The most touching stories in the world are not the ones created by fiction writers. Sometimes a seemingly insignificant incident can create an extraordinary story. Leland Brenholt, a graduate of the American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine, had an experience in China in April which confirms this point.

Leland joined AAAOM’s TCM tourist group and arrived in China on April 7, 2007. This was the second group of AAAOM students to tour China, led by Yubin Lu, Academic Dean of the college. They climbed the Great Wall at Badaling, visited the ancient capital of Xian, made a pilgrimage to the jade dragon snow mountain in Lijiang, and walked beside the earthly paradise of West Lake. Over the course of two weeks these American students were exposed to an enormous range of ancient and modern Chinese culture. In addition to the historic sites, they were taken to visit universities and hospitals of TCM in Beijing and Hangzhou, where they participated in informal discussions with TCM doctors. The last stop of the trip was Shanghai, the business capital of modern China, where Dr. Lu and most of the tour group departed for America on April 21. Leland Brenholt stayed in China, however, because he had arranged to travel by train from Shanghai to Jinan in order to visit with AAAOM alumnus Brian Grosam, who is currently a Ph.D. student at Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Leland planned to stay in Jinan for two weeks and study traditional Chinese medicine at the university.

At 8:00 p.m., Leland’s train was ready to pull out of the Shanghai railroad station. Suddenly, one of the passengers in Leland’s compartment tilted forward and fell to the ground. Leland realized this man was having a heart attack. Without hesitating, Leland began to administer the CPR and first aid techniques he had learned. He gave the dying man artificial respiration and suctioned phlegm from the patient’s mouth with his mouth. He shouted for help, but no ambulance came and there were no doctors around. He tried all the first-aid measures he could think of, and also used the acupoint Ren Zhong. The passenger seemed to revive briefly when Leland stimulated Ren Zhong, but he soon passed away. Leland was

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so distressed when the man died that he began apologizing to the passengers in the compartment. One of those passengers happened to be a reporter for the Qilu Evening Newspaper who photographed Leland as he attempted to revive the passenger. The photo and story appeared in the paper right away. The reporter did not know Leland’s name at that time; he only knew that Leland was an American doctor.

When Leland arrived in Jinan, he was an instant celebrity. Reporters surrounded him and their interviews appeared on the radio, television and internet. The newspaper and radio station gave Leland a Chinese name: Le Lan. Le Lan became a Chinese hero overnight. People called him the new "Bai Quien" (a Canadian doctor who helped the Chinese people during World War II). One newspaper said Le Lan was a "saint doctor" who came from America. Even a Chinese financial news service reported the story and told its readers they should emulate the American doctor Le Lan. As Le Lan walked the streets of Jinan, people pressed against him on all sides, and everyone competed to have their photograph taken with him. After meeting with Leland, the leaders of Shandong University of TCM invited him to present his experiences before them, and they refused to accept any payment from him for the course of study he intended to take at their university (not to mention the banquet they organized in his honor).

In the press, journalists asked "What lessons can we learn from the American doctor?" They decided there are no national boundaries when human beings face life and death situations; only love. The media uproar became even greater when Leland stated that he wanted to meet the dead man’s relatives and apologize to them. They said the American doctor’s love was so great, he not only attempted to rescue a life from death, but he continued to think about the living. They portrayed him as "an angel in white" who didn’t recognize national boundaries or ethnic differences. In order to express his family’s thanks and appreciation to Leland, the passenger’s younger brother traveled to Jinan and presented Leland with a big wooden tablet with the inscription: "Noble sentiment, moving heart, building up harmony together, Quien of this era."

Now Leland Brenholt has returned to his "normal" life in Hibbing, Minnesota, where he is an acupuncture practitioner and martial arts instructor. But his one month in China has had a profound impact on his life. The consequences of his unhesitating impulse to reach out to another human being have expanded like ripples in a pond. Shanghai is a large, modern city with a booming economy and high-tech conveniences. But Leland’s story exposed the fact that there was no emergency medical technician (EMT) or advanced life support capacity at the Shanghai railroad station. Several organizations in Shanghai invited Leland to help them train EMTs, and Leland has already been instrumental in setting up the Yu Shouhai EMT Program. Yu Shouhai was the name of that train passenger whose life he tried to save. As Leland told a Chinese reporter, life is absolutely unpredictable. One single moment in a train compartment totally changed his journey and his plans. One action of his started a conversation with millions of Chinese people. Who knew that in the wink of an eye, something could happen that would affect so many?

