Graduation ceremonies for AAAOM's fifth graduating class are scheduled on February 10, 2007. Our warmest wishes for success and happiness go out to our graduates: Diane Backdash, MouaSao Bliayang, Ki Chang, Barb Fowlds, Ron Jensen, Lisa Kreter, Paziong Lo-Vang, Julie McCormick, Dona McGlennen, Eric Saitta, Sal Salerno, Joi Thomas, Marcia Vick, and Nancy Weirens. This is the largest graduating class in AAAOM's history. Congratulations all!

China Trip
AAAOM is organizing its second student group for a China trip in 2007. In the course of two weeks, students will not only visit historic sites in Beijing, Chengdu and Shandong, they will also have the chance to observe TCM practice in China and communicate with TCM faculty and students in major TCM universities there. It will be another exciting experience for our students.

TuiNa Clinic
AAAOM has recently initiated a new clinic within its Student/Faculty clinic. The TuiNa Clinic is designed to provide student interns in AAAOM's TuiNa program with the opportunity to practice and enhance their TuiNa massage skills. Currently, the TuiNa Clinic is open on Tuesdays, and appointments can be scheduled between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. Community members are invited to come and experience the relaxing and invigorating benefits of TuiNa massage. The treatments are approximately an hour long, including assessment time, and the cost is $30.00 per treatment.

A New Library
The AAAOM library of TCM-related literature was significantly expanded in the second half of 2006. The new library is about 2000 square feet, and contains separate rooms for medical journals, English-language texts, and Chinese-language texts. Ten thousand volumes of books and ten thousand issues of medical journals are now well-housed in the new library. AAAOM's library boasts over one hundred-forty Chinese medicine and Western medicine journals, and could be considered one of the best "intellectual warehouses" of Chinese medicine in the US. This is an extremely valuable resource for anybody pursuing research and advanced studies in acupuncture and Chinese medicine. The library is open to all members of the acupuncture and Oriental medicine community in Minnesota.

Herbal Research
AAAOM Academic Dean Dr. Yubin Lu is currently involved in a research project concerning the effect of Chinese herbs in the treatment of premenstrual anxiety in collaboration with Dr. Mingqi Qiao of the Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. Over the past twenty years, Dr. Lu and Dr. Qiao have collaborated on various research projects, and have focused on two major TCM patterns: stagnation of liver qi, and hyperactivity of liver qi. Their research projects have been funded by the university and by government entities, and involve mechanism studies, animal experiments, clinical trials, and large-scale population surveys. Two herbal formulas have been developed, based on their research.

For more articles and information, visit our website at: www.AAAOM.org
March 4th: Keys to Successful Treatment of Eczema
Hong Chen, Ph.D., TCMD
Eczema is a condition which is triggered by a variety of factors. Finding an effective treatment for eczema in general, and for each individual patient specifically, can be a frustrating experience for both patients and practitioners. It is especially difficult to see children suffering with this disease. Practitioners know that TCM should be very effective in treating this condition, but often they are not sure exactly how to apply their knowledge. If you would like to improve your ability to analyze skin conditions, including eczema, and be confident that you are choosing the most effective acupuncture and herbal formulas, you will find answers to your questions at Dr. Chen's seminar. In her recent practice at the AAAOM student/faculty clinic, Dr. Chen has successfully treated more than ten eczema patients.

March 11th: Effective Treatment for Peripheral Nerve Disorders
Xiangdong Yu, Ph.D., TCMD
Polyneuritis is a condition that can occur any age, but is generally seen in the young and middle-aged. It is characterized by the impairment of the nerves of the extremities. Polyneuritis symptoms are produced by many causes, including toxic or environmental poisoning, side effects of medications, endocrine disorders such as diabetes, metabolic disorders, and many chronic diseases. The principal manifestations of peripheral nerve disorders are abnormal sensations, limited ability to move the limbs, wasting of limbs, and impairment of tendon reflexes. In TCM theory, polyneuritis can be diagnosed as Wei-syndrome, Bi-syndrome, and numbness of the limbs. Dr. Yu will explain the pathology of polyneuritis and provide acupuncture point combinations for treating it, as well as effective herbal formulas. One of Dr. Yu's most effective formulas is an external wash which allows patients to treat themselves at home.

