

A brief description of Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture

Since the 3 century BCE, Chinese Medicine has been used as primary and supplementary health care for millions. It has been shaped by scholars and emperors alike and traveled across oceans and deserts. It's evolved with the influence of different landscapes and even different cultures. Not only has it withstood the test of time but has also remained relevant even in our modern world. So, what exactly is Chinese Medicine? What is acupuncture? Most importantly, would acupuncture and Chinese Medicine benefit you?

YES! Chinese Medicine is an umbrella term that describes a group of modalities and systematic way of looking at the body. Instead of diagnosing diseases, practitioners look for patterns that correlate to imbalances in meridian systems. These imbalances are based around the concept of "Qi". Qi is a word to describe the bioelectricity that flows through the body. When there is a free flow of qi, nothing is stagnant and the body remains well. When the flow of qi is altered or hindered the body experiences an imbalance which presents as disease. One way to conceptualize this comes from an old Chinese proverb about a stream. When a stream flows freely the water remains fresh. When there is an obstruction to the stream's flow, a swamp eventually forms and becomes a breeding ground for all sorts of unpleasant things. Once these imbalances are identified, the practitioner can decide which modalities under Chinese Medicine would benefit the patient most to correct the imbalance. The techniques used include acupuncture, cupping, moxibustion, gua sha (scraping), herbal medicine, qi gong, and Chinese medical massage.

Acupuncture specifically, has gained notoriety in the west and has even made its way into medical facilities like the VA, chiropractic offices, detox and treatment facilities and physical therapy offices. "Dry needling" is how this is most often referred to in these settings because needles are placed without employing Chinese Medical theory. The way acupuncture works is by using tiny needles, often as thin as a piece of hair, as lightning rods for the body's bioelectricity. These needles are inserted into specific areas that correlate with pathways in which the qi flows. These pathways are referred to as "meridians" and the specific areas of insertion are called "acupuncture points". The goal of the treatment is to remind the body how the qi is supposed to flow on its own. Because of this, each treatment is specific to the individual patterns a person is presenting with. For example, two people may both be experiencing eczema but their treatments may look very different. According to Chinese Medicine the end result is eczema but imbalances that have created the eczema are often not the same. The ways in which acupuncture and Chinese Medicine could benefit you are immense. This is because Chinese Medicine looks at the entirety of a person, body, mind and soul.

If you experience "dis-ease", this is for you. If you want to enhance or supplement other forms of treatment for chronic or acute conditions, this is for you. If you just want general tune ups for improved immunity and mental health, this is ALSO FOR YOU! Your practitioner will be able to discuss your goals and individual treatment plan to help you attain your best state of health.