The national debate about health care is often heated, and brings up many conflicting opinions. My area of interest is the acceptance and integration of traditional Chinese medicine into mainstream medical practice in the US. From my perspective, the trend for medicine in America is steadily moving toward integrative medicine. More and more, acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine are being recognized as an effective medical modality, both as an adjunct to Western medicine and as stand-alone therapy for many medical conditions. Examples of acupuncture as an adjunctive treatment include treating side effects of chemotherapy such as nausea, or increasing the successful implantation rate of in vitro fertilization procedures. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognizes over forty health conditions for which acupuncture and Chinese medicine are effective treatment, including headaches, back and joint pain, sinusitis, insomnia, weight loss and addictions, and many more. A “blended” medicine which integrates the best of East and West is taking shape. To support this statement, I will cite a few recently-published reports which provide evidence for this significant paradigm shift in healthcare.

The first report is "Integrative Medicine in America: How Integrative Medicine is Being Practiced in Clinical Centers across the United States.” Sponsored by Minneapolis-based Bravewell Collaborative, this report makes the following statements:

- Acupuncturists and Chinese medicine practitioners are the most frequently-employed practitioners at integrative medicine centers;
- Acupuncture and Chinese medicine interventions are one of the most frequently-prescribed interventions across the spectrum of health conditions;
- Over fifty percent of integrative-medicine centers offer in-patient services;
- Over eighty percent of these centers conduct research to establish the effectiveness of complementary and alternative medicine.

The report concluded that integrative medicine is now an established part of healthcare in the United States.

In the 2010 "Complementary and Alternative Medicine Survey of Hospitals,” conducted by the Samuei Institute, acupuncture was ranked as the second-most-popular outpatient modality among all complementary and alternative medicine modalities, after chiropractic, and 42% of the hospitals surveyed offered complementary and alternative medicine services to patients or employees.

Continued on next page
Continued from previous page

The principal criteria used by hospitals to select complementary and alternative medicine therapies were: patient demand (78% of the hospitals); and evidence of efficacy (74% of the hospitals). 65% of the surveyed hospitals offered complementary and alternative therapies for pain management. Self-referral (84%), physician referral (84%) and nurse referral (59%) are the most common ways patients access complementary and alternative services in hospitals.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine under the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has developed a National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), with the objective of measuring Americans' use of complementary and alternative medicine. The 2007 survey was released in the report, "The Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in the United States." Twenty-one therapies were listed in the survey, including the Chinese medicine modalities of acupuncture, Chinese herbs, dietary therapy, Tai Chi, and Qi Gong, all of which are recognized as valid treatment modalities by the NIH. The survey showed that 38.3% of American adults had used complementary and alternative medicine. Classifying by age groups, it was found that 44.1% of people 50-59 used complementary and alternative medicine, followed by the 60-69 age group (41%) and the 40-49 age group (40.1%). Conditions most frequently treated included back pain, neck pain, joint pain, and arthritis. Now that scientific research has established the effectiveness of acupuncture in the treatment of these conditions, Western practitioners are increasingly disposed to refer patients for treatment.

These three recent surveys and reports reveal that integrative medicine is positioned for takeoff in the twenty-first century. The established medical system is adopting this new medicine into US health care services to meet patient demand.

Why I Love Being an Acupuncturist

By Li Wang, L.Ac.

I feel especially happy and fulfilled when patients say "Thank you" from the bottom of their heart. I love what I do because as an acupuncturist, I hear that all the time.

For example, one day a gentleman came in because he got my name from a friend. His health problems had been getting worse for three years, and he saw acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine as the last try. If the acupuncture didn't work, he would have to quit his high-level management job because he couldn't go on. He went to the doctor initially because he felt tired all the time. His doctor said he was depressed, and prescribed an anti-depression drug. Taking the anti-depression drug generated anxiety, along with the depression, so he went to a psychiatrist. The psychiatrist diagnosed him as bipolar, and gave him another drug for that. Then he developed insomnia. A sleep specialist prescribed a sleep medication, which resulted in the man being unable to wake up in the morning to go to work, so he was prescribed another drug to wake him up. That drug kept him awake, but he was not able to think clearly or focus on his job, plus he developed a sexual function disorder. After three years of getting worse instead of better, he gave up on all his doctors and ended up in my office.

To make a long story short, by getting acupuncture combined with Chinese herbs, he was able to stop taking all the drugs. He is full of energy every day, and he lost the weight he gained due to the anti-anxiety drug. He was promoted to a higher-level management job within the company. He ran a ten-mile marathon. He got his wife pregnant and had a baby boy. He said, "Thank you so much - I've never felt this good before!"

