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Traditional Chinese Medicine: Ancient Paths / Modern Practice.

Ancient Heritage

Traditional Chinese medicine is a discipline dealing with human physiology and pathology, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases. It is an integrated system with an ancient history and is an important part of Chinese cultural history. Traditional Chinese medicine has contributed a great deal to the modern world in terms of the promotion of health and how we view illness.

The first medical textbook, known as the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine, was written over 2,000 years ago. The book's outline consists of the concept of wholeness, the theory of Yin/Yang, five element interactions, meridian and collateral-channel theory, and internal organ patterns, along with other key ideas. In addition, it sets down the foundation of clinical medicine and contains discussion of 225 internal diseases, 36 gynecological diseases, 32 ophthalmological (eye) diseases, 34 otorhinolaryngological diseases (eyes and larynx), 17 surgical diseases, and 12 pediatric diseases, as well as medicinal herbal prescriptions.

First Medical School

In 443 A.D., the Imperial Medical Bureau was established and by 907 it was very complete. With its educational institute and medical facilities, it was the earliest medical school in the world. It had an acupuncture department, a tuina department, and a medical department consisting of pediatrics, internal medicine, dermatology, surgery, and specialists in eyes, and ears, etc.

During the Song dynasty (960-1279), gynecology and obstetrics were added.

Modern Practice

As a reference text, the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Medicine is still a major part of traditional Chinese medicine study. During their initial five years of training, in addition to studying this ancient classic, students of traditional Chinese medicine will take 20-30% of their course hours in Western medicine training in conjunction with 70%-80% that they take in traditional Chinese medicine. Training in traditional Chinese medicine includes traditional Chinese medicine foundation study in theory, the classics, diagnosis, pathology and etiology. The doctor of traditional Chinese medicine will also study the basic sciences, which include biology, biochemistry, anatomy, physiology, public health nutrition, and the philosophy of health. All of this is in addition to the study of acupuncture and moxibustion, Chinese herbs, tuina, dietary therapy, tai chi, and qi gong.

In an effort to explain the hows and whys of Traditional Chinese Medicine, modern scholars are adding to this ancient body of knowledge with research into neurotransmitters, electromagnetic energy, plant chemistry, and other fields.

In 1958, in China, doctors were successful in using acupuncture anaesthesia for the first time in a tonsillectomy. Since that time it has proven successful, as an addition to traditional anaesthesia, in more than 100 types of major operations, from simple to highly complex cases such as cardiac surgery under extra corporeal conditions.

In 1979, the World Health Organization formally decided that acupuncture (and moxibustion) can be used for treating 43 diseases.

A look through some of the topics being published in the leading Traditional Chinese Medicine medical journal, *Journal of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine*, reveals a surprising variety of subjects from the study of acupuncture applied to optic atrophy, and postmenopausal osteoporosis, to the advances in the treatment of blood disorders, coronary heart disease and neurological diseases.

Today's Health Care

Today the China Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine (Minneapolis and St. Paul) carries on this tradition of care and knowledge in traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture, Chinese herbs, and traditional Chinese dietary therapy with doctors who are graduates of Chinese medical schools who are specialists in all aspects of traditional Chinese medicine: doctors with many years of practice.

Dr. Zhuoling Ren has over 20 years of training and clinical experience in Traditional Chinese Medicine. In addition to having been a professor at the China Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine in Beijing and head of the acupuncture department at Xiyuan Hospital, also in Beijing, she was assigned by the Chinese government to lead the teaching and supervising at the Acupuncture Center at Sarajevo (former Yugoslavia). In addition to many other activities, Dr. Ren was the editor of the acupuncture section of the *Journal of Integrated Chinese and Western Medicine*, the leading medical research journal of traditional Chinese medicine, in Beijing.

The China Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine is a full-service clinic providing sophisticated Traditional Chinese Medicine health care. For more information or to schedule a consultation, call the China Institute of Traditional Chinese Medicine at 651-222-1200 (St. Paul) or 612-827-7908 (Minneapolis).