**A Guide to Understanding Chinese Medicine Treatment**

**METHOD:** In general terms, Chinese Medicine can be seen to work by stimulating and regulating the natural mechanisms of the body to restore health. For instance, rather than replace hormones, enzymes, blood cells, it assists the body to resume its normal function of producing them. This process takes more time than some therapies or drugs which introduce foreign substances to the body to control the body’s reactions. However, although the results of Chinese Medicine are not usually instant, they are often long-lasting.

**COURSE OF TREATMENT:** The length of treatment varies greatly and is dependent on the individual and also on the condition. Some people respond earlier than others, and some even get worse before they get better. Children usually respond very quickly. Acute illnesses, such as a recent cold, sore throat or urinary tract infection may only need one consultation and a few days of herbs. Acute sports injury usually only requires a few acupuncture treatments (3-5 on average). Long term chronic illnesses usually require a longer course of treatment. Generally speaking, the older the illness and the more complex the condition, the longer the course of treatment required. Usually, treatment will be more intense during the first few weeks, following which, intervals between treatments will gradually increase. The period of treatment can vary greatly. Often there is no recurrence of symptoms but in some cases maintenance treatment is required.

**TECHNIQUES:** Therapies include Acupuncture, Moxibustion (skin warming), Cupping, Tuina-An Mo, massage, Shiatsu, Herbs and Counselling. Although Chinese medicine has a long history of safe practice, there are always some risks associated with any form of treatment.

* Acupuncture and Massage may cause discomfort and Herbs may have an unpleasant taste.
* Acupuncture can sometimes cause mild bleeding or leave a bruise.
* There is always a small risk of infection when the skin is punctured. If you have a known immune problem, tell the practitioner so special precautions can be taken. Please note that we use only single-use disposable needles and employ approved methods to control cross-infection.
* Cupping commonly causes marks resembling bruises which can last up to a week or more. Sometimes tiny blisters also form. Tell us if this is unacceptable.
* Moxibustion Warming can sometimes cause reddening of the skin or a blister. It is important to tell the practitioner immediately if it feels too hot.
* It is not unusual to feel relaxed and sleepy after treatment. If you feel woozy, you should tell your practitioner. Do not get up too quickly from the treatment table.
* Sometimes conditions get worse for a short time before they get better.
* Sometimes there is post treatment tenderness or an uncomfortable sensation.
* Some herbs can interact with medications and supplements: Be sure to advise us of all your medications and supplements.
* Some people may be sensitive to certain herbs: Be sure to advise us of any unwanted changes.
* You should not stop taking prescribed medication without consulting the prescribing doctor.
* All therapies will be explained carefully before we proceed but you must ask if you have further queries.

**CARE & TREATMENT**

I have received a copy of *A Guide to Understanding Chinese Medicine Treatment* and also

a verbal explanation of what might reasonably be expected in treatment.

I understand that I have the responsibility to tell the therapist immediately if I experience

discomfort during treatment and to communicate any concerns or queries I may have.

I understand that the practitioners at Zen Health are properly trained and experienced and

registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). However, although all due care will be taken to minimize the risks outlined in *A Guide to* *Understanding Chinese Medicine Treatment,* the possibility of such risks cannot be eliminated entirely.

I consent to treatment and understand that I have the right to refuse a particular therapy and request an alternative at any time. (Parent or Legal Guardian to sign on behalf of a minor)

SIGNED: ………………………………………………………………

NAME: ………………………………………………………………

 (Parent / Guardian / Self)

DATE: …………. / …………. / ………………

**PRIVACY POLICY**

Zen Health clinic gives a high priority to Patient Privacy and treats your records with respect and the utmost confidentiality. All reasonable measures are taken to protect personal and medical information in accordance with the Commonwealth *Privacy Act* 1988 and the Victorian *Health Records Act* 2001.

* Information is collected for the purpose of providing treatment. Details of your age, occupation and health history are taken in order to make a full diagnosis. Contact details are taken for the purpose of addressing mail to you and providing receipts for health rebates.
* Disclosure of health information and personal details is restricted to communication to another health professional **only if**, in our judgement, it is necessary in the context of your treatment. We are also required from time to time to provide progress reports under the Workcover Agreement.
* Health information is also sometimes requested for research purposes, for seminars or papers as these add to our knowledge and may provide benefit to others. In these circumstances, however, the patient’s identity is not disclosed without consent.
* Your medical records are kept on computer file and cannot be accessed without a password. Only those involved with your treatment have access.

I have read and understood the Privacy Policy and consent to the use of my health information as described above. (Parent or Legal Guardian to sign on behalf of a minor)

SIGNED: …………………………………………………

NAME: ………………………………………………… (Parent / Guardian / Self)

DATE: …………. / …………. / ………