cranial-Sacral Balancing is increasingly used as a preventive health measure, as it complements the body's natural healing processes. One of the primary benefits of Cranial Sacral Balancing is the ability to bolster resistance to disease, and it has been proven to be effective for a wide range of medical problems associated with pain and dysfunction.

Specialized 16 Wk Weight Loss Program

Excess weight and weight loss are concerns for many people today, and in the Chinese Medical system this is seen as a serious disease state. In Traditional Chinese medicine dysfunctions of the Stomach and Spleen can lead to various food cravings, Dampness which is the TCM equivalent of excess weight and flesh, and contrary to popular opinion cold foods and drinks, salads etc actually create more dampness and further undermine the Stomach and Spleen's ability to process food and fluid.

In the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic I take this problem very seriously from both an Eastern and Western perspective and have devised a three part treatment protocol to quickly and safely remove this problem. A huge part of weight loss success is re-education. The unfortunate truth is many popular recommendations regarding diet and exercise are in fact actually counter-productive and are designed to make you even fatter and unhealthier. For instance – as an expert and published author of a bestselling fitness program I can tell you from both the medical evidence and my own empirical proof and experience that any more than 15 minutes of exertion a week is unnecessary. In fact spending a hour a day on the treadmill or walking actually TELLS you body to STORE MORE FAT!

I approach this problem with a results based focus using a 3 step process. Here's a simple overview

1. **Acupuncture and TCM** – used to correct any organ imbalances that prevent your body from utilizing and processing fat. Simultaneously increasing your energy levels and fat burning potential I can also reduce cravings and suppress excess appetite.
2. **Western Nutrition** – educating you from the ground up on good nutrition – learn why bacon and eggs for breakfast is far better than porridge oats or museli. I help you to install a new way of looking at food and ingrain the 10 habits that underlie every successful weight loss program. It's important to note THIS IS NOT A DIET. They don't work and waste your time. This is a complete change of lifestyle – one that is easy to make and has long term benefits. Fully supported with cookbooks, educational material, notes, DVD's and Audio Cd's.
3. **Exercise** – My own proven and radical approach to exercise. You can complete a successful work in far far less time than you imagine, and that's all you'll have to do. This maximizes lean muscle tissue, making your firm, toned and stronger then you'll have ever been before.

What type of results can be achieved with this 16 week program?

Truthfully, you are talking about completely changing your body. As an example a typical patient, a woman aged 53, achieved the following in just 8 weeks. She

- Lost 21.5 lbs of fat!
- Lost 13.2% Body fat!
- Lost over 9 inches off their waist!

Another participant male, aged 27 achieved the following results in just 4 weeks –

The Secrets to An Energetic and Abundant Life

- Lost 6% Bodyfat
- Lost 6 Inches from the Waist
- Lost over 16lbs of FAT
- Gained 5lbs of muscle

I know this seems too good to be true, and it goes against many of things that you may have been taught, but I can show you the medical proof and the results of my own patients. When you have a proper understanding of proper nutrition and you can get incredible results in very little time. You can learn more about this exclusive and revolutionary program here – [Perfect Body Perfect Health Program](#).

Patient Experiences

At the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic the holistic approach I offer works with a wide range and variety of conditions and ailments and all ages. I've been privileged to have successfully treated young children for asthma, nervous complaints, skin problems and muscular skeletal injuries, many athletes for a wide range of injuries particularly in regards to back and knee problems. I have worked with many stressed executives and professionals suffering from physical complaints, frequent colds and flu's, headaches to fertility and conception difficulties. And finally I have treated many older and elderly people for joint pain fatigue, migraine and palliative care.

As is often the case with acupuncture and holistic medicine many of my patients present with a specific treatment in mind, only to find that many of their other long standing complaints improve and resolve with regular treatment.

Ultimately I have found those that get the most benefit from acupuncture and the holistic therapies I offer are those who are committed to regular preventive and pro-active treatment and who integrate this into healthier lifestyle choices.

My goal in treatment is to help you resolve your issues as quickly as possible, and to serve as a resource for you continued well being and health, accompanying you as a friend and partner to help you reach your highest potential and achieve your long term life goals.

Patient Experiences at the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic

I believe that the experiences of my patients are an excellent resource for others who are interested in finding out the benefits of acupuncture and the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic. I hope that in sharing these experiences and results with you in writing, you develop a better feel for the impact acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine can have on your health and the style and nature of my practice.

