



News Spring 2025

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Dear Practitioner,

GOLDEN FLOWER'S 35TH ANNIVERSARY!

2025 is the 35th anniversary of the founding of Golden Flower Chinese Herbs! First let us express our deepest gratitude to all our loyal supporters. So many of you have been with us for much of this journey; so much has changed in 35 years. 1990 was 4 years before DHSEA (Dietary Health Supplement Education Act) was signed into law. DHSEA created the legal framework for how botanical, vitamin, and mineral products are sold and marketed in the United States. Before DHSEA was passed the FDA was taking actions that threatened access to botanical products. The public support for this act was tremendous across the political spectrum. Americans truly value the health benefits of the products regulated by the act.

A primary motivation for the founding of Golden Flower Chinese Herbs was our concern for patient safety and label accuracy. We were very concerned about Chinese herbal products that contained undisclosed pharmaceutical drugs and other impurities. We began to produce our own Chinese herbal products in order to maintain control over quality and purity. When you encounter individuals or parties who claim that supplements are not adequately regulated, you can assure them that is not the case. Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) cover botanical, vitamin, and mineral products from the ground through how they are processed, packaged, and promoted. There are multiple government agencies involved: the FDA, US Customs, US Fish & Wildlife Service for CITES issues, the FCC, and the local agencies governing plant cultivation and the supervision of local facilities.

FORMULA NAME CHANGES

The names of some of our products have changed. And a few more name changes are coming as formulas are restocked. There are 14 formulas for which we were required to make name changes to comply with the latest FDA standards. Although we have always been compliant, every once in a while, the FDA revisits supplement companies and red flags products again, including those for which they had no prior objections. With Chinese herbal products, the industry standard is to not mention specific treatments on the label, so the only red flag for the FDA is in the product name. So, for example, we have been selling a product named "Stasis-Transforming Formula" for 10 years. Until last year, the FDA did not consider "stasis" to be in violation of their standards. (Stasis-Transforming Formula is now "*San Leng Dan Shen Formula*.) **For a complete list of formula name changes see page 7.**

IN THIS NEWLETTER

We have some wonderful articles in this newsletter that we hope you will find of interest. John Heuertz, DOM has written a piece on the use of the Front *Mu* and Back *Shu* points. Aleksandra Deibel MD, and Miles Nichols, DAOM, Lac have written an enlightening case study for Lyme Disease. Andrew Sterman has provided us with another article on Chinese dietary therapy: on the medicinal value of simplifying our need for endless variety and complexity.

Our newsletters past and present, and the many papers that we have published are posted on our website. We offer them as a resource to you in gratitude for your business, feedback, and support.

Sincerely,

John Scott, DOM and Lorena Monda, DOM

The Front Mu and Back Shu Points,

Part 1

Heuertz, DOM

By John

INTRODUCTION

The front *Mu* and back *Shu* points can be confusing sets of points when the practitioner is trying to distinguish which set to use in a treatment. Many practitioners will simply hedge their bets and needle both, or, more frequently perhaps, simply needle the *Mu* points if the patient is face up on the table and the *Shu* points if they are face down. But there are ways of thinking about these points that can help improve treatment outcomes and ways to support clinical success by prescribing the appropriate herbal strategy in conjunction with your acupuncture treatment.

The *Mu* and the *Shu* points are mentioned in the *Nei Jing*, but the theory and application was more thoroughly developed about 300 years later by the *Nan Jing* school.ⁱ The authors of the *Nan Jing*, ostensibly in an effort to clarify “difficult questions” suggested by the *Nei Jing*, did a lot of simplification and expansion of ideas introduced in the *Nei Jing*. Simplification in the sense of reducing the number of ideas needed to understand acupuncture; expansion in the sense of providing deeper understanding of the application of the principles in the *Nei Jing*. A major part of this work was the effort to reduce the number of point categories required to provide effective treatments. Though full knowledge of the five channel systems (Primary, Sinew, *Luo*, Eight Extraordinary, and Divergent) was still a major part of *Nan Jing* acupuncture, they narrowed their focus to simplify point selection and clarify intention. The *Jing-Well* points could access the Sinew Channels; bleeding the *Luo* Points could treat the *Luo* Channels; combining lower and upper confluent points could open the Divergent Channels. It was generally forbidden to needle the Eight Extraordinary Channels because these were the realm of the constitution—the *yuan* qi—which was considered predetermined by Heaven. So, except for the *Ren* and *Du* channels, which Heaven supplied with their own sets of points, it was considered hubris, until several centuries later, to try and treat the constitution.ⁱⁱ For the Primary Channels, *Nan Jing* practitioners focused on the *shu*/transporting points on the limbs (*Jing-Well*, *Ying-Spring*, *Shu-Stream*, *Jing-River*, *He-Sea*, *Xi-Cleft*, *Yuan-Source*, and the *Luo* point) and other point categories on the body, such as the Influential Points, Front *Mu* Points, and Back *Shu* Points. Since the taboo applied mainly to channels rather than to the energetics of specific points, the *Nan Jing* practitioners found ways to involve the *jing*/essence in their treatments by developing the Influential Points and by expanding the theory of the Front *Mu* and Back *Shu* Points. With these points in their tool box, the *Nan Jing* practitioners could treat all manner of disease at any level without violating the Will of Heaven. This article will focus on the Front *Mu* and Back *Shu* Points.

