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**NATIONAL STANDARD OF THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

GB/T 20348-2026

Replacing GB/T 20348-2006

Basic theory vocabulary of traditional Chinese medicine

中医基础理论术语

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1 Scope

GB/T 20348-2026 is the Chinese national standard covering the foundational vocabulary of Chinese medicine - yin and yang, the five phases, qi, blood and fluids, the zang-fu organs, the meridians, the causes of disease and the principles of treatment, each defined in Chinese and in English. At 70,500 words it is the largest terminology standard in this batch and one of the most consequential for translation: it is the document that fixes how these concepts are rendered in English. It replaces GB/T 20348-2006 and has been in force since 1 July 2026. It was issued on 31 March 2026 and has been in force since 1 July 2026, replacing GB/T 20348-2006. This page is published from the official record of the 2026 edition; the clause text of a standard this recent is not yet in circulation, and the figures, limits and tables it contains are those of the document itself, delivered in full with the English translation.

This document defines the general principles, Yin and Yang, Five Elements, Zang-Fu organs, Qi, Blood, Body Fluids and Essence, Meridians, Constitution, Etiology, Pathogenesis, and Health Preservation in the basic theories of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Terms related to prevention, treatment, and the Five Elements and Six Qi. This document applies to teaching, medical practice, scientific research, management, publication, and academic exchange in Traditional Chinese Medicine.

4 Yin-Yang category

4.1 Yin-Yang Theory Within the framework of ancient Chinese philosophical theory, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) uses the principles of Yin and Yang-opposition, interdependence, waxing and waning, and transformation-to understand and explain life, health, and... disease.

Note. The unity of opposites between Yin and Yang is a law governing the movement and change of all things in the universe.

4.2 Yin and Yang Two fundamental attributes that are mutually opposed within or between things.

4.2.1 yin Symmetrical with Yang. Things and their movements that possess attributes such as internal, downward, dark, inhibited, heavy, and tangible.

4.2.2 Yang Symmetrical with Yin. Things and their movements that possess attributes such as appearance, upward movement, brightness, vigor, lightness, and function.

4.2.3 Yin Qi It is symmetrical to Yang Qi. Qi belonging to Yin has the functions of condensation, moistening, and inhibition.

4.2.4 Yang Qi It is the opposite of Yin Qi. Qi belonging to Yang has the functions of warming, promoting, and stimulating.

4.2.5 Yang transforms into qi Yang's function of generating life is the opposite of "Yin's formation of form." Yang is active and disperses, and when dispersed, it becomes formless and transforms into Qi.

4.2.6 Yin forming substance Yin's function of forming shapes is the opposite of "Yang's transformation into Qi". Yin is characterized by stillness and condensation, and when it gathers, it takes shape.

4.2.7 Three Yin and Three Yang The general term for Taiyang, Yangming, Shaoyang, Taiyin, Shaoyin, and Jueyin.

4.3 Yin and Yang in disarray The interaction of Yin and Yang through mutual induction and union.

4.3.1 Yin and Yang Yin and Yang are mutually exclusive and mutually restrictive.

4.3.2 Yin and Yang are interdependent and mutually supportive.

4.3.3 The dynamic changes between Yin and Yang, with their mutual increase and decrease, waxing and waning, belong to the process of quantitative change.

5 Five Elements

5.1 Five Elements Theory The generating, restraining, and transforming relationships among wood, fire, earth, metal, and water represent the fundamental laws governing the universal connection, coordination, and balance of all things in the universe. Traditional Chinese medicine uses this to explain... The unity of the human body itself and its relationship with the external environment is explained from a holistic and systemic perspective regarding life, health, and disease.

Note. This refers to an ancient Chinese philosophical theory.

5.2 Five Elements The five material attributes of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water, and their relationships of generation, restraint, and transformation.

5.3 Five periods of a year The five seasons are spring, summer, late summer, autumn, and winter.

5.4 Five Qi Five types of climate. wind, heat, humidity, dryness, and cold. < Luck> The five elements of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water.

5.5 Five changes The five stages of life and transformation are. birth, growth, transformation, harvest, and storage.

5.6 five colors Five colors. blue, red, yellow, white, and black.

5.7 fiveflavorsfiveflavors It has five flavors. sour, bitter, sweet, spicy, and salty.

5.8 fivenotes The five notes of the scale. Jiao, Zhi, Gong, Shang, and Yu.

5.9 five sounds Five sounds. exhale, laugh, sing, cry, and groan.

5.10 fivedirections Five Palaces The five directions are east, south, center, west, and north.

5.11 The mutual generation, support, and promotion among wood, fire, earth, metal, and water follow the pattern that wood generates fire, fire generates earth, earth generates metal, metal generates water, and water generates wood. Every line has two aspects. giving birth to me (mother) and me giving birth to (child).

5.11.1 Mother Qi mother elementqi The vital energy that generates me in the Five Elements.

5.11.2 child elementqi The life force in the Five Elements' mutual generation.

6 Hidden Image Category

6.1 The theory of visceral manifestations Theories that study the structure, physiological functions, and interrelationships of the human body's organs.

6.2 visceral The external manifestations of the internal organ functions of the human body.

6.3 Zang-fu The collective term for the five viscera, six bowels, and extraordinary bowels of the human body.

6.3.1 Five Gods' Dirty Mentality Housedzang The heart stores the spirit, the lungs store the vital essence, the liver stores the soul, the spleen stores the intention, and the kidneys store the will, etc. (6.3).

6.4 Zang and Fu in Pair The principle of mutual transmission, correspondence, and matching between the Yin and Yang of the internal organs.

Note. This includes the heart corresponding to the small intestine, the lungs to the large intestine, the spleen to the stomach, the liver to the gallbladder, the kidneys to the bladder, and the pericardium to the triple burner.

6.4.1 Zang moves Qi to the Fu organs The theory of the interaction between the internal organs. The five internal organs transport essence and qi, nourishing the six viscera to transmit and transform substances.

6.4.2 The theory of the interaction between the internal organs. The principle that the six fu organs digest food and absorb and transport the essence of food and water to the five viscera.

6.5 Five internal organs () The collective name for the five internal organs. liver, heart, spleen, lungs, and kidneys. GB/T 20348-2026. Terminology of Basic Theories in Traditional Chinese Medicine ICS

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31 Implemented on July 1, 2026 State Administration for Market Regulation The State Administration for Standardization issued a statement.