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## Spring is here!



Spring has arrived and hopefully it will bring us the warmer weather to enjoy the brighter evenings.

This is a time of growth and rebirth, the start of a new cycle of life for many

things but for some people it is a reminder that for some months ahead they will have to face the annoyance of watery eyes, constant sneezing, congested sinus, to just name a few.

If this sounds familiar to you, maybe it is time you should consider **prevention** instead of just "having to deal with it".

Those in search of a natural and effective alternative and indeed a preventive treatment need search no further than Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

## TCM - a preventative medicine

For some people with seasonal allergies such as hay fever and sinus problems this time of year makes for a miserable one. It is hard for sufferers to enjoy the summer with symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, watery red eyes, fatigue, sinus pressure, congestion, red itchy eyes, dry throat and headaches.

For many, the only option known is to use western medication during the summer season even with the familiar side effects such as drowsiness, dryness, dizziness, fatigue and digestive disturbance.

There is also the possibility of becoming dependent on the medication. Western medicine treatment of allergies tends to treat only the symptoms and not the root cause.

In TCM, the approach to the treatment is to alleviate the acute symptoms but also to diagnose and address the root imbalance causing the symptoms.



### Prevention is the best medicine!

The best time to start getting treated for seasonal allergies is before the symptoms appear.



This could mean starting treatment several weeks before you would normally feel the effects of the allergies.

The treatment will help boost the immune system and prevent the symptoms from appearing since the underlying or root cause has been addressed.

However, if you are already experiencing symptoms you should start treatment as soon as possible so as to get the best possible results. *See more inside...*

## About us

Welcome to the Spring / Summer edition of our Traditional Chinese Medicine Newsletter.

Our names are Siobhan Seville and Sandro Graca and we are practitioners of TCM - Traditional Chinese Medicine.

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

We are writing this newsletter in the hope that it will provide practical and easy understanding

information about TCM - the therapies that are part of it, how it works, how it is used in the clinic, its benefits and any other questions that are commonly asked.

Also, there will be articles and interesting information on the different aspects, topics and research about TCM.



## What is TCM?

We are aiming to demystify the terminology associated with Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) and Acupuncture.

Let's start by looking at TCM and "break down" the term: "**Traditional**" because this system of medicine has a tradition of usage that dates back thousands of years. For example, it is accepted according to standard theory that acupuncture had its origins as far back as the Late Stone Age (circa 8000-3500 BC).

"**Chinese**", because it originated in China and "**Medicine**" because it is a system of medicine with a huge theoretical background to support it.

The interesting fact is that the term "*Traditional Chinese Medicine*" or "*TCM*" is not that traditional after all, since it is a terminology that has only been used in China since the 1950's...

There is evidence of acupuncture being used in Europe in the 17th century but it was not until President Nixon's famous visit to China in the 1970's that acupuncture (and TCM) got enough publicity and exposure to the rest of the world.

## Chinese medicine and western medicine

In the past, western medical science has been very dismissive of acupuncture because it doesn't fit the scientific theories of western medicine. Basically, because western medical scientists couldn't understand how acupuncture works then the results or the benefits of the treatment were always put down to "placebo".

Western medicine can't understand Chinese medicine for the same reason that Chinese medicine can't understand western scientific medicine - their philosophy is completely different! Western medicine is based on linear causality and reductionistic scientific theories whereas the philosophy of Chinese medicine derives from Taoist thought which sees the individual as part of an interactive relationship with its environment at all levels.

This is why some people like to use the term "holistic" but we don't think that being holistic is an important medical distinction - as a matter of fact, some might even argue that ALL medicine is holistic because of the need to look at the body as a whole living organism...

## TCM in the eyes of the World Health Organization



The WHO has recognized TCM as one of the Complimentary and Alternative Medicines (CAM) and has put in place legal and safety standards for the practice of Chinese medicine.

This brings us to another term: “**complementary**” medicine.

In China, most hospitals will operate with Chinese medicine and Western medicine clinics and treatments side-by-side with only one thing in mind: the benefit of the patients. They have learnt to benefit from the best of both medical theories and now use Chinese medicine practitioners and western medicine practitioners to **complement** each other.

Here in the west, the term “CAM” has started to be more and more used especially since scientific medical practitioners have recognized the results of numerous clinical trials and studies published in medical journals.

