

Improve Your **BREAST HEALTH** with Traditional Chinese Medicine

By Toni Eatros, MS, Dipl Ac, AP

More and more women are thinking about their breasts as two potentially pre-malignant cancer ticking time bombs sitting on their chests. Let's begin changing the conversation about breasts from how to avoid and detect breast cancer early to how to maintain healthy breasts and enjoy them.

Let's take a moment to compare our current mainstream medical treatments and the Traditional Chinese Medicine treatment of hormone imbalance and breast disease in women. Read them and pay attention to the sensations in your body while you ponder the different approaches. Which one feels better in your body when you read it?

Modern medicine treats inflammation of the breast, also known as mastitis, using antibiotic drugs. Hormone imbalances are usually treated by using synthetic replacement hormones or those made from horse urine. Be aware that research shows these treatments put women at a greater risk for developing breast cancer. During a mammogram, the breast is put into a cold, metal machine and the tissue is uncomfortably compressed while images are taken. The mammography is not benign. Palpable masses are generally removed surgically, after undergoing several invasive tests, including biopsies. If cancer is detected, aggressive chemotherapy and radiation treatments are used. Suggestions about how to maintain healthy breasts is rarely given.

The Traditional Chinese Medicine Approach is much different from the approach discussed above. From this perspective, fibrocystic breast conditions (swelling, lumps, and pain) are diagnosed as more than hormone imbalance. In TCM, these conditions are diagnosed as qi, blood and phlegm stagnation. When women are emotionally stressed and feeling pressure or overwhelm, those feelings cause the energy flow of the body, also known as Qi, to get stuck. Often the breasts will show physical symptoms when this energy gets stuck. Acupuncture successfully returns the free flow of the energy and lymph fluid through the breasts, returning the breasts to a state of health. The use of non-invasive thermography and auricular medicine are used as objective ways to monitor and track changes in the breast physiology.

Herbal medicine effectively treats infection of the breast without the use of pharmaceutical antibiotics. This is especially important if the mastitis is in a breast-feeding woman. If a mass is present in the breast, a combination of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine would be used. Use of these herbs has been shown to be extremely effective to dissolve, disperse and disintegrate masses in these tissues. The herbs have a potent and consistent effect, and generally show marked effect after three months of therapy. However, the length of treatment may be longer depending on the size of the masses and severity of the condition. If herbs do not work, then surgery may be employed as the last alternative.

There are many things that can be done at home to improve breast health. The first and easiest thing is to go braless as much as possible. This allows the lymph fluids to flow freely through the breast. Underwire bras prevent the free flow of energy and fluid through the breast and fullness and pain can be the result. According to Dr Christiane Northrup, in her book, *Goddesses Never Age: The Secret Prescription for Radiance, Vitality and Well-Being* bras are fashion accessories, not medical devices. There is no evidence that going braless causes breasts to sag any earlier than they would otherwise.

Another wonderful thing you can do at home is to do regular self massage of your breasts or have a partner join in. Open to receive love and give love equally. Change the self talk about your breasts. Start to appreciate them as a symbol of the abundance of Mother Earth and how we nourish and love through our breasts.

Often there is an emotional component associated with breast disease. If a woman has cut herself off from love, withholds affection or has been betrayed, often her heart energy becomes negatively affected. This blockage in heart energy can lead to improper functioning of the cells and tissues of the breasts. Think of breasts as, "heart pillows" that are nourished by the abundant flow of energy in your heart field. Acupuncture can be very helpful in processing stuck emotions.



It is time to change how women view their breasts. Many women are on "search and destroy" missions when touching their breasts. We need to start approaching our them with love and massage and touch them tenderly to keep them in good health. Pay attention to any breast symptoms that suggest the need for hormonal balancing.

Acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine very effectively treats the root cause of breast imbalances. If breast symptoms appear, call 239-260-4566 to schedule an acupuncture treatment as soon as possible, or go to www.AcupunctureSolutionsOnline.com to schedule online. Treatment options such as acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine, and auricular medicine will be discussed.

*Yours In Health & Wellness,
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