

Managing Stress and Anxiety with Traditional Chinese Medicine

By Sheri McLellan-Krauss, L.Ac, M.Ac.

Lourdes Wellness Center

Collingswood, NJ

Outline

- Overview of Traditional Chinese Medicine
- TCM Diagnosis of Stress and Anxiety
- Neurophysiology of Acupuncture
- Treatable Conditions

What is acupuncture?

- Insertion of needles
- Moxibustion
- Electroacupuncture
- Related therapies include acupressure, shiatsu, Reiki, and reflexology
- Part of Traditional Chinese Medicine





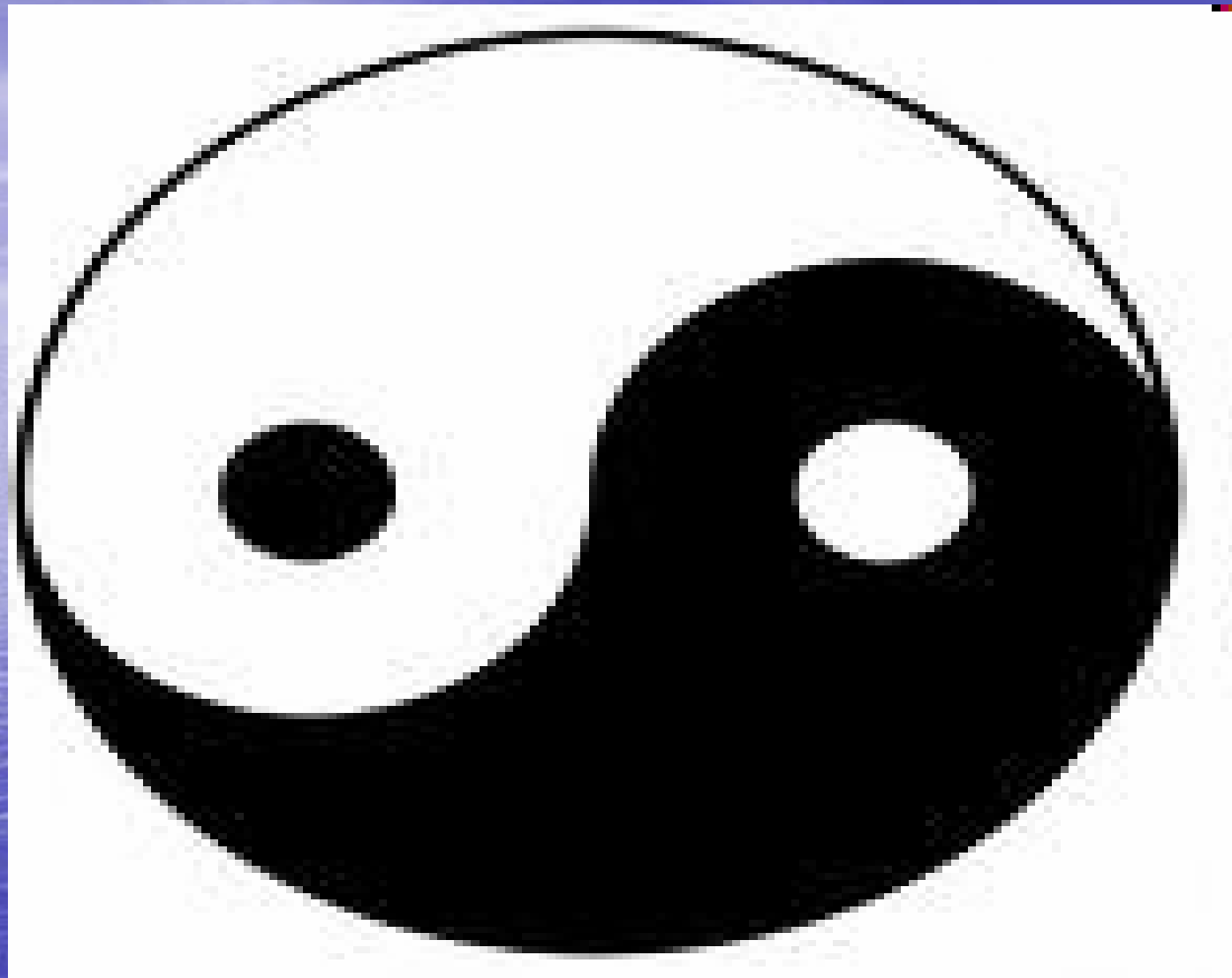
Traditional Chinese Medicine

