

# CASE STUDY

CS550

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# SUMMARY

A 32-year-old female came into the clinic for her first treatment of acupuncture for her Lyme disease symptoms such as acne flare-ups, fatigue, and joint/muscle pain. She has been to several WM doctors and a naturopath with few results. She began experiencing these symptoms 17 years ago when she was diagnosed with Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. She was then diagnosed with Lyme disease.

**Impression:** Lyme Disease (ICD-10: A69.20)

**TCM Diagnosis:** Shao Yang Disharmony with Damp Heat Accumulation; underlying SP Qi Def

**Treatment Principles:** Harmonize Shao Yang, Drain Damp, Clear Heat

**Acupuncture Treatment:** GB20, ST40, SP9, LU7, BL60, LR3, LI4, CV12, CV6, ST25, GB34

**Herbal Formula:** Xiao Chai Hu Tang + San Ren Tang

**Results:** The patient is experiencing slow and steady results after seeing her for five treatments since her initial visit with me.



# GENERAL INFORMATION

**1**

Date of Visit

7/21/2023

**2**

Age; Gender

32

Female

**3**

Occupation

Therapist

**4**

Height

5'6"

122 lbs

# VITAL SIGNS



BP

109/81 mmHg



HR

74 BPM



RR

17 breaths



TEMP

98.7° F



# CHIEF COMPLAINT

Lyme Disease for 17 years



# HISTORY OF PRESENT ILLNESS

This was the first time the patient had ever been to our clinic and the first-time receiving acupuncture. She is coming in because she was diagnosed with Lyme disease by a medical doctor several years ago and has been suffering from several different symptoms.

Symptoms include inflammatory responses resulting in severe acne on the face, neck, and chest; overall joint ache; and intermittent fatigue. She recalls no evidence of being bitten by a tick or having the classic bullseye rash.

She was diagnosed with Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever when she was in high school, and she only suffered from mild symptoms. Since then, she has been experiencing severe cystic acne. She explained that while she was in college, she went through some severe emotional trauma which caused the acne. She said this led to a disfigurement of her face with swollen cystic acne that was red and full of pus. She was given antibiotics and steroids and has been on and off the medication since this incident occurred. She is currently taking antibiotics for her skin prescribed by a dermatologist but will be halting the antibiotics in a week to see how acupuncture helps with her condition.

# PAST MEDICAL HISTORY

The patient has a history of trauma from college, and she suffers from PTSD from sexual assault. She also has a history of anxiety and depression.

Surgery history: The patient had surgery for a deviated septum a few years ago

Allergies: The patient experiences chronic sinus infections during the spring and fall; allergic to cats.

Supplements/Herbal Medicine: The patient is taking vitamin C, D, and methyl B complex; SMS Enzymes for her candida growth.

Medication: The patient is not on any pharmaceutical medication at this time; the only exception is an inhaler for exercise-induced asthma (does not use very often); The patient is also taking Lyme disease vials that were given to her by her naturopathic doctor (does not know what is in them); Antibiotics for her acne



# FAMILY HISTORY

She is the second child out of eight children.

Allergic reactions vary within her immediate family including eczema and seasonal allergies.





# SOCIAL HISTORY, HABITS, & EMOTIONAL STATUS

## Social



She spends time with her family and friends; enjoys going hiking with others

## Habits



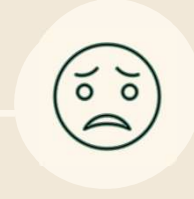
Denied smoking or alcohol  
Denies drinking coffee  
Drinks tea occasionally

## Exercise



Training for a long hike in Europe; 'El Camino' in Spain

## Emotions



Anxious  
Overwhelmed  
Energy: 4/10



# TCM DIAGNOSIS: OBSERVATION

## Vitality/Shen

The patient looked depressed; her posture was depressed with shoulders forward with a round back; very seldom made eye contact.

## Appearance

Very thin build



## Color

Red blotches on the face –  
no pus is present;  
otherwise, pale complexion

## Listening/Smelling

Respiration – Unremarkable  
Speech – Talkative  
Odor - Unremarkable

# TCM DIAGNOSIS: INQUIRY

**Appetite** – She said that she has to force herself to eat and sometimes even forgets to eat; eats two meals a day

**Diet** – eats meat/carbs/veggies/fruit; enjoys eating protein bars, salmon, eggs, yogurt, granola, sandwich wraps; enjoys dessert a few times a week

**Taste** – Unremarkable

**Stools** – feels more constipated; has a hard time going and has to push hard; says that when the stool is hard to push, it is larger in quantity (girth); other times, the stool will be in small pebbles that are clumped together; she goes once a day

**Thirst** – feels thirsty but has to remind herself to drink water; drinks about four bottles of water a day



# TCM DIAGNOSIS: INQUIRY

**Urination** – Experiences nocturia three times a week; wakes up two times a night when it occurs

**Sleep** – She said that she does not sleep well because of her mattress; she does not have a hard time falling asleep, but she wakes up often; When she wakes up, she has a feeling of anxiety; when she wakes up, she does not feel rested; feels a sense of heaviness when she wakes up; sleeps from 12 AM to 8 AM.