I am very passionate about continuing to help others, such as you, reach their health goals so that you too can enjoy life to its fullest and share the same success, experience and results as my patients below.

An extensive list of testimonials covering a vast range of health conditions is also available on my website at: www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com

- Chest Infections, Colds and Flu's
- Tennis Elbows
- Stress Relief and Increased Energy
- Back Pain Relief
- Sciatica Relief
- Fertility
- Miscarriage Prevention
- Pregnancy and Back Pain
- Pregnancy and Morning Sickness
- Weight Loss

Chest Infections, Colds and Flu's

I had just finished a course of antibiotics for a chest infection which was not improving. By accident I came across a leaflet for the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic while in KCR Carlisle Gym. From the moment I met Paul O'Brien I knew that acupuncture was going to work for me.



He made me feel at ease and his confidence gave me hope of a cure without medication.

I couldn't believe that I could relax while I had needles in my body.

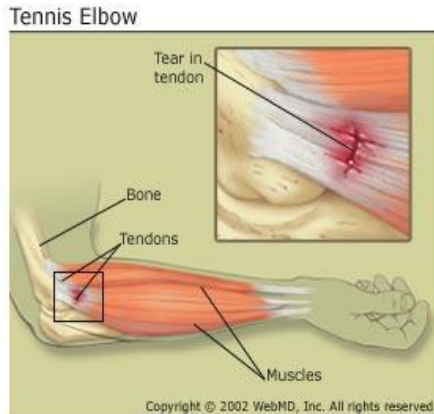
My chest infection disappeared naturally. Sleepless nights a thing of the past and I felt like a connection between my mind and body.

I would recommend Paul O'Brien to everyone without hesitation.

Beda Daily, 59
Public Servant,
Dublin.

UPDATE – Breda has continued to enjoy excellent health, and good as her word has referred many new wonderful patients to me, for which I am most thankful. There is nothing more rewarding than to have people recommend my services and I am truly thankful to have such wonderful patients as Breda.

Tennis Elbow



My problem was Tennis Elbow. Having had painkillers and gels, the pain was still very severe and restricting my movement. On meeting Paul O'Brien and when he told me he was an acupuncturist I discussed my problem with him and organized our appointment.

I have had four treatments and I don't know myself! The experience has been very relaxing and most worthwhile!

Thank you Paul!
Alan

UPDATE – Alan's elbow has been pain free for over 1.5yrs now, and we've also cleared up some sleep problems too ;-) I'm delighted with Alan's progress and wish him all the best in the future.

Stress Relief and Increased Energy

I attended Paul O'Brien of the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic for the first time approximately six months ago with a little fear and a lot of skepticism having never before tried any form of complementary medicine.

I was bowled over.

Following a thoroughly professional and detailed discussion of my medical history, Paul outlined the areas where he felt I could benefit from a course of acupuncture and shortly thereafter, set about a course of treatment which was neither painful nor unpleasant. Surprisingly it was quite the contrary resulting in an experience more akin to massage leaving me feeling totally relaxed and unwound. The days following each session have resulted in the most remarkable levels of energy throughout the day which are now continuing for months at a time.



I thank Paul for his introduction to the world of Acupuncture and would heartily recommend his services to anyone.

J. Stephen Brown,
Hayden Brown Accountants

Stress Relief -Increased Energy

I came to Paul because I was feeling, stressed & tired with low energy that prevented me from enjoying my life to it's fullest. After only a few short sessions I now have more energy then I know what to do with and feel completely unstressed. Thanks Paul!

– Dermot

Back Pain Relief - from hunched to hero in one session

I came to Paul O'Brien in great pain and agony with my back, hunched over like Quasimodo – I left in leaps and bounds pain free! Simply amazing. Many thanks Paul,

Ciaran Doyle
Doyle Chattered Accountants.

Back Pain Relief – Years of Pain Put to Rest with Ancient Medicine



"I went to The Meridian Acupuncture Clinic to undergo acupuncture treatment with Paul O'Brien. *I had been trying for years to get rid of the lower back pain that I was suffering from but to no avail.* I have to say that **I am very happy with the results.** My back has **really improved** and I am **feeling much better in general.**

I feel **less stressed** and seem to have **more energy** since beginning the treatment. Also the exercise and diet advice from Paul has left me with the knowledge to further improve my back strength and general fitness in the future.