- Is a complete system of medicine that dates back to 1000 B.C.
- Diagnosis based on patterns of illness
- Does not reject unexplained illness
- Does not separate mind and body
- Treats both the symptoms and cause

TCM

- Emphasis on prevention of illness
- Focus on balanced living: healthy diet, physical exercise and rest
- Illness arises when there is an imbalance of yin and yang





Yin and Yang

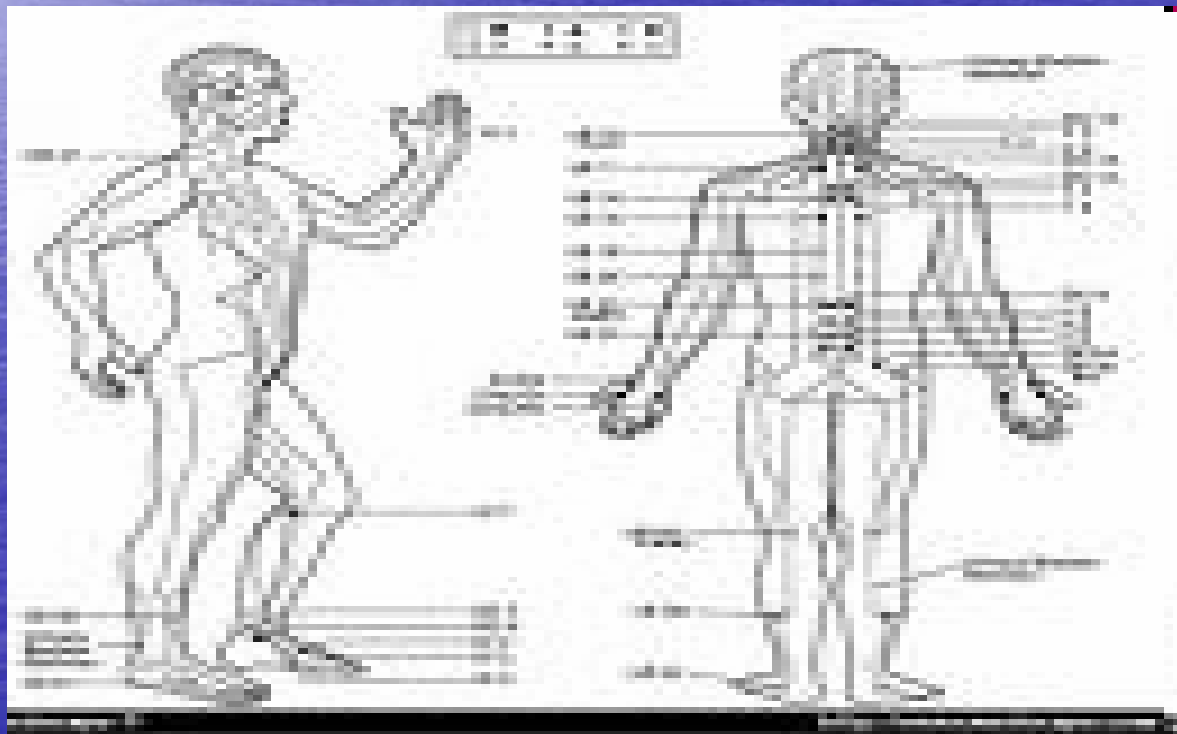
YIN

- Hypo-activity
- Chronic
- Slowly changing symptoms
- Quiet, lethargy, sleepiness
- Cold limbs and body
- Pale face
- Weak voice, no desire to talk

