



How to
Reclaim Your
HEALTH
NATURALLY...

A Safe, Effective &
Drug Free Alternative!

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Making A Commitment To Your Health

As the old saying goes, “you don’t have anything if you don’t have your health”. It doesn’t matter how well everything else in your life is going (relationships, work, finances, etc.) if you don’t feel and function well then every other aspect of your life suffers. Knowing this, why is it that Americans rank near the bottom of all industrialized countries when it comes to their health? As a nation, we are sicker than we’ve ever been. In fact, today’s adolescents are the first generation to have grown up **less** healthy than their parents.

Everyone would love to have more energy, look better and feel more calm and settled in their lives. So, why is it that people find it so difficult to make and maintain the changes that lead to these undeniable benefits?

We live in a world that is constantly drawing us outside of ourselves. Heightened levels of stress and increased life demands scarcely give us time to look inward towards our true and deepest desires. Many people are just doing what they need to do to get from one day to the next. The personal and career demands that are being placed on modern day Americans have dropped health to the bottom of their priority list.

Making the decision to re-prioritize yourself is the first step in regaining your health and well being. Many people feel selfish if they put their own needs above those of their family, friends and co-workers. True health can only come with the realization that if you do not take care of yourself then you will never be as effective as you could be at providing for others. In fact, a healthy and happy version of yourself is the greatest gift that you could ever give to your family!

In natural medicine we believe that true health is not merely the absence of disease. It is a vitality and a vigor for life that comes from being rooted in a deep sense of well being. When you are healthy you build better relationships, you bring a greater sense of ease into the world and you live with a greater sense of purpose.

Committing to and being proactive about your health **right now** will not only lead to greater levels of energy and well being in the immediate future but will also set the stage for greater vitality and resilience as you age.

Making a commitment to your health means:

- Eating a diet that is primarily composed of natural, whole foods
- Regularly engaging in physical activity
- Taking time each day to be present using relaxation techniques
- Freeing yourself of any limiting beliefs that undermine your health and quality of life
- Partnering with the right holistic and Western medical practitioners

Your health is absolutely priceless! By investing in your health, every single aspect of your life will be enhanced.

The Hidden Power of Holistic Medicine

What exactly is holistic medicine?

The term holistic medicine is a broad label that is used to describe any system of medicine which takes into account all of the biological systems of the body, mental attitudes, psychology and environment as well as how they interact with one another.

The primary system of medicine in this country, known as allopathic medicine, is reductionist in nature. What that means is that it strives to dissect the body into smaller and smaller units. Pharmaceutical medicine aims to alter single molecules in order to cause shifts in physiology that can very quickly stabilize symptoms. Surgeons identify organs or tissues that are not functioning properly and repair or remove them from the body.

Although these methods are extremely effective for treating acute, life threatening health issues they do not take into account the complex communication that exists between the various systems of the body and can ultimately lead to a breakdown in communication followed by a loss of function.

Do you believe that "holistic" medicine is superior to "allopathic" medicine?

Absolutely not. Modern "allopathic" medicine is arguably the single greatest accomplishment in human history and has produced countless miracles, saved innumerable lives and alleviated untold suffering. When someone is experiencing an acute medical emergency, pharmaceuticals and surgical interventions have the ability to make swift changes that save people's lives.

The problem lies in the fact that people have grown to rely on pharmaceuticals to manage symptoms that are caused by underlying imbalances which many times can be alleviated using a more natural and holistic approach. The truth is that the strengths of Western medicine are the weaknesses of holistic medicine and vice-versa. A combination of the two is ideal for managing your health in the twenty first century.

In our office we work to integrate your health care plan so that it works to enhance and support what your medical doctor is doing. Cooperation and communication between the patient and their health care team is crucial to achieving the best results!

Oriental Medicine - Secret Of The East For More Than 2000 Years

Oriental medicine is the world's oldest continuously practiced system of medicine. It is based on the idea that your body is composed of interrelated systems which, if they are functioning as intended, serve to keep you in a state of health. When these systems begin operating in a disharmonious manner disease has the opportunity to take root.

What would cause these systems to break down and stop communicating?

In the view of traditional Oriental medicine human beings are part of nature and not separate from it. When people live an unnatural lifestyle the self regulating systems of the body are more likely to break down.

I think we can all agree the life that modern humans live is anything but natural. The food that we eat has been processed and grown using chemicals and genetic alteration. The amount of ongoing stress that the average person is subjected to is way beyond that which would be found in a natural environment.

The accumulated burden of our lives tends to pull our body's self-regulating systems out of balance resulting in a breakdown of communication and the beginnings of the disease process.

How does Oriental medicine help to restore communication and benefit healing?

Oriental medicine works by helping to normalize function within the various biological systems so that the inborn intelligence of your body can reestablish itself. A popular analogy is that of the garden.

Let's say you've got a garden at your home that you haven't tended to in a few years. It is overgrown with weeds and the soil is dry, rock hard and devoid of nutrients. If you were to plant fresh flowers into this soil they would not do very well at best and would most likely die.