Most of these trials have been based on the usage of acupuncture to treat medical conditions, with a huge focus on the relief of pain. Since the treatment of patients with acupuncture was now published in medical journals, the western health professionals agreed on the usage of this **alternative** therapy (acupuncture and TCM) alongside their own therapies (western medicine) in order to **complement** the patient’s treatment.

### Patient safety



We are both members of the Traditional Chinese Medicine Council of Ireland ([TCMCI](#)) and of the Irish Massage Therapists Association ([IMTA](#)).

This means that in our clinics there’s a high standard of practice and clinical safety procedures that will enable you to get the best out of your treatment. All acupuncture needles are for single use (disposable) and pre-sterilized by approved methods.

The use of acupuncture and TCM in the hands of a fully qualified professional practitioner is entirely safe and free of any harmful side effects.

We are recognised by [Vhi Healthcare](#), [Quinn Healthcare](#) and [Hibernian Aviva](#) - which means that you will be able to claim back on your treatments.

For details of your cover, please contact your health insurance provider.

### How can TCM help?

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

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

Chinese medicine takes a preventative approach to disease - in other words, if we consider the springtime and someone with sinus problems, the TCM treatment will focus on ensuring that the body is able to fight the condition to prevent it from happening in the first place before it starts affecting you. Acupuncture can be used to strengthening the respiratory system and the immune system and therefore help to alleviate some of the symptoms that come with the spring and summer months.

In ancient China, for example, the village doctor would adjust the acupuncture treatment and the herbal prescriptions to the different seasons of the year to prepare the body to deal with the change that would take place. The doctor was paid to keep people healthy, i.e. if a person was to get sick, the doctor would continue to treat them but would not receive payment until that person was healthy again.

## What to expect from a TCM treatment

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 will consist of an in-depth 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. The entire proceedings are safeguarded by total confidentiality.

The practitioner will then decide on the appropriate treatment method: acupuncture and/or other therapies (if necessary).

Although some people will experience the changes in their condition straight after the initial treatment, it is recommended that you should follow up the initial treatment with at least a few more sessions to

achieve longer lasting benefits.

Subsequent treatment sessions will last around 30 minutes.

## How many treatments are needed?

There is no set amount of treatments for any person or any condition.

At the end of the initial consultation and treatment your practitioner will discuss the best options for you.

The condition will be re-evaluated at each treatment and the recovery time will depend on the severity of the presenting condition (acute or chronic), the individual's response to treatment and the length of time that the complaint has been there for.

Depending on the above, a practitioner would usually see the patient once a week or once a fortnight.

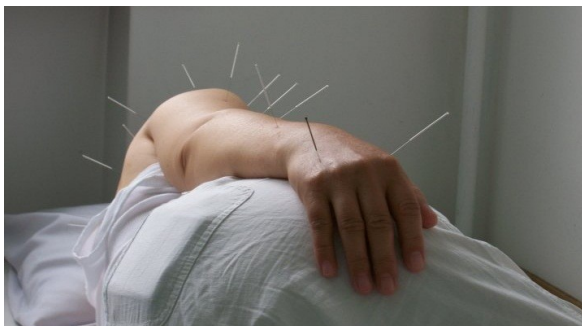
Although it is quite common to feel some benefits from the initial treatment, it is a general misconception to expect that one treatment will completely resolve the problem.

## 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 tense) 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 the experience extremely relaxing and some people even fall asleep for the duration of the treatment.

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

## Traditional Chinese Medicine and Fertility Issues

The definition: "Infertility - the inability of a couple to conceive after one year of unprotected intercourse."

Fertility issues are more and more commonly presenting in our TCM clinics. This varies from couples trying to conceive for on average one year and want to try to conceive naturally with the help of Chinese medicine to couples going through one form or other of fertility treatment.

In a vast number of these cases, there is no clear diagnosis and the problem is simply described as "unexplained infertility". In other cases the couple have a specific problem diagnosed by western medicine as problems like "blocked fallopian tubes", "PCOS", "low sperm count", etc.

For many couples having their life ruled by temperature taking, countdown to ovulation and having to be together at specific times in the month can build up pressure, stress and can be traumatic for both.

Couples experiencing problems with conception usually suffer from additional stresses of societal pressure. They often find it difficult to discuss infertility with friends and family and for some there are issues around shame and fear of failure. All of which can put a strain on the couple's relationship.



### **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 infertility journey.

Visit their website at [www.nisig.ie](http://www.nisig.ie)

## Acupuncture increases the IVF success rate

Acupuncture helps by regulating your body's system. This can increase the blood flow to the reproductive organs and stabilizes hormone levels and this in turn can increase ovarian function in women as well as sperm production in men.

