



A Guide to the  
Brown University -  
Zhejiang University  
Exchange Program in  
Traditional Chinese  
Medicine

布朗与浙江大学医学院  
国际中医交流项目  
说明

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# 1. Introduction

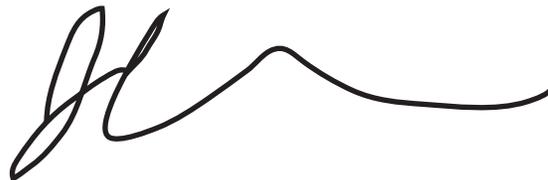
Having been one of the “guinea pigs” in this exchange program, I wanted to compose a handbook for future exchange students. As a rising senior, I went with three classmates to Hangzhou for two months during the summer of 2009. Before going, we had organized a GISP on traditional Chinese medicine, but the hands-on experience was significantly different from reading books and teaching ourselves.

Though we had an unforgettable experience, we faced many questions before and during the program. One concern was that the program lacked standardization. After returning and for my senior capstone project, I worked with Dean Juli Ip and our Chinese contacts to standardize the program and prepare a guide. Thus, by writing this handbook, I’m hoping to familiarize you with the program and give you adequate foresight, or at least a bit more information than what we were given before flying over.

I’m sure the experience is going to be different for every person, and there’s no guarantee you’ll find everything consistent with what’s stated in this handbook. Policies and conditions may change from year to year. Nevertheless, you may use this handbook as a loose guide and reference during your program. Perhaps the handbook could be continuously updated by you or future students as the exchange program matures.

The book is intended to address many facets of the experience, to answer your questions and concerns, and to be a quick reference material. You’ll find basic information on Traditional Chinese Medicine, hints about Hangzhou, and tons of tips!

I hope you have a great time!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JC', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Jack Cossman ‘10, MD ‘14

# 2. Learning TCM Through Brown

As a PLME or medical student, you are in a fantastic position to learn Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Currently, there are no courses that explicitly focus on TCM, and hands-on educational opportunities are limited to the acupuncture program at Memorial Hospital. While there are acupuncturists and quasi-TCM practitioners in the area who may allow shadowing, the only way to get an authentic introduction to TCM is to study abroad in China.

One course you may consider is a pre-clinical elective on complementary and alternative medicine, offered by Dr. Bob Heffron, [Robert\\_Heffron@brown.edu](mailto:Robert_Heffron@brown.edu). He teaches this course (which doesn't count for undergraduate course credit) in the spring semester. My classmates, who took this class before going to China, said it was helpful for learning concepts.

Alpert Medical School's international relationship with the Zhejiang University School of Medicine, in Hangzhou, affords students the opportunity to experience the Chinese medical system and, if it's where your interests lie, TCM. The exchange relationship lets students rotate in any department, but the focus in this handbook is, of course, on the TCM program. The experience is nothing short of total immersion. You'll discover a whole different world of medical care, and you'll find exciting new prospects for the development of your own career.

If you're interested in applying to go, contact Dean Juli Ip ([julianne\\_ip@brown.edu](mailto:julianne_ip@brown.edu)) or Hilary Sweigart ([hilary\\_sweigart@brown.edu](mailto:hilary_sweigart@brown.edu)) in the PLME office, BioMed Suite 222. They will be able to assist you with the process.



# 3. Prerequisites

A comprehensive medical education should theoretically honor as many diverse practices as possible, including traditional and alternative practices. Learning Traditional Chinese Medicine—or even just elements of it—will certainly add an entire new dimension to your capacity as a physician. Though everybody should have access to this educational opportunity, the nature of the program necessitates a few prerequisites.

First, you should be able to speak and understand Mandarin Chinese competently. Some physicians—particularly the younger ones—may speak English, but most of them and nearly all patients will not speak English. Patients, for that matter, might only speak the local dialect, and in that case Mandarin is the link for translation. To get the most out of the exchange, you'll need to comprehend what is going on. Chinese 500 and 600 should be sufficient, but keep in mind that the hospital environment uses a lot of vocabulary that isn't taught in class. Before heading over, you might want to refresh yourself with the vocabulary in the back of this book.