YANG

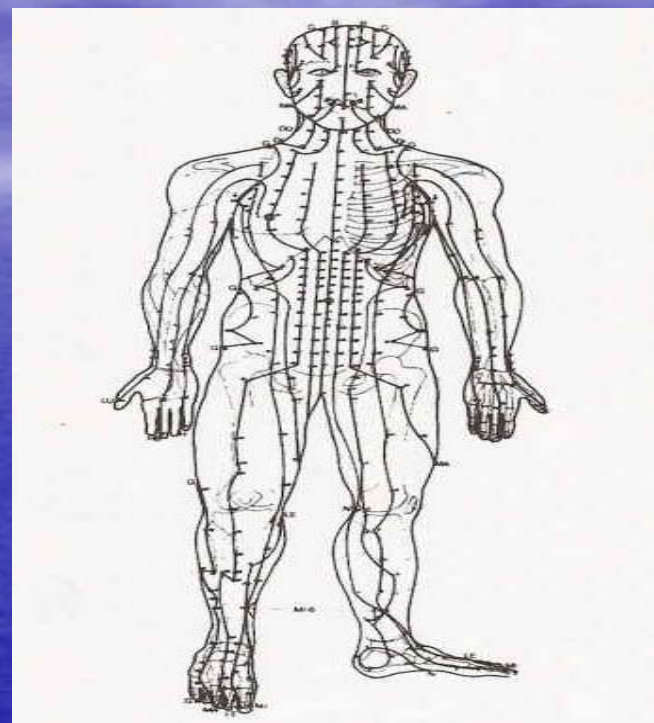
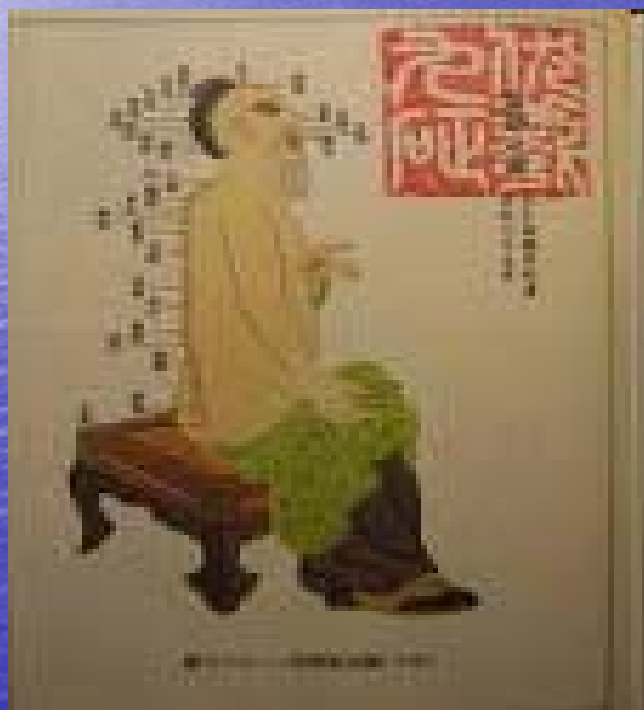
- Hyper-activity
- Acute disease
- Rapid pathological changes
- Restlessness, insomnia
- Hot limbs and body
- Red face
- Loud voice, talkative

Although Yin-Yang essential foundation for understanding symptoms and signs, we need to distinguish further to get exact diagnosis. i.e., which Organ is involved, which meridian involved.



Meridians

- Named after organs
- Paths through which Qi travels throughout the body
- Stimulating points on the meridians has an effect on the flow of qi



