

“So, what *do* I eat?”

Eating for your Constitution: A Traditional Chinese Medicine Approach

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Disclosures

- No conflict of interests to disclose
- The use of web-based photos and material is solely for educational purposes for this course

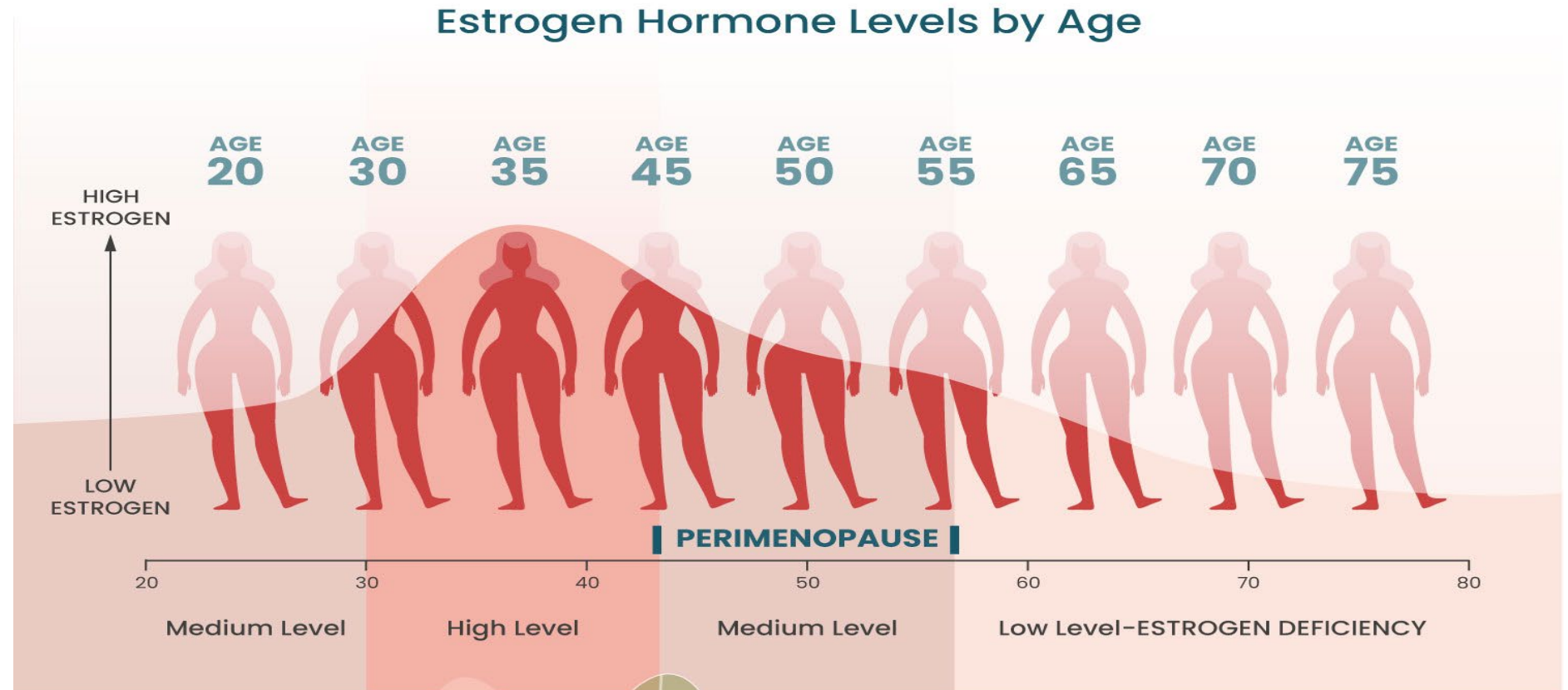
Learning Objectives

- Brief overview of hormone changes during menopausal transition
- Introduce the basic concept of Yǎng Shēng or nourishing life
- Understand Traditional Chinese Medicine Constitutions
- Learn about dietary strategies for each constitution
- An overview of menopause in Traditional Chinese Medicine framework