Secondly, it would be helpful to learn a little foundational TCM knowledge before going over (Five Elements Theory, the different climates, etc.). You don't need to read an entire book, but think about it: If you have trouble understanding the doctors' Chinese lectures, at least



you will have had some familiarity in the comfort of English. This will greatly facilitate your understanding! TCM is hard to learn in our largely scientific paradigm, and it will be even tougher if you aren't somewhat familiar. Indeed, some aspects of the learning process are bound to be rocky, regardless of your preparation. As mentioned in the previous section, Dr. Bob Heffron offers a seminar in complementary and alternative medicine in the spring semester. This is a good recommendation, but not essential.

# 4. Zhèjiāng University School of Medicine and The Second Affiliated Hospital of ZUSM

Zhèjiāng University (浙江大学) is huge, spanning multiple campuses located mostly north of West Lake. The medical school sits on a new campus (紫金港校区, Zījīngǎng xiàoqū) and boasts modern facilities and technology, as well as a very interesting medical museum. (For more details, you should visit their website: <http://www.cmm.zju.edu.cn/>) You might take a trip here to meet some administrators, but otherwise you'll be living and interning nowhere near the actual school.

Instead, you'll be based around 浙医二院, located due east of West Lake on Jiěfàng Road (解放路). It's a large, bustling medical complex contained in one block. The emergency room, outpatient clinic, neurology center, and International Healthcare Center (国际保健中心, Guóji Bǎojiàn Zhōngxīn) face Jiefang Road, and the inpatient department is in the back—separated by a small, central park. Although the complex is confined to one block, most of its departments occupy vertical space. All departments are best accessed from outside, since the indoor path is circuitous. Whichever way you go, you'll be confronted with hundreds of people milling about.

This hospital is a regional leader for medical care. Patients from rural areas and even from different provinces will make the journey to see the highly skilled and competent physicians. The TCM department is just one floor among the dozens of Western medical specialties, but it's very busy every day. Clinics are uncommon in China, and so even the most routine flu is treated at the hospital. When patients come to the hospital, they opt for either Western or Traditional treatment. In reality, a patient usually receives elements of treatment from both disciplines. For example, X-rays will be used to confirm diagnoses and direct treatment protocol.

Although the hospital is regionally known, it doesn't look much different from the ordinary Chinese hospital. It's hectic, and sanitation and privacy aren't as important as in America. It might take a while to adjust to the differences. You'll find that patients often crowd into one room, waiting for their turn with the doctor. You'll also see that the TCM pharmacy—located in the basement—isn't the most sanitary or aerated place.

# 5. Hángzhōu (杭州)

As a large modern metropolis and the capital of Zhejiang province, Hangzhou has a lot to offer. Though it often gets dwarfed by the megalopolis of Shanghai, it still is a fun and fantastic place to experience China. There are so many great restaurants, cultural sights, and shopping opportunities that you might forget that you came to study TCM. You'll need to go out and explore to find the fun.

Even with competent Mandarin, you won't understand the local dialect. It and the rest of the languages spoken around Zhejiang, Shanghai, and Jiangsu belong to the Wu dialect, the linguistic root of Japanese. Regardless, basically everybody young knows Mandarin.

The city's history is extensive, having been a very important city throughout Chinese history. You had best familiarize yourself with its past, especially about West Lake, to learn about the diverse array of historical sites, stories, and items associated with Hangzhou. Some important items include silk (there is a silk market not far from the hospital), Lóngjǐng tea (a tea street market is directly across from the hospital), and of course the cuisine.

Hangzhou is by far known for West Lake (西湖, Xīhú) and the scenery around it. Tourists from all over China and the world come sightseeing here, so many people that sometimes the majesty of the lake becomes too commercialized. There are temples that dot the surrounding mountaintops, open verandas and historical gardens along the shore, and hundreds of boats traveling between shore points and central islands. Taking a bike ride or strolling around the lake is a fun way to get exercise and see some different parts of the city. To reach the lake from the hospital, you just head west on 解放路. Basically all buses heading in that direction will get you to the lake, but you can also utilize the public bike station right out front of the hospital. Walking takes about 20 minutes.

