

January 2007 Newsletter

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2007! We hope that you had a merry Christmas and a great new year.

New Media Gallery Additions

The Acupuncture and TCM Media Gallery features videos and images from around the world submitted by students, practitioners and professionals. Latest additions this month include:



Video: Laser Acupuncture



Video: Funny Acupuncture Advertisement

Visit the media gallery online today at <http://www.acupuncture.com.au/media>

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Acupuncture treatment for Pediatric Cerebral Paralysis

By Xiaoji Jenny Li

Earlier this year, I worked for six weeks in the pediatric department of a TCM Teaching Hospital in Chengdu, China. The following are my observations of the treatment delivered to infants with Cerebral Paralysis (CP) and their outcome.

Loose Scalp Sign (LSS)



It has been found that the scalp area around Baihui (Du 20) of patients with CP is generally loose and in some cases, the scalp can be pulled away from the parietal bones of the cranium. Patients also have the feeling of 'separation' between the scalp and the skull and on examination; the area feels like a hay cushion when pressed. Baihui is located on the top of the head, which is considered to be the converging point of all Yang meridians. CP patients suffer from an innate deficiency and consequent post-natal impairments which cause a failure of the Yang-Qi to rise with the attendant 'hollowness' of Baihui mani-

festing as a separation between scalp and skull. Some patients will display only the signs and symptoms of LSS with no other positive findings from medical tests. In these instances, resolving LSS is an important diagnostic tool and indicator of treatment progress. From the Western medical point of view, LSS is considered the result of an insufficient supply of blood to the local area. It has been found that needling in the local area of Baihui improves blood circulation, resolves LSS and shortens the treatment time.

Joint Needling



The skeletal joints of CP patients vary from flaccid to contracted. Some patients' joints are extremely soft and flexible with an extraordinary range of joint movement. For example, the shoulder can be shrugged to the superior border of the ear, the cubital joint can move medially and laterally more than 30° and extend posteriorly more than 30°, the knees can overex-

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tend and the feet can dorsiflex to touch the anterior crest of the tibia. For these cases, satisfactory results were achieved by applying acupuncture to the affected joint with surrounding needling, reciprocal needling and broad needling. For patients with contracted muscles, needling the muscles controlling the joint movement proved to be beneficial.

Spinal Curvature Syndrome



Spinal Curvature Syndrome is usually a sign and symptom of CP due to hypoplasia of the skeleton and muscle. Acupuncture is delivered in the space between the diseased vertebra and the two neighboring vertebra (along the Dumai) and then Jiaji points are needled obliquely on both sides of the corresponding vertebra until tip of the needles touches the spine. A reducing manipulation is used on the convex side and a reinforcing manipulation on the concave side.

Fear

Some CP patients exhibit slow development of their neurological system. The signs and symptoms are usually; easily frightened, startled by sound

and light and sensitive to external stimuli. Fear and nervousness disrupts a patients' treatment and recovery considerably and for infants with CP, is often the most difficult to treat. The traditional points used for fear are Daling (PC7), Shenmen (HT7), Laogong (PC8), Shaoze (SI1) etc. The effect of these points was not as good as anticipated, so Dazhi and Dannangxue (both extra points) were added and produced excellent results.

Visual Disability



Visual disabilities, such as cortical blindness, primary atrophy of the optic nerve, strabismus and amblyopia, are the result of congenital defects, intrauterine or postpartum anoxia/ischemia, intracranial hemorrhage and kernicterus. Treatment consists of needling Jingming as the chief point. Most patients make progress within 20 treatments, with some recovering after 50 treatments.

Summary of pediatric cerebral paralysis treatment outcomes:

Male, 3ys, could shrug his shoulder

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above the top of his ear. The flaccidity of the shoulder was resolved after 100 treatments of surrounding needling on both sides.

Male, 9yrs, spinal back-protrusion from T9 to T12. This was successfully rectified after 15 treatments.

Female, 1yr, blind. The pupils were dim without luster when she came to the hospital. After 20 treatments, the pupils became brighter and after 50 treatments, she was able to see.

Female, 1yr, was diagnosed with primary atrophy of the optic nerve. The eye balls had horizontal nystagmus and were not able to follow objects. The main points used were Jingming, Binao (LI14), Biyan (arm-eye extra point), Erjian (ear-eye, extra point) and the herbal decoction Danzhixiao-yaosan 丹栀逍遥散. After 3 treatments, the nystagmus disappeared. After 10 treatments, her eyes could follow an object 60cm in front of her.