<https://themenopausecharity.org/>

Menopause & Hormonal Changes



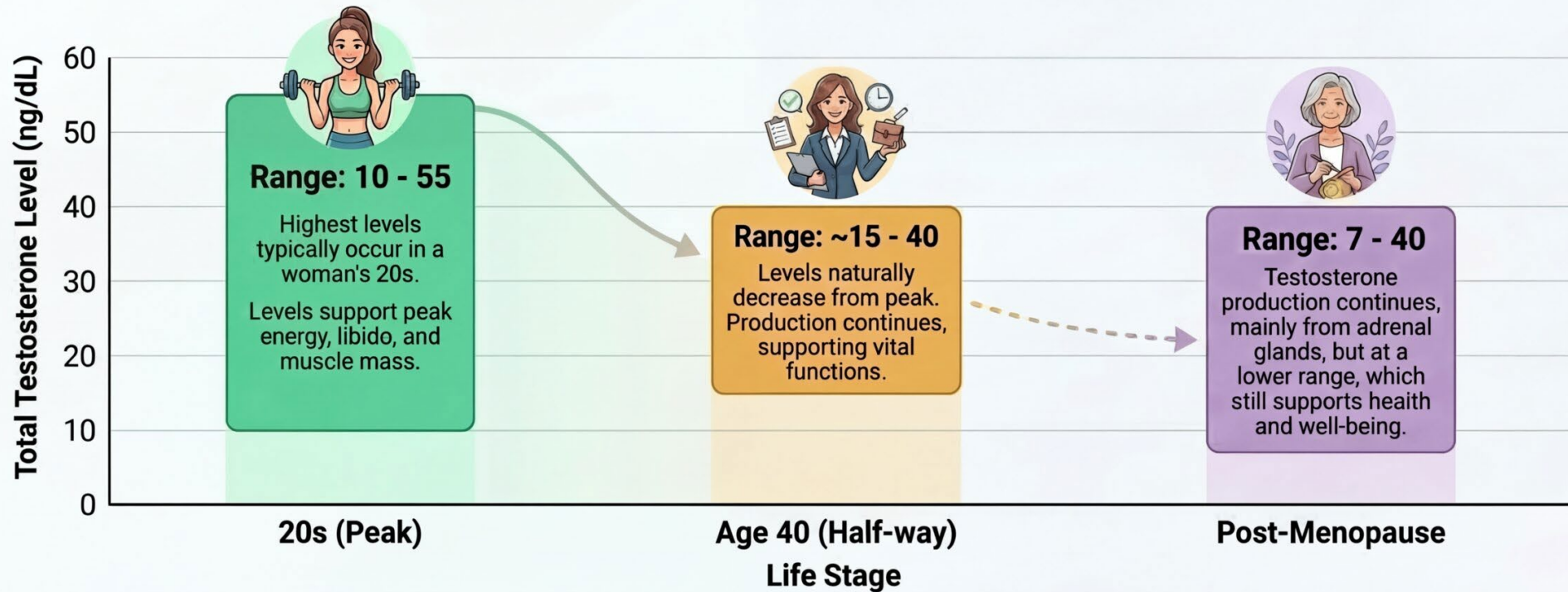
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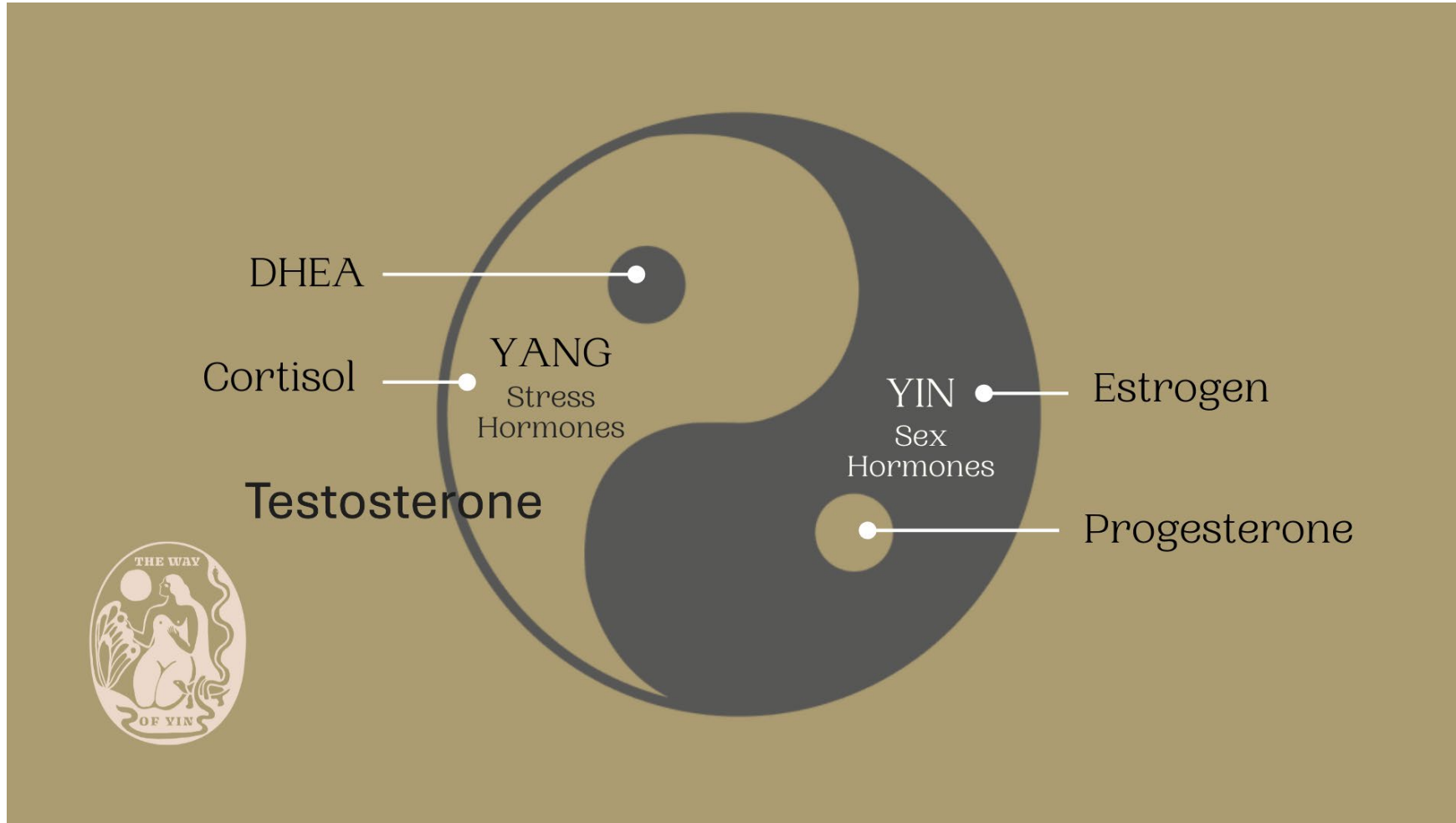
herstasis.com

