

Abstract

# Traditional Chinese Medicine and Depression: A Bridge Between Eastern and Western Theories.

## Medicina Tradicional Chinesa e Depressão: Uma Ponte entre as Teorias Orientais e Ocidentais.

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**Abstract:** Depression, a global health crisis, impacts individuals across all socioeconomic backgrounds. Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) offers a distinctive perspective on mental health, grounded in centuries of philosophical wisdom and human observation.

Central to TCM is the concept of *Shen*, representing the spiritual and mental essence of a person. *Shen* plays a crucial role in regulating cognitive and emotional functions. This review explores the interrelationship between *Shen*, the mind, emotions, and spirit, emphasizing its significance in maintaining emotional equilibrium and preventing mental disorders like depression.

TCM's holistic approach to treatment focuses on restoring *Shen* balance through therapeutic modalities such as acupuncture, herbal medicine, diet, and self-care practices. Scientific evidence, including meta-analyses, supports the effectiveness of acupuncture in alleviating depressive symptoms, making it a promising complementary treatment option.

By bridging Eastern and Western concepts, this review highlights the importance of a comprehensive and personalized approach to depression treatment. Ultimately, this approach aims to enhance outcomes and promote overall well-being.

**Keywords:** Traditional Chinese Medicine; Acupuncture; Shen; Mental Health; Depression.

**Citation:** Soares P. Traditional Chinese Medicine and Depression: A Bridge Between Eastern and Western Theories. *Journal of Complementary Therapies in Health*. 2024;2(2) 10.5281/zenodo.13623562

Academic Editor: Jorge Rodrigues

Received: 20 May 2024

Accepted: 21 May 2024

Published: 28 August 2024

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**Resumo:** Depressão, uma crise global de saúde, afeta indivíduos em todos os contextos socioeconômicos. A Medicina Tradicional Chinesa (MTC) oferece uma perspectiva distinta sobre a saúde mental, fundamentada em séculos de sabedoria filosófica e observação humana.

Central à MTC está o conceito de *Shen*, representando a essência espiritual e mental de uma pessoa. O *Shen* desempenha um papel crucial na regulação das funções cognitivas e emocionais. Esta revisão explora a inter-relação entre o *Shen*, a mente, as emoções e o espírito, enfatizando sua importância na manutenção do equilíbrio emocional e na prevenção de transtornos mentais como a depressão.

A abordagem holística da MTC para o tratamento concentra-se em restaurar o equilíbrio do *Shen* por meio de modalidades terapêuticas como acupuntura, fitoterapia, dieta e práticas de autocuidado. Evidências científicas, incluindo meta-análises, apoiam a eficácia da acupuntura no alívio dos sintomas depressivos, tornando-a uma opção de tratamento complementar promissora.

Ao conectar conceitos orientais e ocidentais, esta revisão destaca a importância de uma abordagem abrangente e personalizada para o tratamento da depressão. Em última análise, essa abordagem visa melhorar os resultados e promover o bem-estar geral.

**Palavras-chave:** Medicina Tradicional Chinesa; Acupuntura; Shen; Saúde Mental; Depressão.

**Acknowledgements:** This work was presented at the 1<sup>st</sup> Portuguese Symposium on Unconventional Therapies for Mental Health on 15 July 2024. The full-text article was published as Soares P. Traditional Chinese Medicine and Depression: Making a Bridge Between Eastern and Western Theories. *Journal of Complementary Therapies in Health*. 2024;2(1) 10.5281/zenodo.11183526.