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Welcome to your course!

I'm so happy you're here, you have taken the first step to taking care of you!
The first step is often the hardest and scariest, don't fear, I am virtually here
to hold your hand through this process!

**Are you ready to reclaim your piece and create the life you want
to live?**



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Get To Know Nikki!



Meet Nikki, the founder and owner of EastWest Acupuncture, and the official Acupuncturist for the Minnesota Twins Baseball team! Nikki's path to acupuncture began when she confronted her own struggles with pain. Experiencing the transformative power of acupuncture as a patient not only changed her life but also sparked a deep passion for healing. Now, she's dedicated to helping others on their wellness journeys!

With 15 years of clinical experience under her belt, Nikki is all about Whole Body Health and improving lives through the incredible principles of Chinese Medicine. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Health Sciences and a Master's degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine from

Northwestern Health Sciences University. To further her expertise, she traveled to Tianjin Medical University, one of China's top medical colleges, where she focused on advanced training in pain management, neurological care, and stroke recovery.

Nikki's mission is to bridge the gap between Eastern and Western medicine, using acupuncture and Chinese medicine techniques to enhance her patients' quality of life. She believes that everyone deserves to feel their best!

Thank you for taking the step to show up for yourself! Nikki is excited to support you in your journey toward a healthier, happier life. Let's get started and make amazing things happen together!



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Understanding Traditional Chinese Medicine!

History of Traditional Chinese Medicine

The oldest ancient text that references acupuncture dates to 100 B.C., and other texts dating back to 600-500 B.C.

By the 1950s, Chinese hospitals started using acupuncture in conjunction with biomedical approaches. Modern research also began to examine acupuncture from a rational, scientific standpoint. By 1997, the National Institutes of Health recommended acupuncture as a complementary treatment. Since then, acupuncture has become the most popular alternative medicine in the US. In addition to acupuncture, we also incorporate other modalities, including herbal medicine, cupping, Tui Na, and food therapy.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, there are 14 meridians that governs all functions of the body. Meridians governs local functions, organ systems, neurological functions, seasons, times of day, emotions, tastes, and many other functions. There are hundreds of acupuncture points located along the meridians. They are informational points that stimulate the healing process.

This meridian system is a different model than the reductive, Western biological model and is holistic in nature. In TCM, dysfunction and disease are not a result of pathology. Instead, imbalances in Qi and other energetic systems lead to health problems.



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What is Qi



Qi is the vital energy that powers our body, moving blood, hormones, oxygen, and more. It is not a mystical force, but the essential flow of energy that supports health, healing, learning, and overall well-being.

Qi is the flow of energy in the body, and when it becomes stagnant, the body becomes more vulnerable to illness, injury, or disease. It is measurable, and modern research views it as a form of energy that can be studied and understood.

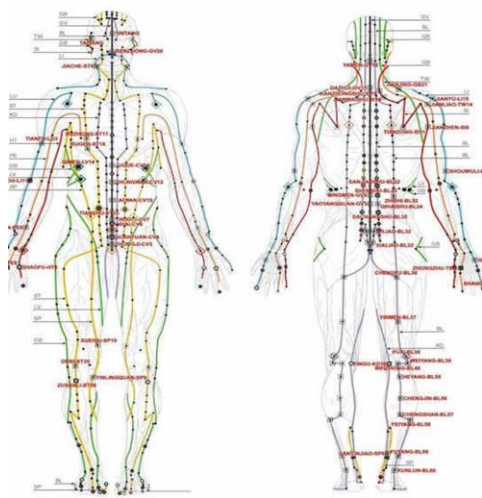
"Qi is the breath of life, the wind that moves the mountains, the river that nourishes the land. Without it, the body is a tree without roots, a flame without light." –
Laozi (Tao Te Ching)



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The Meridian System

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) is a holistic healing system that incorporates the concept of the Meridian system, which was developed thousands of years ago. The Meridian system is a non-physical network that links various parts of the body, much like longitude and latitude lines guide planes, trains, and ships. This system connects the entire body, though it is not tied to any specific part, but instead regulates the overall balance of the body's functions.



There are 14 different meridians, each associated with a specific organ, bodily function, or neurological process. These meridians govern everything from the digestive system to the parasympathetic nervous system, even down to the toenails. Meridians help maintain health by ensuring balance and responding to both environmental and physiological changes.

The flow of energy, or Qi, within the meridians is vital to health, and blockages or disruptions in this flow—akin to traffic jams—can lead to illness, injury, or disease. A blockage in one meridian can cause a ripple effect, creating disruptions in others and resulting in multiple symptoms. Thus, the Meridian system plays a crucial role in TCM's approach to maintaining overall health.

The Meridian system in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) not only governs our physical health but also our emotional well-being. Each meridian is linked to a specific emotion, and unacknowledged or unprocessed emotions can lead to disruptions, or "traffic jams," in the meridian system, which may result in physical health issues. From a TCM perspective, it's essential to address both physical and emotional health to maintain overall wellness.