**Body temperature** – feet and hands are cold and clammy; does not get hot easily; feels a heat sensation on the face and neck during acne breakouts but her body feels normal.

**Perspiration** – during exercise



# TCM DIAGNOSIS: INQUIRY

**Head** – feels headaches on the top of the head, behind the ears, and between the eyebrows.

**Eyes** – seeing spots in her eyes after looking at a solar eclipse.

**Nose** – gets congested easily; after her nasal septum surgery, she feels as if her nose is open on one side and closed on the other but has been experiencing congestion since before the surgery; nasal passages feel inflamed when she is feeling anxious

**Throat** – Unremarkable.

**Ears** – Water collects in the ears all the time; was told she has a very windy cochlear coil



# TCM DIAGNOSIS: INQUIRY



## Menstruation:

Began menses at age 12. She has regular periods that fluctuate between 26-30 days; her periods last for five days; they are painful and debilitating on the first day; the blood is dark red and has some small clots. She is currently on day 27 of her cycle.

Denied pregnancy.

# PHYSICAL EXAM

No physical exam was performed during the intake.

Despite having some joint/muscle pain, she mainly wanted to focus on her skin flare-ups and fatigue.



# TONGUE & PULSE



## Tongue

Thick/puffy body with teeth marks (liver area is red; pale within the teeth marks); slightly purple color overall with a thick white coating; sublingual veins were dark



## Pulse

Thin and wiry  
Superficial

Bilaterally



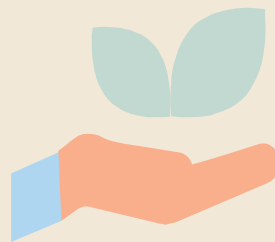
# ASSESSMENT

## Impression (ICD-10):

Lyme Disease (ICD-10: A69.20)

## TCM Differentiation:

Shao Yang Disharmony with Damp Heat Accumulation; underlying SP Qi Def



# WESTERN DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

\*Lyme Disease:

This can be confirmed by Enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA): ELISA detects the presence of antibodies to *B. burgdorferi* in the blood and can be confirmed by Western blot: To confirm the ELISA diagnosis by detecting antibodies to several proteins of *B. burgdorferi*.

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus:

This can be confirmed by antinuclear antibodies (ANA): The ANA test checks for a type of antibodies in your blood that attack healthy cells and tissues causing unnecessary inflammation.

# TCM ANALYSIS

The patient is experiencing Shao Yang Disharmony due to the nature of its intermittency and alternation of symptoms. The cause of this disharmony stems from various pathogens both internal and external creating a friction of heat and stagnation. Dampness is prevalent due to the presence of pus on the skin, the sensation of thirst but unable to drink, and nasal sinus congestion. However, dampness is not the main source of her condition. One could argue that there is a presence of phlegm involved in her pathology as well, as phlegm tends to rise to the head and could be blocking the nasal orifices intermittently. Additionally, phlegm is the source of many complex disorders and could have been caused by chronic damp accumulation.

She also presents with headaches particularly in the Liver and Gallbladder regions of the head suggesting Shao Yang Disharmony. The Liver and Gallbladder are related internally and externally, so if one organ is affected, the other can present with symptoms as well. The emotions of this patient play a huge role in her symptoms, which provoke the stagnation of the Liver Qi, which arguably could be the root of her condition. This is supported by her wiry pulse and the red puffy Liver region in the tongue.

There is an underlying SP Qi Def as well. Her tongue displays a thick puffy body with teeth marks suggesting that the fluids are not being transported/transformed efficiently.

