



TCM NEWSLETTER

Issue 4 - Autumn 2010

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Get ready for Autumn



A new season is approaching and the days are getting shorter and cooler. Following on the good tradition of

TCM as a preventative medicine, you should now be looking at boosting your immune system.

This issue will explain some of the benefits of TCM treatment for improving your health to help dealing with the mentioned season ailments.

Asthma, fibromyalgia and migraine are also discussed to understand how can TCM be used to help with their treatment.

New logo, new look!

We would like to introduce and explain our new logo - the Chinese Sacred Tortoise.

In ancient China, the Sacred Tortoise was also called Divine Tortoise or Efficacious Tortoise and was always paid great respect.

Of the Four Chinese Sacred Animals, only the Sacred Tortoise is real and it is considered the longest lived among the animals and can foretell the future.

The Tortoise's stone or bronze carvings and statues were found in the ancient royal palaces, Emperor's tombs and common people's houses. It symbolizes the age-long of the Chinese Empire, the brightness and knowledge.

The Chinese people regard it as the symbol of longevity and we at TCM Ireland strive to pass on that hope of longevity to everyone visiting our clinics.



TCM Ireland - About us

Hello and welcome to the new edition of our TCM newsletter. Our names are Siobhán Seville and Sandro Graça and we are the founders of TCM Ireland. Before anything else, we would like to thank everyone that has helped with this project so far and also everyone else that has given us the feedback from our previous edition.

We are practitioners of TCM - Traditional Chinese Medicine and we run clinics in Dublin and Meath.

We have studied and worked in Ireland, the UK and in China and we are both fully qualified, registered and insured practitioners, recognized by Vhi Healthcare, Quinn Healthcare and Hibernian Aviva.

We aim to provide practical and easy understanding information about TCM - the different therapies that are part of it, how they work, and how they are used in the clinic for your benefit. We hope you enjoy it!



Sandro and Siobhán on the Great Wall of China

What is TCM?

TCM is made up of different therapies: acupuncture, tuina massage, medical qigong, herbal medicine, moxibustion, cupping, dietary therapy, exercise, life-style advice.



Siobhán working in the Wang Jing Hospital in Beijing

In Ireland, acupuncture is probably the best-known and most used medical therapy of TCM but the other therapies can also be used in the clinic for the benefit of the patient.

Treatments are specific to each individual and therefore similar problems in different people may well require very different treatments.

The first consultation takes approximately one hour and this will consist of an in-dept evaluation of the presenting condition and a full medical history.

An examination of the tongue and the pulse will be carried out and a brief physical examination, where necessary.

Although some people will experience the changes in their condition straight after the initial treatment, we recommend that you should follow it up with at least a few more sessions to achieve longer lasting benefits.

Does acupuncture hurt?

The acupuncture needles themselves are very fine (0.30mm or less), unlike the needles used for injections and blood tests (0.50mm or more).

There is little sensitivity to the insertion of acupuncture needles.

The more relaxed (not tensing the skin) the patient is, the less will he or she feel from the insertion of the needle(s).

While some people feel nothing at all, others experience a brief moment of discomfort as the needle penetrates the skin.

That can be followed by a mild sensation of tingling, numbness, dull ache, or heaviness.

The needles are left in place for about twenty minutes.

Most people find this experience extremely relaxing and some people even fall asleep for the duration of the treatment.

Some of the sensations might last for a while (even after the treatment is over) but different people will experience this in different ways.



Sandro getting an acupuncture treatment at the Guo Yi Tang Clinic in Beijing

Acupuncture around the world

These days, TCM is regulated and practiced safely all over the world - but there is one place that gives it more exposure: Hollywood.



In a testimonial from Jim Carrey, he said that *"undergoing acupuncture treatments with Dr. Mao (his TCM practitioner) and following his nutritional advice has led to a marked change in my physical vitality and my general state of well-being."*

Gwyneth Paltrow, Elle Macpherson, Kate Winslet, Kate Moss, Madonna, Sheryl Crow, Jennifer Aniston, Lucy Liu, Neve Cambell and Cher are just some that have used acupuncture to help them with their health ailments.

Celine Dion got pregnant with twins with the help of acupuncture alongside IVF treatment after years of trying to conceive.

Recently, Sandra Bullock availed of regular acupuncture sessions while she was coping with her personal problems.

Even Oprah Winfrey talked about having received acupuncture treatment - on national TV - helping millions of Americans to become more aware of TCM.