March 18th: TCM Treatment for Diabetes and Its Complications
Dr. Daiyi Tang, Ph.D., TCMD
Worldwide, diabetes mellitus affects approximately 130 million people, and this number is projected to rise to 220 million by 2010. There is a growing need for health care providers the world over to treat this disease and its complications effectively. Chinese medicine has recognized and treated diabetes as a distinct disease for 2,500 years, using acupuncture and herbal formulas. Modern scientific research has confirmed the efficacy of TCM treatment for diabetes, showing that it can reduce dosages of diabetic drugs, alleviate drug side effects, and improve clinical outcomes when used in cooperation with Western medicine. In his seminar, Dr. Tang will provide comprehensive educational materials on diabetes and discuss the following topics: TCM theories on diabetes; recent scientific research on TCM treatment modalities; how and when to treat diabetes with acupuncture and herbs based on different types and stages of diabetes; the importance of diet and Qi Gong exercises in the prevention and treatment of diabetes.

AAAOM Alumni in the News
Several AAAOM alumni have received extensive coverage in local newspapers recently. Dr. Keum Hwa Choi (2004 alumna) was profiled in a Star-Tribune feature article, "Healing Pet Chi." Dr. Choi lobbied for and helped start an Oriental medicine practice for pets at the University of Minnesota’s Veterinary Medical Center five years ago. Over 2000 pets with late-stage cancer, inoperable skeletal problems and organ failure have benefited from Dr. Choi’s services in acupuncture, diet, and herbal prescriptions. She also supervises veterinary medical students on two-week Oriental medicine rotations.

Dr. Imai Neng Thao was the subject of "Enter the Art of Healing: Profile of a Tai Chi Master" in Hmong Today. After receiving his Master’s degree from the American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine in 2003, Dr. Thao pioneered AAAOM’s foreign-study opportunities in Jinan, China by completing his Ph.D. program at Shandong University of Traditional Chinese Medicine. He is one of the few Americans who have received a Ph.D. degree from a leading Chinese university.

In Minnesota’s north country, alumnus Leland Brenholt was featured in the Health section of the Hibbing Daily Tribune. Mr. Brenholt was the subject of a whole-page article: "Acupuncture: The Body as a Web."
American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

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Sunday, March 11, 2007
2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

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• Information Sessions about our Master’s Degree and Certificate Programs
• School Tours
• Tuina (TCM Massage) Presentation
• Visit our Library, Herbal Pharmacy and Student Clinic
• Answers to Your Questions
• Refreshments

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Healing Candidiasis with Traditional Chinese Medicine

By Wei Lu, TCMD

Candidiasis has become a "hot" topic over the past few years among health-conscious individuals in the United States. Candidiasis is a condition that results from the overgrowth of a yeast-like fungus called Candida albicans. Candida cells are part of the normal flora of our bodies found in our mouth, vagina, intestines, and other organs. When they grow unchecked, they can cause a number of health problems, including digestive disorders, fatigue, and vaginal yeast infections. Whether candidiasis is to be considered a disease or a syndrome is still controversial in conventional medicine, but the general public has accepted it as a valid disease, apart from lab tests or theoretical constructs. Some practitioners even claim that "everybody has it." Almost every day in my clinic, people walk in asking for help with this problem. Although Chinese medicine does not have a traditional diagnosis of "candidiasis," we can find a diagnostic framework and a treatment approach to candidiasis from the patients' common symptoms and complaints. I do not believe that "everyone has it," but it is a very common problem in the United States. Many Chinese medicine practitioners are amazed by how prevalent candidiasis is here. When you know the causes of candidiasis, it is not surprising that people are more prone to have it here than in other countries.

There are a number of medications that promote the overgrowth of yeast cells, either because they kill beneficial bacteria, or because they interfere with normal hormone functions. These medications include: antibiotics, chemotherapy, hormone replacement, corticosteroids, and oral contraceptives. Improper diet, such as over-consumption of yeast products, sugar, or alcohol, also can promote yeast growth. In traditional Chinese medicine, these foods disturb the balance of the Spleen, produce Phlegm, and create the perfect environment for yeast overgrowth.