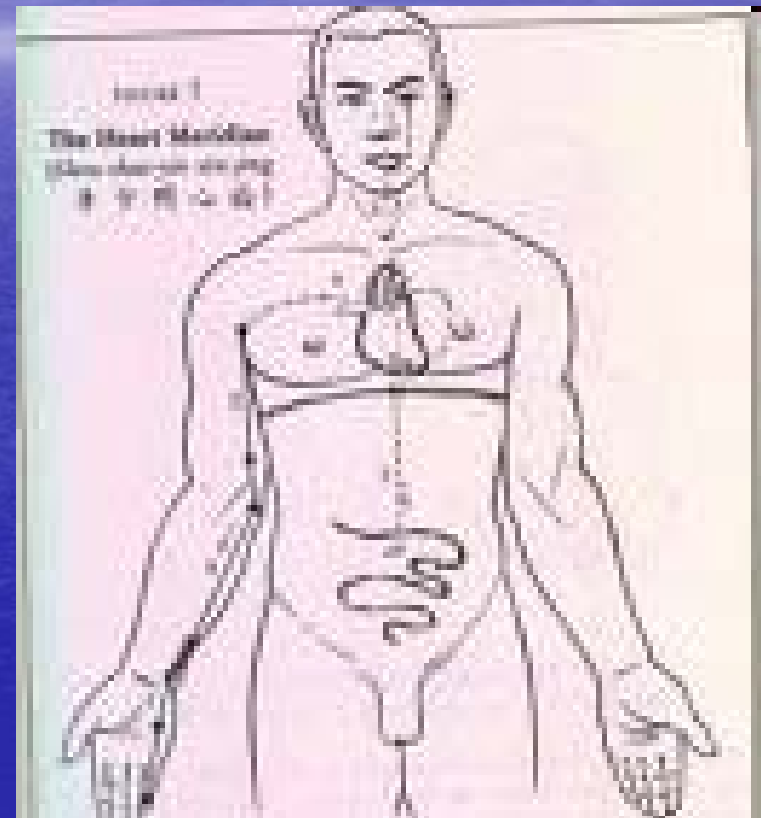
Acupuncture Points

- Can be found along meridian pathways
- 360 points
- Points contain numerous and varied nerve branches, plexi and endings
- Points have names and numbers standardized by WHO

Eg SP6/SanJiao/Three Leg Yin

Organs

- Concepts of “organ” is not confined to anatomical structure
- More to do with function



Yin Syndromes

- Depression, fatigue, low appetite
- Consider the affected organs
- Stimulate with Yang points:

Li4, ST 36, GV14



Yang Syndromes

- Anxious, insomnia, palpitations
- Consider the affected organs
- Sedate with Yin Points

HT 7, PC6, LV3



Neurophysiology and Acupuncture

- Local reaction: in skin and muscle
- Regional reaction: activates dermatomes through reflex arches
- Central nervous system: increases levels of endorphin, enkaphalin and serotonin
- General reaction: activations of above neurotransmitters in CNS and blood plasma affects many organ systems and the nervous system

(Mehmet Tugrul Cabioglu, H. Selcuk Surucu. Medical Acupuncture. March 2009, 21 (1):13-20.[doi:10.1089/acu.2009.0638](https://doi.org/10.1089/acu.2009.0638))

Acupuncture and Stress

In the stress of our modern society, the overwhelming tendency is to become stuck in the "fight or flight" or sympathetic mode. Because of its calming effect on the sympathetic nerves, acupuncture is particularly effective in treating these kinds of disorders.

Chronic over stimulation of the sympathetic nerves can lead to problems:

- Hypertension
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- G.I. distress
- Muscular or skeletal pain
- Insomnia

WHO Treatable Conditions

- **DIGESTIVE**
Constipation
Diarrhea
Indigestion
- **EMOTIONAL**
Anxiety
Depression
Insomnia
Nervousness
- **OB/GYN**
Infertility
PMS
Menopause
- **MUSCULO-SKELETAL**
Arthritis
Pain (neck, back)
Muscle weakness
Sciatica
- **MISCELLANEOUS**
Addiction control
Blood pressure regulation
Chronic fatigue
- **NEUROLOGICAL**
Headaches
Migraines
Neurogenic bladder
dysfunction
Parkinson's disease
Post-operative pain
Stroke
- **RESPIRATORY**
Asthma
Smoking cessation

Why try TCM?

- Different perspective on a patient's collection of symptoms
- Recognizes limits of allopathic medicine
- Few side effects

