

KNOW YOUR MADISONIAN



Leah L. Jones - State Journal

Xiping Zhou says the best part of his job is making patients better and happier, though he sometimes works more than 11 hours a day.

Providing a healing touch

By Chris Martell
Wisconsin State Journal

A lot of people are still skeptical about the healing potential of acupuncture, but Diane Morris is not one of them.

Four years ago, Morris was a healthy 44-year-old, a runner with low blood pressure and low cholesterol, when a stroke struck her as she was on her way out the door for a picnic.

Her left side was paralyzed and she was bound to a wheelchair, where her doctors told her she would remain for the rest of her life.

"Western doctors gave up on me," she said recently during one of her regular visits to Dr. Xiping Zhou, who treats her with acupuncture, massage and Chinese herbs. "They told me to go home and learn how to cope with my disabilities."

Like many people, she turned to alternative medicine as a last resort.

Within months, she was walking again. "Acupuncture gave me my life back," she claims, and when she regained mobility she went to China with a group led by Dr. Zhou and climbed the Great Wall.

Dr. Zhou, who was chief physician and professor at a major medical college in China, decided to make his home in the United States

after coming here in 1993 to speak at an acupuncture conference about his success in treating stroke patients with paralysis. He started an acupuncture school here in 1994 and now operates the East-West Healing Arts Institute on Madison's West Side and teaches eastern medicine through the UW-Madison mini courses.

"After a person has a stroke, they have a hyper-sensitive nervous system," he said. It's the job of the acupuncturist to know which of the body's 361 acupuncture points should be stimulated with a needle to release the paralysis.

"There is the meridian theory, and many people believe that acupuncture eliminates blockages in the meridians," Zhou said. "The body is like a highway system."

For Morris, he always inserts the needles in a particular pattern. Someone with headaches would have needles placed in other points.

On a given afternoon, his clinic, which is filled with tapes of Chinese temple bells, is busy with people with just about every sort of ailment: a man suffering from acute pain after a piece of hydraulic equipment clobbered him, a UW student who gets diarrhea during exams, a pregnant woman with various aches and pains. Zhou inspects their tongues, checks their

pulses, talks to them about their diets and exercises, asks them how they're feeling, then adroitly slips needles of varying sizes where they need to go.

After about 30 minutes, when the patients lie quietly on tables with the needles in them, listening to tapes of Chinese temple bells, Zhou returns to pluck them out, and the patients seem visibly calmer. Then he rearranges and prods them like limp dolls during the Chinese massage that follows the acupuncture. The list of complaints for which people turn to acupuncture is long: back, shoulder, or neck pain, sciatica, arthritis, fibromyalgia, sports injuries, allergies, gynecological problems, stress, insomnia, depression, fatigue, immune deficiency, carpal tunnel syndrome, cardiovascular illness, gastrointestinal problems, smoking, drug addiction and obesity.

Despite the growing interest and acceptance of alternative medicine — some of it by insurance companies — Zhou says the distance between Eastern and Western medical philosophies is still large.

"In China, doctors are paid to keep people well," Zhou said. "They stop getting paid when someone gets sick."

Profile: Xiping Zhou

◆ **Profession:** Medical doctor educated in China, acupuncturist, herbalist; founder and president of the East-West Healing Arts Institute.

◆ **Family:** Married to LiPin Mu, an accountant at East-West Healing Arts Institute; they have two sons, ages 12 and 6.

◆ **Volunteer activities:** Lectures on Eastern medicine at local high schools, Whole Foods, UW-Madison, Wisconsin Public Radio. Chairs massage events at the Dane County Boys and Girls Club, the MS Walk, Diabetes Walk, Ironman and Madison Marathon.

◆ **Hobbies and special interests:** Tai Chi and Qi Chong; soccer.

◆ **If I could change one thing about Madison, it would be:** Change the lunch menu at Madison schools so children would eat more healthy.

◆ **The people I admire most are:** My mother, who is the most hard-working and lovely person, and Abraham Lincoln, who loved freedom and treated people equally.

◆ **My pet peeve is:** When I can't get things done.

◆ **My kids think:** I'm too strict with them.

◆ **Over the years:** My English has become more easy to understand and I've learned more about Western culture.

◆ **What I miss most from my childhood is:** Playing hard and being worry-free.

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