

TCM for Children

By Greg A. Livingston

Is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) safe for children? When and for what conditions can I consider TCM for my children? These are questions that parents often ask, and ones to which I myself as a father and TCM physician have given much thought.

Regarding safety, happily for us TCM physicians, TCM pediatrics has an outstanding track record. Methods such as pediatric-massage and dietary therapy carry virtually no risk, and pediatric herbs are generally mild and non-toxic, many being common food items with



pleasant taste. For generations these have been used to safely and effectively treat a wide range of pediatric problems.

That said, industrial and agricultural pollution pose a serious threat to the purity and safety of herbal medicines. Fortunately, there are clean and reliable sources, but one has to know where to find them. When uncontaminated, high-quality herbs are used they are perfectly safe for children.

So, when and for what conditions can you use TCM for your child? Quite simply you can use TCM for virtually any of your child's health problems.

That's not to say TCM is a panacea or a substitute for all of Western medicine. Rather, each form of medicine has its strengths and weaknesses, and a good doctor knows when to use what. Some conditions are more suitable for one type of medicine or the other, but many can be treated by integrating Chinese and Western medicine. Furthermore, I'm not saying that TCM can miraculously cure all disease, but many conditions can be cured and many others can benefit. Following are some examples.

Asthma. Pediatric asthma is quite common and while Western medicine

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