



Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

Today's Focus:

8 MYTHS ABOUT TRADITIONAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE

As natural medicine experts we see it as our job to educate the public about our discipline and to dispel misinformation and confusion related to healthcare. We are aware that you may come across contradictory or simply false information on various media. Below we have listed some healthcare myths we have come across and we hope that the first-hand information from a top practitioner will provide you with a helpful insight.

January 2025

Myth 1: Everything that has some therapeutic efficiency “must come with harmful side effects”

We have no idea where this perception is coming from but it seems quite common. Perhaps because so many conventional medicines and procedures indeed come with some serious risks and side effects that people tend to conclude this is an inevitable trade-off which must apply to all medicines and all medical treatments? A belief such as this is very worrying as it may encourage complacency among medical professionals and normalise medical malpractice. Side effects may be and often are associated with certain treatments. Sometimes such risks are perfectly justified and sometimes not at all. There is certainly no reason to believe that every single medically efficient treatment must inevitably come with side effects and even more so that a treatment is somehow superior because it comes with side effects. TCM is a form of therapy which is able to achieve desired therapeutic results in great variety of conditions with no or very minimal side effects. It is a duty of your medical professional to optimise your treatment and to aim to minimise any side effects as far as possible. You should also be kept fully aware of any risks associated with your treatment so that you can make informed decisions about your treatment choices.

Myth 2: TCM is based on “magical thinking and not science”

TCM is based on its own theoretical principles which were developed by generations of professional practitioners, empirically verified during millennia long practice and thoroughly documented in countless written sources, including various major medical books. Many of these TCM books are still in use to this day, some even influencing the modern scientific research and leading to major discoveries of new medicinal drugs. In fact, witchcraft and medicine were officially separated in China sometime between 771 BC and 476 BC (that is before the famous Alexander Macedonian was born, a very long time ago indeed!). TCM has therefore nothing to do with magic (although if you ask some of our patients they might still say that it works like magic).

Myth 3: Benefits of TCM are “not proven”

Let's just say that this often depends on how you define the “proof”. In our view the proofs of an efficient TCM treatment are very easy to find even at an individual patient's level. You could for example get some independent health checks by a medical practitioner or laboratory tests to objectively verify if you are getting better after your treatment. Even the way the patient feels is a decent indication of how their treatment progresses, since it is very unlikely that you would suddenly feel considerably better if your health condition did not at all improve or if it was getting worse. Unfortunately medical and scientific community often narrows down their

Wellbeing Clinic

369 Upper Richmond Road West, SW14 7NX London

E-mail: info@wellbeing-clinic.uk www.wellbeing-clinic.uk



Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

Today's Focus:

8 MYTHS ABOUT TRADITIONAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE

As natural medicine experts we see it as our job to educate the public about our discipline and to dispel misinformation and confusion related to healthcare. We are aware that you may come across contradictory or simply false information on various media. Below we have listed some healthcare myths we have come across and we hope that the first-hand information from a top practitioner will provide you with a helpful insight.

January 2025

understanding of “proof” or “satisfactory evidence” to scientific research papers and disregards both the actual patients’ experience and the ample empirical evidence that TCM has accumulated over the millennia and is still able to demonstrate today. Having said this, there is more and more modern scientific research carried out on TCM, which often reveals complex and truly fascinating ways of how the TCM methods work. We can’t wait to see more of this.

Myth 4: TCM is a “placebo treatment”, you need to believe in it for it to work

TCM is a form of highly advanced alternative medicine using sophisticated methods and skills which may differ from those used in conventional medicine but it does not rely on personal beliefs. It is possible for example to treat a very small baby with TCM methods and obtain the desired therapeutic results. A young baby cannot possibly have any religious or ideological beliefs about the treatment they are receiving or be susceptible to placebo effect and yet very young patients tend to respond even quicker and better to TCM treatments than people of a more advanced age. Similarly, it is also possible to perform a TCM treatment on animals and obtain successful results. Modern scientific research on TCM is sometimes performed using animals such as mice.

