

Chinese Herbal Medicine



Chinese herbal medicine uses a variety of herbs, in different combinations, to restore balance to the body. Herbal preparations can prevent and treat hormonal disturbances, infections, breathing disorders, and a vast number of other ailments and diseases. In China, there are over 3,000 herbs, 300 minerals and animal extracts, over 400 formulas are used. Herbal formulations may consist of 4 to 12 different ingredients, to be taken in the form of teas, powders, pills, tinctures, or syrups. Chinese herbal formulas are made up of one or two major herbs that have the greatest effect on the problem being treated. The other herbs in the formula treat minor aspects of the problem, direct the formula to specific parts of the body, and help the other herbs work more synergistically together.

In the United States, Chinese herbs and herbal formulas are rigorously tested for pesticides, heavy metals and other toxins before and after being manufactured. They cost more than the herbal formulas that are manufactured in China but have proven to be safer for the consumer.

Before choosing a mixture of herbs for a patient, the traditional Chinese practitioner will typically ask about symptoms and examine the patient, often focusing on the skin, hair, tongue, eyes, pulses, and voice, in order to detect imbalances in the body.

Chinese herbal medicine is a major aspect of Traditional Chinese Medicine, which focuses on restoring a balance of energy in the body, mind and spirit to maintain health. Herbs are used with the goal of restoring balance by nourishing the body.

In Chinese medicine there can be 4 to 6 different syndromes for one disease. As an example, if someone had a common cold or flu like symptoms there could be 5 different patterns seen. They are Wind-cold, Wind-heat, Damp-heat, Qi deficiency and Lung Yin deficiency. Each pattern has its own set of symptoms so each pattern would be treated with different herbal combinations and with different acupuncture points.