- Decline of estrogen, progesterone
- Increased risk for metabolic, bone, cardiovascular related issues

Symptoms: hot flashes, insomnia, mood changes, pain

TESTOSTERONE RANGES FOR WOMEN AS THEY AGE (ng/dL)









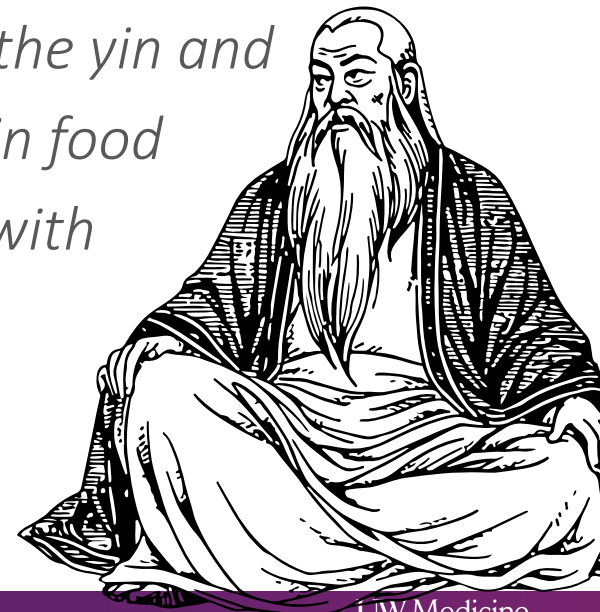
素問 Su Wen

The Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine (722-221BC)

Chapter 1: 上古天真論 The Universal Truth

Yellow Emperor asked: *I heard that, in the old time, people lived to over 100 years, but we only live to the half of the length today - what happened?*

Qi Bo answered: *Old time, people practiced "way of life." They knew the yin and yang balance, lived according to season and nature; did not indulge in food excessively, slept at regular times and did not over exert themselves with excessive work, their mind and body were harmonized.*





What is Yǎng Shēng(養生)?

