

## Traditional Chinese Medicine

Traditional Chinese medicine is known for its holistic approach to treat various human conditions, both physical and emotional. It was introduced to the United States around 150 years ago, and as of 1994 over fifteen million Americans have tried some form of TCM (<http://www.livingwithcerebralspalsy.com/acupuncture-cerebral.php>). TCM has been proven to be an effective treatment for chronic diseases and psychiatric disorders, such as depression and emotional problems. It is also used to treat AIDS, drug addiction, smoking, and obesity, in addition to other ailments. The World Health Organization has completed research on the therapeutic effects of TCM, mainly acupuncture, and found TCM to be an effective treatment (note 1) for a variety of illnesses and conditions.

TCM practice includes theories, diagnosis, and treatments such as herbal medicine, acupuncture, TuiNa (Chinese massage) and Qigong (TaiJi Quan). Many oriental medicines, such as those found in Japan and Korea, owe their origins to TCM. TCM is now “the second largest approach to health-care in the world, after modern Western medicine” (Vickers & Dharmananda 1996).

### *Traditional Chinese Medicine Theories and Concepts*

There are four basic TCM concepts or theories that affect human health. These concepts can be used to guide the design of a therapeutic garden and are: yin and yang; Qi; the movement of Tao; and the Five Elements Theory.

*Yin and yang.* The concept of yin and yang in TCM is based on the idea of two polar energies, by whose activities all things are brought about and come into being. Initially, these two energies were simply called the light and the dark, but later referred to as *yin* and *yang*. The interaction between yin and yang produces change, which is understood to be the movement of the Tao. The objective of TCM is to keep these two forms of energy in balance.

*Qi.* The source of the movement comes from energy called *Qi*. In Taoism, Qi is a very important concept. It is the energy of life and the force that causes change in the yin and yang, and the movement of the Tao. .

*Tao.* Tao is the Yuan Qi, which means the original Qi. Yuan Qi then became can be divided into Yin Qi and Yang Qi. It's the movement of Qi that can keep yin and yang in a dynamic, balanced relationship.

**Yin and yang characteristics:** The relationship between yin & yang has several important characteristics:

- Yin and yang are opposites. Everything has its opposite; although this is never absolute, only relative. No one thing is completely yin or completely yang; each contains the seed of its opposite. For example, winter can turn into summer; day turns into night.
- Yin and yang are interdependent; one cannot exist without the other. For example, day cannot exist without night; light cannot exist without darkness.

Yin and Yang can be further subdivided into yin and yang. Yin and yang are important in the five elements theory.

*Five elements theory.* In Tao and TCM the world is viewed as being made up of five basic elements. The elements are not viewed as physical substances, rather, they are seen as inherent qualities, functions, or states. The five elements are wood, fire, earth, metal, and water. Each element can also be divided into yin and yang. The Five element theory provides a basis for how natural changes that occur within one's body and the surrounding environment affect your health. To predict and understand these dynamic changes, ancient doctors studied nature to determine what universal principles existed that could be applied to health and well-being.

- Yin and yang consume and support each other. Yin and yang are usually held in balance - as one increase, the other decreases. However, imbalances can occur, which is the root cause of illness and problems, which will be described in more detail below.
- Yin and yang can transform into one another. At a particular stage, yin can transform into yang, and vice versa. Like winter changes into summer, and day changes into night.

The symbol Yin Yang (see Figure 1) represents their relationships very well.



Figure 1: Symbol of YinYang

Yin represents the female, negative, darkness, softness, moisture, night-time, even numbers, and docile aspects of things. Yang represents the male, positive, brightness, hardness, dryness, day-time, odd numbers, and dominant aspects of things. Yin and yang are continually in the state of flux and always looking for a state of balance. As one moves, the other responds. They symbolize two polar energies that, by their fluctuation and interaction and are responsible for the dynamic universe. Yin and yang pairs exist both in nature (see Table 2) and in humans (see Table 3).

