

1.Pain Management Programs

Pain Management Programs (PMP) are rehabilitation based multidisciplinary program for the practitioner who assist patients to bring pain under control and generally tailored to individual patient's clinical needs.

When it comes to pain people think of acupuncture as a last resort. With considerable clinical evidence behind it and especially where long term pain medications and surgical interventions are being suggested, acupuncture should be considered for primary pain management and care.

Acupuncture and TCM has a large range of specialized treatment strategies for the treatment of pain whether it is **acute, chronic, severe or mild**.

The promotion of quick healing is at the core of acupuncture therapies such that pain reduction can be felt immediately during and after the session. As Individual cases differ the unique treatments methods address the root causes and symptoms directly and simultaneously.

In acute pain such as lumbar sprain, treatments are specific to reducing muscular spasm and relaxing muscle and tendons. Other methods such as cupping and Tui Na kneading massage are used as required to promote blood circulation, reduce blood congestion and swelling as well as stopping pain.

In chronic pain such as osteoarthritis of the knee acupuncture has been shown to have greater efficacy compared to physiotherapy and anti-inflammatory drugs. Pain stopping herbal medicines and liniments are also valuable and are regularly prescribed where appropriate. Should patients wish to keep using their conventional painkillers we work to reduce the length of their use.

Painful conditions presenting at Acuwise include:

- Neck Pain
- Shoulder Pain
- Lower Back Pain
- Sciatica and Hip Pain
- Temporomandibular Joint Pain (TMJ)
- Knee Pain
- Elbow- Golfer's and Tennis
- Headache & Migraine
- Fibromyalgia
- Arthritis
- Leg- Shin Splints, Calf Cramps

Our Pain Management Program varies per individual.

The treatment sessions incorporate acupuncture, specialized massage therapy ,Cupping, Gua Sha and Chinese Medicine. Advise patient for special diet and corrective exercise.

References:

1 Acupuncture and knee osteoarthritis: a three-armed randomized trial

2. Weight Loss Program

The TCM perspective on weight loss

Chinese medicine sees the problem of weight gain in a very different way from Western Medicine. There are numerous possible diagnoses, but easily the most common is what the Chinese call “spleen qi deficiency”. This can be roughly translated as having weak digestion that does not allow the body to absorb and transport food effectively.

This means no matter how well or how much the person eats, they are left feeling tired, sluggish and usually hungry as the body is not absorbing nutrition from food, which makes weight loss hard. This can lead to a destructive cycle whereby the person always feels hungry and gains weight regardless of the efforts they make to eat less or healthier.

Chinese and Western medicine agree that weight loss is important and that obesity can lead to a range of other illnesses, but the Chinese perspective differs in that obesity is seen as only a symptom of more important underlying problems that, if left untreated, will affect all the other organs in the body.

Spleen qi deficiency and weight loss

Spleen qi deficiency can have a number of different causes and thus approaches to weight loss. There can be a genetic component and similar conditions can run in the same family. Unsurprisingly, it can also be caused by poor diet such as eating meals on the go, unwholesome snacking, lots of greasy or sweet food, too much cold food, cold water or other drinks, particularly beer. All of which hamper weight loss. Eating late at night is especially damaging for this type of condition. The Chinese clock states that the strongest time for the digestion is between 7am and 11am and this is the best time to eat larger or heavier meals.

Too little sleep, lack of movement, overwork and over-thinking or worrying are considered especially hazardous to the spleen and not good for weight loss. Given our current lifestyle, it's not hard to see why so many people could now be considered spleen qi deficient and thus are searching for a weight loss program.

Signs of spleen qi deficiency

- Classical symptoms of this pattern are
- bloating,
- sugar cravings,
- fussy or picky eating,
- low energy,
- bowel irregularities,
- allergies,
- food intolerances,
- obesity,
- sagging skin and muscles,
- pale complexion,
- dull and lifeless skin,
- low immunity,
- period problems and,
- in more severe cases, palpitations, dizziness and anxiety.

If you experience these, TCM could supply your weight loss answer.

