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Essential BodyWorks

Herbal Therapy

Herbal medicines promote body's ability for self-healing and recovery

Herbal therapy is the main treatment method within Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) and is one of the most popular and effective alternative therapies in the West.

Whereas Western herbalism focuses on treating specific diseases, or specific symptoms—headache or a runny nose, for example—Chinese herbal medicine is based on your individual “pattern diagnosis”. Your pattern consists of signs and symptoms, your personal emotional temperament as well as the overall body composition. Therefore, Chinese medicine treats more than just one symptom. It treats your entire, overall disease pattern to bring your body back into equilibrium so that overall health can be reestablished.

Another difference between Western and Eastern herbalism is that TCM formulas can include anywhere from six to eighteen herbs, whereas Western folk herbalism generally consists of single herbs.

Chinese herbs are not all “herbs.” This category also includes vegetable, animal and mineral ingredients.

Neither are all Chinese herbs “Chinese.” About 15-20 % of the 500 standard ingredients originate from outside China. They are considered “Chinese” due to the fact that they are prescribed according to traditional Chinese medical theory and diagnosis.

Herbal formulas are available as:

- Raw herbs (you boil them and drink the liquid as a tea)
- Tinctures
- Powdered extracts
- Pills

The liquid forms are generally the most potent, followed by powdered extracts. These types also allow for the most flexibility, as your practitioner can easily adjust each formula by adding or removing specific ingredients.

Herbal medicine is used for treating the full gamut of human disease, including:

- Acute diseases (flu and common cold, for example)
- Chronic diseases (like allergies, autoimmune diseases and chronic viral diseases)
- Degenerative diseases related to aging (such as Alzheimer's, graying of the hair, etc.)

Herbal medicine for Children: herbal remedies can safely be prescribed for children, in reduced dosages.

In acute conditions, results may be observable within a very short amount of time—sometimes within just a couple of hours or less. For an acute condition, you may only need to take the formula for a brief period of time—stopping when the symptoms have been alleviated completely.

In chronic conditions, some positive results should be seen within two weeks. Although you may have to take your formula for an extended period of time, improvement should be apparent from the start. If no positive changes have taken place after a couple of weeks, your practitioner will need to alter your formula.
