

Dr. Chit Chan Gunn has improved the quality of life of thousands of people suffering from chronic pain through the development of a revolutionary treatment process that fuses Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) with western medicine.

Since developing the process called Intermuscular Stimulation (IMS), and founding the non-profit Institute for Study and Treatment of Pain (iSTOP) in 1995, Gunn has shared his innovative approach to pain management with thousands of professionals around the world. To date, iSTOP has trained over 1,270 physicians and physiotherapists from all over the world. There are also more than 2,000 IMS practitioners in Korea, Brazil, Norway and Israel.

Slowly, the medical and scientific communities have begun to recognize the ground-breaking work of Gunn, who began his focused interest on treating chronic pain in 1967 when he left his medical practice in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia to take a clinical physician's position at the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) in Vancouver.

There he became puzzled by the countless patients who complained of pain without any physical signs. From meticulous clinical observation and rigorous physical examination, he discovered tender points which followed segmental nerve distributions. In the late 1970s, he began to use Electromyography (EMG) tests to produce a graphic record of electric currents in muscle contractions. As well, he wanted to learn more about acupuncture, even though he was skeptical of TCM because as a child he almost died of diphtheria, which was undetected by the TCM doctors looking after him.

One night when he was going through some old books in the library, he came across an obscure monograph on Cannon's Law. Everything became clear in his mind. Based on Cannon's theory about super-sensitivity in malfunctioning nerves, and employing the technique of dry needling which he borrowed from Chinese acupuncture, Gunn made a major breakthrough in the understanding and treatment of chronic pain.

In 1980, he left WCB to start his own clinic, and continued documenting and fine-tuning his new technique that integrated ancient TCM knowledge with the scientific and theoretical work on neuropathy from the West.

Being a Buddhist, Gunn offers his life's work to the world without patenting IMS, and has donated millions to the University of British Columbia to build a new Sports Medicine Centre where the teaching and research on IMS will continue.

He is invested in both the Order of Canada and the Order of British Columbia.



Courtesy of UBC, photo by Martin Dee

Dr. Chit Chan Gunn

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