In the summer time, it can become dreadfully hot and humid. Thankfully, ice cream is not expensive. You'll probably want to buy a locally made 天堂 (Tiāntáng) brand umbrella for shade. In winter, it hardly snows but temperatures can get cold. Always be prepared for rain storms, especially in spring and fall. The shade umbrellas are not good for rain.

Hangzhou has a really good public transportation system. Bus routes navigate most of the city's roads, and a card that is obtainable from the Yán'ān Road bus station (延安路站) allows you to take the buses and to rent bicycles. You need your passport to register for a card. However, you can still get on buses (not rent bikes) by paying with cash. Google Maps is very useful for planning trips by public transportation, locally, and nationally.

The public bike system is awesome, but it can be obnoxious during rush hour when all but the broken bikes are rented out. There are bike stations throughout the city, and you can swipe your card at any location and return the bike to any location. The first hour of rental is free, the

second is 1 yuan, and the third hour and above costs 2 yuan per hour. As long as you check your bike in and out before the first hour is up, you will never get charged. The card deposit, which you can retrieve when you return your card and its receipt, is 300 yuan.

Also, at the time of my internship, the subway lines were under construction and slated for completion in late 2011. Until then, the city gets overwhelmed by grid lock during rush hour, so beware.

As with any city, Hangzhou has a wide variety of nightlife options. KTV is almost everywhere, and different places have different perks. If you just look up while biking, you're bound to see a few signs for KTV establishments. The bars and clubs are mostly located around West Lake and cater to tourists. Therefore, they are all pretty expensive. Another option is to go to a tea house, where you are charged a flat fee, depending on the tea you choose, for unlimited access to a buffet and unlimited time to hang out in your private room.

For a fun shopping experience, visit Héfáng Street (河坊街). It is a pedestrian shopping street that retains a sense of old-city charm. Across from its western terminus is Wúshān Square (吴山广场), an indoor shopping center that sells pets and flowers. While the flowers are nice, it's the pet store that you should visit. Mostly on the lower level, vendors sell animals ranging from



sea turtles to squirrels to tropical fish to deadly reptiles and more. We bought a chipmunk, and then released him when we had to leave.

Hangzhou has many museums, too. There are several around West Lake, including museums specializing in the West Lake itself and the history of Zhejiang province. The museums are free, and their various exhibits are all very interesting and well worth a peek. A visit to the herbal museum is planned in the curriculum.

The variety of restaurants is amazing, and eating out can be the day's adventure. Besides every variety of Chinese cuisine, you can find a good selection of "Western" restaurants, Japanese, Thai, Korean, Taiwanese, and Indian restaurants. A good rule of thumb is to stay away from restaurants along West Lake, especially the ones that broadcast themselves as "Western," which are definitely pricy and not going to be any good. However, the Thai and Japanese restaurants near the Starbucks at the end of Jiefang Road are good. Across from the hospital is the Western Greenery Café, and it actually isn't that bad. You just have to be careful because some dishes really are not good, and they charge you if you break their glassware. Next to it is a good Chinese buffet-style fast food restaurant called Yikǒutián (一口田).

# 6. Accommodations

The International Health Care Center (国际保健中心, 国保 for short) is where students stay. It's a 19-story building next to the hospital complex. It is like a hotel for visitors, outpatients, and families. Each room has a private bathroom, bed, decent internet connection, desk, TV, air conditioning, closet, and furniture. Daily house-keeping makes the bed, restocks toiletries and towels, and takes care of garbage. Everything is simple, and the bed is very hard, but it's all worth it when the fee is waived. In fact, these accommodations are excellent when you think about all the other possible alternatives China can provide.

Staff within 国宝 can help you solve most problems and answer questions regarding lifestyle. The cleaning ladies are very friendly!