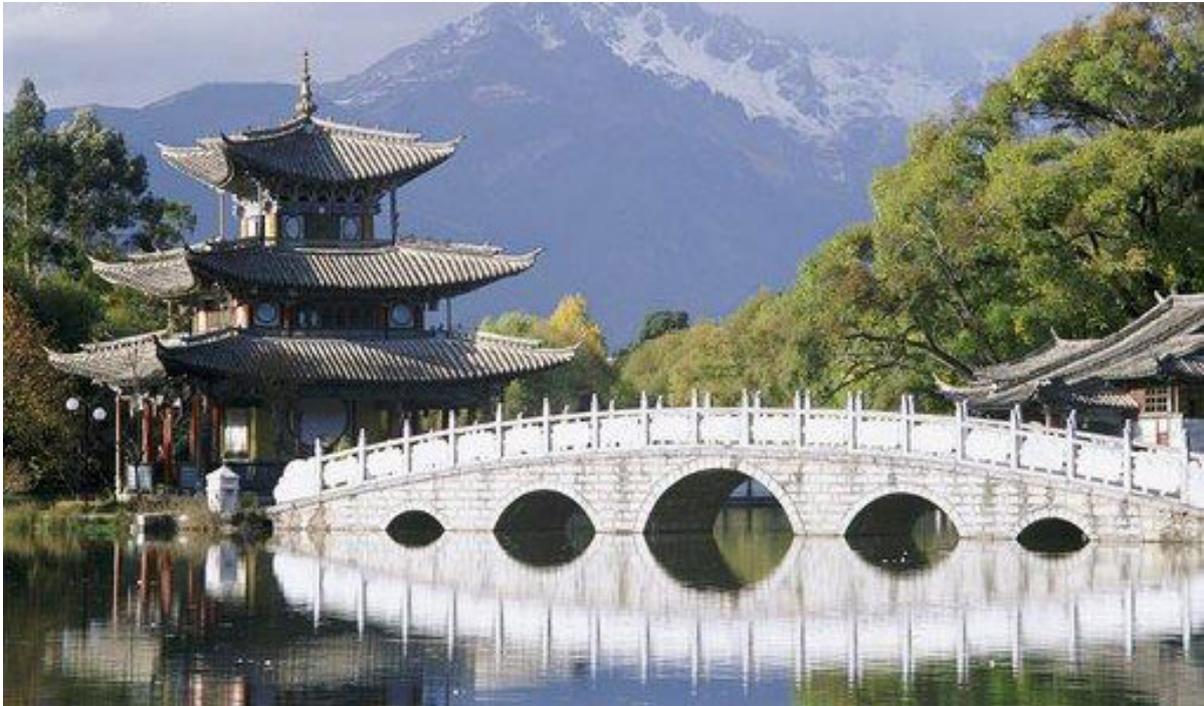
Female, 2 months, postpartum asphyxia in 1999. CT scan indicated severe cerebral hyperplasia. LSS was positive, her feet could dorsiflex to touch the anterior crest of the tibia, and she was diagnosed with Cerebral Paralysis. The patient responded well to comprehensive therapies consisting of acupuncture, Tuina and point injection. After 200 treatments, both her physical ability and intellect significantly improved. She is now studying

in primary school.

Male, 1.5 yrs, full-term fetus and natural birth. This patient was diagnosed with CP without any positive CT evidence. Signs and symptoms included a weak neck and lumbar at 3 months old, unable to hold things in his hands, varus deformity of the right foot, unable to drink without choking, crying without any sound, LSS was positive mainly on occiput. After 10 treatments of acupuncture and Tuina; he could hold objects, the movement of his right foot increased, and he now cries loudly.

■ *Xiaoji Jenny Li graduated from Chengdu University in 1994 with a Bachelors Degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine and is a registered acupuncturist practicing in Auckland. If you would like more information on treating pediatric cerebral paralysis, please contact Jenny at lixiaoji73@hotmail.com*

The Middle Land—By Matthew Bauer



The name China comes from ‘*Chin*’ 秦, the name of the state whose Emperor, Qin Shihuang Ying Zheng, first unified after conquering the fighting independent states and bringing an end to the Warring States period (475-221 BCE). Before the term *Chin* began to be applied to that region and its people, the Chinese referred to their region as the ‘Middle Land’ (Zhong Guo 中国) or the ‘Central Territory’. Many historians believe the ancient Chinese called their homeland the Middle Land because they thought China was the centre of the earth. While some Chinese may have thought this way, I feel it more likely this practice had a much deeper meaning.

Early Taoist philosophy is full of refer-

ences to a mysterious middle ground, a state of being ‘in between’ one reality and another. This concept was known by several different names including ‘divine door’, ‘heavenly gate’, ‘mystical pass’, ‘divine pivot’, etc. When you consider that gates and doors are passageways between one thing and another, it is obvious this concept is not concerned with a physical or geographic ‘middle’ but rather, the potential for transformation. The traditional names of dozens of acupuncture points have terms that reflect this concept such as Life Gate (GV-4), Jade Pivot (CV-21), Stone Pass (KI-18), and the somewhat redundant Pass Gate (ST-22).

Taoist holistic philosophy stresses

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that all creation is interconnected comprising one great whole. Interestingly, modern science has begun to turn from a mechanistic view of nature toward a holistic view. Western medicines' mechanical view of nature gained prominence with the theories put forth by such great scientists as Newton and Descartes in the 17th and 18th centuries and have been the dominant view of scientists and the general public ever since. Throughout the later 20th century however, the cutting edge of scientific thought has been quietly developing theories in which all things are seen as interconnected. From the smallest scale of quantum physics to the largest scale of astrophysics, holistic interconnectedness is rapidly gaining ground in nearly every field of science.

