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HEALTHY
view

Healing with Chinese Medicine

Worried about prescription drug side effects?
Dreading a surgery? You might look into Chinese medicine

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BY
MEGM.
MORING

Watch any amount of TV and you'll see them: slick commercials featuring people hiking, gardening, teaching, living a great life because they've taken the prescription medication being advertised. Maybe you hit the mute button until *Dancing with the Stars* or *Wipeout* comes back on. Who wants to hear the list of scary possible side effects anyway? Hedy Chen thinks *you* should.

"Some of the side effects create more problems than your own original illness does," Hedy, the owner of Chinese Acupuncture Clinic, points out. Some side effects, in fact, include the risk of death, yet commercials still urge people to "ask your doctor to prescribe that medication for you!" Hedy marvels.

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"I wish more people could know how much Chinese medicine can do for them," says Hedy, who grew up in Taiwan and holds a master's degree in Chinese medicine from the well-known Academy of Oriental Medicine in Austin. Hedy, an herbalist and a licensed acupuncturist,

explains that Chinese medicine is more than just acupuncture. Patients can find natural, alternative treatments for a wide array of illnesses. By combining herbal remedies and acupuncture, Hedy says, she has treated patients for menopausal symptoms, migraines, irritable bowel syndrome, hypertension, kidney failure, liver angioma, sciatica, edema, alcoholism, impotence—the list goes on. She often helps patients avoid the side effects of prescription drugs or painful surgeries. In fact, she believes, many surgeries are unnecessary and predispose patients to further complications.

Chinese medicine involves more than simply treating what's



Herbs that are mixed for treatment

wrong. "I treat a patient as a whole person, not isolating a part from the rest of their body," Hedy explains. From the moment patients walk in, Hedy begins observing them—their posture, their color, their gestures—and her observations guide her questions and exam.

Someone may come in, for example, with shoulder pain, she says, but "I will go through a very thorough consultation and point out to them what they need to do to improve their overall health rather than just treat the pain. I give people *very* personal attention." Hedy also commands a fully stocked herbal inventory.

Chinese medicine "is all about nourishing and healing every part of the body," attests client Kris Rallens, a former nurse. "Hedy has this amazing working knowledge of Chinese medicine. She loves to explain it, and she's easy to understand. She's given me a whole new perspective on caring for my body." •