There is a restaurant on the fourth floor. It is relatively expensive compared to street side restaurants, but it is convenient and fast. During the “quarantine period,” they may let you eat here for free for the first couple days. Otherwise, you will always have to pay. The restaurant also has a breakfast buffet every morning, but the options never change. It costs



15 yuan. But if you want to save money and get much more variety, you'd best explore outside.

In addition to not having to pay for accommodations, you will also receive a 2,000 yuan per month stipend (or prorated). You will get information on how to find the office that distributes the envelopes packed thick with 100 yuan bills. This money is yours and can be used for anything.

# 7. Contacts and Resources

The person responsible for academic arrangements is Fàn Ràng (范让), but she likes to go by **Fancy**. She handles all curricular issues and is a useful contact for logistical questions. Fancy likes to make recommendations on things to do in Hangzhou, so don't be surprised if she encourages more exploring than studying. Her phone number is 13757196786.

Her office is somewhat hard to find. It's best if she shows you how to get there because describing the directions in writing is a little confusing. Just keep in mind that it's located behind the inpatient building.

**Chén Jìng** (陈静) works at the medical school. She is a primary contact with Brown and is responsible for the overall arrangements of the exchange. Although you won't see her too often, it is easy to reach her via phone or email for quick communication. She can advise on most issues related to transportation, life style, personal needs, and concerns related to the exchange program. Her e-mail address is [chenjing2006@zju.edu.cn](mailto:chenjing2006@zju.edu.cn).

**Lucy Lou** is the deputy party secretary and associate dean at the College of Pharmaceutical Sciences. Though she is not involved in the exchange program, she has visited Brown and is familiar with the PLME office. She works at the Zījīngǎng campus. When unsure of what to do and need to contact somebody with relatively high authority, you can contact Lucy. Her e-mail address is [louxiaoe@zju.edu.cn](mailto:louxiaoe@zju.edu.cn).



Though you may get confused and frustrated with the frequent disorganization and apparent miscommunications between all the different people, it is prudent to keep in mind that, in China, people of higher age or status should be respected appropriately. Thus, unless otherwise permitted, try to address everybody accordingly. When in doubt, simply say *lǎoshī* (老师).

# 8. Getting to Hangzhou and Settling In

Hangzhou has an international airport that connects to many other Asian cities. Though this is a convenient portal for side trips, you probably should fly to Shanghai Pudong airport. Communicate with Chen Jing well in advance to arrange a driver to pick you up. If coming as a group, all of you should arrive at the same time. The driver will wait for you directly outside of customs and will have a sign. Having a cell phone makes it easier to find each other. The trip to Hangzhou will take about three hours.

A useful website for booking trips to China is [www.flychina.com](http://www.flychina.com), and maybe here you'll find reasonable rates that fly directly to Hangzhou instead of to Shanghai.

As just mentioned, a cell phone will always be useful. You can buy one and a SIM card at the China Mobile or China Telecom outlets near the hospital. Perhaps cheaper but more of a hassle is going to the electronics market on 文三路 and browsing around.

There are supermarkets, department stores, and little markets all over the place. Century Mart (世纪联华) and Carre-four (家乐福) are the largest department/grocery stores close to the hospital. These are good places for food and sundries shopping. Produce is also sold in smaller stores all over the place, but prices are marginally more expensive. Just be sure to wash anything fresh thoroughly before use.

Again, use Google Maps (or Baidu Maps) to locate places.



# 9. Curriculum

The curriculum comes in two forms: a four-week program and a six-week program. Before the start of the first week, you will attend three days of orientation. On the mornings of the Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday prior to beginning, a few doctors will give you a brief introduction to TCM theory. In the afternoons, Fancy will show you around the area and help you get situated.

Whether to choose the four-week or six-program is up to you. Consult with Dean Ip if you need help.

