

Wellbeing with Chinese Medicine



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The Withering of Yin: A Mid-Life Crisis?

Introduction

We've all heard about *Yin* and *Yang*, but what do they really mean in our daily lives? How can our health benefit from understanding these ancient concepts? There are many common illnesses associated with a withering of *Yin*, but we just don't look at them in that way. For example, a deficiency of *Yin* in females can manifest as an irregular menstrual cycle, PMT, irritability, dizziness, early menopause, loss of libido, early signs of aging (withering of the skin), etc. In men, it can manifest as hypertension, impotence, tinnitus, irritability, stroke, etc.

Discussion

Yin is associated with water; it's liquid, nourishing and feminine. *Yang* is the opposite; it is associated with fire, moving and masculine. Perfect health is achieved when *Yin* and *Yang* are in balance. If one is excessive or deficient, an imbalance occurs, causing dis-ease in the body and ill health.

When we are born, we are generally given an equal amount of *Yin* and *Yang*, which are housed in the Kidneys. How we lead our lives, the types of foods we eat, where we live, and other factors such as the quantity of sex and work, how we deal with our emotions, all determine the rate at which *Yin* depletes. When *Yin* has been completely exhausted from our bodies, we wither away. In women, *Yin* is especially important as it regulates the menstrual cycle, provides life, beauty and youth. In men, it is the seed, the provider and the nurturing father.

During our lives, *Yin* and *Yang* have their high and low cycles. In childhood, both girls and boys are very active, and are considered to be *Yang* in nature, and often have *Yang* dis-eases, such as chicken pox, fever, etc. When entering puberty, both girls and boys have a high cycle of *Yin*. For girls, their menstrual cycle begins and for boys they are able to

produce sperm. It has been well documented throughout the centuries in China, how the depletion of *Yin* in females in mid-life is signified by the menopause. In men it is not so clear cut, but can be signified by hypertension and prostatitis.

Herbal Treatment

Chinese medicine uses many different treatment techniques to increase the *Yin*, reduce excessive *Yang* and restore a holistic balance. It achieves this in several different ways; by nourishing the *Yin* housed in the Kidneys, restraining *Yin* loss through irregular lifestyle and reducing *Yang*.

For those suffering from hypertension, it is advisable to take *Qi Ju Di Huang Wan* along with green tea, such as *Jiang Ya Cha*. For tinnitus, use *Er Long Zuo Ci Wan*. For loss of libido in men try *Nan Bao Zhuang Wan* and for women use *Nu Bao Wan*. For menopausal symptoms take *Kun Bao Wan*, and for excessive irritability use *Jia Wei Xiao Yao Wan*.

Lifestyle Advice

Chinese medicine can put you back on the right path. However, if your lifestyle is irregular, then you'll simply wander back off that path into ill health. It is very important, therefore, that all aspects of our lives are balanced, from diet, sleep, sexual activities to our emotions. In China, this is referred to as the *Dao* (way of life).

Diet

Avoid eating excessive amounts of hot, spicy food, as well as alcohol and smoking. These are all very *Yang* in nature and introduce excessive heat into the body, which will burn and injure *Yin*. Men are particularly prone to this category and will often present symptoms of hypertension, impotence, etc. Drink plenty of water (*Yin*), and if you suffer from one of these conditions, eat more *Yin* foods, such as salads, nuts, beans, etc.

Sleep

Sleeping late at night (after midnight – the highest point of *Yin*) or not sleeping enough, greatly damages the Kidneys and the *Yin* housed within them. Women will look tired with dry skin and possible poor menstrual cycle and have a low libido. Men may have a low libido too, with possible hypertension and general strength loss.

Sex

Too much sex for men greatly depletes the *Yin*. This is why, in ancient times, men were taught how to restrain their *Yin* and hold onto their seed. The act of sex is encouraged, but the act of losing one's seed is not.

Environment

Our surrounding environment is often forgotten and given no significance in dis-ease formation. Chinese medicine places great importance on environmental factors. Exposure to excessive heat (sun bathing) will introduce a lot of heat into the body, which will burn the *Yin*. This is why people who sun bathe, (and smoke), tend to have dry, withering skin in later life.

Emotions

Holding onto your emotions and bottling them up causes internal heat (frustration and anger). If you find it difficult to 'let go' of anger and resentment, try taking Chinese medicines, such as Happy Pills (*Jia Wei Xiao Yao Wan*). Women tend to suffer more from irritability, as their hormone levels fluctuate greatly from month to month and then drastically during menopause. Men holding onto unexpressed emotions can end up suffering from hypertension, stroke and impotence, etc.

Remember – A balanced life is a happy, healthy one!