If all creation is interconnected, then everything is truly 'in between' everything else. *All* ground is a middle ground and a door or gate connecting it with all else. The early Taoists discovered a most important feature of these interconnecting gates - they are not all equal. Some gates connect things that are very similar to one another so passing through such a gate is hardly noticeable. Other gates connect things that are so different that passing through them is nothing short of a mystical experience.

Modern science has been mystified by some of these gates as well. For example, it is well known that water can be changed from a liquid to a solid (ice) or to a gas (steam) depending on temperature. Lowering or raising the temperature of water molecules throughout 99.99% of the temperature range where water remains a liquid, will change the nature of its' molecules in predictable ways that are proportional to the temperature change. Yet science has not been able to find any mechanism to explain why lowering or raising the temperature of water molecules past their critical threshold 'gate' should cause them to suddenly jump from one form to another. Scientists call these jumps 'phase transitions' and they represent just one of several phenomena that are forcing scientists to change their mechanical view of nature.

Another concept of modern science that deals with mysterious gates is known as the 'Butterfly Effect'. This term was coined in the 1960's within the field of meteorology from the following concept; a butterfly flaps its' wings in China, causing a chain reaction of meteorological consequences that causes a thunderstorm in Kansas one month later. The Butterfly Effect describes what scientists call 'systems that are sensitive to initial conditions'. In such systems, a tiny stimulus at just the right 'pivotal' point can cause a

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domino effect leading to dramatic changes that are disproportionate (from a mechanical point of view) to the initial stimulus. The idea that a very small stimulus is capable of causing dramatic changes is now considered a scientific fact.

The concept that everything is a gate connected to everything else and that some gates wield special influence over a whole system is central to the theory of acupuncture. Qi circulates throughout every aspect of the body but has the potential to get stuck at any spot - yet the most common or pivotal 'stuck spots' have been singled out and termed 'acupuncture points'. Hua Ching Ni has stated that the human body has 36,000 acupuncture points yet the Chinese designated only 365 or so as 'regular' points - those most pivotal - while recognizing several hundred relatively less pivotal as 'extra' or 'extraordinary'. In treatment, we select a limited number of points to effect healing and will sometimes choose the less common extra points over regular ones. Point selection therefore, is based on the skill of being able to recognize the most pivotal of a group of pivotal points at any given time within a dynamic, fluctuating system.

It can be postulated that human be-

ings are also systems that are sensitive to initial conditions and the best acupuncture points are those that cause a Butterfly Effect stimulating a healing phase transition. Not every butterfly in China will cause a thunderstorm in Kansas and not every change in water temperature will cause a phase transition to ice or steam - you have to know how to pick your points.

It is exciting to see modern science developing a holistic view of nature and coming to grips with the concept of doors or gates, but it remains to be seen if this trend will take modern science to where Taoist science has always been focused; what we in the West would term 'spirituality'.

The ancient Chinese were convinced that in addition to the physical world there exists a spiritual realm and that the goal of life on earth was to connect with this realm. To do this one must discover and then pass through the most mystical of all doors - those that connect the temporal, physical world with the eternal, spiritual realm (the ultimate phase transition). In order to transform from the physical to the spiritual, the physical, mental and spiritual essences (Qi) must be perfectly balanced. An important component of achieving this is to harmonize ones' internal environment with ones'

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external environment. This is why the Chinese referred to their place of birth as the Middle Land. People are a product of their environment and therefore their environment can serve as a gate leading to the spiritual realm. Taoist folk history told of generations of ancient Masters who spiritualized their beings after harmonizing themselves with the Qi of the high mountains or deep forests in the Chinese heartland.

All the Taoist holistic arts and sciences were designed with such transformation as their ultimate goal. In essence, these practices have a dual role; serving the physical needs while providing those who master these skills with the potential for spiritual breakthroughs. Today the spiritual aspects of acupuncture have not been emphasized in China or in other countries where the potential scientific ‘mechanisms’ of acupuncture are the focus. Acupuncture itself is undergoing a type of phase transition as it rapidly evolves from an ancient regional art into a modern

worldwide phenomenon. As acupuncture undergoes this transformation, I hope its spiritual roots will not be forgotten and that acupuncturists will continue to learn that the skills used to find the pivotal doors to healing can also be applied in the search for the Mystical Pass between Heaven and Earth.

■ *Matthew Bauer has been practicing Traditional Chinese Medicine since 1987. He lives in La Verne, California and writes a regular column for Acupuncture Today. For more information, visit www.matthewdbauer.com*

Your contributions welcome!

This newsletter has been created for the public, the students and practitioners of Acupuncture & Traditional Chinese Medicine. It relies much on information contributed from the community. We welcome any contributions including news articles, research papers or anything you feel would be suitable for publication on our website and in this newsletter. To contribute visit www.Acupuncture.com.au and choose “Make a contribution” from the “Professional Community” menu.



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