<b>Program</b>	<b>Week #</b>	<b>Morning</b>	<b>Afternoon</b>
<b><i>4-week program</i></b>	0	TCM foundation and theory lectures	1. Hospital orientation 2. Tour with curriculum advisor
	1	Outpatient shadowing	<i>Free</i>
	2	1. Chinese herb use (theory) 2. Chinese Herbs Museum	TCM pharmacy
	3	Acupuncture shadowing	Acupuncture practice and review
	4	Massage and acupuncture	<i>Free</i>
<b><i>6-week program</i></b>	0	TCM foundation and theory lectures	1. Hospital orientation 2. Tour with curriculum advisor
	1	1. Chinese herb use (theory) 2. Chinese Herbs Museum	TCM pharmacy
	2	Outpatient shadowing	<i>Free</i>
	3	Inpatient rotation	Inpatient physician one-on-one lesson/question
	4	Acupuncture shadowing	Acupuncture shadowing
	5	Acupuncture	<i>Free</i>
	6	Massage	Massage

# 10. Fundamental TCM Concepts

This section is merely to serve as a quick reference. It is by no means complete or comprehensive. Nonetheless, the information is fundamental to TCM and important for learning.

## Yīn and Yáng

A healthy body is in harmony with the universe; Yīn (阴) and Yáng (阳) are balanced and cycle rhythmically. Yīn represents all qualities that are “negative.” Yáng represents all qualities that are “positive.” Negative and positive are not necessarily the same as bad and good. The body’s natural cycles, as well as symptoms of disease, reflect the quality of the Yīn and Yáng relationship. The following chart, from Between Heaven and Earth, distinguishes the two on the bases of universal and physiological patterns:

Yīn	Yáng
<i>Universal</i>	
Substantive	Active
Contracting	Expanding
Descending	Ascending
Cold	Hot
<i>Physiological</i>	
Generation of: blood, lymph, hormones, mucus, urine, nutrient, fat, etc.	Process of: circulation, secretion, discharge, pulsation, metabolism, etc.
<i>Constitutional Patterns</i>	
Low energy, lethargic	High energy, hyperactive
Sallow, pasty, pale	Ruddy, swarthy, flushed
Small, soft, flaccid body	Large, firm, fleshy body
<i>Diagnostic Parameters</i>	
Internal	External
Cold	Hot
Deficiency	Excess
Chronic	Acute

## Patterns of Disease

Illnesses and disorders manifest in symptoms. The nature of the symptoms indicates how Yīn and Yáng are imbalanced. Symptoms can be explained on the basis of the Five Climates. Each climate is associated with a phase, which in turn is associated with an organ pair. Figuring out which climates are present in symptoms can help pinpoint the site(s) of imbalance. The following descriptions are taken from *Between Heaven and Earth*.

**Wind** (风, Fēng) – the nature of Wind is movement that rises and falls unpredictably, rustling and disturbing the location and direction of things. It corresponds to the Wood Phase. It can manifest as jerky movements, dizziness, or symptoms that migrate in the body.

**Heat** (热, Rè) – the nature of Heat is to accelerate metabolic activity, dilate blood vessels, and activate circulation. It tends to rise and move out toward the surface. It corresponds to the Fire Phase. It generates conditions such as inflammation, rapid pulse, and fever.

**Dampness** (湿, Shī) – the nature of Dampness is to sink and accumulate. It corresponds to the Earth Phase. It manifests as phlegm, oily skin, sticky perspiration, edema, and dull pains.

**Dryness** (燥, Zào) – the nature of Dryness is to wither and shrivel. It is associated with the Metal Phase. Brittle hair, cracked and wrinkled skin, constipation, and rashes are some associated symptoms.

**Cold** (寒, Hán) – the nature of Cold is to slow things down by chilling them. It is associated with the Water Phase. Weariness, retarded circulation, and weakened immunity are common symptoms.