Leland Brenholt, L.Ac. practices at Tao Arts North in Hibbing, MN. You can reach him at (218) 213-7981.
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The American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine is dedicated to accomplishing its stated purpose of training TCM health professionals and preparing them for a career of lifelong learning and professional development. A key component of achieving this purpose is our Student/Faculty clinic. The on-site AAAOM student/faculty clinic enables our students to progress successfully through their stages of training by participating in the Faculty clinic, the Student clinic, and several special-focus clinics. In addition, AAAOM plans to open a satellite clinic within the year and is exploring opportunities for students to see patients off-site.

From their first year of study, students participate in the clinical experience by observing faculty members treating patients. Advanced techniques in acupuncture, herbal medicine and tuina are modeled by expert faculty practitioners who carefully discuss each patient's case with the student observers. In their third and fourth years, student interns treat patients directly under faculty supervision, gaining confidence and experience in diagnosing and treating a wide variety of conditions. Our supervisors include highly skilled doctors of Oriental medicine and doctors of biomedicine. Collectively, they have received training in both western and Oriental medicine in the U.S., in China or both. The Academy's supervisors, with their strong theoretical background, clinical experience and technical skills, constitute a highly diversified body of knowledge and expertise in the student clinic.

In order to provide our students with additional avenues of practice, and to expand the usefulness of our clinic to the surrounding community, AAAOM has developed four specialty-area clinics which provide unique services in acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine for those who are interested in complementing their current medical care or exploring an alternative approach to their particular health condition. All student interns are eligible to study, receive training and practice in these special clinics, and interns are also encouraged to establish some special-area focus according to their own research, under faculty supervision. Clinics which have a specialized focus are excellent vehicles for doing TCM research, and for teaching students the techniques and applications of scientific research. Our current special-focus clinics are: TCM IBS/Colitis clinic, TCM Multiple Sclerosis clinic, TCM Infertility clinic and TCM Dermatology clinic.

Research shows that Traditional Chinese medicine modalities of acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine and dietary therapy are very effective in the treatment and management of chronic gastroenterological conditions such as Ulcerative Colitis (UC) and Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS). Our IBS/Colitis Clinic provides differential treatments to patients based on general body conditions, primary complaints, secondary complaints and examination of the patient's pulse and tongue. The IBS/Colitis clinic is directed by AAAOM Academic Dean, Dr. Yubin Lu, an expert in Chinese medicine gastroenterology.

Multiple Sclerosis is a chronic, progressive disease that can have a devastating effect on the patient's ability to function. Traditional Chinese medicine is particularly well-suited to treating long-term, functional health problems such as MS because each patient is approached as an individual, with a specific "pattern" that his/her symptoms follow. There is currently no "cure" for MS, either in western or Chinese medicine, but Chinese medicine is an excellent option for treating and mitigating the symptoms of MS, thereby improving the quality-of-life for those who suffer with this disease. The Multiple Sclerosis Clinic is supervised by Clinic Director Dr. Xiangdong Yu, a TCM neurologist and by Dr. Robert Bleau, a Western M.D.
The benefits of Chinese medicine in the area of infertility can be attested to by the Chinese people themselves, who have had one of the highest fertility rates in the world. Now, modern scientific research is also validating the efficacy of acupuncture treatment in conditions ranging from miscarriage to IVF treatment. Dr. Wei Liu, who heads the TCM Infertility clinic, is an expert at TCM diagnosis and treatment. She is also extremely knowledgeable about the western medicine assessment and treatment of infertility.

Chinese medicine dermatology has been an established discipline for over a thousand years. Effective treatment protocols for skin disorders are accomplished by internal herbal treatment, external herbal treatment and acupuncture. All these therapies are either primary or complimentary to western medical treatment. The TCM Dermatology clinic is headed by AAAOM faculty member Dr. Hong Chen, who has accumulated tremendous experience in treating dermatological disorders as a Chinese medicine practitioner, teacher and researcher.

AAAOM students are well-trained in the areas of acupuncture, tuina massage, Chinese herbal therapy and dietary/lifestyle counseling. Our student clinic is designed to provide the kind of practical experience that crystallizes students' understanding of the theories and philosophy of traditional Chinese medicine. Our graduates leave with excellent skills in patient assessment and clinical diagnosis, and a sound understanding of professional practice standards and ethics. As a result of their academic and clinic training, our graduates have been very successful as they move into the larger community and build their private practices.

A Student’s Clinical Experience

By Barb Fowlds

Student clinic is the time we students put our learning to practical use. It is a challenging, yet very rewarding time in our studies at AAAOM. Challenging because at first we don’t yet possess the experience and knowledge to know exactly which points and herbs to use with every patient but rewarding because our confidence and abilities as practitioners seem to grow by leaps and bounds. As student clinicians we are experiencing many conditions for the first time but as we see patterns repeated in our patients we gain confidence from knowing how to treat that particular pattern.

