

## **Holistic Health Care**

Chinese herbal medicine takes a holistic approach to understanding normal function and disease processes and focuses as much on the prevention of illness as on the treatment.

Most diseases or illnesses present with a core set of recognizable signs and symptoms, but the actual presentation of a particular disease or illness will vary from person to person. For this reason, people with similar health conditions may be provided with quite different Chinese herbal medicine prescriptions.

A qualified practitioner is able to prescribe a Chinese herbal formula that specifically matches and treats your individual health problem. As your condition changes and improves with treatment, the Chinese herbal treatment is also adjusted and modified until the desired health outcome is achieved.

## **What substances are used in Chinese herbal medicine?**

Today, there are more than 450 substances commonly used in Chinese herbal medicine - most are of plant origin though some animal and mineral substances may also be used. You may find some in your kitchen, such as ginger, garlic and cinnamon, while others such as chrysanthemum and peony flowers, are more likely to be found in your garden! Some substances that were used traditionally are no longer part of modern professional Chinese herbal medicine practice. For example, traditional remedies that are derived from endangered species have been replaced by other substances with similar actions.

## **How is Chinese herbal medicine prescribed?**

Chinese herbal medicines are prescribed either singly or made into formulae which take into account the individual therapeutic action of each herb and well as the effects when combined together. A well-constructed formula maximizes the effectiveness for treating a particular condition, while counteracting and minimizing the unwanted effects of an individual herb.

## **What conditions does Chinese herbal medicine treat?**

In addition to providing effective treatment for a wide range of health disorders, Chinese herbal medicine may also be used to assist with general health maintenance and disease prevention. By strengthening and enhancing normal body functions, the immune system is boosted and a general sense of well-being promoted.

A snapshot of conditions typically treated with Chinese herbal medicine includes:

- Insomnia and fatigue
- Loss of appetite and common digestive disorders
- Constipation and diarrhea
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Common cold and influenza
- Chronic headaches
- Skin disorders
- Fluid retention
- Anxiety, depression and stress
- Allergies
- Rheumatoid and osteoarthritis
- Premenstrual syndrome and painful menstruation
- Excessive menstruation
- Infertility
- Impotence and prostate disorders
- Disorders associated with menopause