- Yang Sheng's can be translated as nourishing life and cultivating health and longevity
- *“One key focus of Chinese Medicine is the idea that **disease prevention is the superior form of medicine**. The theories and methods of disease prevention are known as Yang Sheng 養生 literally [means] Nourishing Life.” - Institute of Classical Asian Medicine*
- Preventative Strategies: diet & nutrition, movement & exercises, mind-body (stress management), living in harmony with the season and environment



What is Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Constitution?

What is TCM Constitution?

- Constitution (體質, tǐ zhí)
 - “Body’s property”
 - Innate & acquired physical-psychological traits
 - Shaped by genetics (jing), diet, lifestyle, emotions, environment
- Relatively stable, but can change with aging & external factors
- Determines susceptibility to disease, treatment response

Why is TCM Constitution important?

- Explains why people respond differently to the same pathogen, treatment, risk factors
 - 同病異治 (*tóng bìng yì zhì*): “Same disease, different treatments”
 - 異病同治 (*yì bìng tóng zhì*): “Different diseases, same treatment”
- Guides a personalized preventive care (diet, lifestyle)
- Directs personalized treatments such as acupuncture, herbs, physical activities, and mind-body strategies

Neutral

Well-balanced. Good Energy, a healthy complexion, a normal sleep pattern, healthy appetite, and strong immunity

01

Damp Phlegm

Body struggles with fluid metabolism. Heaviness sensation in the body; oily skin, sticky feeling in mouth. Gain weight easily

05

Qi deficiency

People who are easily fatigued mentally and physically, a pale complexion, easy to catch cold, poor appetite.

02

Damp Heat

Acne-prone skin, a bitter taste in the mouth, bad breath, irritability, and a feeling of heaviness/sluggishness combined with heat.

06

Yang deficiency

People who lack “fire” in the body. Aversion to cold, pale complexion, cold extremities, slow metabolism

03

Blood stasis

Poor circulation. Dark or dull complexion. Easy bruising, dark spots on the skin. Sharp and localized pain

07

Yin deficiency

Lack cooling fluids in the body. Dryness in the body (dry skin, dry mouth). Prone to flushing, night sweats, and irritability

04

Qi stagnation

Stuck qi in the body. Heavily influenced by emotional stress. Frequent sighing. “Lump” in the throat sensation

08

TCM Constitutions

09

Special Constitution

Highly sensitive population. Prone to allergies and sensitive to seasonal and environmental changes

Temperament (energetics) of foods

Cold	Cool	Neutral	Warm	Hot
Vegetables: bamboo shoots, bitter melon, kelp, seaweed, bean sprouts, watercress, celery, Enoki mushroom. Fruits: watermelon, banana, tomato, coconut, melons, grapefruits, pomelo, passionfruit, kiwi, pears Proteins: mung beans, crabs, ducks, octopus, clams. Spices: soy sauce	Vegetables: Broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, mustard greens, cabbages, cucumber, okra, radishes, burdock roots, Grains: amaranth, barley, buckwheat, millet, wheat Fruits: mango, orange, pineapples, strawberries, tangerines Proteins: tofu, egg whites, soy milk. Others: green tea	Vegetables: beetroot, bok choy, brussels sprouts, kale, corn, eggplants, green beans, potato, king oyster mushroom, shitake mushroom, bell peppers, wood ear mushrooms, avocado, sweet potato, turnips Fruits: blueberries, raspberries, papaya, apple, lime, lemon Grains: rice, brown rice. Proteins: chickpeas, lentils, edamame. Pork, geese, quail egg, scallops, sardines, mackerel, salmon, tuna, snappers, milk.	Vegetables: carrots, garlic chives, pumpkins, onions, green onions. Spices: ginger, garlic, cumin, clove, fennel, nutmeg, rosemary, star anise, sweet basil, peppercorns, mustard, turmeric, parsley. Fruits: lychee, jujube dates, peach, cherry Walnuts, Proteins: beef, lamb, lobster, shrimps, eels, mussels, chicken, mutton, ham. Drink: black tea, coffee, rice wine, beer	Spices: Cinnamon, black pepper, Chili pepper, mustard seeds Drink: wine

Neutral/well-balanced

- In a balanced state of health
- Good energy, normal sleep, healthy complexion, strong immunity
- Food therapy: a balanced diet, avoid foods that are extremely cold or hot.
- Lifestyle: maintain regular routine, exercises, mind-body practice.