Myth 5: TCM is “contrary to science and conventional medicine”

TCM precedes the modern science and the conventional medicine by a few millennia and for most part of the human history it was the most advanced, the most comprehensive, the most rigorously governed and the most documented medical system in the world. However, TCM has also been very open minded, keen to engage in knowledge exchange and to adopt useful medical knowledge and skills from multiple sources. Consistently with this approach TCM has already largely incorporated advances of the conventional medical science and practice into its own toolkit. In China TCM doctors are trained at medical universities, where they acquire an education and work experience in both TCM and conventional medicine. Such professionals are legally qualified in China to work in hospitals and medical surgeries where they commonly administer both TCM and conventional medical treatments. Similarly, TCM remedies are produced in China by pharmaceutical companies, in line with the same safety and quality requirements as conventional medical drugs. Furthermore, TCM is now an important contributor into the modern scientific research. Many modern pharmaceutical companies use TCM legacy in development of their own medications.

Wellbeing Clinic

369 Upper Richmond Road West, SW14 7NX London

E-mail: info@wellbeing-clinic.uk www.wellbeing-clinic.uk



Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

Today's Focus:

8 MYTHS ABOUT TRADITIONAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE

As natural medicine experts we see it as our job to educate the public about our discipline and to dispel misinformation and confusion related to healthcare. We are aware that you may come across contradictory or simply false information on various media. Below we have listed some healthcare myths we have come across and we hope that the first-hand information from a top practitioner will provide you with a helpful insight.

January 2025

Myth 6: "It doesn't matter" which TCM practitioner you see

Not every pianist will play music equally well although anyone can make some noise with an instrument. A toddler playing piano is not usually able to perform with a proficiency comparable to virtuosos such as Lang Lang who have spent a lifetime developing their performing skills under direction of best teachers. Similarly, TCM is a highly advanced professional skill which requires many years of learning, access to the right training and professional practice opportunities and, admittedly, a degree of talent. The more qualified, knowledgeable and experienced is the TCM doctor you see the higher will be your chances of getting a successful treatment. A relatively common claim that it is "impossible" to prove that TCM works may originate from the fact that some research studies, in particular in Western countries, may have been performed using underqualified practitioners who were insufficiently skilled to obtain satisfactory results. If a research study paper on acupuncture or a similar TCM method reports "inconclusive" results without even mentioning identity and credentials of the practitioners who performed the treatment as part of the research, we would be tempted to question the scientific validity of such study since the skill of the practitioner is the most important factor determining the success of a treatment such as acupuncture.

Myth 7: A legal disclaimer is there to "make you safe"

You are having a surgery or some other medical procedure and the doctors ask you to sign a legal disclaimer, obviously to make you safe, right? As "professional" and "reassuring" as they may seem, such disclaimers are there to protect not you but the doctor or the medical institution in case things go wrong and usually indicate that there is a high risk associated with the procedure or the medication on offer. Read the small print, make sure you understand the risk and you know what rights you are potentially waiving by signing this paper.

Myth 8: Conventional medicine is "scientific, safe and works" whereas TCM is "unscientific, unsafe and doesn't work"

As practitioners trained and experienced in both TCM and conventional medicine we are very fortunate to have an insight into the advantages and disadvantages of both disciplines. It is sadly still relatively common to see TCM being presented as unsubstantiated and "potentially unsafe" whilst the safety and efficiency of the conventional medicine is often unduly overrated. It is even more worrying if such false perceptions are perpetuated by people claiming to have medical or scientific credentials.

When it comes to conventional medicine, inherent risks have always been high simply due to the fact that it relies heavily on invasive methods and chemical drugs. For example

Wellbeing Clinic

369 Upper Richmond Road West, SW14 7NX London
E-mail: info@wellbeing-clinic.uk www.wellbeing-clinic.uk



Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

Today's Focus:

8 MYTHS ABOUT TRADITIONAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE

As natural medicine experts we see it as our job to educate the public about our discipline and to dispel misinformation and confusion related to healthcare. We are aware that you may come across contradictory or simply false information on various media. Below we have listed some healthcare myths we have come across and we hope that the first-hand information from a top practitioner will provide you with a helpful insight.

