

Boosting Men's Vitality with Oriental Medicine by Ellen Teeter



Women are from Venus, and men are most certainly from Mars. This holds true not only for the difference in the

emotional and physical makeup of men and women, but also for the variations in male and female constitutions. Chinese medicine recognizes that men and women have constitutional tendencies towards different kinds of imbalances.

Whereas women tend to be out of balance with "yin blood," men tend to be low on "yang qi." Yin blood in Chinese medicine is the cooling, nourishing principle in the body and includes red blood, while yang qi is the warming, activating energy and includes basic metabolism.

How many middle-aged couples do you know in which the wife is having hot flashes while her husband has cold feet and wants to bundle up? When you are low in nourishing, cooling yin blood, you get hotter more readily, and when the warm, activating yang qi is declining, it is easier to get cold. In Western terms, we call these symptoms menopause in women and andropause in men.

At this time in a man's life, he is likely to have developed plaque in the circulatory system, which inhibits the free flowing of blood. The yang qi propels the blood; if it is weak, the blood vessels tend to collect debris. Circulatory issues

directly affect heart and erectile function. The energetic imbalances that cause circulatory problems start much earlier than middle age. These energetic imbalances can lead to disease patterns like hypertension, erectile dysfunction, and heart disease. For 40 percent of men past the age of 50, erectile dysfunction is one of the most disturbing aspects of aging. Typically one to five years after the onset of ED, cardiovascular symptoms such as hypertension, heart disease, and stroke will manifest.

The tendency of men to lose yang qi is why, although heart disease is the number one killer in this country for both sexes, men are ahead of women. It is important to understand that many disease patterns affecting men can occur from the core issue of declining yang qi. ED is typically the first sign that more symptoms will be emerging. The recent surge in the use of Viagra and other medications to deal with erectile dysfunction is indicative of the rapid deterioration of the circulatory system in most men in this country. Viagra was originally researched as a cardiac medication, and I believe it is dangerous to use it with some of the most common heart medications prescribed.

Fortunately, most of these disease patterns can be prevented naturally through lifestyle changes in stress reduction, diet, and exercise. Chinese herbal medicine has a long history of successfully treating the core issue of declining yang qi and poor circulation, thus reversing the decline in male sexual potency and improving overall health. By treating the circulatory issues related to ED and the underlying low yang qi, men can achieve a higher degree of health while overcoming the sexual dysfunction.

The acupuncture and Chinese medicine approach is to build up optimal health so that active sexual life will follow naturally. Thus, instead of treating the symptom of impotence by using drugs like Viagra and allowing the underlying health issue to continue to deteriorate, Chinese medicine acts to create overall vitality. Treatment of such conditions might include more than one therapy. For example, a regimen of diet changes and Chinese energetic exercises might be indicated, along with acupuncture and a Chinese medicinal (herbal) prescription.

It can take 18 months to two years to totally rebuild the health and vitality of someone who has completely lost their sexual function. It takes about one month of treatment for every year the body has been out of balance, so problems arising at age 50 have their energetic roots in the 20s and 30s.

Usually within four to six weeks of starting a Chinese herbal prescription regimen, there are many positive signs of improvement. Studies show that some yang qi-promoting Chinese herbs like Epimedium help to stimulate the sensory nerves in the penile area and can improve function fairly quickly. Male silk moth is another little-known herb which benefits both sexes. For men, male silk moth benefits sperm production and libido and has a long reputation for making sexual intercourse more exciting and satisfying. For women, male silk moth is believed to tone the vagina and to make sexual intercourse more pleasurable. For both sexes, it nurtures the entire endocrine system and can restore youthfulness.

Modern research shows that Salvia root and Carthamus help improve microcirculation, thus aiding cardiovascular system in

general as well as specific areas of blood congestion.

Patients with ED and those wishing to maintain a level of health to prevent the onset of ED can start today by changing some lifestyle patterns:

- Reduce stress; change the things you can, and accept the things you cannot.
- Get plenty of cardiovascular exercise (it is always wise to have a physician's approval to start any new exercise program); walking, light jogging, and hiking are all great activities.
- Learn and practice relaxation techniques, meditation, Tai Chi, or yoga.
- Get adequate amounts of sleep.
- Eat a diet with adequate amounts of zinc – oysters, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, peanuts, Brazil nuts, cashews, beans and legumes, brown rice, and wheat germ.
- Avoid alcohol and tobacco products.

To energize your sex life and optimize your health, consult a qualified Oriental medicine provider for Chinese dietary recommendations, prescriptive herbal formulas, and acupuncture. Go to www.fsoma.com or www.nccaom.org to find a provider near you.

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