Qi deficiency



- People who are easily fatigued mentally and physically, a pale complexion, easy to catch cold, poor appetite, loose stool.
- Food therapy goal: build Qi
- **Avoid: over consuming raw, cold foods like salads**
- **Aim: warming, easily digestible foods**
- Food examples: chicken, turkey, cooked oats, chickpeas, potato, bone broth, congee, mushrooms
- Simple recipe idea:
 - Chicken & mushroom congee with slices of ginger
 - Chickpea soup: chickpea, onions, carrots, olive oil
- Lifestyle: gentle exercises, avoid exercises that cause a lot of sweating

Yang deficiency



- People who lack “fire” in the body. Cold intolerance, cold extremities, slow metabolism
- Food therapy goal: restore yang
- **Avoid: excessive cooling foods or cold drinks**
- **Aim: Warming and stimulating foods**
- Food examples: lamb, beef, ginger, cinnamon, onions, chives, walnuts
- Simple recipe ideas:
 - Slow cooker beef stew with carrots, onions, ginger, root vegetables
 - Warm oatmeal with cinnamon and walnuts
- Lifestyle: gentle exercises, saunas and warm foot soaks

Yin deficiency

- Hot flashes, night sweats, dry skin, insomnia, irritable, lean body habitus
- Food therapy goal: nourish yin and fluids
- **Avoid: spicy, fried foods, alcohol**
- **Aim: cooling, nourishing, moistening foods**
- Food examples: pears, honey, almond, black sesame, tofu, goji berry, mung beans
- Simple recipe ideas:
 - Jujube, goji berry, and apple tea
 - Miso soup with tofu, seaweed, and mushrooms
- Lifestyle: stress management, intermittent, moderate exercises or HIIT. Hydration is crucial.



Jujube, Goji berry, apple tea recipe: 1-2 jujube dates with a small ½ tablespoon of goji berries with a few slices of apple in 2 cups of water. Cook in water for 5-10 minutes. Drink the tea.

Jujube dates, also known as Da Zao in Chinese Medicine. This can be found in Asian grocery stores. They are frequently found in this dried form.

Jujube dates tonify qi and nourish blood and sweet in taste



Goji berry, also known as Gou Qi Zi in Chinese Medicine. Also can be found in Asian grocery stores, occasionally in health food stores.

Goji berries nourish yin, brighten eyes.

Caution: if you are allergic in Nightshades (tomatoes, potatoes, eggplants, and peppers, including chili peppers, paprika, and cayenne, You should avoid goji berries.



Damp phlegm



- Heaviness sensation in the body; sluggishness, brain fog, craves sweets.
- Food therapy goal: drain damp, improve metabolism
- **Avoid: dairy, fried, greasy, sweet, cold foods (aka ice cream)**
- **Aim: neutral to warming foods to improve metabolism**
- Food examples: Job's tear, azuki beans, celery, zucchini, daikon radish
- Simple recipe ideas:
 - Stir-fry celery, bell peppers, mushrooms, carrots with garlic and green onions
 - Azuki bean with Job's tear tea
- Lifestyle: consistent daily exercise, sun exposure

Damp Heat

- Acne-prone skin, a bitter taste in the mouth, irritability, and a feeling of heaviness/sluggishness combined with heat, lean body
- Food therapy goal: clear heat, drain damp
- **Avoid: smoking, alcohol, fried and spicy foods**
- **Aim: Eat cooling, light foods**
- Food examples: mung beans, celery, bitter melon, lemon, lettuce, cucumber
- Simple recipe ideas:
 - Mung bean water: mung bean cooked in water
 - Lemon with cucumber water
- Lifestyle: high intensity exercise, reduce activities in summer

Blood stasis

- Poor circulation, dark/dull complexion, easy bruising, dark spots on skin
- Food therapy goal: invigorate blood
- **Avoid: cold, fried, raw foods, highly processed and sweet foods**
- **Aim: foods that improve circulation**