Important distinctions between these two sets of points are suggested by the names. The *Nan Jing* practitioners considered all disease to be an imbalance of yin and yang. The Back *Shu*

Points are on the yang side of the body and the Front *Mu* on the yin side. “*Shu*” means “transporting.” (It is the same *shu* of the *shu*-transporting points—also called the “Antique Points” that are distributed on the extremities distally from the elbows and knees.) “*Mu*” means “collecting” or “gathering.” Transporting—moving something from one place to another, is a yang action. The action of gathering or collecting is a function of yin, not unlike the gathering or pulling force of gravity. This yin-yang differentiation, along with the functional terminology of “transporting” vs “gathering/collecting,” can guide our use of these points once we understand a little bit more.

What is being transported and what is being collected?

In both instances, the answer involves the *jing*/essence. In brief, the Back *Shu* points are the receptacles into which the *San Jiao* Mechanism transports the *jing*/essence from the kidneys. The Front *Mu* points are where the body gathers blood to nourish and support the *jing*/essence of the organ associated with that point. *Mu* Points are postnatal energetics supporting prenatal energetics; Back *Shu* Points are where prenatal *jing*/essence becomes disseminated into postnatal life. *Mu* Points utilize a yin substance (blood) for a gathering action; *Shu* Points are where the *jing*/essence is transported into and also the place away from which the essential qi of a pathogen can be moved from one *Shu* Point to another. The way that these two sets of points are thought to be formed reflects these distinctions.

THE FORMATION OF THE BACK SHU POINTS

A primitive version of the Back *Shu* points is formed in utero, then later activated as an emanation from the *Du* channel with the newborn’s first movement of the spine and head. Note that the Back *Shu* points lie along a nearly separate pathway of the Bladder channel from BL-10 to BL-23. The Bladder channel begins at BL-1 and travels to the vertex of the head (Du-20), after connecting along the forehead to Du-24 and GB-15 and BL-1 through 7. The main part of the channel actually terminates at Du-20. From Du-20 two separate branches emerge. The first travels laterally toward the ear and joins the Gall Bladder channel from GB-7 to GB-12, suggesting that these are very powerful points, being supplied with qi by two meridians. The second branch drops down from Du-20 into the brain and emerges at Du-16.ⁱⁱⁱ After emerging from the brain, it descends to the nape of the neck (BL-10) and splits into two separate branches. One branch goes directly to the medial border of the scapula and creates the Outer *Shu* line. It is from this branch that the channel continues all the way down the leg to terminate at BL-67. From the Outer *Shu* Line, before descending into the leg, the trajectory angles medially to form BL-24-34. The other branch creates the inner line of Back *Shu* points, enters the kidney *zang* at BL-23, then travels anteriorly to connect with the Bladder *fu* (and the Front *Mu* of the Bladder) at Ren-3. That is where this branch ends, according to the *Nan Jing* school. [Some sources including the one used in *A Manual of Acupuncture* use a different trajectory.] The two sub-branches from the Outer Line meet up at BL-40 and continue on to the little toe (BL-67). One important takeaway from this map is the fact that the Inner *Shu* line and the Outer *Shu* lines are not directly connected; there is no line that

reaches from BL-13, the inner *Shu* point of the lungs to BL-42, the so-called “Outer *Shu* point of the lung.”