Those people with immune system or endocrine gland disorders are more prone to candidiasis, such as patients with AIDS, cancer, or diabetes.

In Chinese medicine, balance is the most important concept in maintaining health. Yin and Yang, the eternal opposites of the universe, also form the basic substance of our bodies. They must be in balance for us to be in good health. It is the same for the yeast cells and bacteria in our bodies: too many yeast cells, and a condition of candidiasis results; too many bacteria, and infection can be present; when there is balance, we are in good health.

Triple Burner: A Concept in Traditional Chinese Medicine

The Triple Burner is one of the six Yang organs in the body. It includes the Upper Burner (the Heart, and Lung), Middle Burner (the Spleen and Stomach) and Lower Burner (the Liver, Intestines, Bladder and Kidneys). As stated in the classical medical textbook, Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Medicine, "the Upper Burner opens outwards, spreads the five tastes of the food essences, moistens and pervades the skin, fills the body, and is like mist. The Middle Burner receives vital energy, expels the wastes, steams the body fluids, transforms the refined essence of food, and connects upwards with the Lungs. The Lower Burner directs the separation of the clean fluids from the dirty fluids, and facilitates the excretion of urine." Notice that the Triple Burner is described in terms of what it does. It is called a "concept" because it really exists as a function, rather than as a physical organ. In Chinese medicine, the Triple Burner regulates the activities of the other internal organs and participates in fluid metabolism.

Traditional Chinese medicine recognizes the development and proliferation of Candida in the body as a Triple Burner-related condition. The Middle Burner, and particularly the Spleen, is seen as the key to this health issue. The Spleen is responsible for taking the food and fluids that we ingest and processing them into the Chi and Blood that are the true "fuel" of our bodies. When the Spleen is functioning well, Chi and Blood are in balance, intestinal flora are in balance, there is no excess fluid or phlegm in our system, food is properly digested and distributed, and the immune system is being nourished by Chi and Blood. In most cases of candidiasis, the problem starts with a Spleen imbalance, which may then progress to digestive disorders, irregular bowel movements, diarrhea, constipation, and/or fatigue. In the absence of treatment, or with improper treatment, the disorder will then spread from the Spleen and Spleen meridian to other organs and meridians. At this stage, the condition will be diagnosed as a systemic yeast infection. When the Spleen system is weakened, Damp Heat accumulates in the Lower Burner, and an ideal environment for yeast overgrowth is developed. Symptoms such as a white, cheesy vaginal discharge, genital itching, or vaginitis might occur. When the Spleen system is disturbed, Heat and Fire can accumulate in the Upper Burner, causing an infection of the oral cavity called thrush to develop.

With candidiasis, there are cases when symptoms only appear in one Burner; but in many cases, symptoms spread to all three Burners. As explained above, Middle Burner disorder (Spleen and Stomach) is the key factor in candidiasis. When Spleen energy is weakened by poor diet, medications or other factors, its ability to transform phlegm and nutrients is diminished. The Spleen then fails to properly absorb and utilize nutrients from the foods we eat, and is therefore unable to produce healthy amounts of Chi and Blood. So the earliest stage of candidiasis is almost always a Spleen (Middle Burner) disorder. If treated appropriately at this stage, with re-balancing of the Spleen and Stomach, the problem will resolve with no yeast-related symptoms. But candidiasis is not a well-defined disease pattern. It is difficult to diagnose at the early stages, and many people are completely unaware that they are developing a severe problem. Then the
disease gains ground, spreading to the Upper Burner (thrush, cough, etc.), or to the Lower Burner (vaginal infection, etc.), or both. As with many diseases, the best way to head off trouble is with early detection and treatment.

**A Two-Step Treatment Plan with Chinese Medicine**

**Step 1. Cleansing**

In Chinese medicine, a thorough cleansing is the first step in dealing with candidiasis. When our systems are full of the waste, phlegm and toxins which contribute to yeast overgrowth, clearing them out of the system is necessary. "The constitutional energy is endangered when an internalized evil is there," says the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine.