- Food examples: red wine (some), onions, berries, garlic, ginger, turmeric, eggplant, mushrooms, hawthorn berries, black beans, seaweeds
- Simple recipe ideas:
 - Stir fry bok choy with mushroom
 - Stir fry eggplants with bell peppers
- Lifestyle: moderate intensity exercises, stretches, yoga



Qi stagnation



- Irritability, mood swings, PMS, frequent sighing, heavily influenced by stress
- Food therapy goal: Qi-regulating foods, small frequent light meals
- **Avoid: cold, raw, highly processed foods**
- **Aim: Green leafy vegetables, aromatics**
- Food examples: daikon radish, citrus types, rose, chamomile, mint, rosehip, turmeric, ginger
- Simple recipe ideas:
 - Carrot ginger soup
 - Rosehip & mint tea
- Lifestyle: Stress management, social support, moderate-intense exercises

Menopause in TCM



Menopause

12 consecutive months of no menstrual bleeding, including spotting

The average age for menopause in the United States is 51 years old

Menopause is the result of **natural & normal** decline of hormones

Symptoms vary greatly from one woman to another

Other types of menopause

Surgical menopause: both ovaries are removed surgically

Medical menopause: induced by certain treatments such as chemotherapy, endocrine therapy, or radiation

Premature ovarian failure: loss of ovarian function before age 40

Menopause in TCM framework

- As we age, yin (water) and yang (fire) naturally decline
- In menopause, there is relatively more decline of yin compared to yang
- This relative difference can present with various combination of physical symptoms including...
 - Dry mouth, dry skin, dry eyes, flushed face, hot flash/night sweats, constipation, tinnitus, irritability, insomnia, frequent urination, vaginal atrophy, and more



Creator: Rik Trottier

Types of TCM Menopause

Kidney yin deficiency	Kidney yang deficiency	Liver & heart fire	Spleen & kidney yang deficiency	Liver-kidney yin deficiency	Kidney- Heart disharmony
Dry mouth, heat in hands & feet , irritable, red cheeks, tinnitus, dizziness, insomnia with dreams	Cold intolerance , low back pain, knee pain, lower extremity swelling, frequent urination	Headaches, irritable, easily angered, bitter taste in mouth , palpitation , poor appetite, insomnia with restlessness, can't concentrate	Cold hands & feet, fatigue, pale complexion, poor digestion, diarrhea , abdominal bloating , easily short of breath, frequent urination at night	Tinnitus, dizziness, blurry vision, insomnia with lots of dream , heat in hands and feet, dry stool.	Palpitation, night sweats, forgetfulness, waking up frequently at night , dream-disturbed sleep, weakness in low back and knees.

Who is more susceptible?

- 3 constitutions tend to have more intense menopausal transitions

Yin deficiency	Qi & blood deficiency	Qi stagnation
Smaller body composition, exercise averse, has a fiery temperament.	History of anemia, fatigue and low immunity.	Perfectionist, type A personality. Highly stressful life

Temperament (energetics) of food

Cold	Cool	Neutral	Warm	Hot
Vegetables: bamboo shoots, bitter melon, kelp, seaweed, bean sprouts, watercress, celery, Enoki mushroom. Fruits: watermelon, banana, tomato, coconut, melons, grapefruits, pomelo, passionfruit, kiwi, pears Proteins: mung beans, crabs, ducks, octopus, clams. Spices: soy sauce	Vegetables: Broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, mustard greens, cabbages, cucumber, okra, radishes, burdock roots, Grains: amaranth, barley, buckwheat, millet, wheat Fruits: mango, orange, pineapples, strawberries, tangerines Proteins: tofu, egg whites, soy milk. Others: green tea	Vegetables: beetroot, bok choy, brussels sprouts, kale, corn, eggplants, green beans, potato, king oyster mushroom, shitake mushroom, bell peppers, wood ear mushrooms, avocado, sweet potato, turnips Fruits: blueberries, raspberries, papaya, apple, lime, lemon Grains: rice, brown rice. Proteins: chickpeas, lentils, edamame. Pork, geese, quail egg, scallops, sardines, mackerel, salmon, tuna, snappers, milk.	Vegetables: carrots, garlic chives, pumpkins, onions, green onions. Spices: ginger, garlic, cumin, clove, fennel, nutmeg, rosemary, star anise, sweet basil, peppercorns, mustard, turmeric, parsley. Fruits: lychee, jujube dates, peach, cherry Walnuts, Proteins: beef, lamb, lobster, shrimps, eels, mussels, chicken, mutton, ham. Drink: black tea, coffee, rice wine, beer	Spices: Cinnamon, black pepper, Chili pepper, mustard seeds Drink: wine