I would **highly recommend** The Meridian Acupuncture Clinic and Paul O'Brien to anyone suffering from back pain."

Stephen Campbell,
Student

Sciatica And Back Pain

At first I was skeptical, I didn't want someone sticking pins in me – I was in enough pain already thank you, but he patiently explained that by stimulating special points on the arms and legs, with these tiny hair thin needles (I have to admit I had to look really closely to see them) it would release the tension in muscles and help restore proper function to the sciatic nerve and that the pain would ease and eventually dissipate. I couldn't believe this, having been in pain for so long, and tried so many different treatments. But then what did I have to lose save the pain.

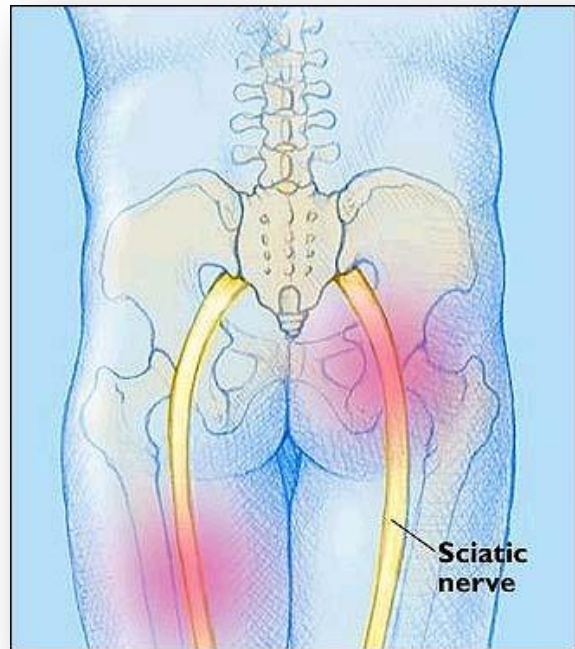
I made an appointment and from the moment I stepped in to the warm and inviting clinic I knew I had made the right decision. Paul welcomed me in and explained which points he would be stimulating and how relaxing it would feel. He was right.

Working on special points on my lower back and leg I felt a deep sense of peace as the muscles in my body relaxed and melted away any stress and pain I was feeling. I don't think I have ever been more relaxed before. Truth be told I didn't want the session to end, but Paul had more people to fix and I guess I can't be selfish.

After the session I notice the pain in my leg had vanished and I could walk with ease. Over the next few sessions Paul continued to improve not only my leg and lower back but my energy levels and sense of well being. It was truly amazing.

I'm now back to my happy go lucky sporting self and have found a new love of sport in skiing! Can you believe it? Had you told me a few months ago that I would regularly enjoy skiing 3 times a week I would have told you were out of your mind, but there I am, skiing down the slopes and loving every minute of it.

Sarah G.
Teacher



Sciatica And Back Pain

I'd suffered from Sciatica for a number of years and it was making me miserable. I had tried Doctor's, Chiropractors, Physio's and none of it worked - my sciatic pain was unbearable. Then I met Paul. After only a few sessions **he succeeded where everyone else had failed and relieved my pain completely!**

- James

Fertility and Pregnancy

An Increase of 85% in sperm motility that stuns the Doctors

Sarah and Brian (names changed) had been trying for a baby for 15 months. "We had expected things to happen really quickly", says Sarah. "I am 31, and Brian is 32. We are both really healthy, so we didn't expect to have a problem. You just don't think it will happen to you.

"We went to see our GP: he referred us to a specialist in the Rotunda Hospital. He decided to check my blood to see if I was ovulating and to do a semen analysis on my husband".

"My bloods came back fine. My scan was fine too. Then Brian went in for his semen analysis, and last October we went in for the results. The consultant said that his sperm's motility was only 10%. It has to be 40% to be called normal.

"He said we needed IVF. He referred us to the HARI clinic (special note the Meridian Acupuncture has a close relationship with the HARI and we can prescribe a series of semen analysis tests etc to confirm our diagnosis). We were devastated. I didn't know anyone who had gone for IVF, and we were worried about the expense as well.

"The whole thing worried us. It was 'oh my god!' And the worst thing was is that there is no guarantee that it will work.



A feature on my success in the Irish Independent

"We rang the HARI for an appointment. They said they couldn't see us until February. That seemed so far away. So we rang the SIMS clinic and they gave us an earlier appointment.

