

Why use natural healing?

A comparison of the science and efficacy of natural healing with that of pharmaceuticals

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This book does not serve as a manual on how to do acupuncture or acupressure. Such treatments, whether by needling, moxibustion, cupping or pressure, should always be performed by a qualified Chinese Medicine acupuncturist.

Preface

This book is aimed at the general reader. The book relies on sound, scientific research, and on a detailed analytical study of the ancient Chinese medicine classics, by a practitioner (myself) with many years of clinical experience of traditional Chinese acupuncture, and also a background in the sciences.

All controversial content related to mainstream healthcare includes references to the source material. However, the main material relating to Chinese medicine is not usually referenced, since the book does not intend to prove this material, but merely to report it. If you would like to know more about the evidence that this aspect of the book is based on, the full detail is provided in the textbook: *Acupuncture Today and in Ancient China*, by Fletcher Kovich. This book describes all the evidence in detail, and provides references to all the source material.

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1. Introduction

Because of the way the drug industry has developed, the pharmaceutical approach to healthcare is not now capable of healing. But rather it prevents healing from happening, and only harms the patient's long-term health.

To devotees of mainstream healthcare, this might seem a puzzling statement. But this book clearly explains why this is the case. It describes the ideas behind drug design; the flaws in these ideas; it explains why this approach is not capable of healing; and it provides the unvarnished facts about the fraudulent techniques used by drug companies to conceal the harms in their drugs and falsely claim they are effective—all in the pursuit of profit and to the detriment of healthcare. Such a fraudulent system has now become state sponsored, worldwide—due mainly to commercial concerns.

Today's mainstream healthcare can best be regarded as a medical religion. All its ideas are believed by the majority of people and repeated as though factual and unquestionable. But many of these ideas are misguided, unscientific, and certainly do not produce effective treatments but rather “treatments” that only impede a patient's health.

This is because most of the commonly used drugs are designed to chemically block the normal function of healthy aspects of the body, in an attempt to conceal symptoms, simply because this is an easy thing for the pharmaceutical industry to do, and many billions can be made from doing this. But because this approach is so detrimental to healthcare, many arguments have been developed by the drug industry to conceal the facts and mislead doctors, the media and public. These arguments are now taught to doctors in medical schools, and accepted by them. Hence the media, politicians and the public (whose information comes from doctors) are all equally misled.

Because this misinformation is so all pervasive in society today, to be able to properly understand the true nature of the drug-based approach to healthcare, it is necessary to first understand how natural

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healing works. This then puts the drug-based approach in context and enables it to be seen objectively, when all its obvious flaws then become apparent.

This book therefore begins with a clear description of how Chinese medicine (with over 2,000 years of consistent clinical results) uses a natural communication system in our body to return our main organs to normal function, which then clears the symptoms of our illness. With each main organ, the book describes all the possible symptoms that result when the organ malfunctions, and how acupuncture is used to correct these subtle organ malfunctions and hence clear the related symptoms. It also describes how our thoughts are able to disrupt our organ functions, which is the most common cause of illness today.

The pharmaceutical approach is then described. This includes how drugs are designed, their intended purpose, and the actual effect they have (the treatment of blood-pressure related issues is taken as an example). The flaws in this approach are clearly described, and many examples are given of the fraud that drug companies now routinely use to cover up the harms in their drugs, and to make untrue claims for the effectiveness of them, by rigging drug trials and fraudulently massaging data.

Being able to view all this from the perspective of natural healing, makes it possible to clearly see how today's drug approach is misguided from its conception, and how it can only block the normal function of a patient's main organs, preventing them from ever enjoying good health.

Once these facts are realized, and you can see beyond the propaganda, the sad reality becomes evident. The world is now trapped into not having a real healthcare system, and using one that is only detrimental to world health. But facing these sad facts is a precursor to achieving real healthcare for all.

2. What is Chinese Medicine?

Chinese medicine and acupuncture was fully documented in a series of scrolls by separate authors, called the *Nei Jing*, dating back to around the 2nd century BC.

In general, it was not felt necessary to give names to the conditions that people suffered. Instead, it was recognised that when one of the main organs was stressed in any way, this produced a range of possible symptoms in the patient. For example, when the pancreas function was poor, it was found that this could produce any combination of the following symptoms:

- a poor appetite (prefer to only eat small amounts);
- general weakness (and hence the tendency to avoid speaking), and feeling tired after eating;
- abdominal bloating and discomfort (particularly after eating), excess gas, frequent loose stools; intolerances for certain foods, such as dairy or wheat;
- poor sense of taste; cravings for sweet food;
- muscles of the limbs are weak and soft (emaciated);
- tendency to bruise easily or have mild haemorrhages or purple spots or patches on the skin, blood in the stools, excessive menstrual flow or bleeding of the uterus;
- feeling a bearing-down sensation in the abdomen, possibly with prolapse of the anus or of internal organs such as the stomach, kidneys, uterus or bladder;
- pain or discomfort anywhere along the pancreas or stomach meridian; and
- the tendency to be always thinking.

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To alleviate these symptoms, the pancreas was treated, so that it returned to normal function, which then caused all the related symptoms to clear.

One way of treating a particular organ was by using combinations of herbs that had been found to affect that organ. But another, novel way was as follows.

It was discovered that each of our organs resonated with a particular path around the surface of our body. These paths are known today as meridians. When a particular organ was stressed, this caused locations on that organ's meridian to also be similarly stressed, which caused the location to feel tender when pressed, or for the skin to be reddened, or to feel warm, or for anomalies, such as boils to appear there. In some cases, aching or even shooting pains could occur along a particular organ's meridian for the same reason (that is, to reflect a particular type of malfunction in that organ).

When any of these affected locations on an organ's meridian were stimulated, this caused the local stress to clear from that tissue, and because of the resonance between this location and the related organ, this also caused that organ to release its stress. The organ function returned to normal (often within a few seconds), and this caused the related symptoms to clear.

The stimulation was achieved either by massage, by applying heat, or by using fine needles. This latter option is known today as acupuncture.

The symptoms related to the other main organs

When the liver function is stagnated, this could produce any of the following symptoms:

- discomfort at the front or back of the torso at the level of the liver (the hypochondrium), frequent sighing or hiccupping;
- feeling of irritability, with outbursts of angry shouting;
- muscular spasms, cramps, twitching, stiff neck;
- a feeling as though something were stuck in your throat;

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- fluctuations of mood, melancholy or depression, paranoia;
- migraines or headaches with pain on the top or sides of the head or associated with the eyes, visual disturbances;
- dizziness, vertigo, hearing high pitch ringing sounds (tinnitus), insomnia;
- strong pain, stiffness or discomfort anywhere along the liver or gallbladder meridian, particularly on the head, neck, hips, and outside of the legs;
- effects on other organs, producing constipation, or the alternation of constipation with loose stools and other digestive signs;
- (in women) irregular periods with cramps, tender breasts, either scanty or absent menses or, alternatively, heavy flow with clots, and emotional fluctuations and irritability in the premenstrual phase (PMS); and (in all patients)
- the tendency to be controlling.

When the kidney function is poor, this could produce any of the following symptoms (note that when the “kidneys” are mentioned in Chinese Medicine, this also includes the adrenal glands and the sex organs, all considered as a single organ):

- soreness and weakness of the lower back (lumbar region), and weak knees or stiff joints;
- frequent and urgent urination (it cannot be put off), and dribbling of urine after urination, or incontinence (enuresis);
- premature ejaculation in men;
- hay fever and other allergies, frequent colds and flu;
- dizziness or lightheaded feeling (particularly after sex in men);
- oedema, particularly in the lower half of the body;
- low-pitch tinnitus (or rumbling or swishing sounds);
- deafness or being hard of hearing;
- loss of balance;
- tendency to feel fearful;
- craving salty food;

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- shortness of breath, asthma (where it is difficult to breathe in);
- insomnia;
- poor short term memory;
- thirst, afternoon fever (hot flushes) and night sweating, dry mouth, hot hands and feet;
- cold limbs, aversion to cold;
- low energy and apathy;
- slow physical development, poor skeletal development, brittle bones, poorly formed or loose teeth;
- slow mental development;
- mental dullness, premature senility, dementia;
- premature greying and hair loss; and
- impotence, or infertility.