For the sake of the present discussion the most important information to note is how the Inner Back *Shu* line, beginning as a branch from BL-10 and terminating in the Bladder *fu* is seen to be a somewhat independent phenomenon from the rest of channel. This is because the *Nan Jing* school looked at the line from BL-13 to BL-23 as the “*San Jiao Mechanism*”.

The *San Jiao* belongs to the Fire Element, and it is Fire that is needed to move Water. In this case, the Fire from the *San Jiao Mechanism* is moving the Water from the kidneys, which is the *jing*/essence. The heart is the Sovereign Fire; the Triple Heater is the conduit for the Ministerial Fire. Fire and Water need to interact for the unfolding of life and the Inner *Shu* points are the most important and fundamental points on the body where the combination of Fire and Water is represented.

The fuller picture of the *San Jiao Mechanism* begins with the Lung’s pulling in the breath, the *qi* of Heaven, and delivering it to the kidneys. This ignites the *mingmen* fire, like turning on a pilot light. The *mingmen* fire vaporizes (or combusts) a tiny measure of the *jing*/essence, which then pours into the *San Jiao Mechanism*. The *San Jiao Mechanism* travels up the spine and distributes the *jing*/essence into the Back *Shu* Points to nourish the *zang/fu*.^{iv} It is from the *zang/fu* that essence is able to enter the primary channels.

Inherent in the concept of yin and yang are 1) the principle of reflection, which includes the idea of yang beginning within yin, and vice-versa; and 2) the dynamic of a continuous cycle of separation and recombination. According to the principle of reflection, there will be a yin counterpart to a yang process; there will be a yang substance within yin tissue; what is inside will be expressed outwardly; what is above is reflected below; and what is in the back will be reflected on the front. In a newborn, as in a fetus, the separations of space and differentiation of structure are still taking form. The formation of the *Mu* Points on the front of the body reflects a yin version of the yang dynamic of the Back *Shu* points. Both are initiated in part by the intake of the first breath. On the back, the breath goes to the *mingmen*, which, depending on which model one is using, is one of three places. It is either the right kidney (anatomical model), the space between the two kidneys (energetic model), or the acupoint Du-4/*Ming Men* (channel model). Du-4 is reflected on the anterior body by the umbilicus; the two are directly opposite each other.^v And just as the first breath is received by the *mingmen* in the back, the back of the navel receives the first breath in the front of the body: the “pilot light” is in the yang aspect; the place of severance where our reception of prenatal nourishment was severed is where

the first breath homes to in the anterior, the yin aspect.

According to the *Nan Jing*, yin disease (disease of the *zang* organs) spreads or is transmitted along the control-insult (*Ko*) cycle; and yang disease (disease of the *fu* organs) spreads or is transmitted along the Creation (*Sheng*) cycle. The Back *Shu* points have a closer relationship to the *zang* organs, while the Front *Mu* Points are more closely related to the *fu* organs.

The arrangement of the Back *Shu* points is a bit confusing. If we try to apply the principle of the *Ko* (Control) cycle to the order of the Back *Shu* points, we run into apparent discrepancies. The order, as it appears on the back, from top to bottom is Metal→Fire→Wood→Earth→Water. But you will notice that the sequence is broken; it does not follow the Control Cycle. Wood does indeed control Earth and Earth controls Water, but what about the Metal and Fire positions? According to the *Nan Jing*, there are two things going on here. In order to

reflect both Internal and External conflict, there is a division at the diaphragm (BL-17). Below the diaphragm Wood disease will transport or spread into Earth (Liver over-acting on the Spleen) and, if the disease advances further, it will spill over into Water, affecting the Kidneys. Above the diaphragm Fire confronts (over-controls) Metal. The control cycle in the upper body moves up and outward because Metal represents the external world, and conflict with the world is intensified by Fire or the failure of Fire

to control Metal. In other words, just like Wood, disease roots down into Earth, Fire disease flares up and out, inhibiting or aggressively over-stimulating Metal’s interaction with the world, including the ability to draw in air. This is how the *Nan Jing* practitioners understood the formation and arrangement of the Back *Shu* Points.

Note: Something should be said here about the *Hua Tou Jia Ji* Points. These are not part of the set of the Back *Shu* Point system. They can be used like *Xi*-Cleft Points and are often combined with *Xi*-Cleft Points in treatments. The *Jia Ji* Points are located just 0.5 *cun*, one half of a “living inch,” away from the *Du* Channel. This represents a close connection with *Du* Channel energetics. Specifically, the *Du*’s role in pain management. The *Jia Ji* Points can be used to treat acute pain conditions, often in conjunction with points on the *Du* Channel and *Xi*-Cleft points on the limbs.