In my own student clinical experience, one of the most challenging things at the first patient visit, was to form a diagnosis and an effective point prescription relatively quickly compared to a classroom setting. As I have continued to practice this has become much easier and when I encounter a new condition I’ve not yet treated, I have learned to rely on some of the most commonly used and effective points initially and research the patients condition well for future visits. From this approach I have seen that the most commonly used points have proven to be some of the most effective points for many conditions and I’m well prepared for the next time I encounter a patient with a similar condition.

Another challenge for a student intern can be gaining the patients’ trust to help them follow practitioner suggestions outside the clinic. I have learned that patients really do desire to be guided by their practitioner and as we treat each person as an individual per their diagnosis and treatment we need an individual approach to build their trust as well.

The rewards of practicing in the student clinic are many. Working closely with the doctors has been especially rewarding for me. The one-on-one relationship with the doctors gives us a chance to see the diagnostic thought process and to hear the doctors’ individual insights on points and herbs. This is tremendously helpful while we try to form our own approaches to treatment. We are fortunate to have the benefit of learning from such experienced doctors at AAAOM. Of course, the most rewarding part of student practice is seeing our patients get better. Seeing them regain their health and to see them start to smile more with each visit and know you have been a part of that, is what we all strive for.

An often overlooked area of the clinic is the reception staff and the administrative staff that helps the clinic run smoothly. Their professional attitude and skills make it easier for the student clinicians to practice and there is much to learn from them about a well run clinic.

The student clinical experience at AAAOM is an invaluable part of our education. It helps us put all the parts of “the web” together and gives us the tools to offer our services to the public as we continue on the lifelong learning of our TCM careers.
A Holy Mountain Cares for Its People

By Dr. Yubin Lu, TCMD, PhD, LAc

China is a vast land containing vastly different geographic features in different areas. On our second AAAOM-sponsored trip to China, we included the small city of Li Jiang in the southwest part of China which is about 21,000 feet above sea level. The only access to the city is a road that curves around the steep sides of the mountain. When we looked out the bus windows, all that met our eyes were the blue sky, range after range of mountains, traditional Chinese farmers’ houses and the local people in their very colorful traditional dress. It seemed that we were on the way to heaven.

Close to the city, we saw a huge snow-covered mountain with multiple peaks. The mountain sits quietly behind the city with a patch of white clouds around it. Our tour guide, a young Chinese girl, told us that this mountain was considered to be a holy mountain by the local people. It is called Yulong Xue Shan (Jade Dragon Snow Mountain) in Chinese because there is always a patch of clouds right above it, even if there are no clouds in other parts of the sky at all. Furthermore, from certain angles of view, the clouds look like a dragon that is flying from the mountain.

The major peaks of the mountain are always covered with snow, and the highest peak is about 54,000 feet above sea level. The tour guide, knowing that we came from an acupuncture school, told us that this area produces many Chinese herbs, about 1/3 of the total herbs in Chinese medicine (which means there are more than 3000 different herbs being grown here). Of these herbs, the most famous ones are Hong Hua, Tian Ma, San Qi, Dong Chong Xia Cao and Bei Mu. She also told us something about the habits of the local people. The people of Yulong Xue Shan always drink Hong Hua tea, and they like to chew San Qi everyday. As soon as she said that, my mind was suddenly jolted and I experienced a strong sense of recognition. I just wanted to shout out, “My God, how great nature is! It provides everything for human beings to live.”

In one flash of insight, I had seen how harmoniously the people of that district live with their surroundings: how completely nature provides for their specific needs in that specific place. At high mountain altitudes there is less oxygen content in the air. People living in high places like Li Jiang City have to have a higher hemoglobin content in the blood in order to carry more oxygen, which will also cause a higher blood viscosity. That explains why the people there all have red cheeks. High blood viscosity makes people more susceptible to cerebrocardiovascular diseases such as high blood pressure, atherosclerosis and stroke. However, the incidence of these diseases in Li Jiang is not higher than that in lower-altitude areas. Why?