Another example is a young lady who was suffering intense pain after an injury. She was taking multiple pain pills daily but still felt the pain. With acupuncture and cupping, she felt better very soon. She sent me an email that said "...I was suffering from a debilitating neck injury and muscle spasms. I had visited countless conventional physicians, neurologists and neurosurgeons that all explained I needed to find the right combination of narcotics, muscle relaxants, barbiturates and anti-depressants and start dealing with my new reality. At 26 years old it was completely overwhelming. Regardless, you should know that you changed my life. The visits to your office proved to be the solution I was looking for, and my neck is now fabulous and I'm back to my sassy self :) THANK YOU!!"

Every day, I see the improvement in my patients' health. They get happier and happier; healthier and healthier. They say "Thank you" from the bottom of their hearts, and I feel the fulfillment of this on a daily basis. That is why I enjoy being an acupuncturist.

Li Wang is a 2006 graduate of AAAOM. She is currently practicing at AlterMed Acupuncture (altermedacupuncture.com) in Bloomington, MN.
American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

You are invited to attend an OPEN HOUSE

Sunday, July 15, or Sunday, July 22
From 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Highlights of the afternoon will include:
• Information about our Master’s Degree and Certificate Programs
• A Tour of the School
• An Acupuncture Presentation
• Visiting our Library, Herbal Pharmacy and Student Clinic
• Answers to Your Questions
• Refreshments

AAAOM School & Student/Faculty Clinic
1925 W County Rd B2
Roseville, MN 55113

To RSVP
Visit AAAOM.edu
Or Call 651-631-0204
Fibromyalgia: A Chinese Medicine Perspective

By Wei Liu, TCMD, L.Ac., Lic. Nutritionist

Recent studies indicate that approximately 2% of Americans suffer from fibromyalgia. The actual figure is probably much higher than that, because fibromyalgia is widely under-diagnosed or misdiagnosed. Even people who have been given a diagnosis of fibromyalgia have usually spent many frustrating years trying to convince doctors that there was really something wrong with them.

Western Medicine and Fibromyalgia

Why is it so hard for conventional Western medicine to diagnose fibromyalgia? For one thing, there are no lab tests or x-rays that can diagnose it. Fibromyalgia is something like chronic fatigue syndrome, in that it is not seen as a clear-cut disease caused by a specific agent, but rather as a collection of symptoms. If a patient exhibits enough of the standard fibromyalgia symptoms, then she is diagnosed with fibromyalgia (women are many times more likely to complain of fibromyalgia and be diagnosed with fibromyalgia than men are).

"Fibromyalgia" means "pain of the muscle fiber," and the most characteristic symptom is a high level of pain in the muscle tissue. Other common symptoms are exhaustion or overwhelming fatigue, insomnia or other sleeping disorders, and very stiff muscles upon awakening in the morning. Besides these principal symptoms, fibromyalgia patients often complain of depression, anxiety, headaches, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

Because there is no definitive test for fibromyalgia, and because many of the predominantly female patients also complain of depression, it is not unusual for fibromyalgia patients to be treated with anti-depressants. Many fibromyalgia patients have endured the frustration of going to doctor after doctor for years and being told that the problem is all in their head. When fibromyalgia is untreated or ineffectively treated, its symptoms can be devastating to the sufferer.

Even when fibromyalgia is diagnosed as such, Western medicine has provided few effective treatments for it. Sleeping medications are almost always prescribed. Exercise is recommended, and pain medications or trigger point injections are often used. Recently, growth hormone injections have been tried on the grounds that insomniacs don't produce as much of this substance as people who sleep normally, but results have been inconclusive. Both Eastern and Western medicine agree that insomnia is a key to fibromyalgia. While Western doctors prescribe sleeping pills, Chinese medicine aims to nourish the Heart and the Liver, which are the two most important internal organs in regard to sleep, and to bring them into balance with the Spleen.

TCM and Fibromyalgia

When fibromyalgia cases are analyzed according to traditional Chinese medicine theory, the two most common diagnosis patterns are Spleen/Heart Deficiency and Liver Qi Stagnation with Liver Invading the Spleen. In the remainder of this article, I will describe the origin of each pattern and give a typical case history for each pattern (patients’ names and details of their cases have been changed).

