



Male Menopause and Acupuncture

Have you noticed your father, brother, or partner acting strangely lately? Does he forget things, a bit moody, seem lethargic, or wake up sweating? If so, he may be suffering from male menopause. Male menopause, also called ANDROPAUSE, refers to a gradual decline in a man's testosterone levels. Testosterone is the male sex hormone that is responsible for creating and releasing sperm, initiating sex drive and providing muscular strength. Some men will see their testosterone levels drop significantly by the time they are 40. By age 50, half of all men will experience a significant reduction in testosterone levels, causing a variety of uncomfortable symptoms.

Male andropause symptoms are very similar to those experienced by women during menopause, only much less intense. Common andropause symptoms include hot flashes, night sweats, fatigue, muscle and joint aches. Men also suffer from emotional symptoms like mood swings, irritability, depression, and listlessness, but the most common symptom experienced by men with low testosterone is diminished sex drive.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has placed a large emphasis on the treatment of male andropause, which has led to a focus of medical knowledge on treating men's health and longevity. Although, other organ systems may also be involved, the core of the treatment of male menopause is the strengthening of kidney function.

The kidneys, which in Chinese medicine are also energetically associated with the male reproductive organs. One major function of the kidney is storing of the vital substance JING. JING, or as it is sometimes translated "kidney essence," is understood to be the "sap of life." Jing is seen as a finite constitutional energy, which naturally depletes as men age.

Since the kidney is the organ responsible for growth, maturation and aging, the deficiency of kidney Yin is directly related to signs, symptoms and complications of andropause. In addition to kidney Yin deficiency, other common conditions that occur in andropause are kidney Yang deficiency; kidney essence (Jing) deficiency; liver qi stagnation; blood deficiency; and uprising deficiency heat.

Whatever the underlying cause of this condition, there are a lot of palatable and successful treatments and practices available within acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicines. The most distinctive element of Chinese medicine is that each treatment is individualized according to the specific needs of each patient and their health picture. Not only can they help to alleviate the signs and symptoms of male andropause, they can address the root cause and underlying imbalances. Provided, of course, that steps are taken by the patient to alter the lifestyle elements that caused the initial strain on the body.