

Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine: What Medical Professionals Need To Know

There is a growing body of evidence supporting Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine for many acute and chronic conditions.*

What qualifies a Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine (TCHM) practitioner?

Completing a 4 year graduate program credentialed by the Accreditation Commission of Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine (ACAHM), and passage of National Board Chinese Herbology Medicine Certification exam. A qualified practitioner can be found at the website www.nccaom.org or state Acupuncture Governing boards.

How is Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine Regulated?

In the United States, Chinese herbs are held to cGMP (regulation under FDA Title 21 CFR 111. Each batch of TCHM has a Certificate of Analysis (COA), which includes: Appearance inspection, Microscopic analysis, Physical and chemical identification, Chemical fingerprinting, and detection of Sulfur dioxide, Pesticide residuals, Aflatoxin, Heavy metals, Aristolochic acid. International regulations are even more vigorous, the best quality herbs are subjected to many regulations, to name just a few most reputable: 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 best source to ask about the quality of your herbal formula is your prescribing qualified Traditional Herbal Medicine Practitioner.



The importance of the Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine consultation:

TCHM requires a differential diagnosis for each patient according to traditional medicine pattern differentiation as outlined in ICD-11 Chapter 26 Traditional Medicine (TM1). <https://icd.who.int> The practitioner will gather detailed health history (including notes about symptoms, illnesses, conditions, medications, and diet) which may include additional diagnostic measures. After a full assessment an individualized, TCHM formula specific to the patient's therapeutic needs and treatment goals will be prescribed.

Will Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine interfere with medications?

Like some foods, herbs may interact with some medications, such as blood thinners or chemotherapy. Interprofessional communication between the herbal medicine practitioner and physician will enhance patient care and outcomes.

Appropriate referral guidelines for Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine may include, but are not limited to, patients who experience:

- Poor response to conventional treatment
- Chronic pain
- Poor compliance, demonstrating resistance, or experiencing adverse effects from pharmaceuticals.
- Adjunct to fertility treatments and other gynecological, trans, and male health concerns
- Chronic digestive, bowel or bladder issues
- Convalescing from/living with chronic disease or illness, ie cancer treatment or post viral syndrome
- Addressing sleep, anxiety, depression, and stress issues to enhance vitality and quality of life

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