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The Caduceus, Chakras, Acupuncture and Healing, Part II

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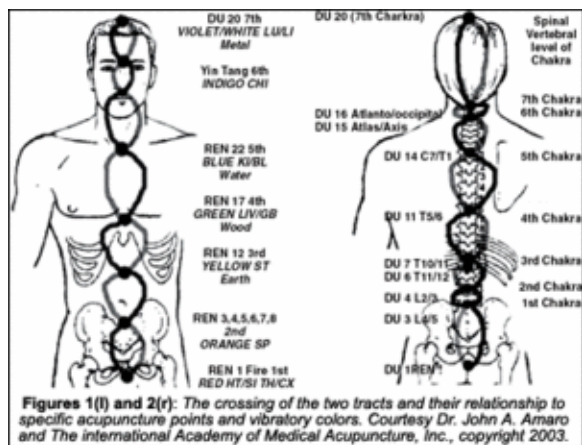
Part I of this article (*DC*, April 21) explored the historical perspectives and healing corollaries of the medical caduceus, represented by the double-coiled serpent, as it relates to the chakras and acupuncture. As I was preparing that article, I found it difficult to encapsulate the information into a format consistent with this column space. The topic of the caduceus and chakras, as it relates to acupuncture and healing, may well be one of the most challenging I have endeavored to describe. This is only because of the vast amount of information this topic encompasses, including the philosophies of dozens of nations, both ancient and contemporary. I soon realized that what I have learned over the years and practice clinically on this topic could easily fill a book.

As a student of the Asian healing arts for over three decades, I have observed firsthand healing principles in nine separate Asian nations. However, my studies have taken me to a variety of nations and historical times I have not personally observed, yet still formed my education. This was most recently brought to mind with the world focused in 2003 on the Middle East, specifically Iraq; Syria; Turkey; Iran; Afghanistan; Pakistan; and India.

Most practitioners of acupuncture and Asian medicine in the Americas, Australia and Europe tend to think of China as the place of origin of this style of healing. However, when one explores the numerous healing disciplines, from scores of nations, that have contributed to the development of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) over the centuries, the amount of knowledge is humbling, to say the least. These contributions have occurred from all of the mentioned Middle Eastern nations, ancient Greece and Rome. The healing philosophies of Persia and India have had an extremely strong influence in developing the philosophical concepts that created the healing principles of Tibet and Nepal.

The primary nationality comprising China's westernmost regions has a strong medical tradition that combines Islamic (Unani) medicine with ayurvedic medicine of India, along with TCM. The *Hui*, or Muslim

Chinese, are most heavily concentrated in Northern and Western China. Much of their medicine has, at its root, a strong Arabic influence, introduced when the Arabs came into Western China in the ninth century. As the Arabs conquered the Mediterranean, what they gathered from the Greeks in regard to medicine became a vital part of the medicine and philosophies of the entire Middle East.



Part I of this article drew a strong corollary between the double-coiled snakes around a single shaft and its relationship to what was referred to in the spinal tracts of Indian medicine as the "*ida*," "*pingala*" and "*sushumna*" that comprise the *kundalini*, or the power centers of the body. (Refer to part I for illustrations.) Every time the *ida* and *pingala*, represented by the snakes in the caduceus, cross one another, the crossing forms what is referred to as a "*chakra*" when applied to the body.

Historically, these chakras are represented on the front of the body, and correlate with what we know in acupuncture as vital acupuncture points.

The study of the chakras is a topic that goes well beyond the space limitations of this column. I urge the reader to visit his or her local book dealer for a variety of literature devoted to the significance of the chakras. You may contact me at the e-mail address at the end of this article for specific sources. It is imperative, however, that those involved in Asian medicine explore the importance of the chakras in its creation and distribution of the energetic field of the body.

Anyone who has ever studied Asian medicine is familiar with the ancient concepts of the "five elements," as it forms one of the most practical, clinical and historical foundations of acupuncture. The relationships between the elements, the meridians they represent, and general factors affecting the body, are

time-honored. There is a strong relationship between the chakras and the five elements in Western, Tibetan, Nepalese, and even Southern Chinese acupuncture.

Examine **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**. Please note that the chakras on the anterior body indicated by the crossing of the two tracts have a specific relationship to a specific acupuncture point and vibratory color, namely:

Note that each chakra has a particular relationship to a **yin** and **yang** coupled set of meridians (e.g., 5th chakra-Ren 22-BI/KI). Also note each chakra is associated with a particular color, consistent with the colors associated with the elements in five-element acupuncture. The meridian correlation to a chakra is based on the color associated with the five elements. For example, green is associated with the wood element, which, in turn, is associated with the LIV/GB meridian.

Chakra	Acupoint	Color
7th	DU 20	violet/white
6th	YinTang	indigo
5th	Ren 22	blue
4th	Ren 17	green
3rd	Ren 12	yellow
2nd	Ren 3-8	orange
1st	Ren 1	red

In **Figure 2**, on the posterior of the body, please note that each chakra has a specific relationship to a particular vertebral level. For example, the 5th chakra is connected with DU 14, between C7/T1. The meridian and color relationship, as in the anterior body, are the same for the posterior body.

To utilize one of the most powerful healing affects in ancient Western Chinese, Persian and Indian acupuncture, make a correlation between the involved meridian and the associated chakra, and utilize acupoint locations on the anterior (yin) and posterior (yang) side of the body related to the involved chakra.