Hua Tou was influenced by the same passages in the *Nei Jing* that influenced Zhang Zhong-Jing. (According to many historians the two men were nearly exact contemporaries, with Hua Tou being perhaps 10-30 years the senior physician.) I am referring to the idea that exterior disease tends to begin with Wind and Cold and that *Taiyang* is the predominant channel involved at the beginning of disease. The exterior is the realm of the Sinew Channels, as well as *Taiyang*. The Sinews govern



muscle movement but also conduct sensation. All sensation involves the *Du* Channel and/or the brain,^{vi} and the *wei* qi from the Sinews is what conducts sensation from the periphery to the brain and spine. The *Jia Ji* are major points where the transmission of *wei* qi into and away from the spine occurs. The *wei* qi conducts both sensation and externality. That is to say, that in order for an external pathogen to pass into the interior, it first must pass through the *wei* level. The *Jia Ji* Points, in addition to representing the movement of sensation into and away from the spine, are also a major junction for the movement of pathogens between the interior and exterior. This is why they are important points along the Bladder Divergent Channel, which uses *jing*/essence to move pathogens **into** latency in the interior or to release pathogens **from** latency into the Sinews.

THE FORMATION OF THE FRONT MU POINTS

The Front *Mu* points are formed not only from the descent of the first breath into the area behind the navel, but also through an obscure dynamic process fleshed out by the authors of the *Nan Jing* called the “swallowing of the mud pill.” The mud pill is concentrated *jing*/essence that forms in the throat (a meeting zone of the lung, kidney, stomach, and spleen) during the last part of fetal development. As the infant crowns during birth, the squeezing action causes the mud pill to be swallowed.^{vii} The mud pill makes its way from the throat toward the umbilicus, establishing along its pathway an anterior vortex for the *San Jiao*, represented by the three *dan tians* (“elixir fields.”) With the establishment of these “elixir fields” of energy, the three burners have a means of communication, harmonization, and common resonance. Once the *San Jiao* Vortex has been created on the anterior of the body, the Front *Mu* points can be established by movement of *jing*/essence outward from the navel.

Obviously, and as has already been stated, development continues after birth. This is true of the channel systems as well. Prenatally, only the *Chong*, *Ren*, and *Du* channels are relatively well-formed, since these are prerequisite for fetal development. The establishment of the *San Jiao* Mechanism on the back (the *Shu* points) and the *San Jiao* Vortex on the front (the three *dan tians*) allows for the distribution of prenatal *yuan* qi and *jing*/essence into the *zang/fu* so that the *zang/fu* can generate, establish, and maintain the channels.

Lu-1 is the first *Mu* point to be established. It is transformed into a *Mu* point when the descension of the qi from the first breath combines with the *jing*/essence of the mobilized mud pill. Note that the journey of the mud pill is not motivated by peristalsis, nor is its destination the stomach. The movement of the mud pill is initiated by an outside force, assisted by the descending energetic of the lungs and the disseminating energetic of the Triple Heater. Its destination is “behind the navel.” From the navel, because life is the process of yin and yang separating and coming together again, the first movement of the *jing*/essence out from the umbilicus is going to be one “living measure,” (one *cun*) of yin + one “living measure” of yang away from the navel. This lands us two *cun* from the umbilicus, or St-25, the Front *Mu* of the Large Intestine, yang of the Metal

Element. Metal is established first because Metal represents the external world; it represents pulling in and drawing down; and also because the very first interaction we have with the external world is drawing in our first breath, an act of Metal.

With help from the *San Jiao* Vortex, from St-25, the *jing*/essence spreads laterally to connect to GB-25 and descends down to CV-3, the two *Mu* points of the Water Element. These two points represent Water’s reception of what metal brings in. Following the Creation/Generation Cycle, the next *Mu* points to form are GB-24, then Liv-14 (Wood). From Liv-14, the Fire from the *San Jiao* Vortex guides the *jing*/essence into CV-17, the *Mu* point of the Pericardium (Fire). From the “Chest Center,” the trajectory turns downward to create the *Mu* point of the heart at CV-14, then down to CV-12, which becomes the *Mu* point of the stomach (Earth). From CV-12, the trajectory moves again laterally to the end of the *Mu* point energetics. Liv-13, the Front *Mu* of the Spleen, is not only the end of the *Mu* Point energetics, it’s also the beginning of the “Influential Points.” Liv-13 is both the Front *Mu* of the Spleen and the Influential Point of the *zang* organs. It is at this point that blood and *jing*/essence have the strongest influence on each other.