When the lung function is poor, this could produce any of the following symptoms:

- shortness of breath which is worse on exertion;
- weak cough with clear, thin sputum;
- poor energy and pale complexion, with an even greater energy lag between three and five p.m.;
- lack of desire to talk, having a quiet voice, and tiring quickly when having to talk a lot;
- spontaneous daytime sweating;
- frequently suffering colds and flu, and generally being easily affected by external pathogens;
- tendency to feel the cold and having a dislike of being in the wind or cold;
- a poor sense of smell, blocked nose, and sinuses; and
- pain or discomfort anywhere along the lung or large intestine meridian.

And when the heart function is poor, this could produce any of the following symptoms. Note that some of these symptoms are similar

to those produced by the lungs; only when the lungs are affected, a cough is present; whereas when the heart is affected, palpitations are present:

- palpitations (awareness of heartbeat);
- shortness of breath on exertion;
- spontaneous sweating;
- lethargy;
- a weak pulse;
- anxiety, panic attacks, restlessness, unease;
- being easily startled by noises or anything unexpected in the immediate environment;
- speech defects such as stammering or stuttering; dyslexia;
- poor long-term memory;
- dream-disturbed sleep;
- insomnia (hard to fall asleep);
- stuffiness or stabbing pains in the chest, which may radiate to the left shoulder and arm;
- possibly also a blue-purple tinge to the face, lips and nails;
- muttering to oneself;
- depression or mental dullness;
- introverted manner, unable to make eye contact;
- incessant or incoherent talking;
- violent behaviour (hitting or scolding people);
- laughing and crying without reason;
- paranoia, hysteria, mental confusion;
- aphasia (partial loss of the ability to communicate with words);
- loss of consciousness (sudden collapse or coma);
- chills, cold limbs; a blue tinge to the lips;
- profuse sweating;
- feeble breathing;
- feeble and fading pulse; and
- mental “cloudiness” or even coma.

As can be seen from the above lists, the range of symptoms associated with some of the organs can be extensive, and covers symptoms in many areas, including our thoughts and emotions as well as the physical symptoms. In the accompanying book, *Acupuncture Today and in Ancient China*, it is clearly explained why and how these symptoms are produced by the related organ. Once this is understood, it can be appreciated how treating the five main organs with traditional acupuncture can have a wide-ranging and deep effect on a person's health, including the mental and emotional aspects of their personality.

How an accurate diagnosis is made

The process of making a diagnosis often begins by asking the patient questions about the symptoms they have. The intention is to identify any of the symptoms from the above lists. Some of the symptoms could be produced by more than one organ, and in this case, further questions are asked to identify the organ concerned. When about three symptoms, or more, have been identified that could be produced by a single organ, then that organ is considered to be stressed. This diagnosis would then be confirmed by examining the patient's tongue, and taking their pulses.

Tongue examination

Many patterns can be seen on the tongue that can accurately indicate which organ or organs are stressed. Particular areas of the tongue relate to certain organs, and when that organ is stressed, this produces redness in that area; or the area may be more or less swollen than the surrounding area; or the tongue coating may be affected, in either its colour or thickness. As well as the area of these anomalies indicating which organ is involved, the type of the anomaly also indicates the type of malfunction in the organ.

A common example is a tongue that is generally swollen, usually accompanied by teeth marks on the side. This indicates that the person's pancreas function is weak. In my clinical experience, a person with such a tongue would also be a heavy thinker or worrier. There is a clear link between over thinking and poor pancreas function.

Interestingly, babies are usually born with a weak digestion (perhaps because these organs were not used prior to birth). And this explains why a baby's tongue is usually swollen, indicating that their pancreas function is weak (the pancreas being the main digestive organ).

Another common condition in developed countries is stress. The symptoms of stress are usually produced by a person's liver and gallbladder; and the function of these organs is usually impeded when certain thought patterns are blocked (such as when we become aware of rules being broken, or things being unjust, unfair, or wrong for some other reason). The left and right sides of the tongue relate to the liver and gallbladder. When someone's liver is heavily affected by this type of stress, the sides of their tongue would appear reddened.

The organ “pulses”

When the “pulses” are taken in Chinese Medicine, this is entirely different to the process of taking a person's pulse in mainstream health-care.

In Chinese Medicine, the practitioner takes the pulses in three different locations on each wrist; and due to the relationships between the practitioner's fingers (which each have different meridians terminating on them) and the left or right side of the patient, this causes the shape of the pulses under each of the practitioner's fingers to adopt a pattern that pertains to a particular organ. The pulse felt in each position can indicate the strength of that organ's function, and also the type of any malfunction.

There is usually an extremely reliable correlation between these patterns, the tongue diagnosis, and also the symptoms that the patient experiences. These methods in combination usually produce an accurate diagnosis. But there are still other ways that the practitioner can confirm the diagnosis.

Meridian locations

Another method commonly used is to examine the meridians at key locations. When each of the main organs is stressed, it is usual for key locations along the organ's related meridian to also have anomalies. The location (a key acupuncture point for that organ) would usually

feel tender when pressed. This is an extremely reliable diagnostic indicator. But there may also be other signs, such as the skin being reddened, or feeling warmer or cooler than the surrounding skin, or for anomalies such as boils or eruptions to appear.

All these different methods provide a whole range of diagnostic techniques that can reliably confirm that the problem lies with a particular organ. And all these methods rely only on the skill of the practitioner; there are no machines or devices needed to make an accurate, reliable diagnosis.

Other signs that assist a diagnosis

The knowledge and experience of the practitioner can also provide other techniques to confirm the diagnosis. When a person's health is dominated by the malfunction of a particular organ, this causes the patient to adopt certain mental and emotional patterns, and also other reliable indicators, such as their tone of voice, complexion, and the way they move.

For example, when a person's health is dominated by their liver function being stagnated, the person would tend to be over controlling. They would be forever straightening objects or tidying up; and they would insist that things were done in a certain way, and if any of these "rules" of theirs were broken, they would find this extremely irritating, to the point where they could frequently erupt in angry outbursts (or if they suppressed their anger, this could lead to migraines or crippling pains along the gallbladder meridian). Their voice would also be notably loud. When they were simply conversing routinely, it would sound as though they were shouting. These signs are a reliable indicator of stagnated liver function.

Similar patterns exist with the pancreas, kidneys, lungs and heart.

How our thoughts and emotions are produced by our organs

In ancient China it was recognized that certain thought patterns resembled the physical function of certain organs, and that when those

thought patterns became unhealthy, this affected the physical function of the related organ.

From this, and much other related evidence, it seems probable that as we evolved, and our thoughts gradually became more complex, the physical functions of our organs were utilized to process our thoughts. Because the “brain matter” related to our organ functions had already existed for perhaps millions of years before we started having more complex thoughts, it would clearly have been easier and quicker for our conscious mind to utilize this existing brain matter, rather than creating new “logic circuits” to do this new job. This pattern exists not only in humans, but also in all other creatures.

The effects on our liver function

For example, the physical function of our liver is to organize the flow of physical substances around our body; the production and supply of energy in our body; and to creatively draw on different resources to best meet the current needs of our body. And in our thoughts, our mind utilizes these same liver functions to organize the world around us, to work out how to best do each task, and to produce creative solutions to problems. The behaviour this produces in us is to be constantly organizing ourselves and the people around us. In some people, their personality has become dominated by their liver function, and this would cause other people to view their behaviour as being over controlling.