Many people try to clear out their yeast overgrowth with diet cleansing methods. For candidiasis, diet management alone is not strong enough to clear the system, or it can take a very long time. Combining proper diet with Chinese herbs and acupuncture can achieve this goal much faster. With herbal cleansing therapy, the goal is to clear the system of Dampness, Phlegm, and Heat. These are seen as the causative factors of candidiasis. The herbs are not intended to mechanically clear out the large intestine; rather, they promote the clearing-out of the pathological factors of Phlegm and Heat toxins. Commonly-used herbs include gentiana (long dan cao), melia (chuan lian zi), agastachis (huo xiang), cardamon (bai dou kou), saussurea (mu xiang), skullcap (huang qin), coptis (huang lian), and phellodendra (huang bai).

Damp Heat Clearing Formula (Long Dan Xie Gan Wan) and Coptis Formula (Huang Lian Shang Qing Wan) are powerful herbal combinations to promote the cleansing process. Damp Heat Clearing is used most often when Lower Burner symptoms appear, and also with some Middle Burner problems; Coptis Formula is more effective with Upper and Middle Burner symptoms.

**Step 2. Tonifying**

After the waste, toxins, and phlegm have been cleared out of our systems, we then have to tonify our bodies, repairing the damage and restoring the balance, or the pathological factor(s) will return. "If sufficient vital energy exists, a pathological factor cannot attack us" (Yellow Emperor’s Classic of Internal Medicine). This is also a very important step to prevent recurrence of yeast infections. Commonly used tonifying herbs include astragalus (huang qi), codonopsis (dang shen), atractylodes (bai zhu), and dioscorea (shan yao). GI Strength Formula (Xian Sha Liu Jun Zi Tang) is a popular formula for tonification, especially of the Middle Burner.

**GI Strength Formula (Xiang Sha Liu Jun Zi Tang)**

Ginseng (Ren Shen), Atractylodis (Bai Zhu), Poria (Fu Ling), Licorice (Gan Cao), Tangerine (Chen Pi), Pinella (Ban Xia), Amomii (Sha Ren), Saussurea (Mu Xiang)

Commonly used tonifying acupuncture/acupressure points include ST36, SP9, SP6, LI10, LIV8, REN6, and REN4.

**A Recommendation for Your Diet**

People who are familiar with a yeast-free diet stay away from bread, cheese, mushrooms, vinegar, soy sauce, barbecue sauce, black fungus, and white fungus. But there are other yeast-based foods such as crackers, pretzels, dry cereal, miso, tempeh, canned vegetables, pickled vegetables, beer, root beer and other fermented beverages which are often overlooked by those with yeast infections.

Grains, noodles, non-yeast bread and white rice are recommended. They are easy to digest. Brown rice and wild rice have more nutrients than white rice, but they take more energy to digest, and it is better for Spleen Chi Deficient people not to eat them often. Certain vegetables are extremely therapeutic for those with yeast infections, such as Daikon radish, which can help cleanse your system and is known as a "phlegm cleanser".

The family of yellow-colored foods such as yam, winter squash, and pumpkins are strongly recommended from the viewpoint of traditional Chinese medicine, as they tonify and strengthen the Spleen and Spleen meridian.

Yeast-based medications such as penicillin, mycin, chloromycetin, and tetracyclines should be avoided, as well as yeast-based Vitamin B supplements.
Chiropractic and Acupuncture

By Elise Garafola, M.S., L.Ac., 2005

The alternative healthcare community has had a long struggle for acceptance. Chiropractic was the first to obtain public awareness and insurance coverage. Chiropractors train heavily in anatomy, physiology and nutrition. Perhaps because of this heavy emphasis on western medical training the medical establishment may be more willing to endorse their profession. That endorsement also allows reimbursement for many of the skills they obtain through continuing education not regulated by the state such as: electronic therapies, massage and acupuncture. The latter modality has generated quite a stir within our profession as we study four years for licensure while chiropractors are required to study only 100 hours to receive certification and, in some cases, licensure, depending on the state in which they reside. So while we, who have studied more deeply and extensively the philosophy and theory that make acupuncture so powerful, have difficulty obtaining insurance coverage for our practice; the chiropractic community is able to practice insurance-reimbursed acupuncture in many cases. The patients I have seen who have experienced certified chiropractic acupuncture have stated emphatically that licensed acupuncturists practice differently and with better results. Obviously, there is a need for the public to become aware of the difference in order to promote the effectiveness of a true TCM treatment. So does all this put our professions at odds with each other? I would hope not. We’re all trying to climb the ladder and they happened to reach the top first. I’m willing to wait my turn.