# TREATMENT PLAN

GB20: sedation – Expel Wind, Harmonize the Shao Yang

ST40: sedation – Drain Dampness

SP9: sedation – Drain Dampness

LU7: even – Expel Wind; stimulate bowels (luo connecting point)

BL60: even – Expel Wind; clear heat

LI4: even – Expel Wind; release exterior; regulates face and the orifices

LR3: even – Clears the head; moves Qi

GB34: even – Harmonize the Shao Yang

ST25: even – Regulate SP and resolve dampness; combined with CV6 and 12 (Four Doors)

CV6: even – Four Doors; assist with constipation

CV12: even - Four Doors; assist with constipation

## Principle of treatment:

Harmonize Shao Yang, Drain Damp, Clear Heat

**Needle technique:** Even/Sedation; Bilateral

**Duration:** 20 minutes

**Position:** Supine

**External:** Heat lamp on the feet

**Treatment Plan:** Once a week for four weeks; after four weeks, reevaluate.

# HERBAL FORMULA

## Xiao Chai Hu Tang + San Ren Tang:

Chai Hu 12g – Combined with Huang Qin to regulate the Shao Yang

Huang Qin 9g

Ban Xia 12g – Combined with Sheng Jiang, Dang Shen, and Zhi Gan Cao to harmonize interior/exterior

Sheng Jiang 9g

Dang Shen 15g

Xing Ren 15g – Descend Qi

Bai Dou Kou 6g – Combined with Huo Po to transform dampness.

Tong Cao 6g - Combined with Yi Yi Ren and Hua Shi to drain dampness.

Yi Yi Ren 18g

Huo Po 6g

Da Zao 3g – Harmonize and balance the formula

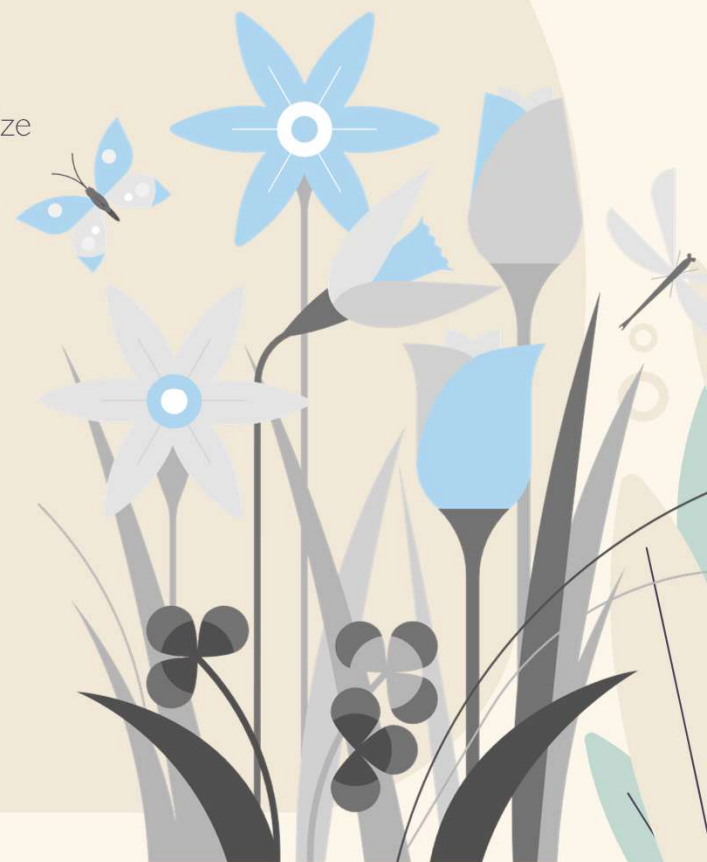
Hua Shi 9g

Dan Zhu Ye 6g – Clear the heat

Zhi Gan Cao 3g

The patient is taking granules/powder twice a day for six days.

Reevaluate the herbal formula during the next visit.



# EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

A case report of a 44-year-old female with a chronic case of Lyme Disease. The patient was treated using both acupuncture and Chinese herbs for her condition. The points used included the NADA protocol with Qi tonifying points. Acupuncture treatment lasted for fourteen days and was then treated by Chinese herbs. The herbs used were to clear heat, drain dampness, resolve phlegm, and regulate Qi. After a month of a formula, there was a modification. This lasted for four months. The patient benefited from both acupuncture and herbal medicine by reducing her symptoms and improving the overall quality of her health.

[Citations:

Adams, A., Hipple, A., & Thompson, S. H. (2023). Acupuncture and Chinese Herbs Relieve Long-Term Symptoms of Lyme Disease: A Case Report. *Convergent Points: An East-West Case Report Journal*, 2(1). Retrieved from <https://www.convergentpoints.com/article/view/18/>]



# REFERRALS

## Psychotherapy\*

(If stress is a trigger, discuss how to deal with stress, anxiety, and the feeling of being overwhelmed more effectively)

## Rheumatologist\*

(Assess if any autoimmune disorders are present and if so, if the disorder is affecting the joints)

## Dermatologist:

Help determine how to reduce acne flare-ups

## Primary Care Practitioner:

Order diagnostic tests to confirm a Western Medical Diagnosis



# HEALTH ADVICE

Incorporate abdominal massage along the large intestine to promote flatulence and bowel movement.

