Physician Acupuncture Training
An Integrative Approach for
Pain, Stress and Mood Disorders

Acupuncture Protocols for Pain, Stress, Anxiety and Depression

**Course Goal:**
After taking this class, physicians will have a clear grasp of the fundamentals of TCM theory in sufficient detail to diagnose and create an acupuncture treatment protocol for the treatment of pain, stress, anxiety and depression.

**Meta purpose:**
The importance of effective treatment protocols for pain and stress may be surmised from the overwhelming numbers of patients who suffer from pain, stress and its sequelae. Using acupuncture to alleviate these nearly ubiquitous maladies is a sound and important skill set by which physicians may confidently assert that they are providing superior quality care for their patients.

**Course Objectives:**
1. Impart and differentiate the fundamental tenets of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) theory highlighting equivalency in terminology and concepts between TCM and Western medical science.
2. Define and explain the essential cognitive didactic and linguistic parameters that allow for competent practice of TCM by Western physicians.
4. Describe, explain, list and analyze the agreed upon signs and symptoms of patterns relating to pain and stress/anxiety/depression.
5. Demonstrate and verify proper point location and needle technique.
6. Demonstrate and verify correct use of moxa and other adjunctive therapies.
Methods:

1. The fundamentals of TCM will be discussed in a didactic/lecture format. Clear emphasis will be given on the important cultural and cognitive parameters that differentiate TCM from Western medicine.

2. Essential concepts to be discussed with emphasis on Western linguistic and conceptual equivalencies are: yin/yang, five phases, qi and blood, fluids and humors, channels and network vessels, disease causes, disease mechanisms, the four examinations, pattern discrimination and treatment principles.

3. Synthesizing the essential concepts into a working system of diagnosis, students will learn the step by step methodology that permits and promotes a clear, logical treatment plan.

4. The agreed upon signs and symptoms of the patterns related to pain and stress/anxiety/depression will be explained with clear emphasis on the pathophysiology of illness as seen from the TCM perspective vis a vis the concept of syndromes commonly referred to in Western medicine.

5. A ‘point vocabulary’ for acupuncture treatment of pain and stress/anxiety/depression will be learned, demonstrated and rehearsed with sufficient repetition and needling practice to ensure competent consistent, quality treatment.

6. Adjunctive therapies like moxa, teishin and qigong practice will be demonstrated to augment the student’s grasp of TCM therapeutic interventions and to increase treatment efficacy.

Texts/ Recommended reading:


• Handouts, Clinical Handbook
• Evidence based literature
• Studies and analyses
• Research reports from China

**Topics covered / Units of learning:**

1. Didactic: overview
   a) What is TCM; what are the advantages? Why study TCM?
   b) Fund of knowledge in TCM - a brief overview: yin/yang, five phases, qi and blood, fluids and humors, channels and network vessels, disease causes, disease mechanisms, the four examinations, pattern discrimination and treatment principles.
   c) Functional, holistic medicine and Western medicine: what are the essential differences? What are the similarities? What are the concepts that can and cannot be translated?
   d) Disease causes and disease mechanisms: liver-spleen disharmony and its implications.
   e) The Four Examinations
   f) Pulse and tongue examination
   g) Pattern discrimination
   h) Treatment principles: heteropathy in TCM
   i) Treatment of pain and stress/anxiety/depression.

2. Experiential learning
   a) Four Examinations: diagnosis – looking, listening, palpating, questioning
   b) Differentiating patterns
   c) Treatment principles: creating a treatment plan
   d) Needling and moxa
   e) Auricular therapy
**Evaluation:**

All students will be required to memorize the signs and symptoms of patterns related to pain, stress, anxiety and depression. In addition, there will be a written section of Problem Based Learning in which students will apply their new knowledge to write down diagnosis, treatment principles and the treatment plan for several case histories. Emphasis will be placed on providing *clear explanation of the TCM logic* used to arrive at the student’s given treatment plan. Lastly, there will be a hands-on section in which students will demonstrate clinical application of knowledge and skills acquired including proper point location and needling technique.
Course Outline

Didactic Unit: (28 hours)

This portion of the 60 hour course will be a pre-clinical module of audio lecture accompanied by printed materials. The didactic unit will introduce and explain topics and issues seminal to the diagnosis and treatment of pain, stress, anxiety and depression.