In Spleen/Heart Deficiency pattern, the Spleen is affected first, and then affects the functioning of the Heart. The Spleen is responsible for transforming our food into the energy and blood that sustain our bodies. Since the Spleen and its partner, the Stomach, are directly involved in processing food, it is easy to see that the health of the Spleen can be affected by a poor or inappropriate diet. The Spleen is also strongly affected by the emotion of worry, or over-concentration (this can include studying and affect students who spend long hours over their books). Chronic worry or too much studying eventually interferes with the Spleen’s ability to generate and convey sufficient Qi (vital energy) and blood to the muscles and flesh, which is an area of the body that the Spleen is especially responsible for.

The principal muscle that the Spleen needs to sustain is the Heart. The Heart is considered to be the home of the Spirit and has a close relationship with the Spleen. When the Spleen cannot generate enough substance to nourish the Heart, the Heart Qi does not have enough strength to house the spirit properly, leading to symptoms such as anxiety, palpitations, and insomnia. A Spleen Deficiency condition can result in fatigue, muscle stiffness, and pain; a Heart Deficiency condition usually brings emotional unrest and insomnia. These two deficiencies then feed into each other: insomnia causes muscle pain and stiffness, and muscle pain makes sleep more difficult. In the Spleen/Heart Deficiency pattern, insomnia takes the form of difficulty falling asleep.

Continued on next page
The second common fibromyalgia pattern, Liver Qi Stagnation with Liver Invading the Spleen, again involves the Spleen. However, while the Spleen is the primary driver of the Spleen/Heart Deficiency pattern, the Liver is the primary driver of the invasion pattern. In Chinese medicine theory, the Liver’s function is to ensure the smooth flow of Qi, blood, and emotions. The emotion that is associated with the Liver is anger. Anger, irritation and frustration all adversely affect the Liver, especially anger that is either out of control or unexpressed. When the Liver is out of balance, it loses the ability to promote the smooth flow of Qi, blood and emotions, and the Liver Qi is said to be “stuck” or “stagnant.” The internal organs and the emotions associated with them are in a reciprocal relationship: excessive emotions will adversely affect the associated organ, and a dysfunctional organ will produce an unhealthy expression of the associated emotion. People who live in a state of constant frustration, or who regularly "blow their top" will end up with stuck Liver Qi. When a person with Liver Qi stagnation gets angry, Liver Qi cannot flow smoothly and resolve the emotion in a balanced way. Instead, the Liver Qi may invade or attack other organs, like the Spleen/Stomach.

Continued from previous page

Donna, for example, presents a typical case of Spleen/Heart imbalance and deficiency, leading to full-blown fibromyalgia symptoms. Eight years ago, Donna had a stressful job and three young children. Then her husband died, and her children began to have problems adjusting at school. Donna would wake up at night, worrying about her situation, never achieving a deep, sound sleep. After a while, she would wake up in the morning feeling stiff all over and extremely tired. "When I went to see my doctor he gave me an anti-depressant, but it didn’t work, plus I gained weight," Donna said. Over the following eight years, Donna’s condition worsened: all her muscles were stiff and painful; she had frequent headaches, chronic insomnia, irritability, anxiety, and depression. She had to quit her job and go on disability. While she finally had a diagnosis, there was still not a treatment. Finally, Donna came to my clinic after reading about Chinese medicine on the internet.

In Donna’s case, the emotion of worry, or over-concentration, had interfered with the Spleen’s ability to nourish the Heart and other muscle tissue. Symptoms of muscle pain and insomnia followed as the Spleen and Heart became more deficient and imbalanced over time. The goal of treatment was to nourish the Spleen so it could properly nourish the Heart and other muscles. Acupuncture, a Chinese herbal formula called Gui Pi Wan, and dietary recommendations were the modalities used to do this. After a month or two, Donna improved and felt better than she had in eight years.

Another patient, Carol, illustrates this pattern. Six years ago her twenty-four-year marriage ended in a very bitter divorce. Four years ago, she was diagnosed with fibromyalgia. When she came to my clinic she had multiple complaints - fatigue, depression, muscle aches, insomnia, irritable bowel syndrome, and poor memory. She finds her job as a teacher to be very stressful these days. Carol’s tongue looked puffy, with indented tooth marks along the edges, a sign that her Spleen was not functioning well. When I checked her pulses, the Liver pulse felt wiry, and the Spleen pulse was weak. These signs indicated that Carol’s Liver Qi was stuck and was attacking her Spleen. As with Spleen Qi deficiency, Liver Qi stagnation can result from an improper diet, but in Carol’s case I felt the origin was emotional: a combination of stress and deep, unexpressed anger. True to form, Carol also reported that she often woke up early in the morning, experiencing intense dreams. In treating Carol’s condition, my goals were to regulate and move Liver Qi, harmonize the Liver and the Spleen, and nourish the Spleen so it could do its vital job of processing food into Qi and blood. She received bi-weekly acupuncture treatments, in conjunction with two Chinese herbal formulas: Shu Gan Wan, which breaks up Liver Qi stagnation; and Xiao Yao Wan, which is indicated when the Spleen is being affected by a dysfunctional Liver.

