



Health Care *in China*

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The health care system in China focuses on preventive medicine, referred to as *active medicine*. Curative medicine is considered passive. In Chinese culture, it is believed that physical sickness is caused by imbalances in energy, otherwise known as the yin and yang. The balance between yin and yang extends beyond the body to include each person's environment and mental outlook.

Chinese assume personal responsibility for maintaining their daily health and turn to traditional and herbal remedies, should they feel ill. These herbal remedies are used as treatment for minor sicknesses such as colds and indigestion. Some of the traditional remedies used in China are herbs, acupuncture, acupressure, massage, and cupping of skin with heated bamboo.

Certain aspects of health care in the Chinese culture are quite different than health care in America. For example, Chinese are very hesitant when asked to give blood because they fear it will weaken their bodily energy. Also, mental illnesses are viewed as somewhat shameful conditions that are generally not discussed. If diagnosed with an illness, a Chinese patient may tend to have a fatalistic view of their diagnosis, meaning they feel that their illness has been caused by fate. Because of this, it is especially difficult to offer treatment options.

