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Healthy Aging and Living Life with Vitality

"Old age, believe me, is a good and pleasant thing. It is true you are gently shouldered off the stage, but then you are given such a comfortable front stall as spectator." -- Confucius

Could this be the fate of the aging as Confucius decreed? To be able to enjoy the golden years of life implies a life well lived and that a good, if not excellent, standard of health was maintained. Our attitudes towards the elderly and aging, in general, are not always so encouraging. How to live a life with vitality and exuberance, one that can last until the time of death is not a foolish quest, but one that is recognized by acupuncture and Oriental medicine as realistic and completely within reach.



Oriental medicine has a long history of healing and rejuvenation that teaches us a great deal about aging well. Two thousand years ago, ancient Chinese scholars described the stages of aging in the Huang Di Neijing (The Yellow Emperor's Internal Classic). They remind us that we cannot change our genetics, but we can change how we live to extend and improve the quality of our lives.

Acupuncture and Oriental medicine emphasize prevention over treatment. This makes a great deal of sense because treating an illness that has already damaged the body is much more difficult than preventing the illness from occurring in the first place. It is never too late. You can begin today.

One of the basic tenets of acupuncture and Oriental medicine theory is the belief that all disease results from the imbalance of yin and yang forces. Yin qualities include darkness, quiet, moisture and formlessness. Yang qualities are represented by light, noise, dryness and form. Running is a yang activity, whereas the rest that comes afterwards is a function of yin. Resting allows for the renewal of depleted energy reserves, which, in turn, makes activity possible. This is one way to describe how the dynamic relationship between yin and yang powers our life force.

The challenges of aging also result from this lack of balance between yin and yang energies. This means that some conditions and symptoms of disease associated with advanced aging may be mitigated by bringing these two energies into harmony again. For example, dry eyes and poor vision can be addressed by acupuncture treatments that focus on nurturing yin and increasing yang. Yin fluids will provide lubrication to the eyes, while an increase in yang helps ensure more energy can reach the top of the head to help improve vision.

Whatever your starting point, you can make positive changes to enhance the quality of your life. Supporting the different ways of improving your health and preventing illness, Oriental medicine promotes living a balanced life. A healthy diet, active lifestyle and emotional well-being are the basic components of Oriental medicine that help point you on the path toward a long and quality life.

**Are you experiencing a waning in your Qi? Have concerns about conditions associated with aging?
Call for an appointment today!**

Six Easy Tips for Greater Health and Longevity

Aging may be inevitable, but your later years can be vibrant and healthy if attention is given to supporting your physical, mental and emotional well-being. These tips are just a few of the ways that you can bring balance into your life. You don't need to try doing all of them at once. Focus on one or two of them.

Practice Gratitude

Grateful people report higher levels of positive emotions, life satisfaction, vitality, and optimism, and lower levels of depression and stress, according to Robert A. Emmons, a researcher and professor at University of California-Davis who has authored four books on the subject of the psychology of gratitude.

Dr. Emmons states that the disposition toward gratitude appears to enhance pleasant feeling states more than it diminishes unpleasant emotions. Grateful people do not deny or ignore the negative aspects of life, but they have a healthy attitude towards them.

Make Exercise a Priority

People who exercise more are less likely to be stressed and more likely to be satisfied with life, according to Danish researchers. Compared with sedentary people, joggers are 70 percent less likely to have high stress levels and life dissatisfaction.

Qi Gong and Tai Chi are non-impact exercises that focus on repetitive movements with attention to breathing. Tai Chi and Qi Gong use gentle movements and low physical impact, which are ideal for aging bodies.

The benefits of these exercises include a slower heart rate, lowered blood pressure, and drops in adrenaline and cortisol levels. Making these exercises a regular practice can lead to better health and vitality. The Mayo Clinic reported results from two studies on these ancient practices that concluded they can also alleviate chronic pain.

Take a Day of Rest

Take a day of rest per week from your regular schedule to recharge. Rejuvenation for the body and mind is worth its weight in gold and you will be more productive with the rest of your time!

Get Good Sleep Regularly

Your body repairs itself best at night, so allow plenty of time for it to do so. Good sleep patterns follow nature. Morning is bright and the most Yang time of day, indicating activity. Night is the dark period, a time to slow down and enter the Yin phase of the day.

Poor sleep has been linked to high blood pressure, atherosclerosis, heart failure, heart attacks, stroke, diabetes and obesity. Research has shown that getting at least eight hours of sleep is needed for good heart health.

Alleviate and Manage Stress Levels

Stress is a normal part of life, but if left unmanaged, stress can lead to emotional, psychological, and even physical problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure, chest pains or an irregular heartbeat. Numerous studies have demonstrated the substantial benefits of acupuncture in the treatment of stress, anxiety and mental health.

In addition to acupuncture, Oriental medicine offers a whole gamut of tools and techniques that can be integrated into your life to keep stress in check. These tools include Tui Na, Qi Gong exercises, herbal medicine, dietary therapy, meditations and acupressure that you can administer at home.

Address Health Concerns Quickly: Don't Wait!

Many diseases can be cured easily if they are caught early, but people often put off seeking treatment. They ignore important signals that something is wrong with their body. We all get warnings about our health and well-being, but these warnings are like traffic lights. They tell us what we ought to do, but they cannot make us do it.



Managing Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is a condition that causes brittle or porous bones due to a reduction in the bone mineral density. Bone is comprised of living tissue, which is constantly dying and renewing itself.

Normally, old bone is cleared away as new growth occurs. However, when new bone cannot be generated, bones become soft and weak. So, should a fall or coughing fit occur, a fracture may arise. In more severe cases, a break can occur without a noticeable event.

Usually the early stages of osteoporosis do not include noticeable signs or symptoms. In later stages, back pain, loss of height, poor posture or easily occurring bone fractures may happen.

Although anyone can develop osteoporosis, it occurs most frequently among post-menopausal white and Asian women.

Other contributors include low calcium intake, prolonged use of corticosteroid drugs, heavy alcohol consumption, smoking and an inactive lifestyle.

A patient suffering from the consequences of brittle and porous bones may be diagnosed by a practitioner of acupuncture and Oriental medicine with a deficiency of yin. Healthy bone depends on a system of blood vessels to deliver nourishment.

Considered a thickened form of body fluids, blood falls under the domain of yin. When yin is in short supply, dryness is the natural result. A disruption or deficiency in the blood supply to the skeletal system may interfere with its ability to properly lubricate and nourish bone.

In addition to receiving acupuncture treatments to help nourish yin, there are some things you can do at home to address your symptoms of osteoporosis, including increasing physical activity and consuming foods high in calcium that support the skeletal system.

An increase physical activity that includes resistance, flexibility and weight-bearing exercises will strengthen muscles, improve stability and balance, help slow mineral loss and improve cardiovascular health.

If you have osteoporosis, work with a therapist to select appropriate exercises for your health. Choosing exercises with slower controlled movements such as Tai Chi or Qi Gong and avoiding high-impact exercises with jerky movements will reduce the risk of fractures.

To learn how acupuncture and Oriental medicine can assist in prevention and provide osteoporosis support, call for a consultation today!