Yin nourishing foods

- Grains: barley, millet, Job's tear
- Beans: Adzuki, black beans, black soybeans, kidney beans, mung beans
- Vegetables: alfalfa sprout, spinach, asparagus, mushrooms, sweet potato/yam, tomato, water chestnut, zucchini, lotus roots
- Nuts & seeds: black sesame seeds, walnuts
- Fruits: apple, apricot, avocado, banana, lemon, lime, mango, mulberry, pear, persimmon, pineapple, pomegranate, watermelon
- Seafoods: fish, oyster, fresh-water clam, octopus, sardines
- Meat: beef, duck, pork, rabbit
- Others: soy milk, honey,



Creator: Rik Trottier

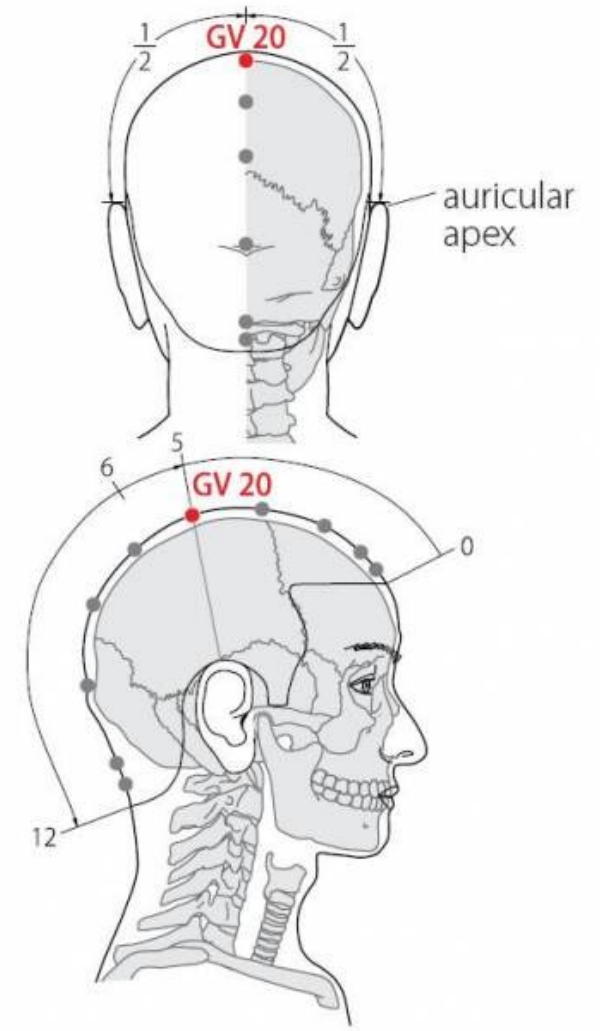
Acupressure self care

- **Spleen 6 (三陰交 San Yin Jiao)**
- Location: inner side of lower leg, 4 fingers width above the tip of medial malleolus, on the soft tissue just behind the tibia
- How: Use your pointer finger and press & circle this acupuncture point for 1-2 minutes daily
- Indication: calm the mind, smooth menstrual discomfort, improve sleep quality, nourish the yin and blood
- **Avoid during pregnancy**
- Warm foot soaks: always aim above this Spleen 6



Acupressure self care

- **Du20/GV20 (百會 Bai Hui)**
- Location: at the crown of head, directly between ear apexes
- Instruction: upon waking, rub your hands together until they are warm. Use your hands as a comb, brush your hair from forehead to the neck. Repeat brushing motions for 100 times
- Indication: Stimulate all channels in the body, raising Qi, improve mental function, alleviate headaches and dizziness.



In Summary...

- Menopause can be experienced differently based on your constitution
- TCM provides personalized treatments based on that unique constitution



QUESTIONS?

