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## **Asian Healing Techniques**

### **Contemporary or Traditional Chinese Medicine?**

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Having practiced and studied traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) for more than 25 years, I have had the good fortune to visit the source of this incredible healing art during 12 visits to China. During those trips I've usually visited the most famous TCM academies and institutes throughout the country.

Observing pulse diagnosis being conducted by a 30-year master of TCM is an experience in itself. This veteran will often spend up to 30 minutes with the patient just analyzing the pulse. I find it interesting that so many of our Western counterparts feel they can do as thorough a job in less than in a minute or or two.

Tongue diagnosis plays a major role in the TCM practitioner's regime. I always wonder how our Western practitioners derive such incredible insight by glancing at the tongue for a few seconds, while the Chinese master spends a considerable length of time studying and analyzing it.

To practice TCM by way of herbal or acupuncture application, it is imperative that one know what conditions exist by proper analysis of numerous factors, and be able to pick the appropriate diagnosis from the classical syndromes, disorders, and pathologies which exist. The following is a list of syndromes that the TCM practitioner must be able to distinguish:

#### **Classical Syndromes**

(Fire Element)

(Metal Element)

1. Invasion of lu by pathogenic 5. Insufficiency of lung yin wind 6. Damp heat in the large int. 2. Retention of phlegm damp in 7. Consumption of fluid in li the lu 3. Retention of phlegm heat in the lu 4. Deficiency of

lung qi

(Earth Element)

1. Invasion of lu by pathogenic 6. Retention of food in stomach wind 7. Retention of fluid due to cold 2. Dysfunction of SP in control- 8. Hyperactivity of fire in ST ling blood 9. Insufficiency of stomach yin 3. Deficiency of spleen yang 4. Invasion of spleen by cold damp 5. Damp heat in spleen and stomach

(Wood Element)

1. Stagnation of liver qi 7. Deficiency of blood stirring 2. Flaming of liver fire wind 3. Liver yang rising 8. Retention of cold in liver 4. Stirring of liver wind in jing luo the interior 9. Insufficiency of liver blood 5. Liver yang turning into 10. Damp heat in liver wind 11. Damp heat in gallbladder 6. Extreme heat stirring wind

(Water Element)

1. Deficiency in kidney qi 3. Insufficiency of kidney yin 2. Insufficiency of kidney yang 4. Damp heat in the bladder

(Complicated Syndromes)

1. Disharmony between heart and 6. Deficiency of qi of lu & SP kidney 7. Imbalance between liver & 2. Deficiency of qi of lung and spleen kidney 8. Disharmony between liver and 3. Deficiency of yin of lung and ST kidney 9. Deficiency of heart and spleen 4. Deficiency of yin of liver 10. Invasion of lung by liver fire and kidney 5. Deficiency of yang of spleen and kidney

(Syndromes of San Jiao)

1. Damp heat in the upper jiao
2. Damp heat in the middle jiao
3. Damp heat in the lower jiao

## **External Pathogens (Exogenous)**

### **Wind Disorders**

1. Wind/Cold
2. Wind/Cold & Damp
3. Wind/Cold restrict lung
4. Wind constipation
5. Wind Damp
6. Wind Dizziness
7. Wind Dryness
8. Wind Phlegm headache
9. Wind Heat
10. Wind/Heat restrict lung
11. Wind/Heat restrict kidney
12. Wind/Phlegm (stroke)

### **Heat Disorders**

1. Heat Deficiency
2. Heat & Dryness
3. Heat & Excess in up TH
4. Heat of the Five Centers
5. Heat in the Heart
6. Heat (pathogenic)
7. Heat restricts lung
8. Heat (summer)

### **Fire Disorders**

1. Empty Fire
2. Full Fire
3. Ministerial Fire

4. Ascending Fire
5. LU depressed Fire

### **Damp Disorders**

1. Damp Heat
2. Damp Cold
3. Damp/Heat in TH
4. Damp/Heat in SP/ST
5. Damp Phlegm

### **Cold Disorders**

1. External Cold
2. Cold Phlegm
3. Cold Damp
4. Cold Damp injures SP
5. Cold in the middle TH
6. Cold QI

### **QI Pathologies**

1. Ascending qi
2. Deficiency of qi
3. Blockage of qi
4. Congealed qi
5. Obstructed qi
6. Empty qi
7. Rebellious lung qi
8. Depressed in the upper TH
9. Pathogenic qi
10. Stagnation qi
11. Turbid qi

12. Wei fen qi
13. Yi qi (evil pathogenic)

### **Blood Disorders**

1. Blood deficiency
2. Cold & empty
3. Blood heat
4. Blood hot
5. Blood stagnation
6. Blood obstructed by cold
7. Blood moves intently

### **Phlegm Disorders**

1. Phlegm cold
2. Phlegm damp
3. Phlegm diarrhea
4. Phlegm ascends
5. Phlegm heat
6. Phlegm fire
7. Phlegm yellow & profuse
8. Phlegm turbidity
9. Phlegm wind

Of course the ancient Chinese physician did not have an understanding of anatomy, physiology, and diagnosis that we in contemporary times have. They were forced to rely heavily on the above thought processes, which by and large are incredibly superior perhaps in most diagnosis compared to what the allopathic internists make today. Those practitioners who are well versed in TCM can effectively treat disease processes with explanations which are totally foreign to our Western thought, and in fact make little sense to one not versed in TCM. It truly is an entirely different profession.

However, just as we have Republicans and Democrats and straights and mixers, we also have traditional

Chinese medicine (TCM) practitioners and contemporary Chinese medicine (CCM) practitioners and contemporary Chinese medicine (CCM) practitioners. Don't be fooled into thinking that if you are not well versed in TCM that you cannot be effective as an acupuncturist or as a Chinese herbalist. The bottom line is that the percentage of patients that respond favorably in the CCM or TCM practitioners' office is about the same.

Today there are a number of classical TCM herbal formulas available to the non-TCM practitioner which utilize Western diagnoses and thought processes to prescribe and achieve the same clinical response which would take years of study into the depths of TCM. These herbal formulas take the Western trained doctor and enable them to prescribe ancient formulas which until now have been totally restricted to the master herbalist and practitioner of TCM.

Contemporary Chinese medicine (CCM) is a new descriptive phrase for those practitioners who practice acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, tui na (manipulation), and who are achieving outstanding clinical results without being immersed in the academics and time constraints of ancient TCM. These are contemporary times, and we are contemporary doctors dealing with contemporary patients. Welcome to contemporary Chinese medicine (CCM).

Have a marvelous holiday season and the best to you in 1996 in the year of the rat!

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Click [here](#) for more information about John Amaro, LAc, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM), FIAMA, DC.



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