The answer lies in the co-relation between the herbs produced in the local area and the people’s living habits. The herbs produced in the local area, including San Qi, Hong Hua and Tian Ma, are in fact the most important and most effective herbs in Chinese medicine for the prevention and treatment of cerebrocardiovascular diseases. According to TCM theory, San Qi moves blood to relieve pain and removes stagnated blood to subdue swelling. Yunnan Bai Yao, which contains San Qi as the main ingredient, is a miracle formula that is super effective in treating both blood stasis and bleeding. Hong Hua is another herb which effectively treats cardiovascular diseases, and Tao Hong Si Wu Tang is the basic formula for all types of blood stasis. Tian Ma is another very good herb for treating cerebrocardiovascular diseases. There was a report on TV a year ago about a TCM doctor in China. He was 104 years old that year and his physical condition was just as good as a man of 60. He was still seeing patients every day. He told the TV reporter that when he had been living in the Chinese mountains with the army in the 1930’s, the main thing he had to eat was Tian Ma meal. He consumed over 300 pounds of Tian Ma within one year, and he believed that it was the single, most important factor in his longevity.

Now I suddenly realized why the best herbs in Chinese medicine are mainly produced in this mountainous area. They are there to help the local people and to create better living conditions for them. The environment there is not perfect for human health, but nature arranged a way to make up for this, so that the mountain people of Li Jiang can live just as well as people in other areas of the globe.

Dong Chong Xia Cao and Bei Mu are also the best herbs in Chinese medicine for asthma and cough. Dong Chong Xia Cao is one of the major herbs we use to prevent attacks of asthma or shortness of breath, while Bei Mu is the best herb for dissolving phlegm and relieving cough. Considering the low oxygen content of mountain air, people living there may have some shortness of breath, but they do not need to worry since nature provided them with the best herbs for easy breathing.

I have to praise nature; I have to remember how well nature takes care of us. When we think we are knowledgeable enough to change the natural order, we need to be very careful.
Ah Beijing. This city was the first of the historical portion of our trip. The Temple of Heaven used to be a place for the emperor to pray for good harvest. In the past no one was ever allowed to enter the Temple of Heaven and ironically today it is a gathering place for people. As we walked among the hundreds of people we realized that, even in a city of 15 million, China has maintained a very strong community. The people of Beijing go to do their morning exercises, tai chi, qigong, sing, play cards and simply to be together. There were points of the trip that felt very surreal but standing at the top of the Great Wall was very grounding. As we made our way up the great wall each step reminded us of the diligence, perseverance, and courage inherent to the Chinese culture.

Ah Xian. The second part of our historical tour was the ancient city of Xian. The people of Xian are very proud that their city has never been attacked as it has been protected by the surrounding city wall that is still standing today. Today, the wall is used for walking, biking, running marathons, and to view the beautiful city below it. In addition to the 7 million people that live in Xian, it is also home to 7,000 Terra Cotta Warriors. This was one of the most amazing sites that we saw on our tour. These warriors were made to be a replica of Emperor Qin's army and they were meant protect him in his after life. Each warrior was dressed for rank and each had original faces and expressions. The number of soldiers and the extent of the details are what made this site so amazing.

Ah Dali. To begin the second chapter of our trip we set out on a bus ride to the town of Dali. Traveling to Dali took us on a tour of the Chinese countryside. We saw people working in fields and we stopped at markets where we ate many delicious fruits. The sights are in sharp contrast to the bustling city life of the people of Beijing and Xian. Around dinner time we all walked from our hotel to a quaint little restaurant about five blocks away. The streets of downtown Dali are amazing. They are lined with small shops selling anything you might be looking for. Had we not been going to a restaurant we would have tasted some of the interesting foods for sale at one of the many BBQ stands. A TCM pharmacy which had a selection of herbs unsurpassed to what we had ever seen made for a nice detour. Although we were only in this small town for a short time, it had a big impact on everyone. We make no exaggeration when we say that our hearts are in Dali.

Ah Lijiang. After another long bus ride, this time through the mountains, we arrived at the town of Lijiang. Jade Dragon White Snow Mountain is one of the only snow covered peaks in the region. It is surrounded by a national park in which many of the plants growing there are TCM herbs. We took a chair lift up the mountain where we walked through trails to closely view the peak of the mountain. Here we encountered many of the native people of Lijiang, the NaXi people. Their rosy cheeks reminded us of the high elevation that they live at. This also makes them prone to stroke and other blood disorders. Dr. Lu brilliantly pointed out that the very mountain that they live on grows herbs that specifically treat those disorders. We were awed by the fact that this sacred mountain was taking care of its people.

Ah Hongzhou. The last portion of our trip was to acquaint us with modern China. To say that Hongzhou is a beautiful city would be a gross understatement. The city is home of West Lake, a huge man-made lake that was the beginning of the Grand Canal. In addition to the beautiful sights of Hongzhou we also took a tour of the TCM University there. The Zhejiang Chinese Medical University is over 140 acres in area, has 10 affiliated hospitals, and currently has over 10,000 students enrolled. Just walking around the campus you can feel how special this place is.