The length of time it takes for fibromyalgia patients to see results from acupuncture treatment depends on how serious the symptoms are, but most people notice improvement after six to eight treatments.
New Research on Acupuncture and COPD

By Changzhen Gong, Ph.D.

Scientific acupuncture research concentrates on two areas: laboratory studies to establish the mechanisms by which acupuncture works; and clinical trials to establish the conditions acupuncture can treat. A recently-published study in the Archives of Internal Medicine (Vol 172 (No. 11), June 11, 2012) is especially interesting because it is a well-designed clinical research study addressing the effectiveness of acupuncture in the treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The article, "A Randomized, Placebo-Controlled Trial of Acupuncture in Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Diseases: The COPD-Acupuncture Trial," was designed to assess how well acupuncture could manage dyspnea (shortness of breath) in COPD patients.

The COPD-Acupuncture Trial was conducted from July 1, 2006 to March 31, 2009 at the Graduate School of Medicine Kyoto University Hospital and three associated hospitals in Japan. Sixty-eight COPD patients were divided into two groups of 34, one of which received real acupuncture treatments, while the control group received placebo acupuncture treatments. A standard TCM-based, 11-point acupuncture prescription was used on all patients (LU 1, LU 9, LI 18, CV 4, CV 12, ST 36, KI 3, GB 12, BL 13, BL 20, and BL 23). Patients in the real acupuncture group received acupuncture treatment once a week for 12 weeks, and both groups took a daily medication. The primary assessment tool to evaluate improvement was the 6-minute walk distance (6MWD) test. Patient levels of dyspnea were evaluated on a 10-point scale of "breathing very well" to "severely breathless" before and immediately after the walk test. Secondary assessment measures included oxygen saturation levels during the walk test, forced expiratory volume, and a dyspnea-related quality of life questionnaire. Other outcome measures included the carbon-monoxide-diffusing capacity of the lung, residual lung volume and total capacity, arterial blood gasses, maximum inspiratory and expiratory mouth pressure, thorax mobility, and body mass index (BMI) and serum prealbumin levels.

Results of the study showed that the real acupuncture group’s Borg scale scores after the 6MWD test showed significant improvement in their breathing, while no improvement was seen in the placebo acupuncture group’s Borg scores. The real acupuncture group also showed better exercise tolerance and reduced dyspnea on exertion, and statistically significant improvements in nutritional status, arterial blood gasses, and range of motion in the rib cage. The study concluded that acupuncture is a useful adjunctive therapy in reducing dyspnea on exertion in patients with COPD, and that acupuncture is an important and effective non-pharmacological modality for COPD management.

The COPD-Acupuncture study suggested a possible mechanism that would explain the positive results of acupuncture treatment. As people with COPD struggle to breathe, their thoracic muscles are hyperactivated, becoming fatigued and shortened, and the ability of the rib cage to expand is constrained. Acupuncture may cause the thoracic muscles to relax, resulting in increased mobility of the rib cage and easier breathing.

Scientific research studies continue the process of demystifying acupuncture as a healing modality. The most direct way to integrate traditional Chinese medicine into the Western mainstream medical system is by following the Western paradigm of conducting rigorous clinical trials and finding rational mechanisms for the effectiveness of Chinese medicine modalities. The COPD study discussed here is especially useful because there is a clear distinction between the real acupuncture group’s measurable improvement, compared with no improvement in the placebo group.

AAAOM Presents
A FREE SEMINAR
By DR. ALSTON C. LUNDGREN
TREATING AGE-RELATED MACULAR DEGENERATION with ACUPUNCTURE

Wednesday, July 18, 2012
12:00 pm to 2:00 pm
1925 West County Road B2, Roseville, MN 55113

The Santa Fe Eye Protocol, which Dr. Lundgren will demonstrate, consists of three parts: 1) auricular acupuncture; 2) needling around the eyeball with electro-stim; 3) scalp acupuncture over visual cortex with electro-stim. With this Protocol, patients achieve measurable improvement of 85-93%, and Dr. Lundgren offers his patients a refund if they do not improve after four treatments.

Visit ReverseAMD.com for further information, including several papers in PDF format.
The Invisible Structure of the Human Body

By Yubin Lu, TCMD, Ph.D. (China), L.Ac.