This connection between our organ functions and thoughts always works in both directions. And when our liver-related thoughts are blocked (by something being out of place, or a person not behaving as they should; that is, the way we would like them to), this causes our liver function to become blocked, or stagnated. Our liver feels that the substances in our body have been blocked from flowing normally. This is a serious situation for our body, and this causes our liver to produce that feeling of anger or rage that we immediately feel. Our “blood starts to boil.” This is the feeling of our physical liver trying to move the blocked substances.

Due to social constraints, we would usually suppress our anger or irritation, to some degree. Some people are better than others at con-

cealing their irritation. But the people whose personality is heavily influenced by their liver would soon find it impossible to contain their building rage and may start shouting to attempt to get their will obeyed. They may even resort to physical violence to remedy this “wrong” behaviour in other people, or in inanimate objects. Things such as computer software or gadgets may often not perform as we would like, and there are less social constraints governing how we treat such devices, therefore we might frequently find ourselves indulging in outbursts of rage when software or gadgets do not behave in the way we expect.

If we are more “self controlled,” and suppress most of these instances, the resulted suppression of the physical function of our liver can lead to serious and painful conditions, such as migraines, depression, and many other conditions due to the blocked flow of the substances in our body, or the production of our energy.

All the above effects are related to stress, which is basically the improper behaviour of other people and institutions, particularly in a work environment. And the fact that we are compelled to continue suffering a stressful job, is in itself yet one more injustice (in other words, the breaking of a “rule”, as far as our liver function is concerned; “it’s not fair that I have to endure this; this is part of my work, so I must endure being treated this way, otherwise I may lose my job and starve”).

When a person behaves in any of these ways, this is a reliable indicator that their liver function is stagnated, and the existence of these patterns can also help to confirm the diagnosis.

The effects on our pancreas function

Another common cause of disease in developed societies is over thinking. This affects our pancreas function, and produces the symptoms of “IBS”.

The pancreas is our body’s main digestive organ, and our mind uses this function to digest our thoughts. The functions of all the organs vary throughout the day, in a 24 hour cycle. With the pancreas, its function peaks at eleven a.m. And people with poor pancreas function find that they can only think clearly before about midday, which reinforces the connection between the pancreas function and thinking. But

in a developed society, we are usually required to be thinking all day long. If our work does not involve thinking, people whose personality is dominated by their pancreas would be thinking all day long anyway, worrying about life, or just simply making up things to think about.

Because of the two-way link between an organ's physical functions and the mental application of those functions, when we think all day, it is as though our pancreas were having to digest a banquet of food all day long; and our pancreas becomes tired. It can then no longer properly digest *any* physical food, and this produces the symptoms of "IBS", including loose stools, abdominal bloating and discomfort, and any of the other symptoms listed on page 9.

What makes this situation worse, is that the problems we mull over, either related to our work or social life, are usually hard to solve (hard to digest). Again, due to this two-way link between our processing of such thoughts and our physical pancreas function, the effect of this is to transform all our physical food into food that is hard to digest. Therefore, not only is our lifestyle constantly weakening our pancreas function, but it is also tricking our pancreas into regarding all the *physical* food we eat as being hard to digest, making the situation worse.

Diagnostically, there is a reliable link between over thinking and poor pancreas function. In my clinical experience, a patient with poor pancreas function always has a swollen tongue and is constantly thinking or worrying. These three things always go hand in hand.

The effect on our heart function

In our body, our heart's function is to "reach out" to the other organs and bodily tissue and spread nourishment to them, via the network of arteries and veins. When this function is used by our mind, this produces our desire to reach out to the people around us. This is most commonly achieved through speech, but we also use touch and eye contact. And our heart's function also produces in us the desire to help others and the ability to be able to empathise with them.

Our sense of speech is heavily influenced by our heart. When our heart function is poor, this often produces speech defects, such as stammering or stuttering. This effect can be seen instantly in many people whose heart function may otherwise be normal. When they

momentarily adopt a position that they know is immoral, such as when lying or treating a person unfairly (which only applies to people who have an awareness of morality) this will momentarily weaken their heart function, which in turn affects their speech and produces a momentary stammer or stutter.

When we do reach out and help someone, because we are acting on this desire that our heart function has produced, this enhances that function, and the “warm glow” that we feel in our heart is a reflection of this. Our heart feels energized, feels momentarily stronger.

Conversely, most societies usually encourage men to “not complain”, to not share their emotional concerns, to “take it like a man” and just keep quiet and suffer in silence. In effect, society encourages men to live a lonely existence. When men do this, they are undermining their heart’s desire to reach out to others. And due to the two-way link between an organ’s physical and mental functions, this weakens their physical heart. They are undermining their own heart, and in time this could result in diseased arteries or even a heart attack. Their social connections are diseased, therefore their physical arteries become diseased (which are the heart’s “social” connections with the other organs around it).

This conditioning starts in early childhood. And another social situation in our early life that can result in poor heart function is when a child has poor social connections with their family. In other words, when there are poor family relationships. Since our speech is heavily associated with our heart function, this situation would tend to produce speech defects, such as stammering or stuttering. And while a person’s heart retains this poor function into their later life, this would also tend to produce “faulty social connections” in them. They would tend to behave and talk in ways that seem strange, would often make inappropriate comments, and may be constantly smiling inappropriately and talking with an amused tone of voice.

As a practitioner of Chinese Medicine, these signs provide another reliable diagnostic device. In some cases, it is often possible for a practitioner to make an accurate diagnosis merely from the sound of a per-

son's voice. Of course, the diagnosis would then be confirmed by using all the other methods.

The effect on our kidney function

When we refer to the “kidneys” in Chinese Medicine, this means three organs in combination: the kidneys, the adrenal glands, and the sex organs. All the other organs have their own dedicated meridian, but with these three organs, they share a single meridian, which is known as the kidney meridian. And when stimulating this one meridian, this treats all these three organs at once. Therefore, from the physiological point of view, it is likely that these three separate structures should be more correctly considered to be separate parts of the same organ.

In our body, the functions of these organs (in combination) are mainly concerned with our self-preservation, both in the present and the future. Amongst other functions, the “kidneys” coordinate our growth and development, from conception through to adulthood; are the key reproductive organ, being responsible for fertility and our sexual behaviour, which thus provides us with our engagement in life and the desire to go on. They regulate the body's energy usage, so as to ensure the proper function of all the organs, thus enabling us to function at our best in the present and also enabling us to deal with stressful situations; and they manage and support the immunity.

Hence, when the kidney function is poor, a person may have low libido, a lack of drive or enthusiasm for life, and may seem to be living in slow motion. Our kidney function tends to weaken in old age, which would produce all these symptoms which are familiar in most old people. But these same symptoms can occur in us if our kidney function becomes poor in earlier life.

When any of our kidney-related concerns are undermined, the kidneys produce the emotion of fear, usually accompanied by an adrenaline surge, to prompt us to remedy the threat to our survival. The threat might be simply the undermining of our status or position; it does not have to be a threat of physical violence. Insecurity is another common threat. From our kidneys' point of view, this threatens the survival of our body, which is one of its main concerns. Therefore, when we feel constant insecurity, or fear, this undermines our kidney's

concerns, which in turn undermines our kidney function, and this may produce any of the symptoms listed on page 11.

