



UNC  
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:  
Dr. Ron Falk & Dr. Wunian Chen  
Healing Through Acupuncture  
“What is traditional Chinese medicine therapy?”

Patient Could you please tell me about traditional Chinese medicine therapy?

Dr Chen In addition to acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine also has other therapies, including herbal medicine, body works therapy, called Chinese Body Works, others include nutritional suggestions and lifestyle changes.

Chinese medicine developed many years ago. There have been no clinical trials or laboratory research involved.

Dr Falk There’s been a long history of using these kinds of history. For thousands of years now, this Chinese medicine has been practiced. Is that right?

Dr Chen Yes. The primary process of the Chinese herbal medicine or Chinese acupuncture is based on the patient’s symptoms or patterns. If you go to a Chinese medicine practitioner, they will ask about your whole body’s symptoms that form patterns of Chinese medicine. For example, in kidney disease, “kidney chi” deficiency or “kidney yang” deficiency.

Patient What is a “chi deficiency”?

Dr Chen Kidney chi deficiency means that energies come from the parents or from the self. So kidney disease mostly involves those kinds of energy deficiencies. An example of kidney chi deficiency would be back pain, kidney disease, proteinuria, those all belong to kidney chi deficiency.

Dr Falk And you can tell that just by talking with the patient, is that right?

Dr Chen Yes, we can tell the patterns but we don’t know exactly how much the kidney is functioning. In Western medicine you have to see the medical doctor to find that out.

Dr Falk But from the Chinese approach, that's not very important, right? You use very different clues than we do.

Dr Chen Exactly.