While the creation of the *Mu* Points in the above trajectory is progressing, there is a second simultaneous trajectory extending upward from the CV-3 (Bladder/Water) into CV-4, the *Mu* Point of the Small Intestine (Fire), and finally terminating into CV-5, the *Mu* Point of the Triple Heater (also Fire). You may note that this is a break in the Generation Cycle sequence. Fire is not generated by Water but controlled by it. CV-5 is the same distance from the umbilicus as St-25, the distance of two “living measures.” The sequence appears to be broken by placing the two lower *Mu* Points for Fire above a Water *Mu* Point (CV-3, the *Mu* of the Bladder). But what is actually happening is a reflection of the Metal-Water dynamic that was established along the midline with the swallowing of the mud pill combining with the first breath. It is by Fire that the *jing*/essence is disseminated, so Fire has to be near the *jing*/essence in order to vaporize it. In fact, CV-4 and CV-6 are both taken to be representative of the lower *dan tian*, and with CV-5 lying between them, the image of Triple Heater presence is strong and clear. My contention is that together the three *Mu* points below the umbilicus represent the Fire and Water axis of a life, our *jing*/essence and its dissemination by Fire. This is why they do not follow the same Generation Cycle sequence as the other *Mu* points.

KIDNEY SHU POINTS

In keeping with the principle of reflection, there are *Shu* Transporting points on the front of the body. These are called the Kidney *Shu* points, since they appear along the kidney channel. The chest, and especially the sternum, is one of the most important repositories of *jing*/essence (in the form of marrow.) Only the brain and spinal cord surpass it as storehouses of marrow. The Kidney *Shu* points are arranged in the same way as the Back *Shu* points, with Kid-26 representing Metal, Kid-25 representing Fire, Kid-24 is Wood, Kid-23 is Earth, and Water is Kid-22. The Kidney *Shu* points are very important points for treatments where the practitioner is try-

ing to affect the *jing*/essence, especially in Eight Extraordinary Channel treatments. Both the *Chong* and the *Yin Qiao* channels have trajectories that include the Kidney *Shu* points. They can be incorporated into *Mu* and *Shu* treatments in ways that can improve outcomes. These will be discussed in the next installment.

The next installment of this article will discuss treatment of disease strategies using the Front Mu and Back Shu points. It will include suggestions on how to use herbal formulas to carry out these strategies. It will be published online only. [See Page 1 for how to receive a copy.]

ENDNOTES

ⁱThis entire article is drawn from lectures by Jeffrey Yuan that I have attended, listened to, or read over the course of many years. But the main source for the information is from his 2001 class on the *Nan Jing* that he taught for the New England School of Acupuncture.

ⁱⁱ It should be noted that the taboo of using the Eight Extraordinary Channels applied only to the treatment of disease. These channels were frequently employed in qigong and meditation practices.

ⁱⁱⁱ Some references say Du-17.

^{iv} This model of the *jing*/essence residing at the base, travelling up alongside the Spine, and then distributed laterally into the *Shu* points is also thought of the “the Tree of Life”.

^v Anatomically, Du-4 and Ren-8 are opposite each other. But in terms of acupuncture, the energetics of Du-4 are reflected in CV-6 (*Qi Hai*), and/or CV-4 (*Guan Yuan*).

^{vi}Some schools, especially the Wai Ke, would emphasize the role of the Sensory Portals in the perception/ sensation of pain.

^{vii} Note that a cesarean birth does not permit the swallowing of the mud pill. In vaginal birth, the mud pill dynamic is initiated before the activation of the *mingmen*/ministerial fire by initial breath taken in by the lungs. In a cesarean birth, this occurs in the opposite order. Also, the mud pill will remain in the throat much longer in the child born by cesarean section. It may begin to disintegrate and get absorbed into the tissues of



the throat. But when the infant begins to nurse, it is this author's contention that the mud pill can be partially revitalized when it combines with colostrum. The colostrum will guide the mud pill to the umbilicus.