Perhaps I am biased. I work with three chiropractors, one of whom is acupuncture Board certified. And, if it hadn’t been for him, my practice would not be as successful as it is. He allowed me to use space at no charge while I was in school. They all refer many patients to me whose physical condition does not improve with chiropractic care or who benefit from both. Our clinic produces a lovely newsletter that is one of the more successful marketing tools we have. And though we have differing views on how to attain health, I am encouraged to submit articles without censure. I am a valued member of the team and our patients benefit from this cooperation. It’s only a matter of time for our communities to learn of the many benefits of TCM care. I am confident that as we continue to publish articles and talk with people we meet, we will receive the same notice as the chiropractic profession.

As an aside, I have a patient whose major medical insurance did not recognize me as a provider. This patient would not take no for an answer. She submitted her claims and made multiple phone calls. In addition, I submitted a narrative report detailing her progress with TCM intervention. The insurance company deliberated and could not deny that her quality of life, reduced number of sick days and overall improvement in health were significant. They awarded her (and me) reimbursement of all her past treatments as well as two years of future care. In closing, as it is with balancing a disease pattern that has taken many years to develop; so it will take many years of step-by-step diligence to win over the trust and validation of our fellow citizens and the powers that be.

Elise Garafola is a graduate of AAAOM and practices out of the Abeler Chiropractic Clinic in Anoka, MN. You may reach her at (763) 421-3722

Running a Practice and Raising a Family

I admire my colleagues who were able to begin full-time practice after graduation. In fact, I had expected to follow the same path, but that didn’t happen. One month after I completed my courses I became pregnant. At 44 years old, a parent to three teenagers, embarking on a new career, facing student loans and managing a chronic illness, I was less than enthusiastic about starting over again with a little one. Now, 27 months later, we have a two-foot live-wire of “cuteness” whom we all adore. Did I put my practice on hold? Only slightly. I worked well into the pregnancy allowing only six months of leave. And though it has taken a good year to recover, my practice has grown to 20 hours per week allowing plenty of time for family and home. Granted, I am not the primary breadwinner and I work for an established clinic. Nevertheless, I don’t have the worries of paying off a mortgage or funding clinic overhead. So, yes, running a practice and raising a family can be done.

Elise Garafola at Graduation
Food as Medicine
By Cheng Chi, TCMD, L.Ac.

Hot Wine Chicken

Hot wine chicken is a traditional recipe for the cold days of winter. This dish combines common cooking ingredients with Chinese herbs to produce an overall warming effect. More specifically, it can treat arthritis, qi and blood deficiency, body aches, cold hands and feet, etc. If you could use a warm-up this winter, please try the following recipe.

Ingredients:
- 1 Chicken
- 30g Ginger
- 3 pieces Ba Jiao Hui Xiang (star anise)
- 1-2 pieces/3-6g Cao Guo (tsao-ko fruit/seed)
- 20g Garlic
- 50-100 ml Vegetable oil
- 2 tsp./15g Salt
- 30ml Soy sauce
- 50-100 ml Cooking wine or wine
- 15g Dang Gui
- 10g Chuan Xiong
- 30g Gui Zhi
- 15g Gou Qi Zi

Preparation:
1. Cut chicken into large pieces; wash.
2. Wrap herbs in a cheesecloth package.
3. Put vegetable oil into a wok and heat (make oil very hot). Add the garlic first, and when the garlic becomes fragrant, add chicken and all other ingredients and fry on high heat for 5 minutes. Then add enough water to cover the chicken and other ingredients, cover, reduce heat, and cook for 30 minutes.
4. When the chicken is tender, add the cooking wine or wine (50-100 ml) and simmer for 10 minutes.

Serves 8 people

TCM Functions:
Tonify qi and blood; open the meridians; stop pain. Very good for people with qi and blood deficiencies, arthritis, bi syndrome, and meridian blockages.