January 2025

everyone knows that an accidental overdose of certain drugs can easily cause significant harm or even death. It should also not be a secret to anyone that an error during even a routine surgery can have devastating effects on the patient. There are growing concerns around antimicrobial resistance and pharmaceutical pollution for which conventional medicine so far has been unable to find effective solutions. This would be the case even in the ideal world where there were no funding, political, commercial or governance issues affecting healthcare and where the medical profession operated fully in line with the best possible medical practice, with perfect professional integrity and always in the best interest of the patients. In the current context of the healthcare crisis you surely do not need us to tell you that the healthcare system does not operate in such ideal conditions, which considerably increases the range of potential risks you may face as a patient. It is for a reason that NHS pays billions of pounds in clinical negligence claims every year. This recent BBC article [Cases double in NHS trust death and injury investigation](#) provides one of way too many cases published in the recent years which all seem to follow a disturbing pattern of incompetence, recklessness, impunity and gang-like cover up culture in hospitals putting patients at risk. Interestingly, it seems that such clinical risks are nowadays so normalised and we are so accustomed to them that we feel "safe" and are prepared to just blindly accept them even when we are perfectly conscious of their existence and should really be asking some

questions. It would be helpful, especially in the current context, to adopt a little less religious-like approach towards the conventional medical practice and to judge it based on its actual merits and its real-life results rather than merely on a promise or blind assumption of safety, efficiency and scientific credibility. We strongly believe this could greatly help patients and medical practitioners alike.

On the other hand, TCM relies on significantly less invasive methods and on medications derived from natural ingredients. This means that the risk of serious harm which may result from an error during a procedure or an accidental overdose of a remedy is usually much lower. This doesn't mean however that it is ok to do things recklessly and that there are no risks at all. It is still very important to follow the best practice, to see suitably qualified professionals, to purchase your remedies only from trustworthy suppliers and to follow recommendations of your TCM doctor.

One point commonly raised by conventional medical community is that TCM may encourage you to avoid or delay getting "proper" medical help. This is not true at all (at least not for any reasons attributable to TCM) because there is no reason why you could not seek advice from both your TCM doctor and your GP. From what we often see in practice the reverse may be true sometimes. It is common for us to encounter patients being offered unsuitable or unhelpful conventional medical procedures such as surgeries or medications either due to a mistaken diagnosis or what seems to be a perceived lack of other

Wellbeing Clinic

369 Upper Richmond Road West, SW14 7NX London

E-mail: info@wellbeing-clinic.uk www.wellbeing-clinic.uk



Wellbeing Clinic Newsletter

Today's Focus:

8 MYTHS ABOUT TRADITIONAL AND CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE

As natural medicine experts we see it as our job to educate the public about our discipline and to dispel misinformation and confusion related to healthcare. We are aware that you may come across contradictory or simply false information on various media. Below we have listed some healthcare myths we have come across and we hope that the first-hand information from a top practitioner will provide you with a helpful insight.

January 2025

treatment options. It is almost as if the doctors were somehow unable to honestly say that they cannot help on this occasion and tried their best to create an impression that they are “doing something” where in fact we strongly suspect they must be aware, at least to some extent, that such treatment, to say the least, is unlikely to be useful and is therefore not in the best interest of the patient. In many such cases TCM could actually offer much better solutions. We have seen cases of hip replacement surgery offered to people with healthy hips who in fact suffered from sciatic pain. One of our patients suffering from a frozen facial nerve was offered a surgery which was certain to leave one of her eyes permanently open for the rest of her life. We have no idea how did the doctors think that such result was going to be an improvement for this patient. Very wisely she declined to accept such offer and having undergone an acupuncture treatment with us both her eyes are now perfectly fine. Similarly, disc removal surgery was until recently offered as a “treatment” for sciatica, where it should have been obvious to any medical practitioner that cutting off an important part of the spine would cause an irreversible damage, which would inevitably generate even more serious lifelong health issues for the patient. Thankfully, it seems that this harmful practice is now becoming less common.

The truth, as is often the case in any debate, is somewhere in between. Both disciplines have their unique advantages in treatment of certain conditions and may be less efficient or less suitable in others. Sometimes a combination of both leads to the best results. Having a correct information about their respective merits and a choice between both methods provides you with a much wider range of potential solutions, which should be enormously beneficial for the patients as well as for the NHS swollen waiting list.

Sciatic pain mentioned above is a perfect example of a condition where conventional medical treatment options are in fact very limited, even assuming that best available practice is followed, and where a competently administered TCM treatment is able to provide significantly better results in a much safer way.

Wellbeing Clinic

369 Upper Richmond Road West, SW14 7NX London

E-mail: info@wellbeing-clinic.uk www.wellbeing-clinic.uk