In the West, as scientific instruments improved and as scientific inquiry became a predominant cultural value, doctors were able to examine and analyze every aspect of human anatomy. By now, the human body has been explored and diagrammed down to a cellular level. Medical students memorize all the bones and muscles and dissect hearts and kidneys as part of their preparation for medical practice.

In contrast, traditional Chinese medicine puts very little emphasis on anatomical knowledge. It knows that the heart is in the chest, and that it moves blood around the body, but textbooks do not discuss ventricles and atriums, arteries and capillaries. Instead, the heart is described as resembling an upside-down lotus seed pod, and is called the "ruler of blood." People who begin to study Chinese medicine often wonder why anatomical knowledge seems to be so limited, or why modern knowledge has not been incorporated into the TCM textbooks. Are the two systems of medicine so different that Chinese medicine cannot work with advanced anatomical knowledge? How can Chinese medicine diagnose and treat diseases without this knowledge?

Actually, a considerable amount of anatomical information was recorded in early Chinese medicine texts. The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine, written 2,600 years ago, states: "A six-foot man has skin, muscles, etc., that can be measured externally when he is alive, while his body can be opened and observed after his death. The internal organs are all different in size, weight and thickness." This shows that people had accumulated knowledge about gross human anatomy, including internal organs and tissues, from a fairly early stage of Chinese medicine. However, anatomical knowledge did not seem to progress over time. There was not a significant science-based advance in knowledge as there was in the West. Even today, when Chinese hospitals use all the latest scientific imaging technology, such as ultrasound and MRI scans, anatomy is still not emphasized in the study of Chinese medicine. Why is this?

Qi Theory
The answer to the questions posed above is not so much technical as philosophical, and goes to the heart of Chinese culture. As they explored nature and questioned man’s place in the order of things, ancient Chinese philosophers came to the conclusion that all visible things come from invisible sources. Since Chinese medicine is based in Chinese philosophy, it believes that the visible structure of the human body is only a container, and depends on invisible energy, or Qi, for its form.

In this context, "invisible" does not mean you cannot see it with your naked eye. "Visible" is defined as something with shape and size, while "invisible" means something without shape and size. According to Qi theory, which is the most important philosophical theory in Chinese culture, Qi (as energy or substance) is the basic universal substance that constitutes everything with shape or size. Qi is without border and size, and it is in constant movement. It is the movement of Qi that ultimately creates all the visible things which have sizes and shapes. The Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine states: "Visible things come from the gathering of Qi. Because visible things are differentiated based on their different appearances, they can be named differently." In other words, because Qi can move in many different patterns, it can create all kinds of different visible things. Visible things, including the human body and all its components, are therefore the result of particular patterns of Qi’s movement. These patterns of Qi’s movement determine all the perceived differences of the innumerable visible things. When Qi can consistently maintain a particular pattern of movement, a visible thing exists. When the Qi stops moving in the pattern required to maintain the existence of that visible thing, the visible thing ceases to exist. Following that line of thought, philosophers would say that any visible thing is only a place where Qi is maintaining a certain pattern of movement. Any visible thing has a beginning and an end, since Qi moves constantly, and the Qi constituting a visible thing communicates continuously with the Qi surrounding it.

Invisible Human Anatomy
The human body is part of nature, and is therefore a visible structure that is created and maintained by the movement of Qi. From this point of view, living beings are processes as much as they are structures, and it is the invisible process that creates the visible structure. So when ancient Chinese doctors tried to understand the mechanisms of the human body, they put the emphasis on what creates and supports the anatomical structure of the human body, rather than on the anatomical components themselves.

Continued on next page
They especially tried to define the specific patterns of Qi that create and maintain the body. That is why they went beyond the superficial structures of the internal organs and tissues, and discovered the pathways by which Qi moves through the body: the meridian system. Acupuncture treatment, which is unique to Chinese medicine practice, is based on meridian theory. Acupuncture points are specific places along the meridians where the energy and function of that meridian can be accessed. So acupuncture therapy is based on meridian theory, and meridian theory is based on Qi theory.