In order to make the garden hospitable to fresh plants you would need to remove the weeds, break up the soil and replenish the nutrients. In a very simplistic way this is how Oriental medicine looks at the body. When a patient arrives at my clinic they may have conditions of **excess** (weeds and bugs) that need to be subdued or removed, conditions of **stagnation** (hard, compacted soil) which need to be broken up and/or conditions of **deficiency** (lack of water and nutrients) which need to be supplemented.

In reality, most chronically ill patients come in with a mixture of all three. It is the job of the Oriental medicine physician to figure out which systems of the body are affected by these imbalances and come up with a plan to systematically move the patient back in the direction of health.

When you say "Oriental medicine" are you talking about acupuncture?

While acupuncture is probably the best known component of Oriental medicine in the United States it is only part of the full system. Oriental medicine consists of acupuncture, Chinese herbal therapy, nutritional counseling, massage, exercise and relaxation techniques.

What exactly is acupuncture?

Acupuncture is the insertion of very fine needles into specific points on the surface of the body in order to stimulate healing in a patient.

That sounds pretty unpleasant. I'm terrified of needles.

I hear that a lot. The vast majority of my patients have some degree of fear regarding the needles. For the most part, Americans have only been exposed to the hypodermic needles that are used to administer injections. **Acupuncture needles are an entirely different type of needle. They are extremely thin (just slightly thicker than a human hair) and are solid and polished smooth at the tip to minimize damage to the tissues.**

Patients generally experience no pain whatsoever. There is a mild sensation involved with insertion which most people describe as heavy, tingling or achey. This is an important part of the treatment and is tolerated quite well by the vast majority of patients.

Once the needles are in place the patient rests for 20-30 minutes. Acupuncture has an extremely calming effect on the nervous system and patients find that they relax to a depth during treatment that they find difficult or impossible to achieve in their daily life.

So, how does inserting needles into various parts of the body stimulate change in a person's health?

The actual mechanism by which acupuncture works is still a subject of research and ongoing debate. One thing that we do know is that acupuncture impacts every major system of the body, including the cardiac, gastrointestinal, circulatory, cerebral, genitourinary, endocrine and immune systems.

Throughout the years there have been numerous theories proposed about how acupuncture might work but no single mechanism could possibly explain the multitude of therapeutic effects that acupuncture delivers. It is most likely that the tremendous health benefits associated with acupuncture come from a combination of these suggested mechanisms along with others that

have yet to be discovered.

- **Acupuncture reduces stress** - We've all heard about the negative impact that stress has on the human body. Acupuncture has a generalized calming effect on the patient and aids in balancing the sympathetic "fight or flight" and parasympathetic "rest and digest" branches of the autonomic nervous system. This brings the body closer to its natural state and enhances function in every system of the body.
- **Acupuncture has a regulatory or "homeostatic" effect on the endocrine system** - Acupuncture appears to have a regulating effect on the areas of the brain that influence the release of hormones throughout the body.
- **Acupuncture increases blood flow** - Substances such as oxygen, nutrients, natural pain killers, anti-inflammatories and hormones are all contained within the blood and if that flow is impeded the body may not be able to fully access the areas where they are needed. In Chinese medicine, we consider lack of circulation to be one of the main causes of disease due its major impact on the body's ability to communicate. Acupuncture has been shown in research to increase blood flow and the dilation of capillaries, blood vessels and arteries throughout the body.
- **Acupuncture stimulates the body's built in healing mechanisms** - When an acupuncture needle is inserted into a painful or tight area we are essentially re-injuring the tissue. The healing mechanisms of the body are called in to heal the new injury and during the process clean up some of the old injury as well.
- **Acupuncture reduces both the intensity and perception of chronic pain** - Acupuncture actually impacts areas of your brain which result in a reduction of your perception of pain. In fact, a recent study using functional MRI imaging showed that acupuncture had a dampening effect on not only the patient's perception of pain but their expectation of it as well.
- **Acupuncture relaxes shortened muscles** - The stimulus of the needle causes muscles to relax and lengthen thereby taking pressure off of the joints and relaxing muscle spasms.
- **Acupuncture releases natural painkillers** - Research has shown that the release of substances such as endorphins, norepinephrine and enkephalin is stimulated through acupuncture treatment. Some of these biochemicals are 10 - 200 times as powerful as morphine.

When you consider the numerous ways that acupuncture influences the body it is easy to understand how it can be such a powerful tool for engaging the healing process. As research continues I am sure that we will learn more about the mechanisms that underlie this remarkable medicine.

Could you explain a little bit about how Chinese herbs fit into the treatment process?

Of course. Chinese herbal medicine has evolved alongside acupuncture for more than two thousand years. Based on traditional diagnosis the practitioner builds a formula, generally consisting of eight to fifteen different herbs, that is crafted specifically for each patient.

