

Acupuncture Students Get a History Lesson on China Trip

Students in MacEwan's Acupuncture program are used to forging their own path. Learning the delicate art of navigating the body's energy meridians to treat diseases and disorders isn't your traditional career choice in the heart of cattle country. Four brave students and three MacEwan faculty members recently found that taking those skills back to China, the birthplace of Acupuncture, was a little like stepping through the looking glass.

"It really is a different world," says Marc Raedschelders, program chair and tour guide for the clinical and cultural tour, "Getting an appreciation for the history of Traditional Chinese Medicine really gives our students insights into practicing Acupuncture in the west."

Recent graduate Mike McFarlane agrees. "The needles they use look like nails, and to see the skill with which they insert them freehand was amazing. We witnessed a lot of intense, aggressive therapies that we wouldn't see in the west. The Chinese people have a much higher pain threshold and the patient-doctor relationship is so different – there's no privacy or consent – the patients just trust their doctors implicitly."

In Shanghai the students discovered worlds built on top of worlds, an ultra-modern city built on layers of history. Turn down an alley and it's like you've entered a whole different universe. Going from sophisticated Shanghai to the city of Heze was like walking back through centuries and it offered the group a chance to strip back all the modern trappings and see Acupuncture practiced in its most authentic forms.

"We saw doctors burning moxa over people's ears and eyes, using special glasses. It was a different experience," says Mike. Watching a needle being inserted at the base of the nose and pushed an inch and a half upwards towards the eyes was enough to remind the students that they weren't in Edmonton anymore.

"It was amazing to see the level of integration with modern western medicine," says Tim Huang, "Acupuncturists order lab tests, read CT-scans and X-rays, and then administer the most effective treatments."



MacEwan's delegation shares a moment in front of the Great Wall.



A patient relaxes while electricity is applied to stimulate energy meridians.



Moxa, a therapeutic herb that produces intensely focused heat, is applied generously.



A herbalist puts together a remedy from raw ingredients – the Chinese version of a pharmacy.



Daily Tai Chih exercises gave the group the energy necessary to keep up the pace.

菏泽市中医院药品价格公示表			
品名	规格	单位	价格
阿司匹林	100mg	盒	1.50
布洛芬	100mg	盒	1.50
对乙酰氨基酚	500mg	盒	1.50
阿莫西林	500mg	盒	1.50
头孢菌素	500mg	盒	1.50
青霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
红霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
四环素	500mg	盒	1.50
氯霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
链霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
庆大霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
妥布霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
阿米卡星	500mg	盒	1.50
卡那霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
大观霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
磷霉素	500mg	盒	1.50
呋喃唑酮	500mg	盒	1.50
呋喃妥因	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺甲噁唑	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺多辛	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺异恶唑	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺甲氧唑	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺二甲氧嘧啶	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶银	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶锌	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钠	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钾	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钙	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶镁	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铝	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铁	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铜	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶锡	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铋	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶碘	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钡	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铊	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铈	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钒	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铬	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钴	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶镍	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铂	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶金	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶银	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铜	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶锡	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铋	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶碘	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钡	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铊	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铈	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钒	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铬	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶钴	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶镍	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶铂	500mg	盒	1.50
磺胺嘧啶金	500mg	盒	1.50

A clinic menu with treatments and prices demonstrates the creeping westernization that has led to a Starbucks in the heart of the Forbidden City.

The novelty of the situation seemed to go both ways, as the MacEwan group felt like visiting royalty on many of their visits. Troy Clamp explains, “Everywhere we went people were aware of who we were. We were often working in a room with fifty people and three television cameras watching our every move.”

Aside from the invaluable clinical experience, made possible by a partnership between MacEwan and the prestigious Heze Medical College, the group also had many opportunities to soak up the culture around them.

“We were up at 5:00 every morning to do an hour of Tai Chih before breakfast,” says Darcy Friesen, “We went to the forbidden city, the Beijing opera, visited the birthplace of Confucious, and walked the Great Wall of China. We learned traditional Chinese brush painting and met so many students, doctors, patients who all went the extra mile to show us hospitality.”

With five digital cameras, an iBook computer and more than 2,000 photos, the group could have put together a documentary film of their adventures. MacEwan plans on offering the trip again next summer and students can use the clinical practice for credit in the program. Plans are in the works for staff and students from China to visit Edmonton in the future.

For more information about becoming a Registered Acupuncturist through MacEwan, contact Marc Raedschelders at 497-4736 or raedscheldersm@macewan.ca



Program Chair Marc Raedschelders takes a minute to enjoy the view.



Darcy flips through his dictionary while Troy pretends to know exactly what's going on.



Bicycles line a wall of this Chinese version of a parkade.



Mike enjoys the attentions of a performance group, one of many that rolled out the red carpet for MacEwan.



A patient does business on her cell phone while receiving treatment.



During a "cupping" treatment, glass jars are heated intensely to draw energy to key points along the energy meridians.