When feeling anxious or overwhelmed, especially during work hours, practice deep breathing exercises focusing more on the exhale to release stagnation. End breathing exercises once yawning begins.

Take a break from strenuous exercise to evaluate the improvement of the joints and muscles while receiving acupuncture treatment

Avoid eating any damp producing foods like cold or raw fruits and vegetables; also avoid spicy foods to prevent more heat accumulation

Understand that this may take some time to achieve any desired results in a highly complex condition.

Allow yourself the patience for healing.





# PROGRESS

This was the patient's fifth visit to the clinic. She said that overall, she was feeling better, but she has been experiencing some interesting symptoms over the last few weeks. During the past few weeks, she mentioned that she has been expelling large amounts of phlegm during activity, especially during her walks. The phlegm is hard, yellow, and blood tinged but can also be green in color. However, today, she mentioned that the phlegm she is spitting up is much softer and clear in color. It is becoming even easier to expectorate but finds herself having to spit quite often, especially when she is working out. She recently had a severe acne breakout this week that occurred in the typical places (face, neck, chest and back).

Her muscles and joints still feel achy after she exercises, but she feels her energy has improved tremendously. She feels she has the energy to work out and get through the day.

# PROGRESS

She said that she felt particularly hot these past few weeks in a way she had not experienced before. She used to have cold hands and feet but is not feeling more heat, especially at night. She was using a fan directly on her at night to cool her off until she was advised not to.

Nocturia is only occurring once a week. Sleep is still difficult for the patient, especially because she is feeling hot at night. She is still waking up a few times a night at no particular time. The sense of heaviness is still present.

Bowel movements are much easier. She is no longer having to push to alleviate herself. The stool is formed but now on the softer side.

The patient has more of an appetite, and she said that she is finding herself eating a whole plate of food which never happened before.

Her menstruation came four days early this cycle, and she said that had never happened before. However, she mentioned that she did not feel the debilitating pain of menstrual cramps during the cycle. The blood was dark red with no clots. The bleeding lasted for five days.

All other systems are unremarkable.

## Objective:

Throughout the past few visits, her skin was looking clearer with less red blotches on the face. During this visit, she had large red blotches on the forehead, below the eyes, and around the mouth. No pus on the blotches.

Tongue: Slightly purplish color overall, puffy on the sides with teeth marks, thin coating (brushes her tongue), moist overall

Pulse: Thin and wiry; superficial---bilaterally

Same point prescription: Added ST44 and LR2 to clear the heat

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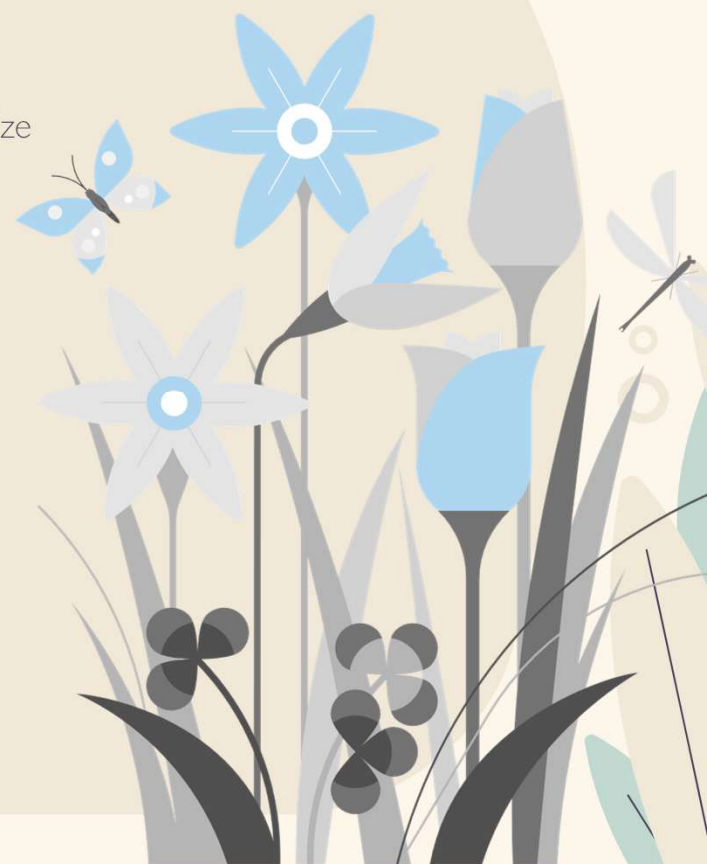
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THANK YOU!!

Q & A