In our modern world, such insecurities are common. People may fear losing their job, or constantly worry about being able to pay bills. Or they may fear losing a relationship if they do not work hard in ways that they cannot really understand. Any of these concerns may then cause them to be constantly running on adrenaline, to try to perform better; and this state itself also weakens the kidneys. The adrenaline surge is meant as an emergency measure, to enable us to cope with a short term threat. But when we live almost constantly in that state, the overuse of this emergency measure also weakens our kidney function, which again may produce any of the symptoms listed on page 11.

Another common health problem related to the mental aspect of the kidneys is when our spirit is defeated. The kidney “logic” identifies our goals in life, our ambitions, and fosters our ideas about our worth, status, or position in life; and the kidneys then drive us to achieve these ambitions. But when any of our ambitions are defeated, or our status or position in life is taken away, this undermines these kidney functions in our thoughts, which then also undermines and hence impedes the kidneys’ physical function.

In this situation, the person’s “spark” would be clearly diminished; they would become gloomy, dispirited. The kidney function of regulating the production of energy would become poor and consequently the other main organs would function poorly. The person would become sluggish, would certainly be melancholic or in a depressive state (as though their body had been shut down) and they may feel like giving up on life, having no drive or spirit.

Because acupuncture directly prompts the organs to return to normal function, this can also immediately correct the mental aspect of an organ; and there are some key kidney acupoints that can produce impressive, instant results in people whose “spirit” has taken a hard knock. At the end of the treatment, the person can seem to have suddenly come to life, with the spark having returned to their eyes, and they can suddenly look years younger.

The effect on our Lung function

The physical function of the lungs could be summarized as: to take in something intangible (air) from outside, sort the good from the bad, incorporate the precious (the oxygen) and let go of the waste (the carbon dioxide). And when our mind uses this function to process our thoughts, this enables us to discern quality in the intangible things around us.

People who tend to overuse the mental aspect of their lung function become perfectionists. But the more we look for perfection, the less we are able to find it, which creates a constant feeling of disappointment. And when this lung function is frustrated in our thoughts, this failure is duplicated in the *physical* lung function, which weakens it. Therefore, this group of people would usually appear sad and have a weak lung function.

The lungs are also weakened due to grief. Grief is not only felt due to the loss of a loved one, but can also be felt due to the loss of anything the person cherishes, such as their job, career, social status, material possessions or wealth, and so on. This may be because the lung function of “letting go of the waste” is now challenged and resisted by our conscious mind, which in turn weakens the lungs.

Another factor that can lead to poor lung function is overuse of your voice. In Chinese medicine, it is recognised that one function of the lungs is to support the voice. When the lung function is weakened by illness, this can often result in the voice failing. Conversely, overuse of the voice tends to weaken the lung function.

In my practice I have treated many teachers and almost all of them had health issues related to poor lung function. Teachers not only must use their voice excessively, and often project it over a resistant and vocal class of children; but also the defensive aspect of their lungs is continuously taxed due to the prevalence of colds amongst children, and also the fact that teachers can sometimes feel “under attack” by their students—which has the same effect on us that physical pathogens do and would certainly also tax the immunity. Their lungs would also be taxed due to them having to constantly assess the quality of their

students' work (teachers, by definition, are perfectionists), which also tends to weaken the lungs.

Another symptom that reflects the prevalence of lung issues amongst teachers is the fact that many teachers tend to suffer an energy lag around three p.m. This is the time of day when the lung function is at its weakest, hence the energy lag felt by people with poor lung function. This energy lag, along with any other signs and symptoms related to poor lung function (as listed on page 12), tends to clear after a few treatments (which I mention to demonstrate that this energy lag is not merely due to the fact that three p.m. is near the end of most teachers' working day).

Treating the mental factors

The lungs also actively expel the waste product of respiration (carbon dioxide), and when the lung function is used to process our thoughts, this ability enables us to let go of "waste". That is, anything in our life that may have become harmful to us. This is often something we once cherished but has now become harmful, such as relationships that have gone bad, projects we started that are not now working. But when a person's lung function is poor, this also weakens their ability to let go of this "waste" in their life. Another facet of this function is that they may bear grudges long after other people would have forgotten about the issue and moved on.

When a person is trapped in such a pattern of mental activity, it can be extremely difficult to break the pattern. But one of the strengths of acupuncture is that it prompts the physical organs to return to normal function and does this without involving our conscious mind. In effect, acupuncture seems to "get under the radar" of our conscious mind. And once the organ functions are normalized, this tends to also normalize each organ's mental functions; and after a few treatments patients often describe the changes they have spontaneously adopted in their mental behaviour.

For a fuller discussion of the mental aspects of our organ functions, see the textbook: *Acupuncture Today and in Ancient China*, by Fletcher Kovich.

How people become ill

Because the functions of our main organs are utilized by our mind to process our thoughts and produce our emotions, when a particular thought pattern or emotion becomes inappropriate, this disrupts the physical function of the related organ, which can then produce serious physical symptoms.

Liver-related symptoms are often the most powerful, such as migraines, period cramps, muscular pains, sciatica or neuralgia (see page 10); and the mental/emotional symptoms related to the liver function can be just as powerful, such as constant rage, paranoia, or depression. But the other main organs can also produce overpowering symptoms, such as the kidney-related low back ache, feelings of fear and insecurity, impotence, lack of motivation or engagement in life (page 11); and the pancreas-related IBS and constant over thinking and worrying, often without being able to arrive at satisfactory conclusions (circular thought patterns).

The above process gives our mind (and the society we live in) the ability to disrupt the physical function of our organs, which then produces our illness. Hence, most of the physical symptoms we suffer have usually been created by our own thought patterns (which includes the way our mind reacts to the society we live in). In my clinical experience, most long term, serious conditions that people suffer have such an underlying cause.

This detailed knowledge of the interaction between our thoughts, emotions, and our physical organ functions, is beyond the understanding so far reached by today's mainstream medics. To them, this is counter intuitive. They imagine the brain is a separate, all powerful computer; whereas the ancient Chinese realized that our organs play the dominant role in determining our personality and health. Why does this ancient knowledge seem so much more advanced than today's mainstream medical thinking?

The ancient approach to healthcare

The knowledge of the ancient Chinese physicians was built up over centuries using a simple approach. The “meridian system” consists of

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specific tracts of tissue on the body that are affected when the related organs are stressed. When a person was ill, they had a range of symptoms, and also a particular meridian would be affected (having tender locations, or other anomalies along that particular tract of tissue). Knowledge of this system enabled the physicians to build up detailed knowledge about the symptoms that result when each organ is stressed in some way (as listed on pages 9 to 13).

It was only necessary to know what symptoms are produced when a particular organ was stressed; they did not need to know the microscopic detail of *how* these symptoms resulted or were produced in the body (and those symptoms could be physical, mental or emotional). Knowledge of this whole range of symptoms was gained, covering just about every common state that people could suffer. And because they knew which organ was malfunctioning to produce the particular symptoms, they could use this same “meridian system” to correct the organ’s function and return the patient to good health, as follows.

When an organ is malfunctioning, this causes anomalies to occur at particular locations on that organ’s related meridian, and stimulating those same locations, encourages the organ to return to normal function. This happens within a few seconds, and the patient returns to good health, until the factors in society that made them ill in the first place, are re-established, and the same organ malfunctions recur.

The great power of this healing system lies in its simplicity, and also in the fact that the physician does not *need* to know how the body works at the microscopic level, and does not even *want* to know. The chemical communication between the organs and the body is corrected by the organs themselves, which is as it should be; after all, the *organs* are the experts on their own chemistry.

This approach not only produced a powerful healing system, but it also enabled the ancient Chinese to understand common and important mechanisms in the body that are not yet understood by today’s mainstream healthcare. This includes the cause of IBS; the underlying cause of most cases of asthma and allergies such as hay fever; and also the mechanism that produces all the symptoms of stress, and the details of the mental cause and how this affects the liver function, which is the

organ that produces all the symptoms. Also a wide range of common mental issues are also clearly understood.

