Qigong and the Immune System

In the book "A Great Revolution in The Brain World," written by Dr. Haruyama, a medical doctor from Tokyo University, the author describes very carefully how qigong and meditation cause the human brain to release beta-endorphins. According to Dr. Haruyama, beta-endorphin is one kind of peptide hormone that is formed mainly by Tyrosine (one kind of amino acids). The molecular structure is very similar to morphine but with different chemical properties. Many scientists have found that beta-endorphins can activate human NK (Natural Killer) cells and boost the immune system against diseases and cancer cells. That explains why some patients can cure some diseases simply by practicing qigong meditation. For a long time, many scientists believe that human immune system is autonomous and does not have any outside control. However, Dr. Felten discovered that human nerve fibers are in fact physically linked both to the human immune system as well as the nerve system. As a result, more and more scientists start to believe the immune system can be controlled to a certain degree by the human brain.

The idea has led to the development of a new area of medical science:

Psycho-neuro-immunology, and has attracted many peoples' attentions. Some scientists believe this is the reason why people who practice mind adjustment in qigong can be more in control of their health.

The Experiments

There are more and more scientific reports today supporting the fact that qigong can effect the immune system and endorphin levels. Dr. Higucchi, in his article "Endocrine and Immune Response During Qigong meditation" (Journal of International Society of Life Information Science Vol.14, No.2, 1996), reported about some tests conducted on two groups of people. All the members in the "Qigong" group have practiced qigong for at least one year while those in the other group (the "Control" group) have not. Everyone in both groups was checked for their endorphin level before, during and after meditation.

After meditating for one hour, most people in the Qigong group showed an increase in endorphin level. By contrast, most people in the Control group showed no significant change while some showed a 35% decrease in endorphin level. Since a higher endorphin level is associated with better empowerment to the immune system, some doctors are starting to believe that qigong can be a effective healing modality for some patients. Actually, beta-endorphins not only strengthen the human immune system but also are very effective for pain control. For a long time, the mechanism of pain control by acupuncture has been a mystery to scientists.

Recent studies show that acupuncture stimulates the hypothalamus within the human brain and induces the release of beta-endorphins that affect the nerve tracts and control the pain. Practicing qigong can achieve the same releasing effect of beta-endorphins, as does acupuncture. This provides a good explanation as to why qigong can be very effective for some patients who suffer from chronic pain.

Qigong and the Human Brain.

Why qigong and meditation can effect the release of beta-endorphins from the human brain? The exact mechanism is not yet clear. However, some scientists believe it may relate to the significant change in the alpha-wave of the EEG (brain wave) patterns. About four years ago, a number of scientists found the alpha-wave of EEG at the frontal lobe of a meditator during qigong state has a much stronger intensity than those taken from a non-qigong meditator. Since the frontal lobe of the human brain has a lot to do with human mind activities as well as a close link with the hypothalamus, a major source for the release of beta-endorphins, many scientists believe the

increased intensity of the alpha-wave at the frontal lobe will stimulate the hypothalamus to release more beta-endorphins. That could possibly explain why the mechanism of qigong meditation effects the release of beta-endorphins so as to improve the immune system and the overall health.

Obviously, the release of beta-endorphins can only explain part of the picture about qigong and the mind and body interaction. But this is a good start. With continuous research efforts, I believe we would have a much clearer picture in the next few years. Qigong still cannot be fully interpreted by today's scientific standards.

Exploring the Mechanisms of Qigong Healing

The healing effects of Qigong have been well documented in scientific research in China, the U.S. and elsewhere. Scientists are currently exploring the reasons behind these effects and it is proving difficult to obtain a complete answer.

The following are some of possible mechanisms of Qigong healing effects.

- Ideally Improving and Regulating the Functions of the Nervous System.
- Ideally Improving and Regulating the Functions of the Circulatory System.
- Ideally Improving the Functions of the Respiratory System.
- Ideally Improving and Regulating the Function of the Digestive System.
- Ideally Improving the Function of the Endocrine System.
- Positively Affecting Changes in the Muscular and Skeletal Systems.
- Adjusting Skin Temperature and Controlling the Body Temperature Center.
- Adjusting the Electric Potential of the Skin and Changing the Electrical Resistance of the Body.
- Ideally Improving and Regulating the Immune Function of the Human Body.
- Enabling Human Beings to Emit External Qi and Transfer Energy.

The Science of Qigong Pain Control

Qigong can exert a tremendous influence over the muscular motion system. Practicing internal qigong is better than practicing martial arts since qigong can produce, in the brain and intestinal walls, large amounts of enkephalin, and excite the bodies morphine receptors to accept the enkephalin easily. Enkephalin is a naturally occurring substance of the endorphin family in the human body. Everyone has this substance, but ordinarily don’t produce large amounts of enkephlin. Its analgesic or pain relieving effect is many times more effective than that of morphine. Furthermore, through qigong, one can produce strong magnetic signals, which have anesthetic and analgesic effects.

Scientific Research & External Chi

The external qi of Qigong has been scientifically detected and the effects on matter and organism rigorously measured.

During the last 15 years, a considerable number of accomplished scientists from leading universities and research institutes in China and the US, such as Tsinghua University, the University of California (UCSD, UCLA) and Harvard University, have applied modern scientific methods and protocols to investigate biological, chemical, and physical effects of (YXQ) Qigong (YXQ) in critical areas of life science, physical sciences and technology.

A large body of scientific data on Qigong phenomena and effects has been scientifically documented. They have been reviewed by Chairman (now honorary Chairman) of Chinese Association of Science and Technology, Dr. Qian Xuesen (Tsien Hsue-Shen), to be "new scientific discoveries and the prelude to scientific revolution" . Prof. Hans-Peter Duerr, colleague and successor of Werner Heisenburg as Director of Institute of Theoretical Phyiscs in Germany proclaimed Qigong research results to be "within my window of acceptance."

These data have established that external qi of Qigong:

- physically exists.
- can interact with and affect matter from molecular to atomic levels.
- can affect the fundamental components of living organisms (water, sugar,
- cell membrane, proteins, DNA and RNA).
- can recognize and optimize genetic properties without adverse effects.