Topics:
1. Physician Acupuncture Training for Pain and Stress (power point)
2. The Issue of Language in Communicating (power point)
3. What is TCM?
4. Clinical Handbook (PDF)
5. Statements of Fact in Holistic TCM (power point)
6. Tongue, Pulse and Questioning in Holistic TCM (power point)
7. Evidence Based Research (PDF and online links)

1. Physician Acupuncture Training for Pain and Stress (power point)
   This opening portion of the didactic unit will introduce physicians to essential concepts in acupuncture as well as provide a stable theoretical foundation for understanding and discussing the integration of holistic Chinese medicine with Western medicine. The methodology of pattern discrimination will be introduced and explained using equivalency terminology where needed.
   - The need for quick, affordable treatment and management of pain and stress
   - Functional treatment using acupuncture
   - How acupuncture manages functional aspects of chronic disease

2. The Issue of Language in Communicating (power point)
   This lecture will expand on the introduction, explaining issues of medical terminology, offering equivalent terminology and parallel concepts in physiology.
   - How to understand qi
   - Characteristics of functional medicine and parallels to Chinese medicine
   - Methodology of Traditional Chinese Acupuncture and the role of language in understanding diagnosis and treatment

3. What is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)?
   This lecture will explain in detail what holistic TCM is and is not and how and why acupuncture is inherently suited to the task of treating and managing pain and stress as well as common complaints in chronic disease.
   - The pivotal difference in diagnosis and treatment with TCM


- Example of TCM methodology
- Common errors and misunderstandings when learning and using TCM acupuncture

4. **Clinical Handbook (PDF)**

   This portion of the lecture will take physicians through the core curriculum for competent clinical practice of acupuncture for the treatment and management of pain, stress, anxiety and depression. Explanation and commentary will be given as well as equivalency terms and concepts to aid physicians in recognizing aspects they may already perform in their practice (in diagnosis). Emphasis will be on correct understanding and methodology in diagnosing and treating pain, stress, anxiety and depression.

   - Key concepts in acupuncture and holistic medical theory
   - Patterns of signs and symptoms related to complaints of
     - Pain
     - Stress
     - Anxiety
     - Depression

5. **Statements of Fact in Holistic TCM (power point)**

   This portion will clarify some of the more detailed linguistic parameters which create and clarify medical reality in Chinese acupuncture. Equivalent terms and parallel concepts will be offered so that physicians may clarify the principle cognitive differences (and similarities) between holistic methodology and their own diagnostic standards.

   - Organ functions
   - Physiology in holistic medicine

6. **Tongue, Pulse and Questioning in Holistic TCM (power point)**

   This segment will cover the essential diagnostic skill set required to perform the pivotal task of discerning a clear and logical diagnosis using TCM methodology. Basic skills will include tongue diagnosis, pulse examination and simple questioning for soliciting and clarifying patient complaints. These are the fundamentals of functional diagnosis in the creation of a logical and time-tested treatment protocol for complaints of pain and stress.

   - Tongue signs and their indications
   - Pulse signs and their indications
   - Questioning for discerning common patterns related to pain and stress, anxiety and depression and how to follow up for clarity

7. **Evidence Based Research**

   An extensive bibliography of research will be provided for examination by physicians. Discussion will address aspects of study methodology.
8. **Post Test**

Physician participants will be evaluated on their understanding and absorption of key concepts, methodology and the signs and symptoms of patterns related to pain, stress, anxiety and depression.

- How to diagnose and create a treatment protocol for common functional complaints
- Signs and symptoms of common patterns
  - In chronic functional disease
  - In pain, stress, anxiety and depression