According to a U.S. National Health Interview Survey, an estimated 8.2 million adults there have used acupuncture last year, up from 2.1 million from the previous year.

Seasonal ailments - the common cold and the flu



The common cold and the flu (influenza) are both respiratory illnesses with similar symptoms - the main difference between them is the severity of the symptoms.

Flu symptoms generally come on quickly and severely while the common cold symptoms are generally more mild.

On average, an adult will catch two to four colds per year.

There are over 200 different viruses that cause colds but there are not as many that can cause the flu.

The TCM view

There is an old TCM saying: *"treat a cold with TCM and it will go away in five days; leave it alone and it will go in seven days."* Another quote from an old TCM book states that *"only unhealthy people get sick"*.

The Chinese culture puts a lot of importance on the "staying healthy" aspect of medicine and throughout the centuries of using TCM they have found that prevention of illness is better (and easier) than trying to treat a condition once it "enters your body".

As we prepare to enter the colder months of autumn and winter, our bodies will have to adapt to these changes and will be more exposed to the viruses.

Staying healthy with TCM

"Staying healthy" should be seen as "maintenance" - we all service our cars so that it doesn't break down; we know that before the winter starts we need to service our boiler to avoid breakdowns during the extreme weather ahead.

So, what about our bodies? If we are "serviced" regularly, we will be healthy and strong to fight the viruses - before they get in!



TCM for the prevention and treatment of colds and flu

The different therapies of TCM will be tailored to the individual's needs in order to help rebalance energy, regulate the Qi and stimulate the immune system.

TCM can relieve the symptoms of a cold or flu and can also strengthen the immune system to prevent them reoccurring in the future.

Clinical studies have demonstrated that **acupuncture** and **herbal medicine** reduce the incidence of upper respiratory tract infection and shorten the length of time one is ill. **Cupping** is used on the upper back to move lung congestion and **herbal prescriptions** are adaptable to your specific symptoms.

When you get sick with the cold/flu, do not wait! Start acupuncture treatments in the early stages - to reduce fever, release the exterior, open the chest, open the sinuses, and decrease muscle aches and pains.

The benefits of drinking tea

Tea is the most commonly consumed beverage in the world after water. Whether it is black, green or red (oolong) tea, they all contain polyphenols which give tea its antioxidant properties. Antioxidants may help protect our body from free radical damage.

Like fruit and vegetables and other nutritional foods, the tea's positive contribution to diet must be seen in the context of a general healthy lifestyle.

At this stage, it is worth while stressing again that a difference exists between tea, as produced by the 'Tea Bush' (White, Green, Black and Oolong teas) and herbal teas (Tisanes) such as Nettle Leaves, Chamomile or Peppermint because all of them have their own unique properties.

Tisanes can refill the liquid resources in our bodies and provide additionally important minerals, tanning agents and vitamins for everybody, regardless of age. They can be a tasty compliant alternative for drinking simply water.



An Ancient Chinese Legend:

"Once there was a man who knew 100,000 healing properties of herbs. He taught his son 80,000 secrets. On his deathbed, he told his son to visit his grave in five years, and there he would find the other 20,000 secrets. When his son went to his father's grave, he found, growing on the site the tea shrub..."



The primary properties of tea leaves are tannins which yield the colour, strength, body and taste that is present in tea after it is processed. The processing done to the tea leaves in making the different types of tea (white, green, oolong and black) will affect the chemical and therefore medical properties of the tea.

It is believed the more fermented the leaves, the weaker the medicinal nature. Therefore it is believed White and Green teas will be the strongest medicinally followed by Oolong and Black teas.

The secret of white and green tea lies in the fact that they are rich in catechin polyphenols, particularly epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) which is a powerful anti-oxidant.

Steamy Tea - quality loose leaf tea

Get
Steamy
you relax, we deliver

'Steamy tea' was established in the spring of 2007 to promote and sell really good quality loose leaf tea. For more details about different teas or to order, please visit www.steamytea.ie

Migraine

A huge portion of the population, males and females alike suffer from quite painful, very uncomfortable and sometimes even debilitating headaches which are accompanied by nausea, vomiting, and sensitivity to light, noise, and smell. This particular type of headache is called "migraine".

These throbbing headaches usually occur on only one side of the head, although the pain can shift from one side of the head to the other, or can occur on both sides at the same time.