Ah Shanghai. The final city on our tour was Shanghai. This city is the epitome of modern China. It is home to over 17 million people. Being that most of us are from much, much smaller towns, this staggering number of people was a bit overwhelming! After shopping and eating in Shanghai we gathered in Dr. Lu's room for one last night in China. We came together now not as strangers but as friends. As we toasted and talked about the trip we began to know how very special this tour was. We saw so many different sides to China which also brought out different sides of each other. As we reminisced on the last two weeks, fireworks began to go off right outside of our window. This random display was the perfect finale to our unforgettable trip to China.
A Sweet Decoction for an Irritable Bowel

By Francis Bonaldo

A 60 year old female came to the clinic with a complaint of diarrhea that mostly occurred in the morning and had been diagnosed as IBS. This was complicated by insomnia and arthritis in her low back and knees. She had these symptoms for approximately 10 years. The patient had been seen for about 2 months by different practitioners before coming to me. Various diagnoses had been made: liver attacking the spleen, kidney yin deficiency, blood stasis, spleen qi deficiency and heart yin deficiency. She had been taking Shen Ling Bai Zhu San capsules. She had experienced some improvement, but after a trip abroad the IBS flared up again.

Originally when she came to see me, she had 3–4 loose to formed bowel movements in the morning and occasionally more. This was an improvement from 2 months ago when 5–6 times each morning was typical. She had no or very slight burning, intense rectal spasms, sense of urgency, no or slight pain and cramps before or after bowel movements. This was also an improvement; before treatment the pain and cramps surrounding the bowel movements were more pronounced. The patient was restless, anxious and experienced lots of belching and cold hands and feet. She suffered from insomnia, waking up for 2–3 hours at a time and leg and knee pain, which was worse at night and better with movement. She also felt warmer at night. She had no abnormal sweating or thirst and her appetite and energy were good. She had a calm and cheerful nature (outwardly, at least). Her pulse had a wiry and slippery quality and her tongue was red, dry, cracked, with no coat, orange sides and a prominent shade of purple between the sides and middle.

I adopted the diagnosis liver and spleen disharmony coupled with kidney yin deficiency and blood stasis. The symptoms of IBS along with stress, anxiety, cold hands and feet, lots belching and a wiry pulse, definitely belong to an attack from the liver on the poor defenseless spleen. The liver controls the smooth flow of qi and it seems that when it is disordered, qi simultaneously stagnates and flows all over the place, causing cold hands, diarrhea, belching and pain. Years of attacks by the liver will have damaged one of Chinese medicine’s most crucial and cherished organs, the spleen. Because of this, blood production is inadequate and liver qi stagnation gets worse as the liver starts to lack blood as well. Prolonged qi stagnation creates heat. This along with the fact that this person has been losing fluids for many years, we have kidney yin deficiency. Remember that the kidney is also said to govern both lower orifices, not just the urinary tract. The orange sides of the tongue are significant here as well, showing severe deficiency of yin and blood this is where the spasms, insomnia, low back and knee pain fit into this picture. Qi stagnation for a prolonged period also causes stasis, so we have pain which is worse at night and better with movement, a warmer feeling at night, a purple shade on the tongue and insomnia, as stasis affects the mind which is nourished by blood.

My main goal was to soothe the liver and keep qi flowing smoothly, and to a lesser extent, slowly and gently tonify the spleen and kidneys. I did not want to use greasy yin tonics for fear I would further impair the flow of qi, or give a prescription too large since the digestion was sensitive. Being the enthusiastic herbalist that I am, I convinced our charming lady to enter the world of herbal decoctions. I was worried that Shen Ling Bai Zhu San by itself would be too drying to her body.

The formula used was very simple, yet specific. Tong Xie Yao Fang truly is important for diarrhea. Bai Zhu, Bai Shao, Fang Feng and Chen Pi work together beautifully, much like musicians in a musical band playing their different parts. Each enhances the other and allows the other’s special skills to shine. These herbs restrain the liver, boost the middle jiao, stop pain, cramps, spasms and regulate qi.

