

**Hillsboro Benefits From 3,000 Years Of Chinese Medicine, by Susan Gordanier
The Argus - Tuesday, August 08, 2006**

From her initial greeting as a patient enters, Dr. Maureen Tighe's focus never wanders. Tighe is a doctor of naturopathic medicine and acupuncture. Her practice, Trillium Natural Health, shares space in the Natural Medicine Center, 172 SE Sixth Ave.

On a first visit, she says, it is important to spend time listening, to learn as much as possible about the person and tune in to their patterns. Her goal is to find the underlying reasons for problems and promote long-term health.

Tighe trained at Portland's National College of Naturopathic Medicine, where she earned a doctorate and masters of science in oriental medicine. The program emphasized classical Chinese training, both in herbal medicine and acupuncture.

"In Chinese medicine much time is spent observing the patient," Tighe says.

When the visit progresses to the physical exam, Tighe takes a pulse reading. Unlike Western doctors, who listen to the frequency of the beat, she feels for its quality at three points just above the wrist. They reflect the state of the lung, spleen and kidney.

She also examines the tongue. Its color, coat and appearance of underlying veins give further information. "Red color indicates lots of heat," she says. "Excessive red at the tip can point to emotional turmoil, heat in the upper body."

Together the tongue and pulse diagnoses give information about where the body is out of balance, she says. "They are outward manifestations of the inner body."

From these observations Tighe forms a treatment plan.

She uses acupuncture to promote flow of qi (energy) in the body. "Stagnation of qi promotes disease," she says.

She inserts metal acupuncture needles at points where the qi channels come to the surface. Since metal conducts energy, the needles stimulate energy flow.

"Some patients are initially afraid of the needles," Tighe says, "but they are not like those used in injections." The needles resemble short lengths of fine wire; their insertion is barely felt.

Tighe also uses cupping. She creates a vacuum inside a glass cup, which is then applied to the skin. The technique can relieve muscle pain - and also the common cold, she says. Treatment usually ends with the application of a hot herbal poultice.

Tighe always discusses nutrition with patients. "In this society hydrogenated oils and trans fatty acids are worst for health," she says, so she encourages a diet rich in whole foods and grains, paired with lean meats and fish. "When people eliminate foods that promote inflammation in the body, they experience a dramatic decrease in pain."

Tighe's goal is changing the way people think about their health. "My role is to empower people through knowledge to take a proactive role in their health, to learn to listen to their body and know what's good for them."

Toward that end, Tighe teaches classes through the Hillsboro Parks and Recreation Department. Topics include improving memory with natural health, balancing stress and using nutrition and energetic medicines to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. For more information, or to schedule an appointment, contact Tighe at 503-380-6405.