A migraine typically lasts 4 to 24 hours but in some cases can last up to 3 days. Some people have symptoms that occur before a headache starts, such as visual disturbances (also known as "aura").

Most people know how difficult it is to cope with a "normal" headache and for those who suffer from "full blown" migraines life can be a struggle.



Treatment of migraine

Western medicine treatment usually includes long-term medication in order to prevent a migraine from occurring or to stop a migraine once it begins. For most migraine sufferers there is no recognizable pattern to the onset - it can start anywhere, at any time.

In some cases, women notice a higher incidence of migraines around certain stages of the menstrual cycle because of the hormonal changes. Migraine is a condition very particular to the individual and therefore the treatment must reflect this.

Migraine Association of Ireland



The The Migraine Association of Ireland (MAI) is a registered charity dedicated to improving the quality of life for the 12-15% of our population who suffer from migraine.

The aim of the MAI is to provide information, support and reassurance to migraine sufferers and those with any other headache disorders.

Information is also on offer to the families and friends of migraineurs and to medical professionals. The MAI also raises awareness of migraine throughout Irish society in general, as well as in the health professional sector.

Callsave Helpline: 1850 200 378

Specialist Nurse Advice line: 01 797 9848

e-mail: info@migraine.ie

Benefits of TCM treatment for migraines

Several medical studies have been published showing that TCM (particularly acupuncture) is very effective for migraine prevention.

The TCM treatment is aimed at resolving the underlying problems that may be the trigger or the contributing factor to the migraine occurrence.

Prevention is always the key factor with TCM, but for those visiting the clinic during the migraine attack, they will find that especially acupuncture can have effective results for reducing the pain.

- ☯ Provides effective pain relief
- ☯ Harmonizes blood circulation in the body - particularly the head
- ☯ Alleviates nausea
- ☯ Improves the quality of life
- ☯ Decreases the use of medication
- ☯ Has no side effects
- ☯ Reduces "sick days" off work / school
- ☯ Long lasting results



TCM treats migraines by relieving the pain and tension, therefore relaxing the body and muscles so that the energy (Qi) and Blood (Xuè) can flow freely.

A word of caution

Even though sometimes TCM treatments can provide somewhat "miraculous" results, **no one should expect that only one treatment will resolve a serious condition** such as migraine.

If you are a migraine sufferer, a suitable treatment plan needs to be discussed with your practitioner to meet your specific needs.

TCM Ireland and the treatment of migraine - on TV3 this Autumn



Blind Faith Productions aims to deliver a groundbreaking new lifestyle series that will encourage Irish people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing in a fun and entertaining manner.

With this aim in mind, "How Healthy Are You?" was born and with the support of their sponsor (Kelkin) they have produced the show that will be on TV3's Autumn schedule, presented by Elsa Jones.

TCM for the treatment of migraines will be featured in episode 3 when the crew visits Sandro's clinic to see a treatment for a migraine sufferer.

Visit their website at: www.howhealthyareyou.ie

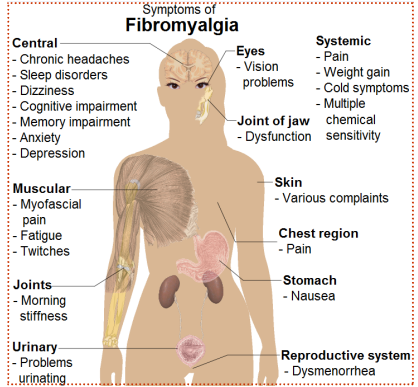
What is Fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia is a condition that causes widespread muscle and soft tissue pain and tenderness, especially in the trunk, neck, and shoulders.

The pain of fibromyalgia can often be severe enough to disrupt a person's daily work and activities. It tends to be seen predominantly in women but can occur in men, and in all age groups.

In the past, many patients were often labelled as "neurotic" because of their unexplained symptoms.

While as yet there is no known medical cure for fibromyalgia, there is a lot that people with this condition can do to improve the quality of their life.



How can TCM help people with fibromyalgia?

The different therapies of TCM can be used to deal with the wide range of symptoms that are commonly associated with fibromyalgia.

Acupuncture, tuina massage, cupping, dietary therapy, herbal medicine and exercise (qi gong/tai chi) can be used together or on their own, depending on the individual and the stage of the fibromyalgia.

TCM can be used safely alongside other medical treatments.