However, apart from conditions with powerful symptoms, other conditions that can sometimes seem intangible are also routinely treated with acupuncture.

Patient Example

Female, aged 45. I initially treated this patient for migraines, and she also wished to stop using various pharmaceuticals. She responded well to treatment and her health was transformed. But because she was under a lot of stress in her life, she then continued attending clinic for a monthly maintenance treatment, to retain the good health she had regained. In this one treatment, a lot of emotional stress had built up over the past month. This affected her periods, producing a few days of PMS (which was now unusual for her), notably tender breasts, some muscular cramps, and in the session she was uncharacteristically emotional. Yet, the other diagnostic signs were subtle. Her organ “pulses” were affected (particularly kidney, lungs, heart and liver), and key acupoints were notably tender (lung-1, kidney-1; and liver-3 was very tender).

Ordinarily none of these states would have been seen as unusual by mainstream medics, and would certainly not have shown up in any of their usual diagnostic tests. But in the acupuncture treatment, she responded quickly; her organ pulses returned to normal, the tender meridian locations diminished greatly, and at the end of the session she felt much calmer and relaxed. She had been treated on a deep level, simply by returning her main organs to normal function. After this, and her other routine acupuncture sessions, she usually felt emotionally and physically much improved, almost like a new person.

There is no doubt that this type of treatment makes a real difference to the functions of a patient’s main organs, and this is a good example of what Chinese acupuncture does.

Yet these kinds of organ “malfunctions” build up gradually, over weeks, months or even years, so the patient does not usually notice how ill they are. If they are experiencing strong symptoms, then of course they notice those, but they usually remain unaware of their general state of stress, until, that is, their organ functions are returned to normal with acupuncture. At this instant, patients often describe the feeling as euphoric. But this euphoric state is simply normality; and it only feels this good to them because they were used to feeling constantly stressed. Yet today’s mainstream healthcare is much less sensitive, and in these types of situation it would usually not even be able to detect a problem with the patient’s organ functions.

Today’s approach to healthcare

In contrast, today’s approach is to study the body at the microscopic level and attempt to work out how it works. When a person is ill, and symptoms appear, the physicians then attempt to directly intervene themselves (usually focussed only on the symptom). This might be by attempting to block an aspect of the body’s chemistry, or repair or replace “broken” or “worn out” parts, or even replacing a whole “irrevocably diseased” organ.

Due to the limitations of drug design, and of physiology knowledge, today’s healthcare is not able to treat an organ directly to return it to normal function, as in the above Chinese acupuncture examples. And anyway, mainstream healthcare is not even able to detect these “routine” organ malfunctions—to the sensitive degree that Chinese medicine can; it can only detect an organ malfunction when it has become so extreme that the organ has almost ceased to function. Instead, mainstream healthcare has focussed on chemically blocking the normal, healthy function of some aspect of the body, in an attempt to conceal the symptom (this process is described in detail in the next chapter). They do this because it is an easy thing to do; and because this is all they know *how* to do, since their knowledge of the body’s overall chemistry is still too primitive for them to be able to correct an organ’s malfunctions using drugs.

There are two main problems with this approach: it does not treat the real, underlying cause, so that the person’s real health issue is

not addressed; and secondly, because these drugs act systemically (that is, they are everywhere in the body, through the blood stream) they also chemically block the main organs from functioning properly. And the drugs also have other random effects on the other systems in the body—hence, the wide range of adverse effects that most drugs produce, many of them unpredicted by the drug’s designers.

When you stand back and consider this approach, it may seem like lunacy. But for many reasons, this approach, and also the fact that such drugs produce random, and often serious adverse effects, has become accepted. Why has it become accepted by most people that “medicine” often harms the patient? And how is such an approach even considered to be medicine? It certainly should not be, but in the collective consciousness of today’s developed societies, this is an accepted reality.

The following chapters explore these issues by describing the unvarnished facts about today’s pharmaceutical approach to healthcare. This includes the way drugs are designed, tested and marketed. There is also much alarming evidence of routine fraud and criminality committed by drug companies, but the purpose of this book is not to simply alarm the reader. All this evidence is necessary to demonstrate the true nature of today’s mainstream healthcare system, and enables the reader to understand why it is not really healthcare at all. But the intention of this book is not to leave humanity with no healthcare. Rather, with the knowledge gained, this book aims to enable the reader to make truly informed choices about their own healthcare, and it points the way forward for a new mainstream healthcare approach.

3. The pharmaceutical approach to healthcare

Introduction

Every aspect of today's mainstream healthcare is dominated by the drug companies, which are huge commercial concerns, and, in reality, are the most unregulated industry on the planet, which will become clear in the following chapters. Their grip on mainstream healthcare is absolute. They provide all the funding; decide what should and should not be researched; which results are permitted to be made public, and which not; routinely manipulate (falsify) research data to turn negative results into positive ones, regardless of healthcare concerns; and use unscrupulous sales techniques to push knowingly inadequate products, all in the name of profit (all this is demonstrated below). Their dominance is total. Therefore, a more accurate description of today's mainstream healthcare might be "drug-company sponsored healthcare."

There are so many myths and untruths about this form of healthcare that are repeated unthinkingly by the media and medics themselves, and this has painted a general picture of a sophisticated, science-based system that does miraculous things and is a great achievement. Every aspect of this picture is untrue.

However, most people are shown this picture from early childhood, and hear it continuously from the media, so that it is not an easy task to discover the truth about mainstream healthcare.

The following sections examine each aspect as honestly as possible, providing you with the facts that drug companies would rather you did not hear, and that many medics themselves are unaware of.

What are drugs?

Most people are unaware that there is any conceptual difference between different potions and pills that are taken in response to illness. In

their mind, all the different approaches are lumped into one concept. They are all simply pills taken to combat illness, and there is no conceptual difference between any of them. In this way, they do not understand the difference between a herbal potion or pill and one produced by today's drug industry.

I have even heard the comment, "Drugs are herbal remedies that have been refined to reduce the side effects." This idea is wrong on so many levels. Adverse effects are peculiar to drugs. They do not exist with herbal remedies. Also, there is no relation between most drugs and herbal remedies.

Herbs affect the body in a similar way that food does. It is often commented that food is medicine, with good reason. When one of the main organs malfunctions, this causes the person to crave a certain flavour, which happens to be the flavour that can remedy the malfunction in the organ. For example, when the pancreas function is poor, the person craves sweet tasting food; and naturally occurring sweet foods, such as root vegetables, cauliflower, rice and other grains (when all cooked) will tend to improve the pancreas function. This principle is at the root of Chinese herbal medicine, which prescribes certain natural flavours to address certain organ-related conditions.

This is perhaps how most people would understand herbs, or any medicine—simply a potion or pill that is taken to address a health issue. Therefore, they tend to imagine that today's drugs act in the same way. But this could not be more wrong.

The healing principle of herbs is abandoned by most of today's drugs, which instead are designed in response to theorizing about how the body might work, and are chemicals created to directly block the function of a healthy aspect of the body, in an attempt to stop a symptom manifesting. But because the drug acts on the entire body, it also accidentally chemically blocks the organs from being able to function normally and hence produces a wide range of unpredicted harmful effects (the adverse effects). A drug's adverse effects are, in effect, created due to man's attempts to directly take control of the body's chemistry while having an inadequate understanding of the effects of that chemis-

try. Hence, adverse effects only occur with today's drugs, and do not occur with properly prescribed herbal treatments.

