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Natural help for menopause

Hot flashes, night sweats, insomnia, fatigue, irritability... Many women experience these and other unpleasant symptoms at menopause. Often, women feel that they just have to learn to live with them – sometimes for many years.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), an ancient healing system dating back 2500 years, has answers where Western medicine has few. TCM sees menopause as a natural transition that need not be accompanied by any discomfort. In fact, when the body is in balance, there need be no symptoms at all.

Unfortunately, most of us are not in perfect balance. Stress, overwork, emotional factors, poor diet and lifestyle, as well as any pre-existing imbalances in the body will increase the severity of menopausal symptoms.

In Chinese Medicine, the most important change that occurs in the body at menopause is a decline in the Kidney energy, particularly the *yin* aspect. (This equates loosely to a decrease in estrogen.) As well, there is a general “drying up” of the body’s fluids and blood. Without the cooling, moistening, calming influence of *yin* to balance the hotter, more active influence of *yang*, symptoms of heat, dryness and agitation appear: hot flashes, night sweats, palpitations, anxiety, insomnia, etc.

The key to addressing menopausal symptoms is in balancing the body’s *yin* and *yang*, as well as ensuring the strength and free flow of the “three treasures”: *Qi* (energy), *Jing* (essence, or constitutional energy, which is stored in the Kidneys), and Blood.

Through pulse and tongue diagnosis, as well as a thorough history of physical and emotional factors, a skilled TCM practitioner can assess exactly where the imbalance lies. Every woman presents in a different way, and each person is diagnosed and treated individually.

Through acupuncture, specially formulated Chinese herbs, as well as diet and lifestyle recommendations, the body and mind are brought back into balance. By addressing the imbalance at its root, menopausal symptoms, uncomfortable to debilitating, are resolved.

In my 13 years of TCM practice, many menopausal women receiving treatment have said that they “just feel better”, with more energy, a more positive outlook, and more stable emotions. Many report a better sleeping, and a decrease in those pesky “power surges”, that have them running outside in the dead of winter, just to cool off!

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