Meridians are also associated with different seasons, and emotional states, like those seen in Seasonal Affective Disorder or the physical sensations we experience when excited or nervous (e.g., "butterflies" or nausea), are governed by specific meridians. Furthermore, meridians influence the body's natural rhythms, including peak energy times and periods of fatigue throughout the day.



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Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a holistic therapy that draws upon the intricate systems of the body to restore balance, alleviate pain, reduce inflammation, and promote overall well-being. Though acupuncture points are not part of our conventional anatomical structure, they play a vital role in guiding our body's healing process. These points exist along the Meridian system, an ancient map of energy pathways that correspond to various bodily functions and areas of health.

At its core, acupuncture works by addressing blockages within the body, which can manifest as pain, inflammation, or dysfunction. By inserting ultra-thin needles into specific acupuncture points, practitioners aim to disperse these blockages, effectively guiding the body's innate healing mechanisms. This process stimulates various aspects of our body, including *Qi*, our vital life force, which is integral to our energy flow and overall health.

The stimulation of acupuncture points extends beyond energy; it influences the fascia, a connective tissue that surrounds muscles and organs. By subtly shifting signals from the brain, acupuncture encourages circulation, reduces pain, and promotes healing. It activates the body's ability to restore balance through natural mechanisms, such as enhancing blood flow, modulating pain responses, and supporting the immune system.

In addition to its physical effects, acupuncture also influences the nervous system, specifically the parasympathetic and sympathetic systems, which are responsible for regulating essential functions such as digestion, respiration, and sleep. By stimulating these systems, acupuncture helps restore homeostasis—an optimal state of balance for the body's functions.

Ultimately, acupuncture points, while not part of our anatomical structure, serve as key reference points that connect our body's energy systems to the physical and biological processes that allow healing to occur. The gentle yet powerful stimulation of these points helps guide the body back to health, fostering recovery and ensuring that we have the ability to heal naturally.



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Herbal Medicine



Traditional Chinese herbal medicine, which has been practiced for thousands of years, often faces skepticism, with many people feeling hesitant about using it. However, it's important to recognize that many modern medications, like aspirin, are derived from herbal sources. For example, Hippocrates used willow bark to treat fevers. Chinese herbal medicine uses a combination of plants, minerals, and other natural substances to create therapeutic formulas for healing. It's time to move past the fear and embrace the natural, time-tested benefits of herbal medicine.

Chinese herbal formulas function similarly to vitamins, like how we take vitamin C to support our immune system without fully understanding how it works. These herbal formulas work within the meridian system to help balance and heal the body naturally. Each meridian is associated with a specific taste, such as sweet, salty, bitter, spicy, or bland, and each herbal formula is crafted to reflect these tastes. For example, if there is a Qi blockage in a meridian governed by the spicy or bitter taste, an herbal formula with those specific properties will be used to help clear the blockage and promote healing. This approach aligns the body's natural systems for recovery and balance.

Chinese herbal formulas are generally very safe. Most practitioners of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), including acupuncturists, use a database that cross-references any medications or supplements you're taking to ensure there are no harmful interactions with herbal formulas. These formulas have been used for thousands of years, and the safety of their use is well-established.

If you have any questions, please email our practitioners at Admin@tmceastwest.com



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Cupping



Fire cupping is a traditional Chinese medicine technique that uses glass cups, rather than plastic, for easier sanitation. The cups are applied to the body to create suction, which helps release tension in the fascia, the connective tissue surrounding muscles.

This technique improves blood flow, reduces inflammation, alleviates pain, and promotes the body's healing process by opening up the fascia and relieving deep muscle tension.

Marks on the body from fire cupping or similar practices are not trauma bruises. They result from suction, which helps draw lactic acid and other cellular debris to the surface, allowing the body to release and eliminate these substances through the skin.

Fire cupping offers several benefits, including reduced muscle tension, improved blood flow, decreased inflammation, pain relief, and the potential to alter fascia memory cells, helping prevent the recurrence of muscle tension.



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Tui Na



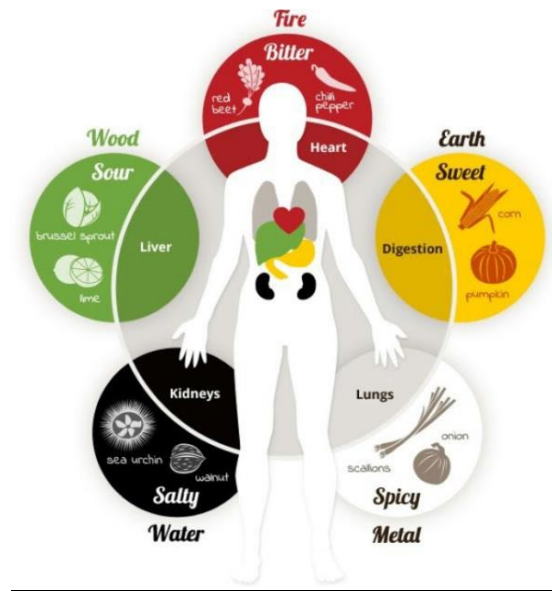
Tui Na is a form of therapeutic massage in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) that involves various techniques, including kneading, rolling, pressing, and rubbing, to stimulate the flow of Qi (energy) and blood throughout the body. It aims to balance the body's energy, relieve pain, and treat a wide range of musculoskeletal and internal conditions. Tui Na is often used alongside other TCM treatments like acupuncture and herbal medicine to promote healing and overall well-being.