Used as a complementary therapy for women undergoing other fertility treatments, acupuncture has been scientifically and medically proven to be especially beneficial.

Some believe that acupuncture works by helping women stay more relaxed through stressful fertility treatments. This is true, but as mentioned above, acupuncture is used mainly to regulate your body's system - in this particular case, the reproductive system. With this regulation comes relaxation.

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

Sometimes the treatment should not focus on the female only as both male and female contribute with 50% for the pregnancy to be successful.

To increase the chances of conception in certain cases it is recommended that both avail of acupuncture treatments - the healthier and more balanced both are, the more chances there is for success.



## Arthritis

In TCM terminology, "arthritis" is referred to as "Bi Syndrome".

This condition is commonly seen in our Chinese medicine clinics.



It affects men and women of all ages and although less frequent, it is also seen in young adults and children.

Arthritis shows itself with symptoms such as pain, swelling and restricted movement.

Typically, what we see presenting in the clinic is: joint aches and pain, numbness in the muscles, lack of free movement in the tendons and restriction of movement in bones and joints.

There can be different degrees of severity, and in extreme cases there can be deformity of the bones and joints.

TCM sees "Wind", "Cold", "Heat" and "Damp" as the main contributing factors for Bi Syndrome as these lodge in the *Jing Luo* (the "meridians", "acupuncture channels") and obstruct the free flow of Qi and Blood (*Xuè*) in those meridians. When Qi and Xuè are not able to flow naturally they stagnate, causing pain, heat, and other symptoms of illness.



### Chinese medicine treatment for arthritis

**Acupuncture** has good results for treating the pain that accompany arthritis.

**Tuina massage** to release tension and increase the body's circulation of Qi, Xuè (Blood) and nutrients. Massage creams and oils made from Chinese herbs may be used to work on affected joints or muscles.

**Chinese herbal medicine** is used to treat the underlying imbalances in the body: Wind, Cold, Damp, or Heat.

**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 joints.

**Cupping** to relieve / release discomfort in the body caused by the stagnation of Qi and/or Xuè (Blood), as well as swelling or pain.

**Dietary advice** - foods which stimulate both blood and Qi may be suggested and other foods which, from a TCM perspective may help warm or cool the body as appropriate.

All treatments can be combined together or used on their own, depending on the individual and the stage of the arthritis.



### Arthritis Ireland - [www.arthritisireland.ie](http://www.arthritisireland.ie)

**Arthritis Ireland**  
*Inform. Enable. Empower.*



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

They provide real solutions and empower people with arthritis and those caring for them to take positive actions to manage the effects of their disease on their lives.

## 推拿 Tuī Ná - Chinese Medical Massage

The term Tuī Ná (*pronounced "twee na"*) is composed of two different parts 'Tui' (to push) and 'Na' (to hold, to grasp) and it is sometimes spelt as 'tuina'. The name for this massage therapy originates from two of the hand techniques used during the treatment: Tui Fa and Na Fa.

Tuina was called "An Mo" (按摩) or simply "massage" in ancient times and was first used to treat paediatric disease through massage manipulations – just as the mum would rub and press the baby's tummy or pat their back.

This therapeutic approach is guided by Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and as with all other aspects of TCM, the aim of Tui Na is to restore the natural flow of Qi throughout the Jīng Luò and the body thus restoring the internal balance, helping the person to return to full health.

Today, Tui Na has become very advanced in its treatment for many diseases and it is used in many of the hospitals in China in the front line of healthcare.

During a tuina treatment the practitioner uses various hand techniques to press, stimulate and activate key points on the surface of the body (along the acupuncture channels and points).

This is why tuina massage is sometimes referred to as "acupressure". When these points are stimulated they release tension and increase the body's circulation of Xuè (Blood), Qi and nutrients to bring about the body's own healing process.



### Some of the benefits of Tui Na Massage:

#### General Tui Na

The massage will loosen tight muscles, invigorate tired muscles, assist in lymph drainage, invigorate the blood circulation and generally relax the whole body.

#### Sports Injury Tui Na

Used as a remedial massage to treat any muscle group or joint. Creams and oils may be used to help break down scar tissue, stop bleeding and to maintain blood circulation.

#### Medical Tui Na

This treatment therapy can be used to give relief from pain and start the healing process for many ailments including back pain, frozen shoulder, tennis elbow and arthritis.

