

# Wimborne Chinese Medicine Clinic Newsletter - Spring 2010



Welcome to the Year of the Tiger, which starts on the 14<sup>th</sup> Feb. In the East the Tiger symbolizes power, passion and daring and is the sign that's said to ward off the three main household disasters; fire, theft and ghosts. The Year of the Tiger is traditionally associated with the bold and the dramatic; noted more for confrontation than for diplomacy I'm afraid. On the upside this can breathe new life into lost causes, and herald the beginning of new and exciting times; it's said to be a time of cleansing, and of change, but not in a humdrum way! Those born under the influence of the Tiger are said to be sincere, affectionate and enthusiastic but also impetuous. So the advice for the year is to hold onto your sense of humour; you may need it.

## Clinic News

The website [www.wimbornechinesemed.co.uk](http://www.wimbornechinesemed.co.uk) is already due to have another update; it currently has four downloadable Consultation Forms; the main one and extra forms dealing with Gynaecological, Pain and Digestive problems which people can fill in when appropriate. Changes to the price (all treatments and consultation will be £45 from Feb 14<sup>th</sup>) and an update on the **Testimonials** is due - so please, if you could contribute a testimonial it would be most appreciated; please email it to me; these really are personal recommendations, which is what the success of the clinic is based on. It's worth mentioning that the website has links to the RCHM, BAAC and jcm websites, which have information on specific illnesses as well as general Chinese medicine news.

## "Save our Herbs" Campaign

As far as the fight to get Statutory Regulation is concerned – thank you for your tremendous support; the process has now moved on and before Christmas the DH (Department of Health) told us that they had received over 6000 replies. We understand that the usual haul for a DH consultation like this is between ten and 80 responses; DH said "they would have to hire extra staff to deal with the huge response". Since 2001 the DH website stated "*The Government is committed to the statutory regulation of herbal medicine, acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine practitioners*", it has initiated three working groups to look at implementing this policy, all of which strongly supported the aim of statutory regulation of this sector. If you'd like to voice your opinion, (again even), then please look at the [www.ehpa.eu](http://www.ehpa.eu) website. To put it in context: 26% of UK adults have used herbal medicine in the last two years and 56% of those used herbal medicine that was supplied by a practitioner; this is a lot of people!



In recent months people have been coming to the clinic with the usual winter aches and pains – neck, shoulder and back stuff on the whole. So I thought I'd do a short case history on one of these people. As general advice – wrap up warm, use hot packs if muscles get tight and don't forget that the "red spray" Zheng Gu Shui will usually sort it out if you get it on soon enough. If the aches are chronic Bee Brand massage oil is wonderful; either rubbed on or in the bath at the end of the day! Ginger and cinnamon will warm you up and help to get rid of colds, but if you get a sore throat stop them and go onto Yin Qiao lozenges and Echinacea for 2-4 days.

## Shoulder Pain Case Study

Mrs H is in her mid-50's and first came to see me in October '09; she had significant pain and restriction in her right arm and shoulder; this had been particularly bad for the last year, but was in fact an old injury that had been bad enough for her to change her job back in the early '80's; it had never really gone since then. It was worsened by typing and needlework and would catch on occasion. The diagnosis was a "rotor-cuff" injury, with contracture of the cuff muscles and those around the shoulder-blade; after two acupuncture treatments there was a 50% improvement with much more mobility and less pain, even though her neck was still cracking. A further three treatments and she is pain-free, has full movement of her neck and shoulder, and has even stopped getting hot flushes and is much more relaxed as a result. As she says "I can't believe it - after over 20 years of pain!"



## Seasonal herbs for coughs and 'flu

In Chinese medicine Wind is a pathogenic factor (something that causes illness); it pushes illnesses in and is involved in most rapid-onset illnesses. It can cause itching, involuntary movement or stiffness, and cause illnesses to move from one place to another. Heat and Cold are other pathogenic factors; so a common cold is Wind-Cold, while 'flu is Wind-Heat; it has similar symptoms to a cold but is hotter. Both make the person want to wrap up and there is shivering and headache, runny nose, sneezing and cough, but with the Heat element of 'flu the nasal discharge is thicker and more coloured, there's sweating and fever, and there may be a sore throat and thirst. So both illnesses need to be expelled from the body (via the skin) but the herbs required need to be targeted to the correct temperature. All of the herbs are diaphoretic (they open pores and make you sweat), but affect different areas and may also act differently when combined to when they are used on their own. If the illness isn't expelled quickly via the skin it will penetrate deeper – into the muscle layer where it will cause more aching and stronger symptoms.

The Wind-Cold herbs are warm and acrid in nature and open the pores and nose. Ones that are known in the West are fresh ginger, *Angelica* root, Chinese lovage root, siler, cinnamon twig, spring onion and *Ephedra*. These herbs are often combined as they have different attributes – some induce more sweating, others open the nose more, or for their other properties. For instance Gui zhi (cinnamon twig) is also used for cold painful joints, it reduces water retention, and can be used for chest pain and shortness of breath. This herb is able to affect both the skin and muscle layers.

The Wind-Heat herbs are cool and acrid, and are used when there is much more fever and sore throat than chilliness,. Some of the herbs are effective in venting rashes, or in eye diseases such as conjunctivitis. Herbs such as field mint, burdock fruit, chrysanthemum flower, honeysuckle flower and duckweed are all Wind-Heat clearing. All of these herbs are cooling and open the pores in order that the heat can be released. Mint is cooling and is used for sore throats and red eyes, it's used in the early stages of rashes such as measles as it brings the heat to the surface. There are other types of Heat clearing herbs, which wouldn't work despite cooling the person, as the illness would stay trapped in the body – it's the sweating, releasing action at this stage of the illness that's the key to success.

Please remember that herbs for colds and 'flu are always stocked at the Clinic as they are needed straight away; if you are prone to these illnesses it's an idea to have some at home. The other herbs that are kept in stock are those needed for clearing and strengthening the Lungs following chest infections.

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