The sweet flavour directly relates to the spleen and stomach in Chinese Medicine. The body craves sugar when it is not receiving enough energy from the food you are eating. Unfortunately, eating sweet foods makes the condition far worse. Most cravings we get are actually the worst things for us and are used in Chinese Medicine as a way of highlighting and diagnosing the problem. Sugar cravings cease when the stomach energy is strengthened again.

Phlegm, dampness and weight loss

This usually follows the development of digestive weakness, but in some cases can arise from other causes. Phlegm and dampness accumulate in the body, making it sluggish and heavy. This roughly translates to lowered metabolism in Western medical terms.

Imagine a lovely stream that cannot flow properly because either there's not enough water or there's an obstruction (some rocks that may have fallen and blocked the flow of water, for instance). The water becomes stagnant and starts to turn green; it is no longer fresh water. This affects the rest of the streams water and all the plant and animal life that relies on the stream for nutrients.

This is what happens in a phlegm damp stagnation pattern. If this pattern is not addressed, it affects many other internal organs, particularly the kidneys, reproductive organs and, more noticeably, the lungs. Phlegm accumulates in the lungs after being produced in the stomach. The Chinese have a saying that the stomach produces the phlegm and the lung stores it. Phlegm in the lungs causes difficulty breathing and that wheezing sound; it also can be diagnosed as asthma.

Phlegm can be very difficult to clear from the body. Most people with phlegm and damp accumulation crave greasy or oily food as well as sugar, which of course aggravate the problem further. This pattern makes you feel very tired, cloudy-headed and quite heavy in the body. It can also affect your temperament, making you feel very fiery, restless and emotional.

Signs of phlegm and damp stagnation

Symptoms can include a

- phlegm-producing cough,
- a full feeling in the chest and nausea.

Reference

Extracted from The WellBeing Team

3. Infertility

Traditional Chinese Medicine and natural fertility.

Using Traditional Chinese Medicine to support female reproductive wellness and promote natural fertility

In Australia, the use of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is enjoying growing popularity as couples seek to enhance their fertility using natural methods. News of positive experiences and successful outcomes are spreading as natural, holistic alternatives to conventional medical fertility enhancement (IVF) are sought.

The overwhelming evolutionary purpose of humanity is to reproduce, ensuring survival of the species. As such TCM practitioners are working with a very potent force dwelling within nature. In many cases of medically unexplained infertility it is relatively simple to enhance fertility using TCM treatment and achieve conception.

Fertility is not exclusively a female domain, however women are much more likely to present clinically for fertility enhancement. For this reason this article will focus on female reproductive health.

The perils of age

In the West women are choosing to have babies much later in life and have often taken the oral contraceptive pill (OCP) to achieve this end. This usually happens during their most fertile years, from adolescence to mid thirties.

Unlike men who produce fresh semen daily, women are born with all the eggs that they will need for their entire lifetime. As women age so do their eggs. From late 30's women's fertility is in natural decline. For older women who have decided to have children later in life, the combination of reproductive aging and the undesirable side effects of the OCP can have a severe and profound impact on fertility.

Pre-conception (up to 12 months prior to pregnancy)

The aim of pre-conception care is to promote optimal gynecological health in preparation for pregnancy. It is designed to get a woman's body in the best possible position to fall pregnant, stay pregnant and nourish a baby for the entire pregnancy and beyond.

Falling pregnant is only one aspect of good reproductive health. The next challenge is for women to be able to carry a baby to full term and then breast feed, care for, love, grow and nurture a child from infancy into adulthood.

Pre-conception care should be considered as part of preventative medicine, beginning up to 12 months prior to women consciously attempting to fall pregnant.

To understand the importance of pre-conception health one might consider the analogy of a garden. Imagine that the uterine lining representing the fertile soil that provides the material foundation for the plant, ensuring survival from germination to maturation.

Along with acupuncture and herbal medicine, pre-conception care usually involves a combination of diet, lifestyle and exercise modification.

Women might also become aware of symptoms that before TCM treatment they believed to be part of their 'normal' female cycle and were either unconcerned or unaware that effective treatment was available. Such symptoms might include period pain, PMS or menstrual migraine. Many women are pleasantly surprised by how quickly these symptoms improve with the correct attention.

