Ask a Licensed Practitioner:

Would you like answers to your medical questions from a traditional Chinese Medicine perspective?

Send our practitioners your questions! Yo San Clinic has four licensed practitioners on staff available to see patients 6 days a week. Their specialties include: pain, orthopedics, gynecology, urology, internal medicine and facial rejuvenation. For biographical information, please click here.

If you would like your question answered by a specific practitioner, please specify that in your request. Send your inquiries to: clinicianmanager@yosan.edu
We look forward to hearing from you!

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Dec 2012

Hot Apple Cider

"Nothing beats a mug of hot cider on a cold winter day. This recipe is great as it calls for fresh apple cider and pure maple syrup. Start with only 6 strips each of the orange and lemon peel, and adjust to taste."
- allrecipes.com

Ingredients

- 6 cups apple cider
- 6 whole allspice berries
- 1/4 cup real maple syrup
- 1 orange peel, cut into strips
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 lemon peel, cut into strips
- 6 whole cloves

Directions

1. Pour the apple cider and maple syrup into a large stainless steel saucepan.
2. Place the cinnamon sticks, cloves, allspice berries, orange peel and lemon peel in the center of a washed square of cheesecloth; fold up the sides of the cheesecloth to enclose the bundle, then tie it up with a length of kitchen string. Drop the spice bundle into the cider mixture.
3. Place the saucepan over moderate heat for 5 to 10 minutes, or until the cider is very hot but not boiling.
4. Remove the cider from the heat. Discard the spice bundle. Ladle the cider into big cups or mugs, adding a fresh cinnamon stick to each serving if desired.

Clove
Clove or ding xiang has many health benefits due to its high nutrient content. It contains calcium, phosphorous, iron, vitamin A, vitamin C, sodium and potassium. Clove oil is frequently used for dental care as a gargle or to relieve pain and mouth sores. Clove oil also has antiseptic and anti-inflammatory properties therefore it can be used for cuts, bruises, acne, fungal infections and insect bites. Clove has also been shown to help with nausea, indigestion, premature ejaculation and strengthening the immune system. These actions are closer to the Chinese Medicine uses of clove. According to TCM clove enters the kidney, spleen and stomach channels. Clove can be used to regulate the spleen and stomach systems, dispel cold and warm kidney yang energy as it is acrid and warm.

**What are the actions and indications for ding xiang?**

- Warms the middle burner ie. the spleen and stomach, directs rebellious qi downward to treat hiccups, cough and vomiting due to cold. Also used for abdominal pain, diarrhea, lack of appetite also due to spleen and stomach cold.
- Warms kidneys and strengthens the yang qi which is the warming energy. Therefore ding xiang can be used to treat impotence, clear vaginal discharge often with weakness in the legs.

**Cinnamon**

Cinnamon or rou gui is anti-microbial which helps to inhibit bacterial and fungal growth, thereby making it an natural preservative. It also has anti-clotting properties which can help with arthritic pain. Studies have also shown it can lower LDL cholesterol and regulate blood sugar. Cinnamon contains manganese, fiber, calcium and iron which can help regulate bowel function. It also has anti-clotting properties and reduces the proliferation of cancer cells. Another study has also shown the scent of cinnamon can improve brain function and memory.

According to Chinese medicine rou gui enters the spleen, stomach and kidney channels. It is a warming sweet and pungent herb which promotes circulation, relieves spasms and aids digestion.

**What are the actions and indications for rou gui?**

- Warms the kidneys and strengthens the yang energy especially of spleen and kidney. Symptoms include cold limbs, weak back, impotence and frequent urination for kidney deficiency. Combined with spleen yang deficiency there will be abdominal pain, reduced appetite and diarrhea.
- Disperses cold, warms and unblocks channels and
vessels to alleviate pain associated with dysmenorrhea, amenorrhea, damp-cold painful obstruction which is similar to arthritis. Also used for chronic sores and abscesses which are slow to heal or ooze clear fluid.

- Can also encourage generation of qi and blood when combined with appropriate herbs.

**Source:** meridianflowacupuncture

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**Holiday Stress**

According to the wisdom of Chinese medicine, the cold months of winter are an essential time to conserve as well as generate vital energy — so that you may live and feel your best in all seasons...

