



Philip Lai Qi Gong Association

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My dear Qi Gong friends:

Not all organs defined in Traditional Chinese Medicine are tangible or recognized by Western Medicine. Unlike the Liver, Lungs or Heart, the Heart Governor and Triple Heater do not show up in MRIs or ultrasounds, however they fit into the overall theories of Yin and Yang and the flow of Qi which have been known by TCM for thousands of years.

The Heart Governor

The Heart Governor is similar in function to the autonomic nervous system (governs things like heartbeat which are not consciously controlled) in Western Medicine. The Heart Governor is also called the Pericardium in TCM but it is not the same as the Western Medicine organ which is a sac surrounding the heart. It coordinates Yin and Yang in the body. For example, when we eat salt, the Heart Governor coordinates the organs to prepare for this substance. The Kidney and Large Intestine absorb more water. The Heart beats more slowly and the Stomach becomes more active. If the Heart Governor is not working correctly, the pulse will be too fast (too Yang) or too slow (too Yin). Problems with the Heart Governor can be diagnosed by observing symptoms such as enlarged pupils, trembling in the fingers and tongue, constipation and diarrhea, shallow sleep and vivid dreams.

The Triple Heater

The Triple Heater (also called Triple Warmer), controls the respiratory, digestive and excretory systems. It regulates our energy, so an active person has a strong Triple Heater.

The Triple Heater controls the three systems and the skin connects them. The skin is the most exposed part of the body while the Triple Heater is considered by TCM to be

deep inside the body, thus they are opposites but closely related.

In TCM the body is divided into three sections: upper, middle and lower according to the way it senses heat. The head may be warm for example, while the feet may be cool. The name Triple Heater refers to its function in controlling the temperature of these three regions. When the Triple Heater is weak, a white ring appears around the iris of the eye, with a moon above it. The surface to the body may feel cold, the head may feel hot or the extremities cold. Healthy skin has a positive effect on all the organs.

Living in a hot climate is beneficial for the skin as it promotes sweating and release of toxins. Swimming in cool water and showering in hot, then cold water is also good for the skin. The best thing for healthy skin is a good diet. Not only does the skin regulate body temperature through sweating (working with the Triple Heater), it is also related to the Lungs. Like the Lungs, skin takes in oxygen directly as a form of nourishment. The skin also helps the Kidneys by excreting wastes through sweating. Sweat and urine are very similar in composition. If the Kidneys are weak or overloaded and food heavy in waste products continues to be taken in, the skin tries to expel the waste. The skin becomes dark and prone to ulcers. Balms or creams can be used on the skin but they do not fix the underlying deficiency of the Kidney. Conditions such as psoriasis, eczema and acne are usually caused by Kidney problems.

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