How drugs are designed

The study of physiology has provided a basic understanding of how chemical communication within our body works. The organs release certain chemicals to control every aspect of our body. Normally, this is a complex network of activity that can change from second to second, and the communication also includes other elements that are not yet understood.¹

But in simple terms, there are receptors (like tiny plug sockets) at various locations around our body which only accept a specific chemical (which can plug into that receptor). For example, when it is desirable to contract the muscles that surround our blood vessels, the specific chemical is released that plugs into the receptors on those muscles, and so activates the muscles. And there are very many similar actions around our body, all with their own specific receptors.

Biochemical engineers (the people who design drugs) have discovered that it is possible to design chemical agents that block certain of these receptors. And the drug companies can mass produce these chemicals, so that this crude device is now used to block the body's chemistry (to prevent certain aspects from working normally), in the hope of preventing a particular symptom from manifesting (in other words, masking the symptom).

A good example is the issue of modifying a person's blood pressure.

What is the whole "blood pressure" issue about?

When a person has high or low blood pressure, what does this mean, and why is it an issue? In all people, it is normal for our body to make constant adjustments to our blood pressure. When a stressful situation is encountered, our body responds in various ways. One of these is to adjust the muscles of our arteries and heart, so that our blood can be

circulated more rapidly, increasing the supply of nourishment which then enables us to better deal with the stressful situation. This is a perfectly normal, useful and healthy process.

If our blood pressure were measured during any stressful situation, it would be higher than when we were relaxed. This situation of temporary high blood pressure is not a disease, or even an unhealthy state; it is a perfectly normal and healthy state. It is simply a normal (and necessary) response to stress. However, in today's developed societies, it is easy for people to become locked into being constantly stressed. This is most often brought on by mental states, but physical and lifestyle factors can also cause this.

Chinese medicine fully understands how mental and emotional states are able to produce in a person the state of being constantly stressed. To treat this situation, the "meridian system" is stimulated to quickly return the person's main organs to normal function (with most patients, this would usually involve treating their liver and possibly also their "kidneys"). Once the treatment was successful, they would be more relaxed, less affected by "stressful situations", and much less likely to return to living life in a constantly stressed state. And, of course, there would not be an issue with their blood pressure, since they were no longer living life in a stressed state.

Today's mainstream healthcare, however, has no knowledge of this process of certain mental and emotional states being able to block the liver function and thus produce in us all the symptoms of stress—including constantly raised blood pressure.

What is the "pharmaceutical" thinking on this topic?

In the absence of the above knowledge, how did the current mainstream thinking on high blood pressure come about? What *is* that thinking? And how did the drug companies respond to this?

Today's study of physiology has mainly focussed on the microscopic tissue of the organs and vessels, and how the chemical communication in the body may work to control states in these structures. This physiology cannot explain and does not understand the complex

interactions between our thoughts, emotions and main organ functions in the same way that Chinese medicine does. And the drug-based approach also has no way to properly return our main organs to normal function—as Chinese medicine (and other natural healing) does. Instead, because of the relatively primitive nature of the drug-based approach, the only option it has adopted is to chemically block healthy aspects of the body from working, in the hope that this will ease the patient's symptom without doing too much harm to their general health. Their approach to the blood pressure issue demonstrates this well.

How did the preoccupation with blood pressure come about?

There are great limitations in today's knowledge of physiology. These stem from the fact that it focuses on isolated tissue, and has no real knowledge of how the overall body works (when compared to the comprehensive knowledge of Chinese medicine). This means that mainstream medics are unaware of the underlying cause of most serious conditions, such as heart attacks, arterial disease, stroke, and many other serious but non-fatal conditions, such as migraines, stress-related conditions, and so on.

In the absence of this knowledge, a tool that has come to be relied on is statistical studies. When you do not know how something works, you can use statistics to make ball-park guesses.

Blood pressure is taken with most patients in mainstream health-care, simply because it is something that can be easily measured. When data was collected from a large number of patients who (for example) suffered heart attacks, stroke, arterial disease, and other serious conditions, it was noted that a certain percent of the patients had raised blood pressure at the culmination of their disease. Therefore it was decided, statistically, that having raised blood pressure was a possible factor that may have led to a certain number of people developing their condition.

This, of course, is not a medical fact. There is no actual knowledge of a connection between a person's blood pressure being raised, and how this might lead to a particular condition (such as heart attack,

etc) developing. Instead, the statement is a statistical substitute for knowledge.

From a natural healing perspective, it is obvious that when a person is seriously ill, they are likely to be stressed, and hence will have raised blood pressure. But this does not mean that the raised blood pressure caused the illness. That notion is simply silly. However, today's physiology has no knowledge of how these conditions are caused, so they have adopted a thought pattern something like this. "If we can administer a drug that lowers the person's blood pressure, then perhaps they won't develop a serious illness. So let's do this to all people, and there's a possibility that a certain amount of them may avoid developing a serious illness where they may have otherwise."

But (as demonstrated next) the drugs that are used disable normal, healthy functions of the body, and do nothing to address any underlying condition that may be there or may develop. Whatever your thoughts on this approach to medicine, it has now become the norm in mainstream healthcare, and it was this type of thinking that gave birth to the lasting preoccupation with blood pressure in mainstream healthcare.

This preoccupation has now become so prevalent that "high blood pressure" has even become labelled a "disease" in its own right, not only by many medics, but also in the public consciousness. But properly speaking, "high blood pressure" is not really a condition. It cannot even be regarded as a symptom, because it is not something the patient is even aware of. And the raising of a person's blood pressure is a normal process in a healthy person. It is not, in itself, a disease.

The drug companies being the father of today's mainstream healthcare, it was up to them to provide a solution. It is biochemical engineers who design drugs. When they consider any issue, they think about the known physiology that *could* be involved in producing that issue (in this case, blood pressure); look at the way the chemical messaging system in the body modifies this physiology; and attempt to produce drugs that block that communication, such that the physiology stops working normally, which then hides the issue. At least, that is the intention. And their hope is that the damage done to the patient's health by their intervention is kept within "acceptable" limits.

What are the common types of drugs used?

Below are listed the most common drugs, the thinking behind their design and use, the obvious flaws in this thinking, and the common adverse effects of the drugs.

Angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors

All the blood vessels are surrounded by a muscle layer. The purpose of this is to constantly adjust the size of the vessels, as a part of the body's management of its own blood circulation in the many different situations we find ourselves in each day (exercise of various levels, rest, sleep, or when alarmed).

To make these constant adjustments an enzyme is released into the blood, called *angiotensin converting enzyme* (ACE). This enzyme then causes the chemical *angiotensin II* to be produced in the blood, and this chemical acts on the muscles surrounding blood vessels to cause them to contract. This narrows the vessels and hence raises the blood pressure, when needed to meet our body's demands. The level of this enzyme (ACE), and hence the *angiotensin II* chemical is constantly varied by our body throughout the day to contribute to the proper functioning of our blood circulatory system, to meet our body's varying demands. This process is normal and should happen in all people for them to remain healthy.

An *ACE inhibitor* drug works by blocking the action of the ACE enzyme, which then interferes with the normal function of this regulatory mechanism, so that the blood vessels become constantly flaccid. For this reason, these drugs are sometimes known as "vasodilators". The theory is that when there is more volume in the blood (achieved by expanding the blood vessels) then by definition, there is less pressure in the blood.

Hence this drug is not correcting a health problem. In fact, it is blocking the normal function of the blood vessels.