The ancient Chinese believed that human beings should live in harmony with the natural cycles of the universe and their environment. The cold, quiet, stillness and darkness of the winter season urges us to slow down. This is the time of year to self-reflect, replenish energy and conserve strength. It is the time to integrate the life-harvest of this particular year, in preparation for a new cycle of life that begins each spring. It is also a season to go to sleep early, rest well, stay warm, eat nourishing foods, and expend a minimum of energy.

In Chinese medicine it is said that winter is ruled by the Water element, and is associated with the Kidneys, Bladder and adrenal glands of the human body. The Kidneys are considered the foundational source of all energy or “Qi” within the body.

Once the daily energetic demands of the body have been met, if there is any Qi that is in surplus, it is stored by the Kidneys so that it can be used in times of stress and change, to heal, to prevent illness, and to age healthfully and gracefully. While optimal health and well-being in the winter season calls for rest, nourishment and energy conservation for revitalization of body and spirit, your holiday activities may have a different agenda.

We have all felt the realities of holiday stress. The holidays can be filled with a dizzying array of demands: visitors, travel, frantic shopping trips and financial concerns. For many people it is also a time filled with sadness, loneliness, anxiety or even anger. Even under the best of circumstances, with all of these stressors on top of the ordinary and extraordinary demands of daily life, and you may find this to be one of the most emotionally trying times of the year.

Stress, anxiety and depression are our subjective experience in our bodies that energy is not harmonious and balanced. Such mental/emotional states can lead to a disruption in the flow of vital energy throughout the body. These energetic imbalances in turn can weaken the immune system, and cause symptoms including physical pain, sleep disturbances, abnormal digestion, headaches, and even menstrual irregularities. Over time, more serious illnesses may develop.
Chinese medicine offers safe and effective treatment to help smooth and balance our responses to what can be a challenging time of year. It can help correct energetic imbalances and directly affect the way your body manages stress. Thus enhancing the body, mind and spirit, one may face the demands of life and the holidays, with grace and vitality.

When the body’s energy is harmonious, the mind and heart are peaceful, and life is health.

By Susan Buhler, MSOM, LAc

**The Placebo Effect and TCM**

*by Adam Cappuccino, Yo San Clinic Intern*

Sometimes, as a student of alternative medicine, I find myself trying to bridge the gap between Traditional Chinese Medicine and conventional medicine. I use metaphors, I'll talk about modern research, mention how long acupuncture is believed to have existed, but essentially I impress upon people that what we are doing is legitimate medicine. Medicine seeks to treat people, end suffering, prolong and improve the quality of life, and ideally, to cure disease. In our search for the answers to how the body heals and why we get sick, one factor cannot be ignored; the Placebo effect. The role of placebo has changed throughout time, but we are now learning that the body and the mind have always had the power to heal itself, and we are starting to understand that power.

Placebo has had its place in medicine for a long time, as well as in religion. Roughly translated, a verse from Psalm 116 in the bible uses placebo to mean ‘I shall please”. Although this may have been inaccurately translated, the word took on this meaning by the end of the nineteenth century, especially among the medical field, when medical procedures were very unpleasant for the patient (Moerman, 2002). Thus, the term took on an air of futility and uselessness. Nowadays, placebo has been viewed as an enemy to the progress of science and medicine; one that must be overcome in order to produce better treatments for diseases. To the researcher, the standard level of placebo, approximately 30-40%, must always be discounted off the effectiveness of the prescribed test treatment. This calls for the use of a further control group, one that receives no treatment at all, by which placebo levels of improvement can be measured against.

Ted Kaptchuk, famous among TCM practitioners for his introductory book “The Web That Has No Weaver”, has played an important role in the understanding of the power of the placebo effect. In one of his many scientific trials, Kaptchuk studied the effects of placebo alone as a viable source of therapeutic treatment for IBS. One group acted as the control and was offered no treatment besides 15 minutes of interaction and information about their condition from a doctor. The other was given a placebo pill, an inert substance that contained no
therapeutic ingredients. The novelty of this study was that patients receiving the placebo were explicitly told that they were receiving the non-treatment pill. To their surprise, patients on the placebo experienced on average about 59% decrease in their symptoms. They came to the conclusion that without the deception of a double-blind study, with only the persuasive suggestions about the effectiveness of placebo, lead to significant improvement in reported symptoms (Kaptchuk, 2010).