Comments:
The properties and functions of this formula can be summarized as follows:
1. Tonify qi. Chicken meat has the property of tonifying qi, plus it is easily digested and rapidly absorbed by the body. This is why chicken soup is a basic healing food in so many cultures.
2. Tonify blood. Dang Gui is an excellent herb for tonifying and invigorating blood. Generally speaking, Dang Gui is the first choice for treating blood deficiency. However, Dang Gui has a powerful flavor, and can be unpleasant-tasting if too much is used. It is best to limit the amount of Dang Gui to 10 - 15 grams in cooking recipes, or it will spoil the taste of the food.
3. Open the meridians and stop pain. The herbs Gui Zhi and Chuan Xiong are added to this recipe to expel wind, cold, and dampness from the body. It is therefore effective in treating cold bi syndrome and osteo-arthritis, muscle pain, and meridian blockages.
4. Gou Qi Zi has the function of harmonizing all the herbs and nourishing kidney yin.
Treating Ulcers with Cang Zhu (Rhizoma Atractylodis)

By Yubin Lu, Ph.D., Academic Dean

Cang Zhu is a very important herb in the TCM repertoire. It is traditionally prescribed for conditions of dampness obstruction in the middle jiao with abdominal distension or fullness, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. The most typical formula containing Cang Zhu as the main herb is Ping Wei San (Stomach-Sedating Powder), which is widely applied to many types of disease of the gastrointestinal tract, especially ulcers, such as gastric ulcers, oral ulcers and ulcerative colitis.

Modern pharmacological research has found that the active ingredients of this herb include Atractyolol, Hinesol, B-eudesmol, B-selinene, elemol, 3B-acetoxy- atractylol, and others. Cang Zhu is highly effective in preventing the development of ulcers in the gastric lining which have been triggered by pylorus constriction, aspirin ingestion, and excessive gastric acid. It can also drastically inhibit the secretion of gastric acid as well as regulate peristalsis of the gastrointestinal tract.

The following are some examples of the use of Cang Zhu in the treatment of several types of ulcers.

For Gastric Ulcers:
Zhi Zi 10g
Chuan Xiong 12g
Xiang Fu 12g
Cang Zhu 12g
Shen Qu 12g
Da Huang 10g
San Qi Fen 3g (to be taken with water).

Decoct in water and take internally, once a day for six days (one course of treatment).

This formula functions to move qi and relieve pain. It is applicable in conditions of gastric ulcer with stomach pain referring to the hypochondrium, eructation, acid reflux, thin and whitish tongue coating, and a wiry pulse.

For Oral Ulcers:
Cang Zhu 10g
Hou Po 10g
Chen Pi 10g
Gan Cao 6g
Jin Yin Hua 15g
Dang Gui 10g

Decoct in water and take orally, one dose per day.

This formula functions to dry dampness, clear toxic heat and move blood. It is applicable to chronic or acute oral ulcers with pain. The skin of the affected areas may be red, or there may be no change of skin color. I once treated a patient who had a chronic tongue ulcer for two years. After two weeks’ treatment with this formula, the ulcer was totally healed.

For Ulcerative Colitis:
A practitioner reported using the formula below as a basic formula in the treatment of chronic ulcerative colitis with very good results:

Huang Qi 18g
Zhi Shi 10g
Bai Zu 10g
Cang Zhu 10g
Fu Ling 12g
Ze Xie 12g
Shen QU 10g
Huang Qin 10g
Huang Lian 6g
Da Huang 6g
Shan Zha (Carbonized) 12g
Bai Tou Weng 10g
Mu Xiang 10g

The above herbs are to be decocted in water and taken orally on an empty stomach, one dose per day.

The treatment principles of this formula are to tonify qi, strengthen the spleen, remove dampness, harmonize the stomach, and disburse stagnation.
AAAOM Faculty Spotlight: Dr. Wen Jiang
by Leila Nielsen

A core faculty member of AAAOM since 2005, Dr. Jiang received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in acupuncture from Shandong University of TCM, and her Ph.D. degree in acupuncture at Tianjin University of TCM, where she studied under Dr. Shi Xuemin, an internationally-known expert in classical needling techniques. In addition to her teaching schedule, Dr. Jiang also treats patients and supervises student interns in the AAAOM student/faculty clinic.

L.N.: How much experience did you have with TCM before you started studying it?