When a person's blood pressure is constantly raised, this suggests (as mentioned on page 33) that the person has adopted mental habits that have placed them in a constantly stressed state. However, today's mainstream healthcare has no understanding of the interaction between a person's thoughts and their main organs, and hence does not fully understand the physiology of stress. It only sees "high blood pressure" as a warning light that (in effect) must be switched off (or, more accurately "broken" to stop it flashing). And this is what the drug does. It plays a chemical trick on the body to "switch off a warning light". But mainstream healthcare does not see it this way; their thinking is that raised blood pressure is the "problem", so by applying this trick to disable this normal regulatory mechanism in the body, if this results in reduced blood pressure, they think "the problem" has been dealt with. But in fact, the underlying cause of the patient's ill health was never understood, has not been tackled, and instead an important part of the body's self regulation has been disabled. The effect this drug also has is to disable a doctor's ability to detect organ problems by measuring blood pressure. The blood pressure reading may be artificially lower, therefore mainstream healthcare wrongly claims it has improved the person's health, but the organ problems are still there, only a doctor is now unable to detect them by measuring the patient's blood pressure.

This is only the "theoretical" effect. But because the body's overall complex chemical activity is not fully understood, when this drug is introduced, random effects occur (which the designers of the drug did not predict and are unable to explain). A good selection of these are discovered when the drug is first tried on a group of people. These are now usually called "adverse effects".² Some of the commonest ACE inhibitors are listed below (with trade names in brackets):

- enalapril (Vasotec)
- captopril (Capoten)
- lisinopril (Zestril and Prinivil)
- benazepril (Lotensin)
- quinapril (Accupril)
- perindopril (Aceon)

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- ramipril (Altace)
- trandolapril (Mavik)
- fosinopril (Monopril)
- moexipril (Univasc)

Adverse effects

Some of the common adverse effects³ of ACE inhibitors include:

- dry cough,
- loss of taste sensation,
- loss of appetite,
- shortness of breath,
- drowsiness,
- headache,
- sleep problems (insomnia),
- dry mouth,
- nausea,
- vomiting,
- diarrhoea, abdominal pain,
- skin itching or rash,
- allergic reactions with swelling of the face, lips, tongue or throat with difficulty in swallowing or breathing,
- muscle weakness,
- slow/irregular heartbeat,
- tingly feeling,
- fever,
- chills,
- persistent sore throat,
- body aches,
- flu symptoms,
- changes in the amount of urine,
- swelling, rapid weight gain,
- confusion,
- increased thirst,
- pounding heartbeats or fluttering in your chest,
- heart attack,
- fast or uneven heartbeats,
- chest pain,
- stroke,
- pale skin,
- loss of hair,
- impotence,
- easy bruising or bleeding,
- yellowing of the skin or eyes (jaundice), and
- other possible adverse effects.

This drug targets the blood-vessel muscles. But there is no claim, nor suggestion, that there is anything wrong with the blood vessel muscles, nor with the chemistry that the drug attempts to block. Therefore this intervention does not provide a “treatment”. It is not curative, or healing. Instead it is purely playing a “trick” to try to hide a “warning light”, without treating any aspect of the underlying problem, nor even knowing what the underlying problem is. And with many people, this deliberate blocking of an aspect of their body’s chemistry may cause them serious health problems. With several of the known adverse effects, the drug information leaflet advises you to seek emergency treatment. So, this routine remedy prescribed by mainstream healthcare could result in you requiring emergency treatment, if you are going to survive. This is a curious situation.

Angiotensin II receptor blockers (ARB’s)

This drug aims to achieve the same effect as ACE inhibitors (p.37), but hopes to overcome some of the weaknesses discovered in the concept of ACE inhibitors. The blocking effect of ACE inhibitors can be bypassed in the body by other systems (reactive increase in *renin* and *angiotensin I* levels).

The ACE enzyme causes the chemical *angiotensin II* to be produced, and it is this chemical that “tells” the blood-vessel muscles to contract. And ARB’s directly block the effect of the chemical *angiotensin II*, so that the blood-vessel muscles are no longer able to contract. The thinking is that even if the effects of blocking the ACE enzyme are bypassed by the body (by its complex chemistry compensating for this), the chemical that the body is still producing (*angiotensin II*) to attempt to control its blood vessels and perform other tasks, this chemical is prevented from having its effect.

Some of the commonest ARB’s are listed below:

- Azilsartan (Edarbi)
- Candesartan (Atacand)
- Eprosartan
- Irbesartan (Avapro)
- Losartan (Cozaar)

- Olmesartan (Benicar)
- Telmisartan (Micardis)
- Valsartan (Diovan)

It is said that these drugs have less adverse effects than ACE inhibitors, though the known adverse effects can still be serious, and all the same comments apply. As before, there is no claim that there is anything wrong with the body's chemistry that this drug attempts to block and it is therefore not providing a "treatment" (it is not healing or curative) but is merely attempting to switch off a warning light and hence mask the real underlying problem; and in the process, it may seriously harm your health.

Beta-blockers

When we need to perform better, or more quickly (which is usually the case in most stressful situations), our main organs (primarily the "kidneys", which include the adrenal glands) release the hormones adrenaline and noradrenaline. Many of the organs, systems and vessels in the body have receptors on them that detect this hormone in the blood; when detected, they adjust their behaviour, so as to enable us to respond to the stressful situation. These receptors are called *adrenergic beta receptors*. The beta-blocker drug prevents these receptors from detecting the adrenaline hormone. One of the effects of this is to slow our heart rate, which can then lead to lowered blood pressure.

There are three known types of beta receptors, and some beta-blockers are able to target one particular type of beta receptor. The receptors are located in the heart, kidneys, lungs, gut, liver, uterus, blood vessels, fat cells, and in the skeletal muscles. Hence, our main organs would usually attempt to adjust many aspects of our body to respond to stressful situations. This is normal, and essential for our immediate and long-term survival.

Beta-blockers can impede any part, or even the whole, of this system. As usual, the drug is not given to a patient to "treat" a condition, in that there is usually nothing wrong with this entire "fight-or-flight

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system” (as it is usually called). Therefore, the drug has no “medical” intention, or healing effect. Instead, this fight-or-flight system is being chemically impeded simply to attempt to switch off the “high-blood-pressure warning light”, usually with no knowledge of the genuine, underlying condition (the reason why the person is now locked into living in a constantly stressed state, and hence having raised blood pressure).

This fight-or-flight system is present in many key organs and systems of our body, and our main organs normally regulate it throughout the day, making continuous fine adjustments. As can be imagined, any interference with this chemistry could produce a wide range of adverse effects, some serious or even fatal.

Adverse effects

Currently known adverse affects of beta blockers include:

- nausea,
- diarrhoea,
- bronchospasm (causing difficulty in breathing, possibly severe),
- shortness of breath,
- cold extremities,
- slow heart beat,
- heart failure,
- disruption of the heart’s electrical impulses,
- fatigue,
- dizziness,
- hair loss,
- abnormal vision,
- hallucinations,
- insomnia,
- nightmares,
- sexual dysfunction,
- type 2 diabetes, and
- other possible adverse effects.

Calcium channel blockers (CCBs)

Calcium channels are pores in cells that allow calcium to pass into the cell. A calcium element is known as an ion. This is because it has an unequal number of protons and electrons, which gives it a positive charge of 2. When ions exist in liquid form (as calcium does within our body), this provides a way for the body to move electrical charge

around. When a calcium ion enters a cell through its calcium channel, this increases the electrical charge on that cell, and the cell then uses this charge for various purposes. This process is used by nerves to produce an electrical impulse, and it also plays a key role in the function of smooth muscle, enabling it to contract.

Our blood vessels are surrounded by smooth muscle. But when these calcium channels are blocked, this prevents the muscle from working, so that the muscle loses its normal control and becomes flaccid.

This “trick” is used to cause the blood vessels to unnaturally expand, and from a pure plumbing point of view, because there is now more volume for the blood to fill, this means that the pressure of the blood is reduced. In the same way, if you expanded the pipes in your home’s plumbing system, the water pressure would be reduced.