- Although Bai Zhu is a qi tonic, when combined with Bai Shao, it also helps to nourish blood. Remember that it calms the fetus, meaning it is definitely capable of influencing the blood.
- Bai Shao has a tranquil nature and softens the liver so it can soak up blood. In this case liver qi moves erratically so Bai Shao gently restricts it by nourishing liver blood. This is like putting an overexcited kid who is running around everywhere in a warm bath of water to relax him, except here we are bathing the qi in a bath of blood.
- Fang Feng has a floating and ascending nature and has been said to enter the qi level of the liver to (surprise!) regulate liver qi. It also has an anti-diarrhea effect and is able to get rid of internal and external wind. The severe yin deficiency, signified by the orange tongue and intense spasms, can lead to internal wind, so Fang Feng has a crucial role here. Although dispersing herbs typically tend to be dry, Fang Feng is the only one with a moistening quality, so it fits well here.
- Chen Pi regulates qi and, in fact, enhances the tonic abilities of other herbs by clearing stagnation in the middle jiao, so that they can be assimilated more efficiently.

To this formula, I also added two astringent tonics:

- Shan Yao is a mild tonic/food with a broad effect. It is good here because it has some astringent properties to treat diarrhea as well as essence. It is not drying in
nature and won’t affect qi flow very much. Shan Yao, in my opinion, should also be good for joints and bones as it is a chalky, bony feeling herb that snaps easily, just like a dry brittle bone. This offers mild protection to the joints in this case since they are not the main focus.

• Although seldom indicated for diarrhea specifically, Shan Yu Rou enters the liver and kidney channels only, whereas most other astringents do not. As the old doctors tell us, it secures and astringes the essence to prevent liver wind or abandonment from severe yin deficiency. More importantly, ancient doctors also accorded this herb the ability to unblock qi and blood, which the modern books don’t seem to mention. Not knowing who to believe, I tasted the herb myself and I agree with the old herbalists (cheers Shen Nong!!). Strangely it is also indicated for pain in the brain in the old books, though I felt the herb move around in my gut. Did they mean that brain!? In either case, this makes Shan Yu Rou a very useful astringent, able to secure and keep qi flowing smoothly, which is the main goal.

Lastly, I added:
• Fu Ling, which boosts the middle and calms the mind.
• Dan Pi is a specific herb for liver blood stasis and hidden heat in the blood. It was anciently used to quiet the five viscera and to treat stasis in the stomach and intestines. At any rate, it is another herb with a moistening property and it has the ability to move stasis without injuring qi or blood. Dan Pi is no stranger to the lower abdomen, as it is often used in cases of early stage appendicitis.
• Gan Cao completes the formula and should need no explanation. It, in fact, is the one who does the explaining…. "guo lao."

Immediately after starting this formula, the patient’s bowel movements were reduced to 2 times a day and continued as such for 6 weeks. The stools are now formed or only slightly loose. The belching, cramps, spasms and pain have gone away and sleep is slowly improving. The arthritis is a minor issue now. She caught a cold for 2 days during the first week of treatment and the IBS flared up, but I attributed this to the cold throwing off the digestive system. The patient comes once every 2 weeks, so acupuncture is not the main aspect of treatment, though I have been using LI4, LR3, SP4, PC6, DU20 and ST25 as the basic treatment.

Strengthen Spleen To Treat Chronic Urticaria

by Hong Chen, TCMD, Ph.D.

Patients who have a history of urticaria (hives) lasting six or more weeks are classified as having chronic urticaria. It is a common allergic problem, with the primary symptom of recurring wheals. There are several types of urticaria pathology: physical urticaria, delayed pressure urticaria, cholinergic urticaria and cold urticaria. Antihistaminic or steroid drugs can help, but only for a short time. Chinese herbs are very effective in healing urticaria. For chronic urticaria, the main pathogenesis is spleen deficiency with wind. Therefore, the main treatment principles for chronic urticaria are to strengthen spleen and disperse wind.

Case Report:
The patient is a 50 year-old woman with a 40-year history of itching skin wheals. She presented with pink wheals on her face, trunks, arms, legs and feet. The skin lesions came and went and moved around all over the body, and they were extremely itchy. She had a history of asthma. The dermatographism test was positive. Emotionally, she dealt with “overthinking” and overwork, and felt anxiety, depression and fatigue. She had a yellowish complexion, loose stools, poor appetite, insomnia, a pale tongue with thin white coating and a weak pulse. The diagnosis was "spleen deficiency with wind." The Chinese herbal treatment I prescribed was a modified version of Si Jun Zi Tang and Yu Ping Feng San. The exact prescription given to this patient was: Dang shen 15g, Fu Ling 12, Bai Zhu 12g, Huang Qi 30g, Fang Feng 12g, Jing Jie 12g, Bai Jiang Can 12g, Chan Tui 6g and Zhi Gan Cao 6g. The dosage was one bag every two days. After two weeks, the wheals were gone and did not return.