Tui Na targets specific points on your body, much like acupuncture. Instead of using needles, practitioners use their fingers to work your muscle trigger points. It works on a deeper level than a traditional massage, because not only does it target your muscles, but it also helps balance the emotional and physical components of your body to support your overall well-being.



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Food Therapy

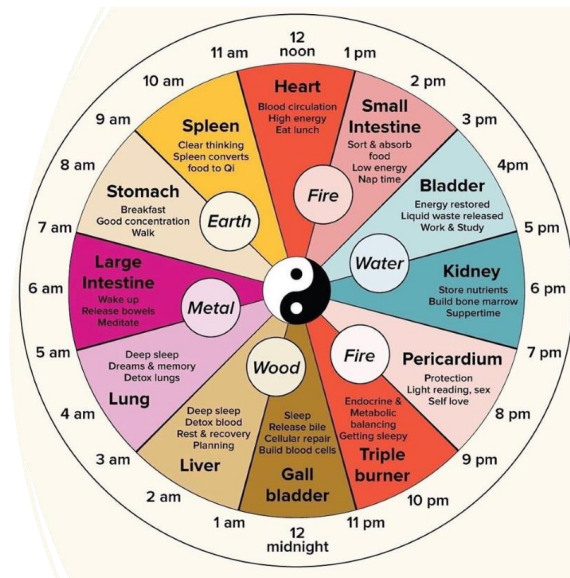


In Chinese medicine, food is viewed as a form of therapy, just as important as herbal medicine. Using the meridian system, practitioners identify imbalances and prescribe foods to address those specific issues. Since every body and condition is unique, dietary recommendations are tailored to individual needs. For example, someone with constipation or dry stools would be advised to avoid hot, spicy foods, which could worsen dryness and heat. Chinese medicine food therapy considers each person's specific condition when making dietary suggestions.



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Chinese Meridian Body Clock



The traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) meridian body clock plays a key role in understanding various patient conditions from a TCM perspective. It links the body's energy flow through meridians to specific times of day, helping practitioners diagnose and treat illnesses based on when symptoms occur. This clock reflects the body's natural rhythms and imbalances, offering insights into health issues and guiding personalized treatments.



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Whole Body Health

Whole body health emphasizes the interconnectedness of all physical systems within the body. When you experience pain, it's essential to consider not just the affected area but also how it relates to your overall well-being.

For instance, TCM practitioners often inquire about your sleep patterns, emotional state, digestion, and even whether you tend to feel hot or cold. This whole body approach helps to uncover underlying issues that might contribute to your discomfort. Pain in a specific area can be indicative of imbalances in related meridians, offering valuable insights into your body's broader health landscape.

TCM practitioners also use pulse and tongue diagnosis to guide their treatment strategies. There are three different pulse positions on each wrist used to indicate imbalances in each of the meridians. Practitioners feel for the rate, depth, and quality of your pulse to determine if your specific concerns are a result of one or more meridians having an excess or deficiency of qi flowing through it. Tongue diagnosis provides a map of the meridian system on the surface of the tongue. Providers look at the shape, color, coating, and moisture content of the tissue of the tongue to confirm their suspicions about which meridians are involved in your health concerns.

By understanding these connections, practitioners can create a more effective treatment plan that addresses not just the symptoms, but also the root causes, ultimately promoting comprehensive healing and wellness.

Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine are integral to the concept of whole body health, as they view the body as a complex system of interrelated parts. In this tradition, health is seen as a balance of energy, or "qi," flowing through the meridians that connect the various organs and functions.

When this flow is disrupted, it can lead to pain, illness, and emotional distress. Acupuncture works by stimulating specific points along these meridians, restoring balance and encouraging the body's natural healing processes. Additionally, practitioners may incorporate herbal remedies, dietary recommendations, and lifestyle adjustments to support overall wellness between your acupuncture treatments. By



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addressing not just the symptoms but also the underlying imbalances, acupuncture and Chinese Medicine promote a holistic approach to health, encouraging both physical and emotional harmony.

This comprehensive perspective allows for a deeper understanding of how various aspects of life—such as stress, nutrition, and sleep—interact and impact overall Well-being.

Traditional Chinese medicine considers both external and internal factors in the creation of an individual's diagnosis. The current emotional state of the patient is one internal factor that traditional Chinese medicine believes to be very important.

In fact, emotions are believed to directly correlate to specific organs and their states of being.

Understanding Your Body Journal Exercise

Learn how to connect your emotional and physical health. It can be hard to truly identify what we are feeling which can make it easier for us to ignore it. It is important to learn to recognize the emotional and physical signals our bodies are giving and bring those to the surface.

Over the next week, every night before bed, lay down, take a deep breath and check in with yourself. Take note of how you are feeling emotionally and physically and think about how those “separate” feelings may actually be connected in your body. Log these in the chart below.

Thank you, for the time you are putting into YOU!
Sending love ~

EastWest Connections Team