**The Mechanism of Life**

When Qi is moving in the proper pattern to create and sustain a particular life form, we call that process the life form's "mechanism of life." Chinese medicine has developed all its theoretical principles and therapeutic applications based on the ideal human mechanism of life. When the mechanism of life is normal as a result of normal Qi movement, we are healthy; if Qi movement is abnormal, we will be sick. When a Chinese medicine practitioner treats a disease, the first objective is to restore a normal flow of Qi. For example, if Qi is stuck, the treatment objective is to move it; if Qi is slow because it is cold, it is warmed; if Qi is moving recklessly, it is redirected or "smoothed." Any treatment modality used, whether it is acupuncture, an herbal formula, dietary modification, etc., produces its effect by working on the mechanism of life first. This principle can explain the seemingly contradictory fact that the same acupuncture point can produce opposite results in different patients. Acupoint PC 6 (Neiguan), located two finger breadths proximal to the wrist crease on the medial midline, can help both tachycardia and bradycardia; acupoint ST 36 (Zusanli), located one hand width distal to the lower border of the patella and one finger breadth lateral to the tibia, can treat both constipation and diarrhea. This is because PC 6 affects the mechanism of regulating the heart, and ST 36 affects the mechanism of regulating digestion.

And if a patient's mechanism of life is exhausted, it is possible that no treatment will work for him. For these people, *The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine* says, "their body and blood have been depleted." In other words, because the mechanism of life is so weak that it cannot respond to any treatment, no treatment will produce an effect.

**A Broad View of Internal Organs and Human Tissues**

According to Qi theory, each internal organ of the body is created and supported by its own specific form of Qi movement. Because movement is a primary characteristic of Qi, each kind of Qi circulates throughout the body, supporting not only its internal organ, but also the meridians, acupoints, and tissues which are associated with that internal organ. For example, Heart Qi supports the heart, and also flows through the two Heart meridians to the tongue, as well as manifesting at the Heart Point in the ear. We can say that the Heart organ is the primary gathering point for Heart Qi, while recognizing that Heart Qi also flows to many other areas and tissues of the body. Heart-related disorders can be diagnosed by looking at the tongue, and heart problems can be treated by needling acupoints along the Heart meridian, or the Heart Point in the ear. If Chinese medicine just focused on the internal organs as anatomical entities, and did not recognize the dynamic flow of organ Qi through the body, we would lose a unique, multifaceted way of perceiving the human body.

This discussion points out some fundamental differences between the Western medicine point of view and the Chinese medicine point of view. Western scientists who advanced the study of anatomy took the position that if you can't see it, measure it, and analyze it, it doesn't exist. For Chinese medicine practitioners, it is the invisible structure - the anatomy of energy - that is essential.
Minnesota is well-served by the acupuncturists at TCM Health Center clinics. With six convenient locations, TCM Health Center clinics are committed to providing high quality acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine at reasonable rates. Our practitioners are fully-licensed and highly-trained professionals who bring specialized knowledge and years of experience to bear on patient treatment. Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine are known to be exceptionally effective at addressing a variety of diseases, as well as being proven preventive medicine.

SIX CONVENIENT LOCATIONS

St. Louis Park: 3710 Grand Way, St. Louis Park, MN 55416 (952-746-7992)
Edina / Southdale: 6550 York Avenue S, Suite 111, Edina, MN 55435 (952-926-4011)
AAAOM Faculty / Interns: 1925 W County Road B2, Roseville, MN 55112 (651-631-0216)
Grand / St. Paul: 613 Grand Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55102 (651-726-2459)
Uptown / Kenwood: 2930 Emerson Avenue S, Suite B, Minneapolis, MN 55408 (612-823-6650)
University / Dinkytown: 1313 Fifth Street SE, Suite 212, Minneapolis MN 55414 (612-379-3583)

Visit AcupunctureMN.com for more information on conditions, services, practitioners, hours, locations and directions, and more.
Artemesia and Moxibustion: A Healing Warmth

By Thomas McCarty, L.Ac.

Among Western botanicals, the genus Artemisia is probably best known for the herb wormwood, the key ingredient of absinthe, the nineteenth century liqueur which has enjoyed a recent return of popularity. Since medieval times, monks, herbalists and physicians of all stripes cultivated wormwood for its powerful medicinal effects on digestion. The Artemisia family includes a large number of species, and many of these have found their way into the healing traditions of various cultures around the world. In Europe and North America, useful varieties of Artemisia include tarragon (A. dranunculus), wormwood (A. absinthum), and mugwort (A. vulgaris). In North America, desert sage (A. tridentata) is a native representative used as everything from a medicine to treat coughs, to a source of fiber for footwear.

In China, a handful of distinct Artemisia varieties are used in herbal medicine. The most important one, called Ai Ye in Chinese (pronounced aye yeh) (Artemesia argyi) is essentially a Chinese variety of common European wormwood. Traditional Chinese medicine uses A. argyi as a warming agent to treat painful conditions and to stop bleeding during pregnancy, among other things. It is also the herb burned in the Oriental medicine modality known as moxibustion. If you visit an acupuncture clinic and get a whiff of a strange, smoky odor, it is likely a smoldering moxa roll. The rolls are cigar-shaped cylinders compressed down from the leaves of Artemesia argyi.