Discussion:
Spleen deficiency with wind is the main pathogenesis of chronic urticaria. In the formula, Si Jun Zi Tang has the function to tonify spleen Qi; Yu Ping Feng San strengthens spleen and disperses wind; Jing Jie, Bai Jiang Can, and Chuan Tui disperse wind and stop itching. Thus, this formula has the function to strengthen spleen, disperse wind, stop itching and is an excellent treatment for chronic urticaria.
Dr. Chi has been a core faculty member at AAAOM since 2004, specializing in Tuina and Dietary Therapy instruction. He is also clinic director at the TCM Health Center on Grand Avenue in St. Paul. Dr. Chi’s expertise and enthusiasm make him one of the most popular instructors at AAAOM.

L.N.: The Tuina certification program at AAAOM is drawing more student interest lately. I have noticed that American schools of TCM tend to emphasize acupuncture and Chinese herbs, with less emphasis on bodywork and dietary therapy.

Dr. Chi: American TCM schools are smaller than Chinese colleges and universities of TCM, so they concentrate on teaching the fundamental principles and practice of TCM. Also, there are not as many qualified instructors of tuina in this country. In China, after students spend four years learning the theory and fundamentals of TCM, they go on to specialize in one of three areas: acupuncture, internal medicine, or tuina. These three specialties are considered equally useful and important. It is very good for TCM students to have a practical knowledge of tuina - they can give more balanced treatments to their patients by combining tuina with herbs and acupuncture. They will also have more success with patients who are frightened of needles, and with children. The field of pediatric tuina is very rewarding.

L.N.: You are a very popular teacher with your students, in class and in clinic. You are always so enthusiastic.

Dr. Chi: I have been teaching half my life, and I have been practicing medicine longer than that. Being a good teacher is not the same thing as being a good practitioner - it takes different skills. Teaching is a responsibility. If I teach someone, I take responsibility that they learn. The two most important things in teaching are to be open with students and to correct their mistakes. I am a friend and colleague of my students; I also correct their mistakes as soon as I see a mistake. Practicing medicine is serious work. Students must be serious about their studies, their careers and their future. I have made mistakes in my life. Everybody makes mistakes, but the best way to learn is to learn from your mistakes. I have heard that when you learn a theory, you only remember it for seven days. Then you forget unless you put the theory into practice. You can buy a $100.00 book and learn all the theory in it, but you have to practice more and more to keep the knowledge. The more you practice, even with failures, the more success you finally have.

L.N.: I heard you were a “barefoot doctor.” How did that happen?

Dr. Chi: When I was 15, under the Cultural Revolution, all the high school students had to choose one area to study. You could choose agriculture, army, industry or medicine. I studied western medicine to start, but also worked with TCM doctors in the clinics of Kun Ming (Dr. Chi’s hometown). Then when I was 17, I was sent out to the countryside to be a barefoot doctor. I walked from village to village with my “medicine box” and treated farmers and villagers with the supplies I had. There were so many people to see that I could not spend much time with anyone. I injected people with antibiotics and vaccines, performed first aid and small surgical procedures and delivered babies. I also prescribed Chinese herbs and did acupuncture, but there was not a lot of time to do acupuncture treatments.

By the time I was 18 or 19, the Cultural Revolution period was over and I was able to return to Kun Ming and attend the university. I achieved a TCMD degree and then a Master's degree in pharmacology. During this period I worked in the hospital, taught students and did research. I published 35 papers and four books on pharmacological research on Chinese herbs. In 1996 I came to the University of Michigan as a visiting scholar and did three years of lab work researching testicular cancer in animals. After returning to China for two years of "service work" as a TCM doctor and teacher, I moved to the U.S., teaching and practicing in New Mexico and California before moving to Minnesota in 2004.

L.N.: What do you do to relax?

Dr. Chi: I love to play the piano. In China I taught myself to play the accordion, but accordions are too heavy. I never learned to read music very well, but if I hear something I can usually play it on the piano.
Food As Medicine

By Cheng Chi, TCMD, L.Ac.

Deep-Fried Eggplant

Ingredients:
- Eggplant 300g (3/4 pounds)
- Mixed vegetables 3 cups
- Chili powder 5g
- Soybean sauce 1 1/2 tablespoon
- Sugar 1 tablespoon
- Garlic powder 1 tablespoon
- Ginger powder 1 tablespoon
- Vegetable oil 1 cup

Preparation:
1. Chop eggplant into pieces.
2. In a wok, heat oil to high temperature and deep fry eggplant for 2-3 minutes until tender.
3. Add chili powder, soy sauce, sugar, ginger and garlic powder to eggplant and cook together for a couple of minutes.
4. Serves 3 - 4 people.

