

Foreword

Current Japanese Acupuncture and Moxibustion

This special issue on *Current Japanese Acupuncture and Moxibustion* follows our earlier publication of *Current Kampo Medicine*.

Since the 1990s, the popularity of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) has been growing in Europe and in North America. CAM is practiced primarily in the form of acupuncture and Kampo medicine in Japan today, although acupuncture and related traditional therapies such as moxa and traditional amma massage are at present less commonly used than Western medicine.

We who are involved with acupuncture are confident that these forms of Asian medicine which have been contributing to better health in Japan since they were first introduced from China 1300 years ago, have an important role to play in Japanese medicine today. We also believe that the introduction and popularization of acupuncture and related forms of healthcare can help to improve and sustain health in countries and cultures where these methods of treatment are not well known or widely practiced.

Through these publications our editorial staff intends to provide information on the results of research in Eastern medicine, including acupuncture and Kampo medicine. We hope that this information will be of use internationally, and that the traditions of acupuncture that have been nourished in Japan, will spread and flourish in countries throughout the world.

In Japan today there are two major approaches to acupuncture. First, is traditional acupuncture, which arrived from China 3,000 years ago and modified over time so that it is now uniquely Japanese. Secondly, it is an approach strongly influenced by Western medicine and scientific thinking, which during the 60 years following World War II has made tremendous progress in the scientific study of acupuncture and its effects. Each of these approaches has its strengths and weaknesses.

The former is based on subtle therapeutic stimulation and care. This form of acupuncture integrates readily into the patient's activities, and can have a profoundly positive effect on daily life. The latter was developed to promote the use of acupuncture within the context of modern Western medicine. Research in this area is intended to provide a clear scientific basis for the use of acupuncture in conjunction with Western medical treatment in hospitals and clinics. In countries where Western medicine is firmly established as "the" medical system, this scientific approach to acupuncture is particularly useful, and the painstaking clinical research to clarify the relationship between acupuncture and Western medicine is bearing fruit.

Today we face medical conditions such as lifestyle diseases and end-of-life issues that will be extremely difficult to resolve if we rely solely on modern living and Western medicine. In this context, therapeutic methods that recognize the value and significance of acupuncture can be of great service to the medical community worldwide. It is our hope that acupuncture from Japan, on the eastern edge of Asia, will continue to contribute to good health and vibrant life for all people.

Shuji Goto, Ph.D.
Executive Editor

Chairman, Acupuncture and Integrative Medicine College, Berkeley, U.S.A.

Chairman, International Institute of Health and Human Services, Berkeley, U.S.A.

Chairman, GOTO College of Medical Arts & Sciences, Tokyo, Japan

President, The Japan Society of Acupuncture and Moxibustion (JSAM), Tokyo, Japan