One of my favorite clinical stories that illustrates this concept relates to a gentleman whose son-in-law lives in Paris. The son-in-law suffered from extreme low-back pain with radiating sciatica, which was excruciating. After exhausting all forms of "alternative" medicine, including acupuncture and chiropractic,

the patient was scheduled for a decompression laminectomy. Prior to going into the hospital for surgery, the patient was advised of a "healer" who practiced on the third floor of a building in Paris, not far from the patient's home. He was convinced he should at least give it one more chance. On arriving at the building, he was met with three flights of stairs, which he navigated slowly and painfully. After explaining the history of the problem, the practitioner simply placed his two overlapped fingers directly on the top of the patient's sternum at the manubrium. After holding this spot for approximately two minutes, the healer leaned away from the patient and asked how he felt. The patient, being a busy, no-nonsense businessman, was mortified this was all the practitioner had in mind to do. Disgusted with the fact he had just climbed three flights of stairs with considerable pain, he turned, and in a huff, started down the stairs. When he reached the first landing, he suddenly turned and went back up to the practitioner, demanding to know what he had done to him. The pain that had been so excruciating had suddenly lifted to a tolerable ache. The patient returned the following day for a follow-up treatment that completely resolved his condition, at least with regard to pain. His surgery was cancelled. Two full years have passed with no return of the symptoms.

This is an ideal example of the abovementioned principle in action. Due to the patient's spinal condition, it was ascertained through acupuncture principles that he had involvement of the bladder and kidney meridians. Each is associated with the water element, which is associated with the color blue. The 5th chakra is likewise associated with the vibratory energy of "blue." Therefore, in five element/chakra balancing, this action will be taken directly at Ren 22, which is the 5th chakra.

Since many of the conditions we see clinically are of the musculoskeletal variety, it behooves us to recognize that muscles, tendons and ligaments are under the influence of the wood element, associated with the meridians of the gallbladder and liver. These two meridians have their related chakra at CV (Ren) 17. One of the most startling clinical responses you can expect results from stimulation of CV 17 in any musculoskeletal-ligamentous condition. Likewise, it is imperative one take action on both the yin and the yang chakra, by stimulating DU 11 between T5/6.

The same is true for the 3rd chakra, as it connects with the stomach meridian and the earth element. Its posterior chakra is specifically at the double-point of DU7 and DU6, between T10/11 and T11/12. It is imperative to realize that the earth element is divided: The 2nd chakra is likewise associated with the earth element; however, it is related specifically to the spleen meridian and associated with the color orange. This entire area from the navel to the *pubic symphysis* constitutes what is known as the "*tan tien*" or center of energy. The spleen meridian in TCM is responsible for the creation of *chi* through nourishment.

Those with metal-element situations affecting LU/LI will receive significant results by stimulation of the 7th chakra relating to DU 20 and specific vertebral stimulation at DU16 at the atlanto/occipital area. Keep in mind: The color associated with the 7th chakra is violet; however, white is likewise associated here, as it is the culmination of all the colors. White is reflective of the metal element. DU 20 has a powerful effect on any condition affecting the lung or large intestine meridian. Academically, it is not a classic point for these meridians, but it is extremely important in the "chakra" style of acupuncture. Symptoms associated with the fire element have shown stunning success by utilizing Ren 1 in the perineum. It can also be reached through the posterior at DU3 between L4/5. As opposed to stimulating Ren 1 in its delicate location, utilizing the Korean hand point (at the base of the hand, just distal of the wrist on the palmar surface) has yielded stellar effects.

The one chakra that does not have a specific color associated with the five elements is the 6th chakra: indigo. This becomes a combination of the blue of the 5th chakra and the violet of the 7th chakra. In clinical applications, it has a very strong influence with the kidney meridian. Just as the 2nd and 3rd chakras are divided into the color of orange (which does not exist on the five elements) for the 2nd chakra and yellow of the 3rd chakra, the same thing occurs at the 5th, 6th and 7th chakras. Consider the bladder meridian associated with the 5th chakra, and the kidney with the 6th.

Note how the ida and pingala cross at DU 26; however, no mention of a chakra is located here. This is perhaps one of the most powerful points on the body for a variety of conditions, which is often overlooked in acupuncture. Most practitioners know this point to be effective in reviving a fainted patient; however, it is extremely powerful for pain and anxiety. It meets all of the criteria of a chakra in that it is at the junction of the crossing ida and pingala; however, it is usually not associated with a chakra location. DU 26, in my opinion, is a landmark acupuncture point. Begin to use it for any pain condition. This point is so powerful, I will have to reserve further comment for an entire article devoted specifically to its application.

Any practitioner who is academically knowledgeable of the five elements can utilize some creative imagination and successfully treat hundreds of conditions specifically through the chakras. Assume a patient visits your clinic with the complaint of macular degeneration. Besides the typical medical approach to this condition, the practitioner will draw a corollary between the eyes and the liver meridian. This, of course, would be associated with the green, which is the 4th chakra, with its key point on the yin side at CV (Ren) 17 and yang side at DU11 T5/6.

Electromeridian imaging (EMI) has shown incredible promise in contemporary acupuncture with regard to this application. On electronic examination, any time a paired meridian, such as BL/KI or LU/LI, is involved by being elevated, depressed or split, direct action to the chakra has shown quicker stabilization of the meridians. This same concept can be applied to auriculotherapy (ear acupuncture). This is accomplished by discovering the involved paired or single meridian electronically, then locating the corresponding ear point. The effect is extremely noteworthy.

When one begins to correlate the various factors attributed to the five elements, such as environmental; emotional; body parts; senses; and tastes, and begins treating both the yin and yang chakra related to specific conditions, it opens up a dimension in acupuncture that is one of the easiest and most effective to utilize in your practice.

Be sure to read my previous articles on EMI [www.chiroweb.com/archives/20/20/01.html] and [www.chiroweb.com/archives/20/26/01.html]. This contemporary method of diagnosis, combined with the ancient principles of acupoint chakra balancing, will create a new environment in your office that will be rewarded by increased referrals, financial benefits, and most importantly, patient satisfaction.

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