

my office

## Dr. Xiao Wu

Holistic Healer

by Kate Yandoh

Photography by Davies & Lawery

**D**r. Xiao Wu's office, tucked in a white house in a leafy corner of Roswell Road, reeks of relaxation. A Traditional Chinese Medicine doctor who has been practicing acupuncture and herbal medicine for nearly two decades, Wu schedules as many as 15 clinical appointments daily at her practice, East-West Healthcare Consultants. Patients are treated for complaints including headaches, infertility, weight control and drug abuse. The common thread, Wu explains, is her discipline's focus on "finding the root cause of every problem. This approach is not about just addressing the symptoms. Traditional Chinese Medicine always looks at the whole body picture."

After patients have completed a thorough diagnostic evaluation, they recline on a massage table while Wu puts hair-thin acupuncture needles to work during 30- to 45-minute sessions. "It's based on thousands of years of theory and solid medical principles," says Wu, who was chosen by the United Nations' World Health Organization to teach physicians from across the globe. In between appointments, Wu's phone gets almost

as much use as her needles do, as she schedules patients, answers their questions, and confirms the course of treatment. Since her field is relatively new to most Westerners and so very different from "modern" medicine, Wu believes that education is a critical to her work. She prescribes herbal remedies and explains how patients can aid their own recovery. "Everybody is affected by the constant changes in their environment, diet, emotions and lifestyles. I adjust the herb formulas to fit the precise disharmony of each individual. I'm here to help them take care of themselves so they can reach their maximum level of health."

This healer shares her office space with two paintings from the Buddhist tradition: one depicting a mother standing before the moon, symbolizing kindness, and one showing a wise master trailed by a young student. Wu explains it's symbolic of what she tries to do, often helping patients who've exhausted all other options. She says the paintings mean that "even though we can't know everything in the universe, a person with a persistent heart can always find the light." ♀