

Uncommon Healer

By Nancy Ging

Practitioner Profile

Who: Mavis A. Bates, L. Ac., is a licensed acupuncturist practicing in the western suburbs. She uses the ancient techniques of Oriental medicine to treat a wide variety of conditions, such as pain, weight gain, infertility, and menopausal syndrome. She also offers wellness treatments of facial rejuvenation and relaxation.

Quick Take: Bates is committed to helping her patients heal themselves through acupuncture, Chinese herbs, Eastern nutrition, and tui na Chinese massage. She believes that thousands of years of treating people with Oriental medicine has been the world's largest "field trial," and has proven its effectiveness. "Oriental medicine combines a systematic method of analyzing and diagnosing complex conditions with the benefits of energy medicine," Bates said.

Old vs. New: As a practitioner of Oriental medicine, Bates said she has a very deep respect for Western medicine. "We love our M.D.s and the help they give us during critical situations." However, Bates believes there are gaps in Western medicine that can be bridged with Oriental medicine. These gaps include the treatment of pain, chronic conditions, and some emotional problems. "Instead of painkilling pharmaceuticals, we use our needles and herbs to stop the pain. There is no medicine on the needles, and no chance of toxicity or side effects such as have been discovered lately with some common medications," she said.

Knowing the Difference: Oriental medicine sees the body as a living ecosystem, whereas Western medicine often sees it more as a machine.

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Bates sees Oriental medicine as healing from within, by bringing the body into balance, and by moving the vital energy, or Qi of the body. Bates said, "What is lacking, we build up. What is too much, we release. Where there is stagnation, we help to gently move it along."

Biggest myths: Many people believe that acupuncture works mainly by the placebo effect, i.e., that acupuncture is only effective if you are a "believer." But many double blind, randomized, placebo-controlled clinical trials have proven scientifically that acupuncture and Oriental medicine are effective. This includes one study showing that acupuncture can increase the success rate of in vitro fertilization by 40 to 60 percent. The World Health Organization lists over 100 conditions for which acupuncture is effective.

Personal Profile: Bates received her master's degree in Traditional Oriental Medicine from Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in Chicago. This intensive four-year, full-time, year-round program included over 1,000 hours of clinical training and extensive training in Western medical courses. Bates is board-certified in acupuncture, Chinese herbs, and Oriental medicine. She also holds a Doctor of Naturopathy from Clayton School of Natural Healing. Prior to entering the realm of medicine, Bates received a master's degree in computer science and worked at Lucent Technologies for almost 20 years. Bates lives with her husband, John, in Aurora, and practices in Aurora, Winfield, and in Naperville at the Clarus Center. Phone: 630-605-9244, or [email](#).

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