I have come to accept that placebo effect as a reliable source of healing inspiration for myself and my patients. I no longer see it as being a confounding element in my treatments. As a healer, I remind myself and my patients, that all acupuncture does is unblock and redistribute the energies of the body. There is no magic or divine intervention in my treatments, only the inherent healing capacity of the human body put to work without hindrance. The placebo effect is nothing to be discounted. It is not a flimsy figment of the imagination reserved for spiritual healers, shamans, and charlatans. It is the body doing what the body does best; healing itself! It is the same force that guides us from a single-celled zygote to a complex multicellular organism that houses our minds and responds to our thoughts and whims. We need not feel cheated that a sugar pill can make us feel 59% better than we once did, we need to be reminded that we are at least that powerful when we are given the chance to heal.


Meet our intern

Yo San Clinic has an exceptional and diverse intern team. With various professional and educational backgrounds, our Traditional Chinese Medicine students bring a variety of experience, knowledge and care. In our monthly newsletter, we will introduce you to our new interns and tell you a little bit about what makes them exceptional healers.

Sherra Cunningham

Sherra has a BA in Psychology from University of Washington in Seattle. After graduating, she went to work for Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and worked with bone marrow and stem cell transplant patients for 15 years. With a cancer diagnosis, a patient is suddenly thrown into a world where everyone is doing something to them. Patients feel a loss of control over their lives and their bodies. Sherra wanted to find a modality that would help patients feel
more empowered. Patients who were receiving acupuncture in combination with the chemotherapy treatments seemed to have less side effects and a more positive outlook throughout their healing process. Sherra decided to study Chinese Medicine and through her learning process discovered the variety of health issues this medicine can treat and prevent. Sherra has a strong belief in the body’s ability and desire to heal itself. She feels nutrition, movement, body and emotional awareness are critical to good health. She enjoys teaching people how to listen to the body’s language and to notice imbalances before they become chronic conditions. Sherra believes everyone has the power to heal and hopes to inspire her patients to embrace that power with love for themselves and their lives.

To book an appointment with Sherra, call us at (310) 577-3006.

Meet our Doctoral Candidate

White-Eagle Perry, L.Ac., “the Native American Acupuncturist”, from Denver, Colorado, has been involved with health and healing since a small child. His life path led him to Yo San University to get his Masters of Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine. After nearly six years of private practice in Denver, he has returned to learn Integrative care in Healthy Aging and Longevity in Yo San’s Doctoral program. His focus is relieving pain and stress utilizing acupuncture, Chinese herbs, whole food supplements, and exercise suggestions. In his spare time he teaches Traditional Japanese martial arts, enjoys golfing, scuba diving, flying planes, and is active within Toastmasters International.

White-Eagle is currently treating patients on Sunday mornings at Yo San University Clinic.

Research

Yo San’s Doctoral Students are Blazing Paths for Acupuncture Research:

In March of 2012 Yo San graduated its first Doctoral Cohort. Each student submitted a capstone project presenting initial research on a particular women’s health issue and the effects of acupuncture and Chinese Herbs. These capstone projects are available here and our newsletters will feature abstracts for you to enjoy.

Treatment of Depression with Acupuncture: A Research Synthesis In Pursuit of the Question – Can Acupuncture
Impact Reproductive Outcomes in Infertile Women Suffering From Depression

By Janice Chen, L.Ac., (FABORM)

The main objective of this research synthesis was to study the effects of acupuncture in the treatment of depression, in order to lay some ground work for the investigation of acupuncture’s effect on reproductive outcomes in the treatment of depressed women with infertility. The outcomes of previous reviews and meta-analyses were reviewed, which revealed that most reviews had limited conclusions and required more higher-quality randomized controlled trials.

For the research synthesis, twenty-seven studies were retrieved that observed the effects of acupuncture treatment on depression. The articles were reviewed, and data were collected on the details of the participants, treatment interventions, outcome measures and results. The studies consisted of a wide range of study populations, treatment interventions, control interventions, and outcome measures. The outcome of most of the included studies showed that the acupuncture treatment had significantly decreased depression severity. However, many of the studies lacked appropriate controls, were of poor quality, or had small sample sizes. When compared with antidepressants, acupuncture treatment was found to be comparable in effects. When comparing acupuncture to control acupuncture interventions, the results were mixed. Recommendations were provided for future studies on the treatment of depression with acupuncture in infertile women.

Clinic Hours

Yo San Clinic is Open 7 Days a Week!
Monday through Friday - 8 am to 9 pm
Saturday - 8:30 am to 5:30 pm
Sunday - 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm

Healthy Aging Clinic & Fertility Clinic
Sunday - 8:30 am to 1:30 pm

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