TCM treatment

Acupuncture - many medical studies have proven how effective acupuncture is dealing with pain. It can be used at specific areas of the body or for overall pain and/or fatigue.

Tuina massage - to release tension and increase the body's circulation of Qi, Xuè (Blood) and nutrients. The massage will be adapted to the individual's constitution and will help to unblock the stiffness in the muscles and the joints.

Chinese herbal medicine - TCM herbal prescriptions are used to treat the underlying imbalances in the body. There are also external prescriptions (creams and oils) that can be used by the person at home.

Cupping - to relieve / release discomfort in the body. Commonly used on tight and/or knotted muscles, aching joints, swellings and specific areas of pain.

Exercise: Qi Gong and/or Tai Chi - these gentle exercises can be used to optimize the flow of Qi and blood in the body, and therefore increasing the range of movement and relaxing the muscles and the joints.

The New England Journal of Medicine (USA) recently published the results of their clinical trials on using Tai Chi as an effective therapy for fibromyalgia.

Asthma

Breathing is something that most us never think about. A Chinese saying states that: *"there are only 2 types of people that worry about their breathing: someone that practices Qigong and... someone who is about to die."*

We breathe in and out unconsciously and unless we are sick, we can easily get the oxygen we need.



For people with asthma, breathing is something that is always on their mind. Every minute of the day, there is always the chance that an asthma attack will leave them gasping for air.

Sometimes these attacks are predictable but sometimes they are not and while some might be minor and easily handled, asthma sufferers can at times end up in an emergency room.

Asthma sufferers have turned to acupuncture and TCM in their search for a more permanent solution to their problem.

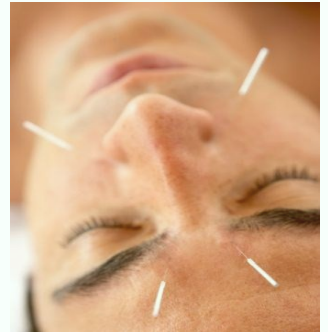
Acupuncture for the treatment of asthma

Medical research in the past decade has shown that acupuncture can be very effective for respiratory diseases - including asthma. There are many studies relating to the success of acupuncture treatment for asthma which have been reported in medical journals.

In 1979 the World Health Organisation (WHO) listed 40 diseases for which acupuncture was considered to be beneficial and diseases of the respiratory tract including asthma and bronchitis were included in that list.

The benefits of acupuncture

- ☯ Reduction of the symptoms
- ☯ Improves health and quality of life
- ☯ Strengthen and balance the immune system
- ☯ Decrease the intake of prescription drugs and medication (*ALWAYS discuss with the health professional that prescribed them originally*)
- ☯ The benefits are significant and long term



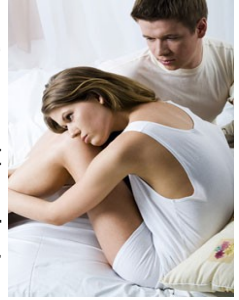
In our clinics, we see people from all ages from children, teenagers, adults to the elderly that have been suffering from asthma and/or breathing difficulties for most of their lives.

Expectations are sometimes very high but we always advise that acupuncture and TCM treatment(s) are never a "quick-fix" / "once-off" solution to chronic conditions.

Acupuncture for fertility issues

In recent years, acupuncture and TCM treatments have been increasingly used to help both men and women to overcome their difficulties in conceiving.

Fertility issues are becoming one of the most commonly seen complaints in our clinics. This includes couples that are just planning to get as healthy as they can before they try to conceive, through the ones that have already been trying for a while with no success, to those that are about to start their treatment with the fertility clinics.



How does acupuncture help?

Acupuncture helps by regulating the body's systems and the body's functions. This will increase the blood flow to the reproductive organs and will stabilize hormone levels which in turn can increase ovarian function in women as well as sperm production in men.

In particular, studies have shown that acupuncture definitely increases the rate of pregnancy in women undergoing "in vitro fertilization" (IVF).

In Ireland, GPs, Consultants and IVF clinics recommend couples to avail of acupuncture even while undergoing other medical treatments - the healthier and more balanced both are, the more chances there is for success.

National Infertility Support and Information Group



National Infertility Support and Information Group

The National Infertility Support and Information Group (NISIG) is a voluntary organisation that was established in Cork in 1996.

The NISIG offers a confidential listening ear to couples and individuals and empowers them to contemplate real choices to guide them through their journey.