"I looked up Brian's condition on the internet and it said acupuncture could help (read my article on Male Infertility here). And meanwhile we improved our diets, I took a zinc supplement.

"We went to see Paul O'Brien. He was lovely. He talked us through the whole process. He said he would treat me as well. I hate needles, but it was fine. It didn't hurt at all. I went away feeling like I was brand new.

"Finally our appointment at the SIMS clinic came. They said that before they started the IVF they would do another semen analysis. They rang that same night to say that Brian's semen was normal the motility was 50%. We no longer needed IVF.

"We're going to have IUI where they give me medicine to ovulate and insert a catheter into the uterus to improve our chances of pregnancy. It can just speed things up. But they were amazed at the improvement. They could hardly believe it.

"We still go to Paul every week. We are delighted with him. And hopefully we shall have some good news soon.

UPDATE – after a continuation of treatment Brian's semen was retested and came in at an astonishing 95%. Representing an 85% increase!

Fertility - Miscarriage prevention

Stephanie Hyland (34) hadn't had too much trouble getting pregnant. But, she had suffered two early miscarriages, which left her feeling distraught.

"Then I saw Paul's card up in my gym. He treated me, and just weeks later, I was pregnant. I've been seeing him every week since.

"I'm now 18 weeks pregnant. And I'm thrilled. "Acupuncture is very relaxing," she says. "I feel really good after each session."

UPDATE: Stephanie has given birth to a beautiful baby girl; I wish both her and her newborn daughter the very best of health.



A Natural approach to successful conception

Pharmacist chooses a Natural and Traditional Fertility Treatment over medication.

I attended the Meridian Acupuncture Clinic for the first time in June 2008. My friend had recommended Paul having heard he had a number of children called after him due to his success in the fertility field.

Myself and my husband had been trying to conceive for almost 2 years. We had attended a fertility clinic in January 08 to ensure there were no physical reasons we had been unsuccessful. I found the whole approach in this fertility clinic very businesslike with very little regard for the emotional needs of their patients. Luckily for us all parts of both of us appeared to be working effectively.

Despite this good news they were very adamant I should still start fertility treatment straight away. Being 36 they felt I didn't have time on my hands. Being a pharmacist I did not want to subject my body unnecessarily to this type of treatment and opted to keep trying the natural way until September 08.

The first time I attended Paul he took a medical history, but unlike the fertility clinic was very interested in the personal tragedies in my life. My father had been very ill of the past 2 years and I had been very involved in his care both in a personal and professional level. These 2 years had been very stressful and very upsetting for me.



I really felt that this may have been affecting our ability to conceive. Paul listened to me intently, asked me a number of diagnostic questions, and asked me about my diet and my tongue. From this first encounter he felt my "Liver" (a TCM reference, not the physical organ - Paul) was blocked due to the stress of the previous 2 years. He also felt he could treat me.

Blockage of the Liver is significant in cases of infertility in Chinese Medicine as the liver controls flow of blood to all the vital organs. Some of my symptoms were irregular periods, cold extremities, and occasional gastric problems. My first 6 treatments with Paul involved the treatment of this blockage and needles were placed in my legs, below my knees, my hands and my head.

I really enjoyed these weekly treatments although the needling does hurt sometimes (a sensation brief momentary sensation known as *DeQi* that indicates a blockage, an excellent confirmation of diagnosis – Paul). AT the start of a treatment we would discuss how I had been since the last time, if something came up and I needed to talk about it Paul would always sit and listen. I believe this is invaluable and a key part of the treatment process.

Time never appeared to be an issue. Other weeks would just involve the placing of the needles and then lying down in the quieted room for 30 minutes.

My periods became more regular and my GI problems improved and after 12 treatments I was pregnant. I have continued to attend Paul although now I attend every 2 weeks. I am now 13 weeks pregnant and been very well, no nausea. Although Paul has told me if that occurs he can treat that too!

I would recommend acupuncture for infertility; it is a holistic experience which I believe imperative for this type of condition. Paul is professional, enthusiastic and inspiring. You always come out of a treatment feeling enlightened, well and upbeat. For me this was the type of treatment I required and I would consider acupuncture as the way forward for all future ailments.

Louise Byrne, 36
Pharmacist,
Dublin,

From Back Pain to First Time Mother



I most enjoyed the relaxed manner and atmosphere, it's very personalized and tailored session and Paul's approach is excellent (and friendly).