As before, there is no suggestion that there is any fault in this mechanism. Therefore, this drug does not have a healing effect. It is not directly correcting a problem. But rather, it is preventing a normal and vital system in the body from working properly, so as to hide a warning light about something somewhere else in the body; and leaving that underlying condition in place. So, as usual, not only does this type of approach, not do any good for the body, or provide any cure, but it actively prevents a separate part of the body (or a whole system) from working, a part or system that was previously working perfectly.

Smooth muscle exists in many parts of the body. One important location is within the lymphatic system; and when this smooth muscle is prevented from working properly, the normal lymph drainage in the body fails to work, causing swelling of tissue.

This is an obvious adverse effect; this is so obvious, the drug designers are able to predict and expect it. But (as with most drugs) many other adverse effects were not predicted, and it is not known how the symptoms are produced. This is only to be expected when the body’s complex chemistry is impeded in any way.

Adverse effects

Common adverse effects⁴ of calcium channel blockers include:

- headache,
- constipation,
- rash,
- nausea,
- flushing,
- edema (fluid accumulation in tissues),
- drowsiness,
- low blood pressure,
- dizziness
- sexual dysfunction,
- overgrowth of gums,
- liver dysfunction,
- some CCB's may worsen heart failure, and
- other possible adverse effects.

Diuretics

One aspect of the normal kidney function is to filter blood to remove harmful or unneeded elements from the blood, and then to reabsorb the “cleansed” water back into the blood, to help maintain the body’s necessary liquid levels.

There are several different types of diuretic drug. They all aim to block this normal process of reabsorbing “clean” water back into the blood, but each type of drug achieves this by disabling a different aspect of the kidneys. The intention here is that, from a pure plumbing point of view, if there is less water in the blood, then there is less volume in the “pipes” (the blood vessels), therefore, the pressure in the pipes will be less (the blood pressure is lower).

Again, there is no suggestion that there is anything wrong with your kidneys in the first place, so the chemical blocking of your normal kidney function is not producing a healing effect, and is not even intended to “correct” a problem with your kidneys in any way. Instead (as usual), the chemical blocking of your normal kidney function is being done to hide a warning light about some other underlying problem, but without addressing that problem, and not usually even knowing what that problem is.

Adverse effects

There are many obvious and predicted adverse effects⁵ when the tissues of your body are robbed of the essential water they need. These, and other adverse effects, are:

- dry mouth,
- thirst,
- weakness,
- lethargy,
- drowsiness,
- restlessness,
- muscle pains or cramps,
- confusion,
- seizures,
- muscular fatigue,
- hypotension,
- oliguria (decreased or absent production of urine),
- increased heartbeat,
- gastrointestinal disturbances,
- death (caused by extremely low levels of sodium),
- neurologic damage,
- gout (from increased uric acid levels),
- other possible adverse effects.

Alpha-blockers

This chemical is another approach used to attempt to prevent the smooth muscle that surrounds blood vessels from working properly.

Alpha-blockers work by blocking the transmission of certain nerve impulses. When some nerves are stimulated, they release a chemical called *noradrenaline* into the blood. This chemical then stimulates *alpha-adrenergic* receptors, which exist in various parts of the body, including the heart, smooth muscle and blood vessels. When these receptors are stimulated, they cause blood vessels to constrict. This is an essential process that the body uses to maintain the normal function of the heart and blood vessels under varying conditions.

An alpha-blocker drug attaches to these *alpha-adrenergic* receptors and blocks them from being stimulated. This action prevents the smooth muscle that surrounds blood vessels from working, and the blood vessels become flaccid.

Again, when this drug is used, there is no suggestion that there is any fault with this system, so the drug is not providing any healing effect in the body. Instead it is disabling this healthy tissue from working properly, so as to hide a warning light that some unknown thing is wrong elsewhere.

Common alpha-blockers include:

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- Alfuzosin (Uroxatral)
- Doxazosin (Cardura)
- Prazosin (Minipress)
- Silodosin (Rapaflo)
- Tamsulosin (Flomax)
- Terazosin (Hytrin)

Adverse effects

Common adverse effects⁶ of alpha-blockers include:

- dizziness, sometimes severe
- lightheadedness,
- headache,
- fatigue,
- tired feeling,
- stuffy nose, sneezing, or sore throat,
- fainting,
- fast or irregular heartbeat, or
- chest pain.

Adverse effects not usually mentioned

With all drugs, the total list of known adverse effects is always much longer than the list usually mentioned to patients by medics or informational websites. This is partly because the list, if given for *all* patients, could be literally endless. Different people respond in different ways to the same drug, and some people are more sensitive than others. Also, many of the effects are not known by drug companies, because they may take years to build up and medics may never associate the adverse affect with the drug that caused it. They simply consider it to be a separate, unrelated symptom.

However, looking at the patient information leaflet for any drug, should report a full list of the adverse effects noticed when the drug was first tried on patients, or reported to the drug company later. This full list is always much longer than the common effects usually mentioned.

For example, with the above drug (alfuzosin, or Uroxatral), the list of common adverse effects usually mentioned only includes 9 items,

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but the complete list in the patient information leaflet includes 32 items, some serious:

- feeling dizzy or faint,
- headache,
- feeling sick,
- weakness or tiredness,
- diarrhoea,
- stomach pain,
- general feeling of being unwell,
- feeling dizzy, light-headed or faint when you stand,
- dry mouth,
- being sick (vomiting),
- a fast heart beat (tachycardia),
- pounding in the chest and uneven heartbeat (palpitations),
- chest pain,
- drowsiness,
- rash and itching,
- hot flushes,
- problems with your vision,
- runny nose, itching, sneezing, stuffy nose and/or burning eyes,
- water retention (may cause swollen arms or legs),
- lack of control over passing water,
- fainting,
- uncomfortable feeling in the stomach and indigestion (dyspepsia),
- abnormal liver function (signs may include yellowing of your skin or the whites of your eyes),
- you may get more infections than usual,
- abnormal heart rhythm,
- impaired brain function,
- increased risk of bleeding (including nose bleeds and/or bleeding gums) and bruising,

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- swelling of the hands, feet, ankles, face, lips or throat which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing,
- itchy, lumpy rash (hives) or nettle rash (urticaria),
- chest pain (angina),
- painful erection of the penis, not related to sexual activity, which will not go away.

Alpha-beta blockers

These drugs are intended to have the effect of both beta-blockers (p.41) and alpha-blockers (p.45). The arguments in those sections also apply to alpha-beta blockers.

Other drugs

Drugs of other types may also be tried to address the “high blood pressure” issue. These could include drugs such as clonidine, aliskiren (Tekturna), and minoxidil. They have similar effects to the drugs mentioned above, but act by blocking other aspects of the body’s chemistry.

With all the above drugs, what should be remembered is that “high blood pressure” by itself is not a condition; and the chemistry that these drugs block in your body is not faulty in any way; there is nothing wrong with it. And blocking that chemistry, only causes further problems. Instead “high blood pressure” is at best a warning light that something else is not right. But because the focus of mainstream healthcare has been guided by drug companies for so long, this has precluded it from even being able to detect the real underlying condition. With all the above drugs, the only medical effect they have is to disable a doctor’s ability to detect organ problems by measuring a patient’s blood pressure. With the drug in effect, the patient’s blood pressure reading may be artificially lowered, but the underlying organ problems that resulted in the organs raising the blood pressure, those problems are still in place; only now they cannot be detected by measuring blood pressure. The warning light has been disabled, and this appears to fool medically naive practitioners.

To understand why mainstream healthcare is unable to detect such underlying conditions (even when no drugs are being taken), it is

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necessary to understand what natural healing is, and how it diagnoses a problem and successfully heals it. Only by understanding this, it is possible to see today's mainstream approach to healthcare in context, and therefore gain the insights that would enable you to make a genuinely informed choice about your healthcare.