Commonly Asked Questions About TCM

To begin...

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) uses terms uncommon in English language, sometimes making communication between the client and practitioner difficult or confusing. It is important to remember that although there has proved to be a lot of overlap, the approach of TCM is vastly different than that of modern, conventional medicine.

TCM vs. Modern Medicine?

Modern medicine operates from a static perspective, isolating problems from the context in which they occur, accepting medical truths only as verified by the scientific method. TCM operates from a dynamic perspective, connecting the problem to the context in which it occurs, accepting the truth of the present moment, as supported by the laws of quantum logic. While TCM can certainly improve health in cases of illness, it excels as a preventative medicine; modern medicine excels in extreme cases, particularly cases of trauma or life and death emergency. Both approaches have their own utility, strengths and weaknesses; an integrative, synergistic approach, especially in extreme cases, may provide the best outcome.

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Why speak in terms of comparison?
You may hear your practitioner speak in terms of relativity, for example: excess vs. deficient, hot vs. cold, interior vs. exterior, hot vs. cold, etc. From a holistic perspective, nothing is separate—all things may be observed relative to the other. TCM uses terms of comparison to describe and assess relative states of balance, or imbalance, in the context of body, without the aid of modern technology. Symptoms of any kind are a manifestation of imbalance. These comparisons provide the foundation for determining diagnosis, the root cause of imbalance, and the best approach for treatment.

What is Qi?
Qi (pronounced “chee”) is what TCM refers to as the intelligent, creative life force—the energy flowing through all living things. Though it is invisible, its manifestations are tangible and observable—qi governs activity, the process of organizing form and shape. It enlivens the human body, directs functionality, allows it to adapt, and is responsible for all physical and mental activities. When qi is weak, body and mind are weak; when qi is strong, body and mind are strong.


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