There are bi-monthly meetings held throughout Ireland.

Visit their website at www.nisig.ie

Our clinical experience

In our clinical experience, we have found that acupuncture and TCM can make a huge difference and improve the female and the male reproductive system.

Women following a TCM treatment plan will notice the changes during their subsequent menstrual cycles and men will see the results of their improvement reflected in their general health and the follow-up semen analysis.

There is no western medical treatment/medication for a male that has shown poor results from their semen analysis - acupuncture and TCM will work on the different systems (digestive, nervous, reproductive) in order to improve sperm count, morphology, motility, etc.

Couples coming to our clinics together can avail of a special reduced rate for their treatments - please call us for more details.

Qi Gong and Tai Chi - the Chinese view on exercise

Those more familiar with the Chinese culture will have seen pictures or videos of people gathering in parks or open spaces to exercise together.

In the western world, we associate these exercises with Tai Chi or Qigong, but sometimes these "slow motion", gentle movements are a simply a way of loosening the joints and relaxing the muscles.

TCM considers that appropriate exercise, diet, relaxation, social relationships and habits all play a part in promoting or hindering the healthy flow of Qi in the body.

In our clinics we may also include certain exercises as part of the treatment plan - you will be shown some gentle exercises that you can do at home in your own time. These exercises will help you to maintain the free flow of Qi throughout the body during the days between your treatment sessions.



If you are interested in learning Tai Chi, classes are available at The Mill in Celbridge, Co. Kildare every Thursday at 8:15pm. Contact Paul Maloney on 086 1294973 for more details.



Useful Internet Links

National Infertility Support and Information Group

NISIG empowers couples to contemplate real choices to guide them through their journey.

www.nisig.ie

Arthritis Ireland

Ireland's only arthritis charity enabling people with arthritis to take their lives back.

www.arthritisireland.ie

Eating Disorders Resource Centre of Ireland

The EDRCI is an Irish based organization dedicated to provide counselling, support, information, advice and help to individuals who experience food, body and weight issues.

www.eatingdisorders.ie

Primacare Medical Centres

Medical, dental and paramedical services - comprehensive care, convenient locations.

www.primacare.ie

How Healthy Are You?

Health and lifestyle series on TV3.

www.howhealthyareyou.ie

Migraine Association of Ireland

The MAI provides information, support and reassurance to migraine sufferers and those with other headache disorders.

www.migraine.ie

Asthma Society of Ireland

The ASI has a clearly defined role in providing support services for people living with asthma.

www.asthmasociety.ie

SteamyTea

Quality loose leaf tea from around the world.

www.steamytea.ie

Acupuncture for Facial Rejuvenation

The non-surgical method of reducing the signs of the ageing process with the added benefit of improving general health.

www.acupuncturefacialrejuvenation.ie

Confucious Quote

"It is easy to hate and it is difficult to love. This is how the whole scheme of things works. All good things are difficult to achieve; and bad things are very easy to get."

Confucius (Kong Qiu) was born in 551 B.C. in Zouyi, the state of Lu and lived in the late Spring and Autumn Period more than 2,400 years ago.

He was a great thinker and educator in ancient China and the founder of the Confucian school of thought.

The core of Confucius' thinking is benevolence.

As he put it, *"It is to love all men."* It means that one should care for, love and respect others.

As mankind is entering the 21st century, a review of Confucius' ideas of "benevolence and humanity" is of great enlightening significance for the human progress, our social development and ecological balance.



Sandro at the Confucious Temple in Beijing, China

Acupuncture and TCM Clinics

Siobhán and Sandro run acupuncture and TCM clinics in the Primacare medical centres in Dublin.

Sandro also runs a private clinic in Trim, Co. Meath.



For more information about the clinics, please contact:

"Convenient Care"

siobhan@tcmireland.ie - 087 232 0994 - 01 495 1086

sandro@tcmireland.ie - 087 978 9610 - 01 495 1086

Siobhán Seville

Dundrum Medical Centre, Dublin 16

Firhouse Medical Centre, Dublin 24

Citywest Medical Centre, Dublin 00

Ballyowen Lane & Castle Medical Centre, Lucan

Sandro Graca

Applewood Medical Centre, Swords

5 Haggard Court, Trim, Co. Meath

Tyrrelstown Medical Centre, Dublin 15

12 Watergate St., Navan, Co. Meath

WWW.TCMIRELAND.IE