Most practitioners base their prescriptions on what are called “classical” formulas. These are herbal combinations that have been used for hundreds if not thousands of years and have a reputation for being extremely safe and effective. Starting from this solid base the practitioner can then add or subtract individual herbs to tailor the formula for the patient’s specific needs.

Although most formulas will include some herbs to alleviate symptoms the majority are geared towards correcting the underlying imbalances which are standing in the way of the body’s ability to heal.

How do I take the herbs? Are they pills?

Pills are a very convenient option that many practitioners use today. They can be very effective but are not ideal because they are pre-manufactured and cannot be modified to address the patient’s individual needs.

Traditionally a patient would receive several packets of the herbs in their natural form. A typical formula would consist of plant materials such as roots, twigs, leaves and bark. The patient would then boil the herbs into a tea and drink it two to three times per day. Although this administration method is still used by many practitioners today it takes a good deal of time to prepare the herbs and consequently can be inconvenient and time consuming.

Granulated herbs are a nice compromise between pills and whole, raw herbs because they allow the practitioner to make changes to the formula while still being very easy and practical for the patient. The manufacturer brews large batches of the whole herbs into a tea and then uses a process similar to “freeze-drying” to reduce them down to a powdered form which can be easily reconstituted. The patient simply adds the granulated herbs to hot water and drinks them between meals three times per day. This is the primary method of delivery that I use in my office.

Are Chinese herbs safe? I hear a lot about contamination issues coming from China.

It’s true that you need to be certain when taking Chinese herbs that they come from a reputable source and that they meet rigorous standards of quality. The companies from whom I purchase my herbs are the best in the business. On average the herbs must pass fifteen separate tests prior to leaving the manufacturing facility. This assures both practitioner and patient that the

herb is the correct species as well as free of contaminants such as heavy metals, molds and pesticides.

If you would like to learn more about the safety standards employed by the manufacturers you may visit the quality control pages of their websites at [Evergreen Herbs](#) and [KPC Herbs](#).

What kinds of diseases can Oriental medicine treat?

Oriental medicine has a profound effect on promoting the body's natural healing mechanisms. As such, we can say that if a disease condition is within the ability of your body to heal then acupuncture combined with Chinese herbal medicine can be an effective solution. Having said that, there are dozens of specific conditions in which Oriental medicine has been shown to be exceedingly effective. The following is a partial list of those conditions.

Neurological and Musculoskeletal Disorders

Headache
Migraines
Trigeminal Neuralgia
Facial (Bell's) Palsy
Meniere's disease
Neck and Upper Back Pain
Frozen Shoulder/Shoulder Pain
Intercostal Neuralgia
Low Back Pain
Sciatica
Osteoarthritis
Rheumatoid Arthritis
Fibromyalgia
Tennis Elbow
Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
Knee Pain and Weakness
Peripheral Neuropathies
Tremors
Weakness Following Stroke

Women's Health

Menopause
PMS
Infertility
Menstrual Cramps
Excessive Bleeding
Loss of Period
Sexual Dysfunction

Gastrointestinal Disorders

Irritable Bowel Syndrome
Colitis
Acid Reflux
Esophageal Spasm
Hiccups
Gastritis
Hyperacidity

Cardiovascular Disorders

High Blood Pressure
Low Blood Pressure
Palpitations
Irregular Heartbeat
Dizziness / Vertigo
Anemia

Psychiatric Disorders

Anxiety
Stress/Tension
Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD)
Insomnia
Depression
Addiction

Respiratory System

Bronchitis
Common Cold
Sore Throat
Influenza
Rhinitis
Allergies
Asthma
Tonsillitis
Sinusitis

Dermatologic Disorders

Eczema
Rashes
Acne
Psoriasis
Itching
Allergic Reactions
Dermatitis

Dandruff
Dry Skin

Degenerative Vision Conditions

Macular Degeneration
Glaucoma
Diabetic Retinopathy

A Final Word

Being healthy on all levels is not an easy thing to accomplish. Many people struggle with how to implement healthy life habits in a world that is anything but. At Balance Acupuncture and Natural Medicine, it is our goal to meet you wherever you are along this path and help you to achieve your health goals. Whether you're struggling with minor aches and pains or suffering from chronic debilitating illness we can help you to overcome these obstacles and get back to the life you want to lead.

You've already completed the first step in your journey towards wellness by downloading and reading this report. If you are ready to take charge of your health the next step is to pick up the phone and call our office at (210)479-3900 to set up an appointment for a treatment or a free exam.

You can also keep in touch by joining our [Facebook fan page](#) and following our blog at www.AcupunctureSanAntonio.com. It is our intention to use these sources to provide you, as well as your family and friends, with ongoing information and health tips that will enhance and support your efforts to live a healthy and happy life.

If you found this report useful please feel free to share it with your family, friends and co-workers! Many people are desperately trying to figure out how they can overcome their health problems and live more meaningful and energized lives. This report is a great starting point for creating hope and encouragement that there are indeed powerful resources available to guide you in this direction!