Nature	<b>Yang</b>	<b>Yin</b>
	Light	Darkness
	Sun	Moon
	Brightness	Shade
	Activity	Rest
	Heaven	Earth
	Dry	Wet
	Round	Flat
	Time	Space
	Energy	Matter
	Left	Right

Table 2: Yin & Yang in nature

HUMAN	YANG	YIN
	Acute disease	Chronic disease
	Function	Structure
	Exterior skin, muscles	Interior organs
	Energy	Blood/body fluids
	Small/large intestine/Gall bladder/stomach/bladder	Heart/lung/liver/spleen/kidney
	Restlessness, insomnia	Sleepiness, listlessness
	Scanty-dark urination	Profuse-pale urination

Table 3: Yin & Yang in Human

So, Tao is generally used to indicate the unseen, underlying law of the universe and nature, from which all other principles and phenomena proceed. Yin Qi and Yang Qi interact with each other and result in the five elements that enable change to take place within the world.

### ***The Five Elements:***

The five elements are earth, water, metal, wood, and fire. The five elements are not physical substances; they symbolize five different inherent qualities, functions, states and directions of movement of Qi. They represent a dynamic process, and not the physical elements themselves. More importantly, they represent cyclic movements and states, which if understood, can be used to treat a patient or bring about a balance or normal relationship in a situation where an imbalance causing an illness. This treatment of a patient may include herbs and medicine, exercise, acupuncture and meditation, as well as, potentially, the design of a garden for the patient. There are two types of relationships among the five elements. They are generation cycle and controlling cycle.

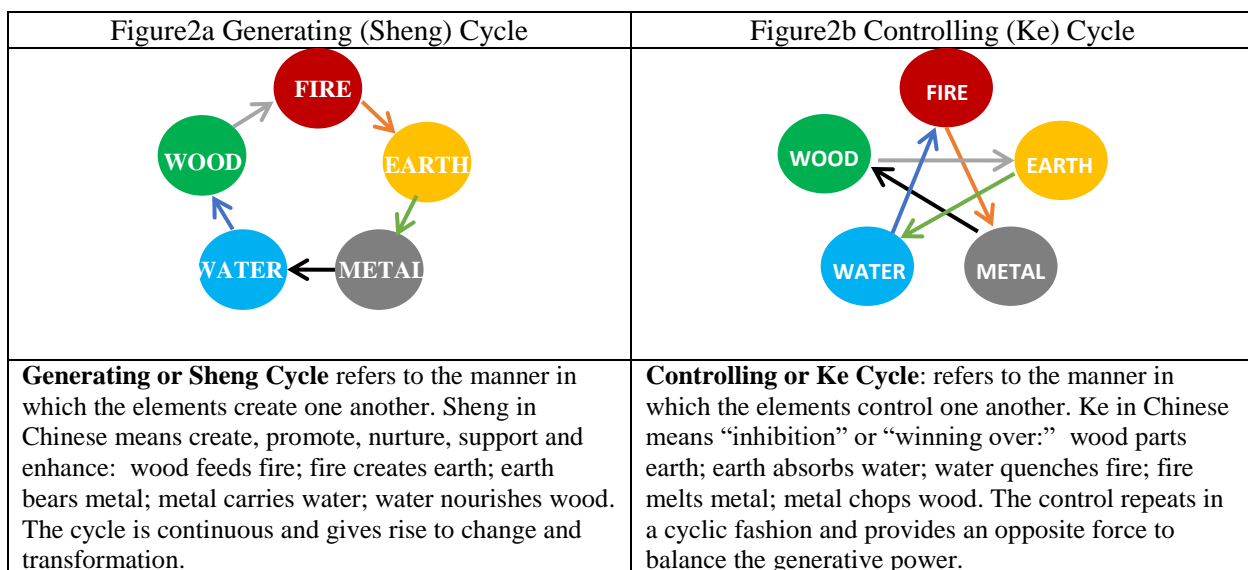


Figure2- Normal relationships among the five elements

The **generation** and controlling properties of the five elements hold each other in check, preventing over-functioning. These two cycles maintain a constant relationship of harmony and equilibrium among the five elements. They are also the cause of movement of Qi between the elements. This is the yin Qi and the yang Qi, which alternate between flourishing and declining. In these two cycles, the Qi of five elements are constantly changing activity during the transformations of yang Qi to yin Qi. They are constantly nourishing and controlling the other, so there is a constant circular movement without beginning or end. The interaction of these primordial forces creates harmony in the changing course of nature's cycles. The Qi's combine and recombine in countless forms and produce material life. The system of the five elements provides the basis for harmony in the universe, nature, and humans. Qi makes the movement of the universe, that's why there are winter, summer, spring and autumn, and days and nights. Everything is part of the five elements system and everything in nature corresponds to the five elements (see Table 4).