Dr. Jiang: Very little. I wanted to be a doctor and help people, but I did not have a strong idea of the direction I would take in the beginning. Even my first year of school, the ideas of TCM did not speak clearly to me. Then, in my second year, everything made sense. It was not just that I understood TCM, but that I could see how well it worked. Once I saw what a powerful instrument acupuncture was, I was motivated to get advanced degrees so I could be a good student and practitioner of acupuncture. Because I was not sure of my path in the beginning, I always say that first acupuncture chose me, and then I chose acupuncture.

L.N.: What stands out in regard to your post-graduate work?

Dr. Jiang: After I got my B.S., I worked in a hospital, mostly with stroke patients. I could see that I needed to know more, especially to do research in my areas of interest. For my M.S. program, I focused on gynecology. The main research project was using auricular acupuncture techniques to treat menstrual problems. For my Ph.D. studies, I had to move to another city so I could study with Shi Xuemin. Dr. Shi invented an acupuncture protocol to treat stroke patients. I wanted to do research in neurology, and I wanted to study with Dr. Shi.

L.N.: How did you feel about coming to Minnesota to teach?

Dr. Jiang: At first I was worried about being homesick, but the students and the faculty members were so warmhearted and so kind to me that I felt like I was at home here. When I started teaching, I worried that my English was not clear enough. But the more I teach the more I want to do a good job and share my knowledge. When students say they like my classes, it makes me want to do even better.

L.N.: It’s amazing to me that there is so much to learn about acupuncture needling techniques that people can earn a Ph.D. degree in that subject. Do you see differences between needling techniques in China and here?

Dr. Jiang: It seems to me that there is not so much knowledge about different kinds of needling techniques here. In China, where all the people are familiar with acupuncture, patients know about needling sensations and expect to have strong needling sensations for a therapeutic effect. Here, patients seem to feel the needling more strongly, and they think it is hurting them to have a strong needling sensation.

L.N.: Can you share some of your experiences treating patients at the AAAOM clinic?

Dr. Jiang: For one thing, I see a lot more different kinds of patients with different problems than I did in China. As a practitioner in China, I would focus on treating a few health problems, like stroke or PMS, and I learned about those conditions intensively. Here I treat more things, and this makes it interesting. I am very rewarded in my career because I always see good results with Chinese medicine, so I believe in it more every day. Recently, a woman came in who was having irregular periods and heavy bleeding after having a miscarriage six months before. When I saw her, she had been bleeding heavily for a month and was very anxious. After one acupuncture treatment and three bags of raw herbs, the bleeding totally stopped. Then I used acupuncture through two of her menstrual cycles, and her periods came under control.

L.N.: How do you like to spend your free time?

Dr. Jiang: I love to listen to music, especially classical Chinese music. I also like to collect stamps. My favorite physical activities are badminton, tai chi, and jogging. I haven’t played badminton since I left China, but tai chi and jogging are my best exercise here. Jogging is good for the body and the mind. It relaxes the mind and is good for stress. I jog all winter because it makes me feel better when the days are so short.
By Yubin Lu, Ph.D., Academic Dean

Many people may be embarrassed when they are asked to stick out their tongues when they first visit an acupuncturist. They wonder why the practitioner looks at the tongue and what the tongue can tell him regarding his diagnosis and treatment.

The tongue is an organ related to many internal organs in Chinese medicine. Basically it is believed that the tongue body is more related to the vital qi or the five zang organs, while the tongue coating, which is a layer of membrane like substance covering the tongue body, comes from stomach qi steaming the yin fluid in the stomach.

The different areas of the tongue correspond to different organs. In fact, if you put the tongue upside down, the tongue represents a small body. The anterior part of the tongue, corresponds to the heart and the lung or the chest. The central part of the tongue corresponds to the spleen and stomach which are located in the middle jiao in TCM. The bilateral sides or margins of the tongue relate to the liver and the gallbladder. And, the root of the tongue represents the kidney, which is located in the lowest part of the body in relationship to the other zang organs.