This is how the therapy works. The TCM practitioner puts a flame to one end of the moxa roll until it forms an even-burning coal, then carefully moves the hot tip above the surface of the patient’s bare skin (see image). The objective is to warm and activate the patient’s meridians and acupoints, producing a strong sensation of warmth and local redness. There is no burning or scarring with this treatment. For patients who suffer from chilled extremities, poor digestion, or pain from menstrual cramps, for example, moxibustion therapy creates a deep-rooted feeling of warmth, both alleviating the symptoms and helping the body gain the strength to initiate healing. In cases of muscle strain or tension due to cold, tracing along the meridians (energy channels) with moxa has the effect of opening the meridians and restoring the proper flow of Qi (energy), thereby alleviating pain and stiffness.

Another application of moxa is called “warming needles.” This procedure involves burning miniature rolls of moxa fixed on the handle of an acupuncture needle set into an acupoint. This application is commonly used to intensify the tonifying effect of a particular acupoint, and creates a deep-rooted warm sensation even more focused than that achieved by the previously discussed use of the moxa roll. The practitioner should employ a protective shield of paper to keep any falling ashes from injuring the skin, and should also stay with the patient until the entire moxa plug is burnt and removed from the needle handle.

A third application is called "indirect moxa." With indirect moxa, pieces of a moxa roll or small amounts of raw moxa are set onto the skin over a therapeutic acupoint or area to be treated, with a disk of non-burning material between the skin and the moxa. The type of non-flammable material on which the moxa is set varies depending on the disease pattern: common materials are a thick slice of fresh ginger or garlic, or a pile of coarse salt. The moxa is lit and allowed to smolder down, again producing deep warmth and local redness. Indirect moxa is used to accentuate the warming quality of the treatment, to detoxify the area, or to direct the warming effect to a specific organ or tissue. Again, the practitioner should be in constant attendance throughout the treatment.

There are still further applications of this very useful modality: too many to elaborate on them all here. In my experience, though, moxibustion is effective treatment for a wide range of situations. It is entirely appropriate that the Chinese term “zhen jiu,” which is translated into English as ”acupuncture,” actually means "needle/moxibustion." If your acupuncturist treats you with moxibustion, you will be continuing the medical art’s long and colorful relationship with the clan of Artemesia.

Thomas McCarty is a 2010 graduate of AAAOM. He is currently practicing at Grand Avenue Natural Medicine Center (injuryhealing.com) in Saint Paul, MN.
Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS) affects an estimated 2% of the population. Pain is the most common symptom and is experienced throughout the body, in the muscles and joints, with extreme sensitivity to pressure. Other symptoms include fatigue, difficulty concentrating, insomnia, restless sleep, gastrointestinal difficulties, such as irritable bowel syndrome, and mood problems, such as depression and anxiety. Symptoms may come and go and be more or less severe.

So far Western medicine has no consistent theories as to why the disorder develops. The most common therapy is to offer pain medications and sleeping pills. An increasing number of fibromyalgia sufferers seek help from practitioners of acupuncture and Chinese medicine. In TCM theory, fibromyalgia can be seen as a form of Bi Syndrome, located at the muscular level. Bi Syndrome is a broad category of muscle and joint pain, including osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, rheumatism, etc. Pain is seen as a result of blockage or disruption of the normal flow of Qi within the body. The stagnation of Qi and blood that results in fibromyalgia symptoms is usually associated with disharmonies of the Liver, Spleen, Kidney and Heart organs.

Chinese medicine has a long history of successfully treating Bi Syndrome, and these therapies also work well with the "new" disease of fibromyalgia. Acupuncture, Chinese herbal formulas and dietary therapy are the most common treatment modalities, along with stress-reducing exercise regimens like Tai Chi and Qi Gong. Good nutrition is essential for anyone to be healthy, and is especially important for people who suffer from chronic conditions like fibromyalgia. Eating a diet based on whole foods and a variety of plants can greatly alleviate symptoms of fibromyalgia.

The following recipes are recommended to fibromyalgia patients. The lemon/chicken recipe emphasizes the principle of moving Qi and blood throughout the whole body to overcome stagnation. The lamb stew recipe tonifies blood and is warming in nature, for people whose pain is worse when it is cold.

