

What is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)?

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) goes back over 3,000 years. It was not developed by any particular individual; rather it grew out of the necessity of maintaining good health among Chinese people.

The ancient Chinese, like all of us, had to struggle against diseases in order to stay in good health. In the process, they came to see the benefits of consuming herbs (known as Chinese Herbology today),



inserting needles in the body along found pressure points (known as acupuncture today), eating the right foods (known as Eastern Nutrition today), massaging the body (known as Tuina, a form of Chinese manipulative therapy or 'Shiatsu',

Japanese form of applying pressure to acupressure points) and exercising the body (known as qi-gong and tai-ji/Tai'Chi).

Today, TCM is practiced in China and Japan, side by side modern Western medicine.

When you go to see a doctor of TCM, the doctor will

observe your complexion and look at your tongue, take your pulse and ask you many questions about your symptoms, your eating habits and your food preferences. Then the doctor will develop a diagnosis of what is wrong with your body and tell you whether you need a therapeutic massage, acupuncture or herbs and what foods are good for you.

Oriental medicine sees the human being as inseparable, one, without divisions between mind, body, and soul. The body-mind is considered a whole construct. Its parts are inseparable from the functioning of the whole organism in its environment.

At the SSC we train students in the two styles of acupuncture:

Traditional Chinese Medicinal Acupuncture and Japanese Acupuncture.



What is Traditional Chinese Medicinal (TCM) Acupuncture?

Classical Chinese acupuncture lays its foundation on the meridian system, a networked energy pathway of the body. This system connects Zang-fu organs and circulates Qi and blood. Every organ network has a corresponding meridian line and the Qi-energy flows through the body just as rivers and streams flow across the surface of the earth. From a TCM perspective, ailments or disorders are generally perceived as imbalances of the body's Yin-Yang and Qi-blood or blockage of some specific meridians are caused by harmful influences and/or various pathological reasons. Acupuncture needling techniques in combination with other therapeutic techniques such as Tui Na or shiatsu, eastern dietary nutrition and herbal theories can help the body clear the blockage and restore the balance.

What is Tui Na?

Tui Na is a form of massage that originated from TCM. Therapists use arms, hands, fingers, knees and elbows for the treatment of illness and disease and for the overall maintenance and promotion of health. In a Tui Na treatment, the therapist manipulates the body stimulating acupuncture points to correct physiological imbalances and regulate the body's energy or qi. Tui Na is useful in treating soft tissue injuries, blood circulation issues, rheumatic pain, fatigue, and any symptoms caused by stress or emotional problems.

What is Japanese Meridian Acupuncture?

The Japanese meridian system of acupuncture was developed within the last century about the same time as TCM in China. Its theoretical foundation is derived from the medical classics - the Su Wen, Ling Shu and Nan Jong. Many practitioners of meridian therapy in Japan are blind, and based on their heightened sense of touch have developed extremely delicate needling techniques based on touch and pulse diagnosis to correct the circulation of Ki in the 12 meridians. The emphasis in this system is on having the practitioner feel and correctly interpret the response of the Ki in the patient in relation to using pulse diagnosis for immediate feedback for every aspect of practice (point location, point selection, needle technique, etc.)

What is Shiatsu?

Shiatsu is deeply rooted in TCM (over 3,000 years old). This form of therapeutic massage uses a unique holding technique on specific acupressure points. Therapists commonly use palms, fingers, thumbs and elbows along with a variety of stretches that help stimulate the nervous system which then stimulates the body to rebalance itself in a healing fashion. The skilled therapist chooses the appropriate technique according to the degree of pressure required and the physical condition of the client. Shiatsu is a preventive form of holistic therapy for maintaining and/or improving ones' overall level of health.