

About Herbal Medicine

One of the therapeutic pillars of Acupuncture Practice is Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine. For thousands of years herbal medicine has been used for many acute and chronic conditions. Herbal formulas may contain many ingredients with unique characteristics that when combined, offer a therapeutic effect. Ingredients are primarily of plant origin. Herbal formulas can be taken internally, (by mouth), or topically.

How is Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine regulated?

In the United States, Chinese herbs are regulated by the FDA*. The best source to ask about the quality of your herbal formula is your qualified practitioner of herbal medicine.



Is Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine (TCHM) safe?

TCHM is considered safe when prescribed by a qualified practitioner. Make sure to purchase your herbal medicines under the supervision of a qualified practitioner of herbal medicine who has taken a complete health history and performed an appropriate herbal medicine evaluation.

How can I find a qualified Traditional Chinese Herbal practitioner?

A qualified acupuncturist is the only health care professional in the United States whose education includes extensive training in TCHM, followed by the passage of rigorous exams. You can find a practitioner Certified in Oriental Medicine or Chinese Herbology located near you at the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine website <https://www.nccaom.org> or in California at <https://www.acupuncture.ca.gov/>

Is Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine therapy covered by insurance?

At this time, Chinese herbal medicine therapy is not typically covered by insurance but may be reimbursed under your Health Savings Account (HSA) or Flex-spending account (FSA). Please check your specific plan.

What happens during Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine consultation?

A qualified practitioner of herbal medicine will take a complete health history, including details of symptoms, illnesses, conditions, medications, allergies and diet. Once you have been fully assessed, the qualified practitioner of herbal medicine will prescribe an herbal formula unique to you and your therapeutic needs.

Is Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine a replacement for conventional Bio-Medical treatment?

No. It is a complement to your conventional treatment plan. Your qualified practitioner of herbal medicine may work with your physician to manage your care.

Will Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine interfere with my medications?

TCHM may interact with your prescription medications. This is why it is important to tell your qualified professional herbal practitioner and other medical providers what medications and supplements you are taking. It is vital to disclose all medications and supplements you are taking to all your health care providers.

Reference Notes

* held to cGMP(regulation under FDA Title 21 CFR 111. Every batch of TCHM should be accompanied by the Certificate of Analysis (COA), which should reflect: Appearance inspection, Microscopic analysis, Physical and chemical identification, chemical fingerprinting, and detection of sulfur dioxide, pesticide residuals, aflatoxins, heavy metals, aristolochic acid. International regulations are even more vigorous, the best quality herbs are subjected to specific regulations, to name just a few most reputable agencies: TGA-PIC/s GMP (Therapeutic Good Administration), USDA-NOP (United States Department of Agriculture, National Organic Program), NSF-cGMP (National Sanitation Foundation), Kosher, Halal, ISO 9001:2008 (International Accredited Forum), ISO17025:2005 (Taiwan Accreditation Foundation), GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice).

The Food and Drug Administration, the FDA, refers to Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine (TCHM), so we use this language: <https://www.fda.gov/regulatory-information/search-fda-guidance-documents/complementary-and-alternative-medicine-products-and-their-regulation-food-and-drug-administration>

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