



Benjamin McCluske, Acupuncture Physician, in his office.

The Eastern mindset sees the body as a cohesive ONE—a complex system where everything within it is inter-connected—where each part affects all other parts. Lack of balance within this biological system is the precursor to all illness. The body exhibits symptoms when suffering from inner dis-ease, and if it's not re-balanced these symptoms may lead to acute or chronic illnesses of all kinds.

The acupuncture physician examines and figures out the root cause by asking questions, and using various forms of observation and palpation.

- Questions cover a wide span of issues, including your emotional state, bodily functions, and areas of pain or discomfort.
- Tongue diagnosis, and looking at the eyes and the coloration of the skin, is done to discover the current state of internal functions (or dysfunctions), which leave visible clues in these areas. He may also observe speech patterns, agitation, signs of depression and other non-visible clues, through the act of listening.
- Palpation, such as feeling the pulses and touching the skin to check for dryness, moisture, hardness or pliability, is also done to gain insight about the inner state of the body.

Based on this information, the acupuncturist comes up with a diagnosis and the most suitable treatment.

The beauty of Chinese medicine is that, unlike allopathic (Western) medicine, it does

not simply disguise the symptoms. Rather the treatment is geared to hit the internal root of the problem—which oftentimes has little or no apparent connection with the symptom on the outside—and the symptoms are relieved because the underlying cause is either re-balanced, or removed.

In essence, your natural state of physical health is re-established. Some people aptly call this “cure.”

### Say Sayonara! to Side-Effects That are Worse Than the Original Complaint

Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)—, which includes herbal therapy—is powerful medicine, yet remarkably safe with few, if any, negative side effects. But it does have the added boon of POSITIVE side effects! The reason for this remarkable windfall of good health is quite simple.

A root problem, or “root dis-ease in the system,” usually leads to not only one, but a multitude of physical, mental and emotional symptoms. High blood pressure, for example, can lead to dizziness, headaches, fainting spells and even emotional disturbances, as well as heart or kidney disease and stroke. So a patient presenting chronic headaches, dizziness and the early stages of kidney disease is not coming in with a multitude of SEPARATE problems. They're all connected, via the root problem that is causing the high blood pressure.

Here's where our Eastern/Western paths often veer apart at sharp angles. Western

By: Benjamin McCluske, AP, LMT and Ami Ahlstedt

“Chinese medicine, which includes acupuncture, is a holistic health care system. It is designed to take you—in your entirety—into account, to eliminate the root cause of your problem.”

medicine puts you on a pill to artificially force your blood pressure down. (This is why you have to “tinker” with the dosages. Your body has no say in the matter; it simply has to respond to the chemical introduced into your system.)

Eastern medicine, on the other hand, will try to figure out the root cause of the high blood pressure. It's not normal. Why? There's a reason. Once the diagnosis has been made, the herbal and/or acupuncture treatments will prompt the body to re-balance itself, so that the blood pressure can return to normal. Since the body is in charge—it's not artificially forced to respond—it will do so at its own pace, and usually without troublesome side effects.

And here's the sweet spot: when the root cause of the high blood pressure is diminished or removed completely, the dizziness and the headaches subside. The kidney disease is given the opportunity to go into remission. AND, the patient may suddenly find that she's sleeping better, sweating and flushing less, has greater stamina, less fatigue, more “regular” bowel movements, clearer skin... **all positive side effects from finally getting the internal system back into optimal functionality. LMT**

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