My overall experience with Paul was extremely positive and effective. I always feel 'renewed' or re-energized after a session!

I have recommended Paul to both family and work!

These treatments have improved my life, I'm pain free and most importantly treatment eased my pregnancy.

I initially started acupuncture to relieve my back pain but continued treatment throughout my pregnancy and after for a list of ailments including endometriosis, and irritable bowel. Having exhausted nearly all other options available to me, I decided to try acupuncture and ease my constant back pain. I can say without hesitation that it was a success; I no longer carry a mini 'chemist' in my handbag! Not only did Paul manage to cure my back and make me pain free for the first time in years, he also alleviated my endometriosis and the symptoms that affected me. So much so that I went on to have a very healthy and seamless pregnancy.

I continued with my course of acupuncture during my pregnancy and this ensured that my energy levels were good, my swelling reduced and I remained relaxed. Even my indigestion / heartburn, a common side effect, was manageable!

All in all, I would highly recommend acupuncture, especially with Paul J.O'Brien to anyone interested in using an alternative form of medicine. I definitely found it more effective!

Ciara Taylor, 31,
Product Manager.

A Whole New Body - Weight Loss

I first started the "Program" on 7/01/09, to lose weight, a stone I hoped if not more. I have benefitted greatly both from the Acupuncture treatments and the nutrition program. I lost a stone in weight with such ease it amazes me. I have learnt a great deal from program and am still learning. I enjoy reading the books and the audio cd's are very helpful.

Paul's professionalism, friendliness guidance and humor made it easy to adhere to the program, and I looked forward each week to the treatments. I would certainly recommend Paul and his nutrition program to others, not just those wishing to lose weight but to anyone who wants to feel good.

Geraldine,
51,
Dublin
21/04/2009

Additional Resources

Resources

www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com

www.tcmci.ie

www.afpa.ie

www.acupuncture.com

www.acupuncturetoday.com

Books

“The Web That Has No Weaver” by Ted Kaptchuk

“Nourishing Destiny” by Lonny Jarrett

“Acupuncture: Is it for You?” By J.R. Worsley

“Staying Healthy with the Seasons” by Elson Haas

“Between Heaven and Earth: A Guide to Chinese Medicine” by Harriet Beinfield and Efrem Korngold

“The Biology Of Belief: Unleashing The Power Of Consciousness, Matter And Miracles” by Bruce H. Lipton

“Pain Free” by Pete Egoscue

“Nourishing Traditions” by Sally Fallon and Mary Enig

“Healing with Whole Foods” by Paul Pitchford

About the Author

Paul J. O'Brien B.A., N.C.E.H.S., Dip. Acu., Dip. OBB, Cert Clin. Med. M.AFPA., M.CThA. has a passion for helping people like you live an emotionally balanced, physically free and abundant life. He received a bachelor's degree from University College Dublin in 2001, and additional qualifications in TCM and Acupuncture as well as Western Clinical Medicine from the Lansdowne College of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine in 2006. He is also qualified as a fitness professional in Exercise and Health Studies with the National Training Centre in 2002, and has most recently completed his studies in Oriental Body Balance, a multi-disciplinary approach to health, as of June 2009.



Paul is a prolific author and educator, believing that education is an important factor in achieving a balanced state of health both mental and physical. He has a regular medical column in Ireland's leading sports magazine Irish Fighter, and has written 9 e-books on the subject of specialized fitness training earning an international reputation as a leading fitness expert, with over 200 articles published in these combined fields of ancient Chinese medicine and cutting edge fitness.

Paul also enjoys public speaking and lectures on Chinese Medicine and fitness and has appeared on numerous occasions on TV3 as well as being featured in several leading publications such as the Irish Independent, The Evening Herald and the Irish Examiner along with international medical publications such as Spine Biz.

He believes that each of us is entitled to lead a healthy, energized and deeply fulfilling life and balances his own work with physical activities such as the martial arts of which he is also a qualified instructor, and quieter activities such as Origami. He also pursues active involvement in numerous charities and community projects as he believes it is important to balance what we receive with what we give.

Finally, Paul feels strongly in self improvement and education and continues to pursue additional qualifications and a better understanding of other treatment and medicinal systems, so that he can always present his clients with the best possible options to improve their health.

To schedule an appointment or to book a speaking engagement, please call 087 901 9627 and visit www.meridian-acupuncture-clinic.com for health tips, wellness resources, and a comprehensive selection of self help articles and guides.