Tui Na massage is quite different from other types of massage because it is only used within the context of TCM and therefore a diagnosis will always precede the treatment. Also, when appropriate, tuina can be used in conjunction with other TCM therapies like acupuncture, moxibustion and cupping.

Another distinguishing feature is the fact that during a tuina massage treatment the patient remains fully clothed, as a cotton sheet will be used to prevent friction. We recommend the patient to wear loose clothing to make sure that they are comfortable and also that there is little restriction to the blood circulation.

**For more information, please visit [www.tcmireland.ie](http://www.tcmireland.ie) and click on [Tui Na Medical Massage](#)**

## Tai Chi for your health by Paul Maloney\*



Tai Chi (also spelt Taiji) is a Chinese health system which can help to slow down our lives and teach us to live in “the moment”. When practising Tai Chi the main aim is to clear the mind of useless thoughts so that one can concentrate completely on a sequence of movements. The mind must be in a relaxed yet clear and alert state; this is why it is referred to as “moving meditation”. Consistent practise allows one to enter this state easily and eventually it filters into everyday life.

There are many styles of Taiji. The original form is called Chen Tai Chi and it has a lot of spiralling and twisting motions (referred to as silk reeling exercises), which makes it excellent for improving the circulation and maintaining the joints and muscles at their optimum.

Tai Chi improves the structural integrity of the body by emphasising correct posture and alignment while practising the

form. The form is a sequence of movements which can be done in a very slow meditative manner or, depending on the fitness of the person, in a more vigorous manner.

With its emphasis on correct abdominal breathing, it teaches the practitioner to remain calm in the midst of the pressures of modern day living, but this needs to be cultivated through regular practise.

*\*Paul Maloney is certified by Master Chen Zhonghua of the Hunyuan Taiji Academy*

**For more info, please visit Master Chen Zhonghua’s website  
<http://www.chenzhonghua.com> or contact Paul Maloney: 087 1294973**

### Tai Chi Classes

Paul Maloney teaches two classes every Thursday in Celbridge, Co. Kildare.

The first is from 7-8pm and is specifically for beginners and those who want to take it at a slower pace.

The 8.15pm class consists of warm-ups, followed by Yilu (Taiji form) and Zhan Zhuang at the end.

The cost of 8 weeks of Taiji is 90€ and you can join at any time and pay the remainder of the ongoing 8 weeks fee.

You can contact Paul by mobile: 086 1294973 or by email: [yinyangtaiji@gmail.com](mailto:yinyangtaiji@gmail.com)



### Exercise – the Chinese view

The Chinese approach to healthcare is not very different from the general outlook of western approaches. 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 treatment sessions.

## Acupuncture for facial rejuvenation

Acupuncture for facial rejuvenation is sometimes referred to as “cosmetic acupuncture” and is a specialist field of acupuncture (and by default, part of the therapies of Traditional Chinese Medicine).

It focuses specifically on cosmetic aspects of the person, offering a non-surgical method of reducing the signs of the ageing process with the added benefit of improving general health and well being at the same time.

This is therefore fundamentally different from other cosmetic treatments because acupuncture treats holistically - not only treating the signs of aging on your face, but also providing a rejuvenation of your general health.



### Some of the benefits of cosmetic acupuncture:

- ④ Improves muscle tone and dermal contraction
- ④ Decreases the tendency towards sagging and jowls
- ④ Moisturises the skin by increasing local circulation of blood and lymph to the face
- ④ Tightens the pores
- ④ Slows the ageing process - from within
- ④ Helps to reduce and/or eliminate bags under the eyes
- ④ Helps to eliminate fine lines of the face and has a diminishing effect on larger and/or deeper wrinkles
- ④ Improves facial colour by increasing peripheral circulation
- ④ Brightens the eyes
- ④ Helps to lift drooping eyelids
- ④ Reduces stress evident in the face

### How many treatments does it take to notice the improvement?

At the end of the first treatment, most people start to notice the improvement on their facial complexion – the firmness of the skin, the improvement on the muscle tone and the brightness of the eyes.

Obviously, results depend on the individual condition of the person - sometimes, it might take a few treatments before results start to be more noticeable.

To achieve visible and long lasting results, it is recommended that you take on the full cosmetic acupuncture treatment package, which is comprised of 12 weekly sessions.

The treatment is offered as a package at a special price or as individual sessions at a normal rate.