Lyme Disease Case Study

by Aleksandra Deibel MD and Miles Nichols DAOM, LAc

INTRODUCTION

Lyme disease presents with a wide range of symptoms, making diagnosis challenging. As a great mimicker, Lyme disease frequently goes undiagnosed for extended periods of time, leading to more complex and prolonged treatment courses. While antibiotics remain the standard of care in conventional medicine, they come with potential risks and limitations. This case study presents a patient with Lyme disease and co-infec-

tions who experienced significant symptomatic and laboratory improvements using a Chinese Medicine herbal treatment approach, illustrating promise for a potential alternative and/or complement to common conventional treatments.

CASE PRESENTATION

On 6 September 2023, a 70 year old male presented at our clinic with a history of Hashimoto's thyroiditis. The patient wanted a deeper evaluation into the possible root cause or causes of his autoimmune condition and wanted to investigate infectious and environmental factors.

He was diagnosed with Hashimoto's thyroiditis at age 53. He reported having unexplained fevers and recurrent sinus infections prior to receiving this diagnosis.

MEDICAL HISTORY

Past medical history includes birth in Omaha, Nebraska. Tonsillectomy at age 13. Four wisdom teeth were extracted at age 25. Spiritual orientation is Zen Buddhism. The patient lived in a home with mold exposure between 2001 and 2002. Urine mycotoxin testing was positive. Diet is ovo-lacto vegetarian and gluten free. Stress levels ranked 3 on a scale of 1-10. Two other main complaints were a short duration of sleep (4-6 hours per night) and chronic sinusitis. The patient had Hashimoto's thyroiditis but was in a euthyroid state.

INITIAL DIAGNOSTIC TESTING AND RESULTS

The Horowitz Lyme-MSIDS Questionnaire revealed an initial score of 27. This score revealed a possibility of a tick-borne disorder and further evaluation was recommended.

The patient had a history of tick exposures (without rashes), was an avid hiker and backpacker and lived in a wooded area of Asheville, NC.

Initial Visual Contrast Sensitivity Testing revealed a biotoxin score of 83% for the left eye and 72% for the right eye and CIRS symptom assessment revealed 7 out of 37 symptoms and 6 out of 13 symptom clusters. A Lyme and tick-borne symptom picture was suggested by the symptoms and clusters.

Initial lab work revealed CD8 CD57+ lymphocytes low at 48 (expected 60-360), TSH 3.55, PSA 3.7, TGFb-1 11,104, Hemoglobin A1C 5.5%, DHEA-S 123, AM cortisol 9.3, ACTH 17.7, hs-CRP 0.41, Homocysteine 8, Uric Acid 5.5, thyroid peroxidase slightly elevated at 55, thyroglobulin antibody normal at <1, Antistreptolysin O Ab elevated at 317, ANA by IFA Positive 1:80 titer Speckled Pattern, Iron 57, TIBC low at 236.

IgeneX testing on October 6, 2023 revealed:

- Western Blot 41 KD (IgG) Band: Reactive
- Western Blot 30 KD (IgG) Band: Reactive
- Lyme Screen Immunoassay IgM: Positive
- TBRF *Borrelia* genus Immunoblot IgG: Positive
- TBRF *Borrelia* species: Positive
- *Babesia* FISH: Positive
- *B. microti* ImmunoBlot IgM: Positive
- Anaplasmosis HGA IFA IgG: 160
- *Bartonella* genus ImmunoBlot IgG: Positive
- *B. elizabethae* IgG: Positive
- *B. vinsonii* IgG: Positive

Stool analysis revealed presence of *H. pylori*, low presence of

commensal/keystone bacteria, elevated beta-glucuronidase, elevated anti-gliadin IgA, Elastase-1 normal > 750, moderately elevated steatocrit, low calprotectin.

Neural zoomer by Vibrant Wellness revealed elevated anti-dopamine receptor 1, anti-glycine receptor, and anti-contactin associated protein like 2 antibodies suggestive of active brain inflammation. Also, Anti-Streptococcal A IgG antibodies were highly elevated, IgM was normal.

NutraEval by Genova Diagnostics revealed high levels of oxidative stress and toxin exposure as well as moderate methylation imbalance, mitochondrial dysfunction, and omega imbalance.

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION

The following treatments were initiated for Lyme disease and co-infections: **Clear the Hidden 1 Formula** and **Clear the Hidden 2 Formula**, Chinese Skullcap tincture (2 droppers twice a day), Cryptolepis Sanguinolenta tincture (2 droppers twice a day).