## The Five Phases and the Organ Pairs

The Five Phases represent processes in nature and in the body. In a cycle, each phase is born out of the previous and engenders the next. Each network of organs is associated with a particular phase because they perform a process that characterizes that phase. The cycle of phases, therefore, is the same as the cycle of the organs. The cycle of phases is:

→ **Wood** (木) → **Fire** (火) → **Earth** (土) → **Metal** (金) → **Water** (水) →

The Chinese word for organ is **qìguān** (器官), but the term specifically used in TCM is **zàngfǔ** (脏腑). The TCM organs are physically the same as the actual organs, but the functions are different; i.e., notions of physiology almost completely break down. The organs' functions complement each other in the transformative processes involving **Qì** (气), **Blood** (血, Xuè), **Essence** (经, Jīng), **Spirit** (神, Shén), and other fundamental substances. The unique process of each organ, of course, can be classified as Yīn or Yáng. Zàng refers to the Yīn organs and fǔ refers to the Yáng organs. Each Yīn organ is paired with a Yáng organ. The chart displays the interrelationships:

Element	Zàng 脏	English	Fǔ 腑	English
木	肝 gān	Liver	胆 dǎn	Gallbladder
火	心 xīn	Heart	小肠 xiǎocháng	Small intestine
土	脾 pí	Spleen	胃 wèi	Stomach
金	肺 fèi	Lungs	大肠 dàcháng	Large intestine
水	肾 shèn	Kidneys	膀胱 pángguāng	Bladder
(火2)	三焦 sānjiāo	Triple Burner	心包 xīnbāo	Pericardium

The **Liver** ensures the smooth flow of Qì throughout the body. The Liver opens to the eyes and manifests in the finger and toe nails. It also governs the sinews and tendons. A properly functioning Liver will ensure that the tendons are properly nourished and not too tense. The normal direction of Liver Qì is downwards. When Liver Qì “rebels,” it can attack the Spleen and cause nausea or poor appetite. It can rebel upwards causing tenseness in the shoulders and headaches, or it can stop flowing and become stagnant—leading to irritability and anger. When the Liver is dysfunctional, headaches, premenstrual symptoms, tense muscles, loss of appetite, insomnia, anger, irritability and frustration may result. The Liver is weakened by wind.

The **Heart** is considered to be the most important organ, sometimes described as the ‘ruler.’ The main function of the Heart is to govern the Blood, which it does in two ways: transforming Food-Qì into Blood and circulating the Blood (the same as in Western medicine). The Heart is weakened by heat.

The function of the **Spleen** is to transform food and drink into Qì and Blood and transport these substances around the body. The Spleen governs the flesh, the muscles, and the four extremities. When the Spleen is functioning well, digestion will be good, the muscles will be strong, and circulation will be efficient. When the Spleen is weak, there may result nausea. Cold hands and feet, lack of muscle tone, easy bruising and poor concentration/over-thinking can be signs that the Spleen is weak. The Spleen is weakened by dampness.

The **Lungs** send Qì downwards and disperse it throughout the body. It receives Qì through breath and exhales the waste. The Lungs govern the skin and hair (thus involved in immunity). Properly functioning Lungs ensure the skin and hair are of good quality and that the immune system is strong and able to fight disease. The normal direction of the Lungs is downwards. When Lung Qì “rebels” it goes upwards, causing coughing and wheezing. When the Lungs are weak, there can be skin conditions such as eczema, thin or brittle hair, and a propensity to catching colds and flu. The lung is weakened by dryness.

The **Kidneys** store the Essence and are considered the root of life. The Kidneys govern metabolism, growth, development, reproduction, secretions and some brain functions. The Kidneys produce Marrow, dominate Bones, and manufacture Blood. The Kidneys open into the ears. They receive air-Qì from the Lungs. Health of the Kidneys is reflected in head hair.

The **Triple Burner** is the metabolism mechanism, but it has no physical analogy like the

other organs. It is closely associated with the Spleen functions of transformation and transportation, particularly the metabolism of incoming food. It is also closely associated with the Kidney function of metabolism. Unlike the Spleen and Kidneys, however, the Triple Burner is a general metabolizer that can be applied to a variety of metabolism needs.

## Fundamental Substances

There are several fundamental substances that, through manipulation and transformation, produce the process of life. When they stagnate or flare up, the imbalance results in symptoms of illness or disease. The most commonly discussed substances are:

**Qì** (气) is the vital force that circulates through meridians that link organ pairs. It is derived from air and food and is continuously transformed as it passes through the organs. Each organ has its own characteristic Qì (e.g., liver Qì, kidney Qì). Simply put, it is the motive force of life and is found throughout nature in different forms and functions.