	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
<b>Seasons</b>	Spring	Summer	Later summer	Autumn	Winter
<b>Climates</b>	Wind	Heat	Dampness	Dryness	Cold
<b>Direction</b>	East	South	Center	West	North
<b>Colors</b>	Green	Red	Yellow	White	Black

Table 4: things in nature correspondence to the five elements

Everything in nature is subject to the five elements and the movement of Qi between them. Every part of the human body, internal organs, senses and emotions are also subject to the five elements system (see Table 5).

	Wood	Fire	Earth	Metal	Water
<b>Stage of development</b>	Birth	Growth	Transformation	Harvest	Storage
<b>Emotions</b>	Anger	Joy	Worry/thinking	Sadness/Grief	Fear
<b>Sounds</b>	Shouting	Laughing	Singing	Crying	Groaning
<b>Tastes</b>	Sour	Bitter	Sweet	Pungent	Salty
<b>Sense organs</b>	Eyes	Tongue	Mouth	Nose	Ears
<b>Tissues</b>	Sinews	Vessels	Muscles	Skin	Bones
<b>yang organs</b>	Gall-Bladder	Small Intestine	Stomach	Large Intestine	Bladder
<b>yin organs</b>	Liver	Heart	Spleen	Lungs	Kidneys

Table 5: Human corresponds to five elements

Maintaining a balance between generation and control is important for normal transformation of the five elements. Each element is under the influence of the other four in some way. Wood generates fire and water generates wood. On the other hand, wood inhibits earth, but itself is inhibited by metal. In this way, all five elements establish an intricate homeostasis in nature. In TCM, this “wisdom” has also been applied to human for health maintenance, improvement, and treatment of various diseases (see Figure 3).

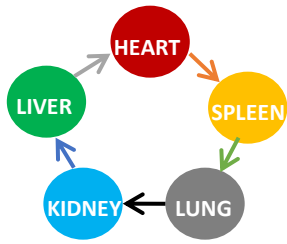
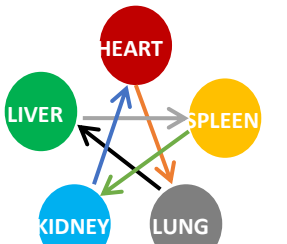
<p>Figure3a shows how the five internal organs promote/nurture one another.</p> 	<p>Figure3b shows how the five internal organs control one another</p> 
<p>For example, the element <i>fire</i> creates/nurtures the element <i>earth</i>. The heart is the element <i>fire</i> and nurtures the spleen (the element <i>earth</i>), because the heart supports and promotes spleen functions (refer to Figure 1). If heart function is deficient, the spleen will be affected. According to TCM theory, a heart deficiency cannot sufficiently rule the blood. Therefore, the spleen cannot perform its normal transformation of qi and blood, and disharmony results. This disharmony can lead to disease.</p>	<p>For example, the liver (<i>wood</i>) controls the spleen (<i>earth</i>) and inhibits its functions in a balanced manner.(refer to Figure 1). If the liver's function becomes excessive, there will be over-restriction of spleen function, causing an imbalance in the body. This happens because excessive liver function produces fire, which in turns affects the smooth flow of Qi. Without good Qi flow to start, the spleen cannot successfully transform food into more Qi.</p>

Figure 3: Relationships between the five elements and its translation to the human body

According to TCM, at any given moment, the proportion of the five elements in a body's system determines its physical and mental states. In a healthy person, the system of five elements is in balanced or harmonious states . When one element grows out of proportion to the others, a person experiences mental disharmonies (anger, grief, excessive joy, fear, worry), as well as physical discomforts that correspond to one of the five organ systems.

Similarly, when a person is healthy, the yin and yang are balanced. When a person is sick, yin-yang is in an imbalanced state. Yin or yang may increase beyond their normal range and lead to consumption of their opposite quality. From a pathological point of view, there are several situations where an excess of yin or excess of yang can lead to consumption of the other. So, through yin-yang and the movement of the five elements, everything in humans and nature (garden) are connected to each other and affect each other.