Chicken with Four Roots and Lemon Sauce (Si Wu Ning Meng Ji Tang) Ingredients:
- Chuan Xiong (Rhizoma Ligustici) 5 grams
- Bai Shao (Radix Paeoniae Lactiflorae) 5 grams
- Lemon juice 1/2 lemon
- Sugar 1/2 cup
- Chicken breast (sliced) 5 breasts
- Eggs (beaten in a bowl) 2 raw eggs

Preparation:
1. Make a decoction of the four herbs (Dang Gui, Shu Di Huang, Chuan Xiong, Bai Shao): Cover herbs with cold water (approximately 3 cups) in a non-aluminum pan, bring to a boil, and simmer for 20 minutes. Strain liquid and discard herbs, leaving approximately 1 cup of liquid.
2. In a saucepan, mix herbal decoction liquid with lemon juice and sugar. Heat and stir.
3. Slice each chicken breast into 3-4 slices. Coat chicken slices with raw egg and dredge in flour.
4. Fry chicken slices in hot oil until golden brown and cooked through.
5. Arrange chicken in serving dish and cover with herb/lemon sauce.

Lamb Soup with Dang Gui (Dang Gui Sheng Jiang Yang Rou Tang) Ingredients:
- Dang Gui (Radix Angelicae Sinensis) 20 grams, sliced
- Sheng Jiang (Ginger) 30 grams, sliced
- Lamb meat, cubed 1 pound
- Cooking wine 3–4 Tablespoons
- Salt To taste

Preparation:
1. Blanch lamb cubes in boiling water for 30 seconds and discard water.
2. Place lamb in 5–6 cups boiling water, cook for 30 minutes.
4. After lamb has cooked 30 minutes, add herbs and cooking wine and cook together for additional 10 minutes.
5. Remove sliced herbs from soup.
6. Salt to taste.
7. Serve in bowls or over rice.

TCM Functions:
In these two formulas, the herb Dang Gui tonifies and invigorates blood; Chuan Xiong invigorates blood, promotes Qi movement, and alleviates pain; Shu Di Huang tonifies Liver and Kidney Qi, and nourishes Yin and blood; Bai Shao nourishes blood and preserves the Yin.
AAAOM Open Houses

Open Houses for prospective students will be held on July 15th and July 22nd from 2-5 p.m. Open House presentations are an excellent opportunity for prospective acupuncture students or anyone who is interested in exploring the field of acupuncture and Oriental medicine to obtain a lot of information in a short space of time. Read more on page 3, visit AAAOM.edu for full details and to RSVP, or call 651-631-0204 ext. 2 with any questions and to RSVP. We hope to see you there!

First Day of Fall Trimester

The first day of classes for 2012’s Fall Trimester will be Tuesday, September 4th. Applications are now being accepted and prospective students are encouraged to register soon. For application information, visit AAAOM.edu or call 651-631-0204 ext. 2. **AAAOM accepts applications year-round for trimesters beginning in September, January, and late April.**

Tai Chi and Healing Qi Gong Classes Open to the Public

To cultivate healthy lifestyles and healthy communities, the AAAOM Community Education program includes ongoing 12-week Tai Chi classes on Wednesdays from 6 to 8:30 p.m. beginning September 5th and 10-week Healing Qi Gong classes on Thursdays from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. beginning September 6th. For class and registration information, please call 651-631-0204 ext. 1.

2012 AAAOM Graduation Ceremony - Year of the Dragon

AAAOM is proud to graduate its tenth class. Twenty students took part in AAAOM’s traditional graduation ceremony on May 5th and received their well-earned diplomas in 2012 during the Year of the Dragon. Graduates below (pictured from left to right in red sashes): Front Row - Hui Yi, Janet Taterka, Sher Thao, Tou Lee Lor, Ann White Eagle, Katrina Kassler, Sarah Miklos, Shane Berquist, James Franco, Aimee Van Ostrand, Annie Lund, Kwao Ahelegbe, Sonia Even, Timothy Helland, and Zhenling Qu; Back Row - Tricia Mattson, Lisa Smyth, Garry Riedemann, Mai Lia Xiong, and Lue Thao. Graduates not pictured: Randall Bornemann, Corinne Ravenwald, and Susan Shurson.

**American Academy of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine**

1925 W County Rd. B2
Roseville, MN 55113

AAAOM offers a Master of Science degree in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, emphasizing both acupuncture and Chinese herbology, in addition to a certificate program in Tuina Chinese massage.

The focus is on ambition in this Year of the Dragon. Set your own rules for success, be willing to take risks and do things in grand fashion. Congratulations to all of our Graduates, and a special “thank you” to the Hua Yi Chinese Ensemble for the gift of music.