In the body, it circulates continuously and in sequence through the organ networks throughout the day. Its flow is unique to the time of day, following Yīn and Yáng patterns. It is the force behind everything happening in the body: from the active act of respiration to the passive shut-down for sleep.

Qì governs the shape and activity of the body and its process of organizing and forming itself. Inherent to it is the total summation of the life of the organism.

**Blood** (Xuè, 血) is a dense form of body fluids that have been acted upon and energized by Qì. It flows both within the blood vessels as well as within the meridians, as it has a synergistic relationship with Qì. It is a material substance as well as the process of generating, distributing, and storing nutrients.

Important to both Qì and Blood is **Moisture** (Jīn, 津), which governs the internal environment. Where Blood functions as nourishing and Qì as moving or vitalizing, Moisture lubricates and moistens these substances. Without Moisture, Qì becomes hot and agitated and blood dries up and congeals.

Without Blood, Moisture is dispersed and Qì is scattered. Without Qì, Moisture and Blood stagnate, coagulate, and fail to circulate. Though each substance is unique, each is nothing without the proper functioning of the other substances. Within the body, every phenomenon is the product of the interactions among Blood, Moisture, and Qì.

**Essence** (Jīng, 精) is stored in the kidneys and is the densest physical matter within the body (as opposed to Shén, which is the most volatile). It is the basis for the physical body and is Yīn in nature, which means it nourishes, fuels, and cools the body. Jīng can be thought of as the potency of life.

**Spirit** (Shén, 神) embodies consciousness, emotions, and thought. It is the sentient part of the process of life.

## Concepts related to acupuncture

In **acupuncture** (zhēnjiǔ, 针灸), needles are inserted into points along meridians, which are the invisible threads of a web that interconnect the organ networks. Acupuncture meridians are called jīngmài (经脉) in Chinese. Each organ pair has a meridian with points called 穴位 (xuéwei), with each one having its own name and associated health effects. An acupuncture point is also considered a gate (门) to the extent that it is where the flow of Qì and Blood can be directly accessed and manipulated.

The meridians are given special names depending on the degree of their Yīn or Yáng quality. There are twenty meridians in total, twelve of which are associated with the organs. The names and their locations are in this chart:

Organ meridian	Chinese name	Location of meridian
Lungs	手太阴肺经	From armpit , along forearm, to thumb tip
Large intestines	手阳明大肠经	From forefinger, along arm and collar, to nose
Stomach	足阳明胃经	From forehead and eye, along ribs and front torso, to tip of second toe
Spleen	足太阴脾经	From big toe, along lateral leg and torso, to armpit
Heart	手少阴心经	From armpit, to elbow, along forearm, to pinky
Small intestines	手太阳小肠经	From pinky, along arm to shoulder blade, to cheek and ear
Bladder	足太阳膀胱经	From eye, to top of head, along back splitting into two parallel meridians, ending in three spots around pelvis
Kidney	足少阴肾经	From sole of foot, to ankle, along leg and torso, to collar bone
Pericardium	手厥阴心包经	From armpit, along forearm, to tip of middle finger
Triple Burner	手少阳三焦经	From ring finger, along back of arm, to ear and eyebrow
Gallbladder	足少阳胆经	From eye, crisscrossing along scalp, along neck and lateral torso and leg, to little toe
Liver	足厥阴肝经	From between big and second toe, along inner leg, through groin, to ribcage



Where to stick the needles depends on the symptoms and can vary depending on individual response. Sometimes the points chosen will be at the site of pain in order to relieve stagnant substances. Sometimes the points will lie along the meridian of the organ pair that seems to be imbalanced and producing the symptoms of disease. And other times, the points may be specifically related to the symptoms (e.g., 足三里 is good for general weakness and appetite disorders).