When the tongue looks pale, it mostly means qi and blood deficiency. When the tongue looks tender and enlarged with teethmarks, it may suggest some digestive problems called spleen deficiency with dampness. If the tongue is red, it indicates heat in the body. If the red color appears more in the anterior part, it is a sign of heat in the heart and lung. If it is redder along the sides, it is very often the manifestation of fire or heat in the liver or gallbladder. In some patients with blood stasis, patients suffering a heart attack or cirrhosis of the liver, for example, you will see some blue or purplish spots in the heart or liver areas of the tongue.

Tongue coating often signifies the strength of pathogenic factors. If you have a yellow greasy tongue coating, which mostly occurs in the center of the tongue, you may have a condition caused by damp-heat such as poor digestion, gallstones, lung infections, etc. If you do not have any coating, it may represent damage of yin fluid or yin deficiency in the body. This tongue is very often seen in aged people in whom there is natural yin deficiency.

The tongue is very sensitive to any changes in the body and is often considered to be the most important evidence when making a TCM diagnosis. Of course, you can also monitor the changes in your own tongue either during the course of treatment to see if there is any improvement or to recognize any pathologic changes over time.
AAAOM Student Wins Publishing Contract

By Leila Nielsen

When Mona Abdel-Rahman began her studies at the American Academy of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine two years ago, she soon began to wonder if she may have waited too long to begin a second career. An R.N. for 18 years, as well as an artist and musician "forever," Mona was so intrigued by Oriental medicine that she committed herself to the five-hour commute from her home in Grand Marais, MN in order to attend AAAOM.

By the time Mona began to study TCM Diagnostics with Dr. Daiyi Tang, she knew she needed to find a way to memorize all the data that was coming at her. She describes herself as a "visual learner," and knows that pictures convey more information to her artist's mind than words on a page. Inspired by the simple cartoon a classmate drew as a learning aid, Mona began to take all the information she learned in class and create wonderful little pictures to illustrate the TCM concepts. Month after month, Mona drew cartoon pictures with hand-lettered captions, and by the time she was finished with TCM Diagnostics III she had put together a delightful manual that actually made learning fun.

Everyone who saw Mona's illustrated study guide loved it, but Academic Dean Dr. Yubin Lu was the first one who seriously encouraged Mona to try to get it published. With the help of Dr. Tang, Mona found Stonebridge Press in California. Stonebridge was enthusiastic about Mona's work and is expecting to publish it as an illustrated study guide in July, 2007. The study guide does not have an "official" title yet, but everyone believes it will be a best-seller once it hits the market. Dr. Tang plans to translate the study guide into Chinese because the same material is taught in China, and Mona's book would be a fresh approach to the way the material is usually presented. Stonebridge is considering releasing an edition of Mona's study guide that would appeal to the lay public and contribute to educating Americans about Oriental medicine.

Mona has started illustrated study guides to several other classes, but the work is so time-consuming that she has not been able to complete another book yet. She expects to graduate from AAAOM in 2010, and says that community members in Grand Marais are just waiting for her to open an acupuncture clinic there. The community is well-informed about alternative medicine, and the doctors at the Grand Marais hospital where she works as an R.N. are very supportive of her studies.

Mona and her husband live four miles outside of Grand Marais in a small cabin on a heavily wooded 40-acre lot. They have electricity and a wood stove, but do not have running water. Mona's goal in life has always been to help people in any way she can. She has five sisters who are also interested in alternative medicine, and sometimes they daydream about opening a clinic where all six sisters could work together.
Dates to Remember

AAAOM Open House
The next Open House for prospective students will be held on Sunday, March 11, from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. We hope to see you there!

First Day of Summer Trimester
The first day of classes of 2007’s Summer Trimester will be Monday, April 23. 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 10-week Healing Qigong classes on Saturdays from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, beginning April 28, 2007 and 12-week Tai Chi classes on Wednesdays from 6:00 - 8:30 pm beginning April 25, 2007. For class and registration information, please call 651-631-0204.

AAAOM Continuing Education Seminars, 2007
March 4  Keys to Successful Treatment of Eczema - Hong Chen, Ph.D., TCMD
March 11 Effective Treatment for Peripheral Nerve Disorders - Xiangdong Yu, Ph.D., TCMD
March 18 TCM Treatment for Diabetes and Its Complications - Dr. Daiyi Tang, Ph.D., TCMD
For seminar and registration information, please call 651-631-0204.