Explained infertility

Explained infertility is when Western Medical tests have been able to establish a pathology such as

- endometriosis,
- hormonal irregularities,
- polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS),
- fibroids,
- blocked fallopian tubes,
- failure to ovulate or poor egg/semen quality which might explain the reason behind infertility.

By the time most women arrive at a TCM clinic they usually have a Western Medical diagnosis and will be looking to explore conjunctive or alternative treatment options.

Having a Western Medical diagnosis can be helpful to TCM treatment in that it offers valuable supplementary information to support and direct a comprehensive treatment plan.

Other than diagnostic tests, the scope of Western Medicine practice is primarily limited to drug therapy, surgery and of course IVF treatment. Once the cause of infertility is established then women will be able to use this information to make informed choice about their treatment options.

Surgery will remove any pathological growths, uterine obstructions or scarring. Surgery quickly and resolutely removes 'old', stale blood and energy allowing the opportunity for a new, voluptuous endometrial layer to develop. This outcome would be one of the intended aims of TCM treatment also, although the end is achieved using techniques.

Falling pregnant is only one aspect of the 'baby making' equation. The value of TCM in this scenario is in its ability to support and cultivate the fertile ground of the endometrium to provide ongoing nourishment to a growing baby.

It is perfectly safe for women to use TCM in conjunction with Western Medicine and to continue both acupuncture and herbal treatment once pregnant.

There are a number of possible explanations as to why couples may experience difficulty conceiving. TCM can be used as a stand-alone, natural, drug-free treatment option to enhance fertility and treat both medically explained and unexplained infertility. It can also be safely used in conjunction with conventional Western Medical fertility treatment before and during pregnancy.

Reference /Karenpohlner

4. Anxiety and Depression

Chinese Medical Approach

Depression and anxiety are two of the most common mood disorders affecting approximately 20% of the population at some point during their lives. Today, more than 30 million Americans are taking anti-depressant and anti-anxiety drugs, and over 130 million prescriptions were written for anti-depressants in 1998. One may assume these numbers have only grown. *According to the Physician Desk Reference*, the top anti-depressant and anxiety drugs address only the signs and symptoms of the disease and can cause a myriad of side effects: insomnia, anxiety, listlessness, fatigue, loss of appetite, and sexual dysfunction.

In order for a person to be diagnosed with depression, four or five of the following symptoms must persist for two weeks, and not be due to another physical condition, medication, alcohol, drugs, or normal bereavement:

- Persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness
- Weight loss or gain
- Lose of all interest in pleasurable activities, including sex
- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbances
- Irritability
- Guilt
- Poor concentration or indecision
- Abnormal thoughts of death and suicide

Some of the symptoms associated with a diagnosis of anxiety include:

- Persistent worry
- Muscle tension, aches, twitching
- Sleep disturbances
- Fast or irregular heartbeat
- Frequent urination
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue; Nausea; Dizziness
- Restlessness
- Poor concentration
- Irritability; Overreaction when startled

Traditional Chinese Medicine and Depression/Anxiety

Every healthy person has experienced some form of depression in his or her life. It is a healthy response to overwhelming events in our lives. When we are healthy, physically and mentally, we can usually bounce back from a depressed state within a couple of weeks, and continue on with our normal lives. But when feelings become persistent and occur without precipitating factors, true depression may set in.

Chinese medicine recognizes a powerful interplay between the body and emotions; the two are, in fact, inseparable. When we become emotionally upset, our internal environment also becomes disrupted, leading to the physical symptoms of anxiety and depression. When we are physically compromised, our emotions can be greatly affected.

According to Chinese medical theories, depression and anxiety are often the result of an imbalance or blockage in the body's energetic organ meridian systems. If the Qi becomes obstructed or the quality becomes insufficient, emotional upset, anxiety/depression, illness and disease may occur. Many things may cause the Qi to become blocked or insufficient: physical trauma, emotional trauma, hereditary weakness, poor diet, and chemical, physical and emotional stress.

Extracted from Calvindale