Note: Instead of deep frying in oil, the eggplant may be boiled or steamed by adding a dash of sesame oil with the above condiments. However, the deep-fried version is the most colorful, because eggplant contains water-soluble pigments that are bleached out by boiling or steaming.

TCM Functions:
Clear Heat and drain dampness; promote urination; strengthen spleen and stomach.

Indications:
Use to treat blood in the stools due to heat, dysuria, edema, jaundice, abdominal distension, poor appetite.
- For edema: dry eggplant and grind it into a powder. Then sprinkle 0.6g (1/2 tsp.) over food three times a day.
- For jaundice: eat this eggplant dish together with rice.

Comments: Eggplant is cool in nature and has a bitter flavor. It is associated with the spleen, stomach and large intestine meridians. Therefore, it is useful to treat damp heat conditions in the spleen, stomach and large intestine by purging heat and draining dampness. Eggplant can also be used when there is bleeding in the large or small intestine, such as in the case of hemorrhoids.

AAAOM Highlights

AAAOM Students Walk for MS

Students formed Team AAAOM to join the Christopher and Banks MS Walk presented by Anchor Bank on May 6, 2007. Nick Dougherty, Sara Erdman, Sara Gillet, Thomas McCarty, Lindsey Zeutenhorst, Stacey Zeutenhorst and Natalie Zimny set out from the St. Paul Capitol to walk nine miles to Minneapolis Minnehaha Park along with nearly 9,000 other walkers. Team AAAOM was able to raise over $1,000 for the MS Society to aid in research, program funding, and services for Minnesota and Western Wisconsin. On this fun filled walk, Team AAAOM was able to reach out to the community and bring awareness on the effectiveness of treating MS with Traditional Chinese Medicine. Look for Team AAAOM again next year!

Acupuncture on Oprah

On February 13, 2007, an acupuncture demonstration and full acupuncture treatment appeared on The Oprah Winfrey Show with “Ask Dr. Oz.” In the show, Oprah received a wellness treatment and a guest, Angela, received a treatment for her chronic shoulder pain. In the show, Dr. Oz commented: "Acupuncture has been around for 2500 years in China. There are a billion people in another part of the world who use these therapies. So for us to just now be beginning to grapple with it is a little bit surprising." Angela's positive experience is very encouraging to Oprah: "I need to get 12 more after the show," she said.

For those of you who missed Oprah's acupuncture show, you can catch it on YouTube:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=WWXPed6PMNk

Acupuncturist Beats Fannie Mae

The April 9, 2007 issue of U.S. News & World Report published an article on one acupuncturist's story: From Stressed to Stressbuster. Lisa Eaves is a licensed acupuncturist practicing in Washington D.C. as the sole proprietor of Heal From Within Acupuncture. She specializes in fertility and women's health issues. Lisa was a highly ranked technical support manager at Fannie Mae with substantial income, but felt increasingly stressed. After attending an acupuncture college, Lisa set up her practice. Two years later, Lisa's practice pulled in more revenue than she was making at Fannie Mae, and she found satisfaction in running her own acupuncture practice. She is inspired.
Dates to Remember

AAAOM Open House
The next Open House for prospective students will be held on Sunday, July 15, 2007 from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. There will also be an Open House on Friday, August 3, 2007 from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!

First Day of Fall Trimester
The first day of classes of 2007’s Fall Trimester will be Tuesday, September 4. Applications are now being accepted and prospective students are encouraged to register early.

For application information, please call 651-631-0204.

Tai Chi and Healing Qigong Classes
AAAOM offers ongoing 15-week Healing Qigong classes on Thursdays from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm, beginning September 6, 2007 and 12-week Tai Chi classes on Wednesdays from 6:00 - 8:30 pm beginning September 5, 2007. For class and registration information, please call 651-631-0204.

AAAOM’s Upcoming Weekend Seminars (Receive 4 CEU’s!)
Sundays: 1:00 - 5:00 p.m. Cost: $45.00
9-16-2007 Successful Treatment of Psoriasis in TCM - Dr. Hong Chen
9-23-2007 Controlling Allergies with Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs - Dr. Daiyi Tang
9-30-2007 Effective Treatment of Degenerative Nerve Diseases in TCM - Dr. Xiangdong Yu
10-14-2007 Cyclical Treatment of Menstrual Disorders - Dr. Wen Jiang
10-21-2007 Controlling Fibromyalgia with Chinese Medicine - Dr. Yubin Lu

Wood - Fire - Earth - Metal - Water
AAAOM’s students and faculty brave the elements for a picnic on a cold day in May.