Related to acupuncture is **moxibustion**, whereby herbal substances are placed on the skin above points and heated so as to absorb into the skin and release beneficial compounds.

**Cupping** (báguàn, 拔罐) is based on a vacuum space created within a jar, and the 'cups' are placed widely over the body. The positions do not necessarily follow meridians, as they serve as a general method to suck out "poisons" in the body.

**Massage** (Tuīná, 推拿) works on the same principles, except that it utilizes acupressure to stimulate the meridian points.

# 11. Vocabulary Reference

Hospital terms		医院生词			
Check-up	体检	tǐjiǎn	Ambulance	救护车	jiùhùchē
Blood pressure	血压	xuèyā	Capsule	胶囊	jiāonáng
ER	急诊室	jízhěnsì	Injection	注射	zhùshè
Operation	手术	shǒushù	Painkiller	止疼药	zhǐténgyào
Antibiotic	抗菌素	kàngjūnsù	Examination room	病房	bìngfáng
X-ray	X光	x-guāng	Allergy	过敏	guòmǐn
Infection	感染	gǎnrǎn	Outpatient	门诊	ménzhěn
Inpatient	住院	zhùyuàn	Pulse diagnosis	脉诊	maizhěn
Acupuncture	针灸	zhēnjiǔ	TCM massage	推拿	tuīná
Pharmacy/Prescription	处方	chǔfāng	Tongue diagnosis	舌诊	shézhěn
Medical record	病历	bìnglǐ	First aid	急救	jíjiù

Maladies		毛病			
Flu	流感	liúgǎn	Fever	发热	fā rè
Cramp	抽筋	chōujīn	Sneeze	打喷嚏	dǎpēntì
Headache	头疼	tóuténg	Cough	咳嗽	késǒu
Cold	感冒	gǎnmào	Nausea	恶心	ěxīn
Sore throat	咽喉痛	yánhóutòng	Stomachache	胃痛	wèitòng
Asthma	哮喘	xiàochuǎn	Chicken pox	水痘	shuǐdòu
Diabetes	糖尿病	tángniàobìng	Hay fever	枯草热	kūcǎorè
Nosebleed	鼻出血	bìchūxuè	Rash	皮疹	pízhěn
Alzheimer's Disease	老年性痴呆病	lǎonián-xìngchībìng	Strep throat	链球菌性咽喉炎	liànqiújūn-xìngyānhóuyán
Measles	腮腺炎	sāixiànyán	Toothache	牙痛	yátòng
High blood pressure	高血压	gāoxuèyā	Stroke	中风	zhòngfēng
Scoliosis	脊柱侧凸	bèizhùcètū	Earache	耳痛	ěrtòng
Acne	痤疮	cuóchuāng	Anorexia	厌食	yànshí

Arthritis	关节炎	guānjiéyán	Athlete's foot	脚癣	jiǎoxuǎn
Backache	背痛	beitòng	Fracture	骨折	gǔzhé
Blindness	失明	shīmíng	Snore	打呼噜	dǎhūlū
PMS	经前综合症	jīngqiánzōng-hézhèng	Laryngitis	喉炎	hóuyán
Jaundice	黄疸	huángdǎn	Insomnia	失眠	shīmián
Obesity	肥胖症	féipàngzhèng	Cancer	癌症	áizhèng
Tumor	肿瘤	zhǒngliú	Tooth grinding	磨牙	móyá
Heart attack	心脏病	xīnzàngbìng	Constipation	便秘	biànmì
Diarrhea	拉肚子	lādùzi	Coma	昏迷	hūnmí



# 12. Suggested Readings

Between Heaven and Earth, by Beinfield and Korngold, is an easy reader for an introduction to Chinese medicine.

The Web That Has No Weaver, by Kaptchuk, is a more comprehensive introduction to the theory and practice of traditional Chinese medicine. The author is a well-known writer of TCM, and his other works might be useful as well.

In Chinese bookstores, there is usually a big selection of medical books, many of which are bilingual. Here you can find your preferred materials, including acupuncture charts, hand references, and complete textbooks.

Good luck, and remember to keep an open mind!

