

Wellbeing Natural Medicine

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YINYANG

Yin and Yang are the two interrelated forces which together with the concept of Qi and a knowledge of meridian theory that form the foundation of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM). Yin and Yang are mutually exclusive and together form a whole which in balance constitutes a state of harmony and health, and when out of balance indicates disharmony and illness.

From a medical perspective, the relationship between Yin and Yang form the general basis for all diagnoses and treatment protocols. A clinical example would be a person who has Liver Fire signs such as headaches, flushed face and anger. In this case the Yin Yang relationship may be 70% Yang and 30% Yin, leading to excessive Yang symptomology.

Yin and Yang are opposite qualities which never exist in isolation, everything contains both Yin and Yang aspects, even extreme Yang contains the seed of Yin and vice versa. They never exist in a static 50-50 balance and while a theoretical ideal, in reality Yin and Yang are always in a dynamic relationship and are always spoken of in relative terms. They are interdependent yet one cannot exist without the other, they can be distinguished but not separated and are mutually consumptive.

There is a story that says the application of yin and yang to the body came from watching the way the noon time sun would hit an animal. Just as every hill had a sunny side and a shady side, so too does the animal. Every part of the animal that touched the sunlight was associated with yang and every part that was in shade was associated with yin. To yang went the entirety of the head, the posterior-lateral arms and legs, the posterior of the torso, etc. To yin went the anterior of the torso, the anterior-medial arms and legs, etc. Internally, those organs which are in direct contact with the outside world, mostly from mouth to anus, went to yang (a.k.a. the hollow organs). Those organs which open to the outside only indirectly went to yin (solid organs). (See table below).

Every sign, symptom and aspect of the body can be contemplated with yin and yang in mind. Before looking at its medical applications and imbalances, first the structure of the body is placed into the two categories by their nature

As for the meridians, the split is correlated to both the meridians organ association and it's location. Interestingly, all of the hollow organs have meridians which run along the posterior-lateral aspects of the arms and legs. Similarly all the solid organs have meridians that run along the anterior-medial aspects of the arms and legs. (What's curious is even though some meridians have a greater percentage of points on one aspect of the body, they fall into the other.)

It is the imbalance between yin and yang in the body that is one of the major pathologies in TCM. In addition, the nature and characteristics of an illness and how it runs its course, can also give inclinations to whether the pathogen or pattern is yin or yang.

Balance needs to be achieved, so the strategy is to tonify that which is deficient, and reduce that which is excess. Yin and yang patterns are rather serious patterns and are not as simple as those that are in the table below. Just because you have a qi deficiency does not mean that you have yang deficiency. In these cases, any effect you wish to have on yin and yang should be indirect or subtle.

YANG	YIN
Superior	Inferior
Posterior	Anterior
Lateral	Medial
Exterior	Interior
Organ Function	Organ Structure
Qi	Blood/Body Fluids
Hollow Organs(Fu)	Solid Organs(Zang)

YANG	YIN
Acute Disease	Chronic Disorder
Rapid Onset	Gradual Onset
External Pathogen	Internal Disorder
Changes in Pathology	Lingering Pathology
Qi Disease	Blood Disease
Hot Illnesses	Cold Illnesses
Dry Illnesses	Damp Illnesses
Hardness	Softness
Hyperactivity	Hypoactivity

Yin and Yang theory is one of the cornerstones of TCM, the interplay of these opposites bring great clarity not only to the patients existing condition, but also allow a practitioner to reflect and consider the deeper implications of their important role in this relationship, as nothing is without it's opposite.

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