### Why choose acupuncture for facial rejuvenation over cosmetic surgery

While this treatment is not claiming to be a replacement for surgery, acupuncture for facial rejuvenation is an excellent alternative because:

It is far less costly than cosmetic surgery - in these difficult economical times, people are looking for “value for money”. You can pay as you go or avail of our special offers and get discounts for the full package of 12 sessions.

In the hands of a fully qualified TCM practitioner it is safe, virtually painless and has no side effects or risk of disfigurement - sometimes, cosmetic surgery may have an extended recovery period with swelling and discolouration.

## Eating disorders

Nowadays, there is much more awareness and better treatment for eating disorders.

The whole health system has improved considerably in recent years at looking at eating disorders as an illness.

These eating disorders have compulsive behaviours such as yo-yo dieting, binge eating, anorexia, and bulimia as well as obsessive thoughts about food.

These behaviours and thoughts may cause small disruptions in the person's life or can lead to severe and life threatening mental and physical health problems. Eating disorders can affect both men and women of all ages and of all walks of life.



## How can TCM help?



TCM, and especially acupuncture, can deal with the emotional and physical discomfort of various eating disorders. It can complement the psychological and medical treatment of eating disorders.

TCM treatment always involves finding the root cause of the disease/illness. As each individual has their own unique personal issues that contribute to their eating disorder, the treatment is tailored to the individual's specific needs, personality, and lifestyle.

The medical complications of eating disorders can compromise various body systems, including the cardiac, gastrointestinal, and endocrine systems.

Resulting problems can include everything from headaches to infertility.

The medical problems created by eating disorders can be life threatening which is why eating disorders require medical evaluation and treatment.

TCM can treat many common physiological symptoms such as digestive disruptions and discomforts for example abdominal bloating, nausea, constipation, diarrhoea, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), and acid reflux these are some of the symptoms commonly associated with eating disorders.

Acupuncture and herbal therapies can be very helpful in treating these digestive problems. Other symptoms such as headaches, gynaecological problems, sleep disturbances, and emotional imbalances can also accompany eating disorders and these can also be resolved through TCM treatments.



## Eating Disorders Resource Centre of Ireland



### Eating Disorders

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

They offer information and advice free of charge to anyone who wishes to gain a better understanding of their food, body and weight issues. They also provide group support for parents and carers of people experiencing eating disorders.

Visit their website at [www.eatingdisorders.ie](http://www.eatingdisorders.ie)

## Useful Internet Links

### [National Infertility Support and Information Group](#)

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

[www.nisig.ie](http://www.nisig.ie)

### [Arthritis Ireland](#)

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

[www.arthritisireland.ie](http://www.arthritisireland.ie)

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[www.eatingdisorders.ie](http://www.eatingdisorders.ie)

### [Acupuncture for Facial Rejuvenation](#)

[www.acupuncturefacialrejuvenation.ie](http://www.acupuncturefacialrejuvenation.ie)

### [Tui Na Medical Massage](#)

[www.tuinamassage.ie](http://www.tuinamassage.ie)

### [Tai Chi - Master Chen Zhonghua](#)

[www.chenzhonghua.com](http://www.chenzhonghua.com)



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[chinesemedicineEIRE](#)



[www.tcmireland.ie](http://www.tcmireland.ie)

## Confucius Quote



"Ignorance is the night of the mind,  
but a night without moon and star."

Master Kong Fuzi (Confucius)  
Chinese Philosopher, (551 BC – 479 BC)

## Acupuncture & Traditional Chinese Medicine Clinics

**Siobhán Seville, Lic. TCM,**  
*Cert. Prep. CHM, Dip. MQG, Cert. Tuina (UK), Cert. Acup. (Beijing, China)*

### Clinic Locations:

☯ Dundrum Medical Centre  
Dundrum, Dublin 16

☯ Oldcourt Medical Centre  
Firhouse, Dublin 24

☯ Citywest Medical Centre  
Citywest, Co. Dublin

☯ Ballyowen Medical Centre  
Lucan, Co. Dublin

Contact Siobhán:

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01 495 1086 - 087 232 0994

**Sandro Graca, Lic. TCM,**  
*Cert. Prep. CHM, Dip. MQG, Cert. Tuina (UK), Cert. Acup. (Beijing, China)*

### Clinic Locations:

☯ 5 Haggard Court  
Trim, Co. Meath

☯ 12 Watergate Street  
Navan, Co. Meath

☯ Tyrrelstown Medical Centre  
Dublin 15

☯ Applewood Medical Centre  
Swords, Co. Dublin

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