

TCM Congress - Workshops

3rd Scandinavian TCM Congress „Chinese Medicine and the Fertile Spirit: Childhood, Nourishment and Long Life“



Stephen Birch

An Introduction to Shonishin - Japanese Paediatric Acupuncture

Shonishin (children's needle therapy) is a unique and specialized pediatric style of acupuncture that developed over 250 years ago in Japan. It recognizes that children do not like needles and has instead developed specialized treatment techniques, many of which are non-invasive and thus not frightening to the child. In Shonishin, a variety of instruments have been developed based on the nine needles described in the classics. These tools can be pressed, rubbed, tapped or scraped on the skin instead of inserted, to give different kinds of gentle stimulation. When applied for short periods of time in simple systematic patterns, these simple treatment techniques have been found effective for a wide variety of pediatric problems from birth through to age five or older. As children get older, and/or their problems are more difficult or stubborn, specialized acupuncture techniques and insertion methods have also been developed and tailored to match the needs of children, so that they are comfortable and acceptable to both the child and the parent. Shonishin easily combines with other styles of treatment such as the Chinese TCM acupuncture, Japanese Meridian Therapy. This allows any acupuncturist to use the system in combination with their usual treatment approach.

The general treatment can be very useful for fortifying the child's vital energy and strengthening their constitution. When correctly applied, this treatment will not only help symptoms to naturally improve, but will help resolve many other small day to day problems, helping make the child less prone to illness. The basic treatment has the added advantage of being easily taught to parents so that they can use it regularly at home, thus increasing frequency of treatment and allowing parents to participate actively in the treatment of their children. This tends to reinforce the effects of treatment, and helps make the treatment more enjoyable for everyone. Shonishin is used to treat a wide variety of problems using these specialized approaches including emotional, behavioural problems, sleep problems, skin, respiratory, digestive problems, developmental problems, urinary problems, recurrent infections, weak constitution, etc.

This one day workshop will introduce the core root treatment of the Shonishin system and show how to combine it with a simplified form of Japanese Meridian Therapy. The lecturer has practiced Shonishin for almost thirty years and has recently completed a book on Shonishin, published by Thieme Medical Publishers. He is also one of the senior instructors of Japanese Meridian Therapy in Europe.