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Understanding energy

Learning objectives

This chapter covers the following:

- **yin and yang**
- **meridians**
- **chakras**
- **Ayurvedic influences**

We often hear words and phrases such as ‘imbalance’, ‘out of balance’, ‘balancing the chakras’, ‘running the meridians’, ‘too yin or too yang’, but what do these words and phrases actually mean? They usually refer to an imbalance of ‘life force energy’ known as *Qi*. This life force energy flows along yin and yang meridians that run throughout the body. Any disruption to the flow disturbs the balance of yin and yang and leads to illness. Holistic therapy treatments improve the flow of this life force energy by applying different methods of treatment. For example, acupuncturists improve the flow of *Qi* by inserting needles into specific acupoints on the skin; reflexologists improve the flow by using specialized massage techniques on the feet; crystal and or colour therapists improve the flow through meditation and visualisation techniques using crystals, colours and the chakra energy system of the body. The theories and principles of yin and yang, the meridians, the chakras and Ayurveda to name but a few, all incorporate balancing the ‘life force energy’ in their teachings. When the circulation of this ‘life force energy’ is improved around the body, achieved by clearing blockages, both body and mind will function at an optimum level, increasing vitality and encouraging self-healing mechanisms. This chapter will give you a basic introduction and understanding into these techniques, and bring to your attention the complexity and importance of the subject, which may in turn inspire you to want to learn more.