Clear the Hidden 1 and 2 are Chinese herbal formulas specifically designed for Lyme disease and tick-borne infections, and both contain a proprietary blend of herbs to strategically target these stealth pathogens.

Clear the Hidden 1 – Formula Actions: Extinguishes wind, clears heat, purges fire, dries dampness, releases the exterior, eliminates toxins, and tonifies yin.

Ingredients: Uncariae Ramulus cum Uncis (Hood Vine, Gambir / *Gou Teng*), Sophorae Flavescentis Radix (Shrubby Sophora Root / *Ku Shen*), Artemisiae Annuae Herba (Sweet Wormwood / *Qing Hao*), Andrographitis Herbs (Andrographis / *Chuan Xin Lian*), Scutellariae Radix (Chinese Skullcap, Scute / *Huang Qin*), Gynostemmatis Herba (Fiveleaf Gynostemma Herb / *Jiao Gu Lan*), Forsythiae Fructus (Forsythia / *Lian Qiao*), Carthami Flos (Safflower, Carthamus / *Hong Hua*), Schisandrae Fructus (Northern Schisandra Fruit / *Wu Wei Zi*), Salviae Militiorrhizae Radix (Chinese Salvia Root / *Dan Shen*)

Clear the Hidden 2 – Formula Actions: Invigorates blood and breaks up stasis, dispels wind, supports *wei* qi, releases the exterior, clears damp heat, and tonifies yang

Polygoni Cuspidati Rhizoma (Japanese Knotweed Root / *Hu Zhang*), Sophorae Flavescentis Radix (Shrubby Sophora Root / *Ku Shen*), Smilacis Glabrae Rhizoma (Chinese Smilax Rhizome / *Tu Fu Ling*), Houttuyniae Herba (Houttuynia / *Yu Xing Cao*), Astragali Radix (Astragalus / *Huang Qi*), Dipsaci Radix (Japanese Teasel Root, Japanese Dipsacus / *Xu Duan*), Lonicerae Japonicae Flox (Japanese Honeysuckle Flower / *Jin Yin Hua*), Caulis Lonicerae (Japanese Honeysuckle Stem / *Ren Dong Teng*), Zingiberis Rhizoma (Ginger, dried / *Gan Jiang*)

Directions: 4 tablets of **Clear the Hidden 1** or **Clear the Hidden 2** (rotating weekly) twice per day with meals and 2 dropperfuls of Cryptolepis sanguinolenta twice daily with meals for 6 to 12 months. (Check in regularly and adjust as needed, it is recommended to start at a lower dose and titrate up as tolerated to minimize Herxheimer-Jarisch reactions.)

NOTE: Cryptolepis sanguinolenta is the chief ingredient of

Resolve the Hidden Formula. The recommended directions for **Resolve the Hidden** are 1-2 capsules twice daily with meals ongoing (not in rotation). **Clear the Hidden 1 and 2** and **Resolve the Hidden** formulas were designed by Dr. Miles Nichols for Golden Flower Chinese Herbs.

Other medications prescribed for the patient included: Colesevelam—as a mycotoxin binder at 2 tablets three times a day with meals.

VIP Nasal Spray 150mcg—1 spray 4 times a day for repair from damage from toxins from mold exposure and Lyme toxins.

A gut-healing protocol was initiated for H. pylori that included Intestin-ol by Orthomolecular at 2 capsules twice daily with meals for 60 days, Allimed (garlic extract) 1 capsule twice a day for 60 days, Pylori-motility repair 5 capsules with meals for 90 days, and pyloguard probiotic by Microbiome labs 1 capsule daily for 90 days.

FOLLOW-UP AND OUTCOME

Initial Horowitz Lyme MSIDS score 27 on September 6, 2023

Repeat Lyme MSIDS Score at the end of treatment was 15 on November 19, 2024.

Diagnoses: Hashimoto's thyroiditis (euthyroid), Lyme disease and co-infections with Babesia, Anaplasma, and Bartonella.

RESULTS OF FOLLOW-UP TESTING

Remarkable positive changes were observed on repeated IGeneX testing on September 4, 2024 (approximately 10 months after starting the Chinese herbal regimen).

- Western Blot 41 KD (IgG) Band: Reactive
- Western Blot 30 KD (IgG) Band: Negative (no longer reactive)
- Lyme Screen Immunoassay IgM: Indicative (no longer positive)
- TBRF Borrelia genus Immunoblot IgG: Negative (no longer positive)
- TBRF Borrelia species: Negative (no longer positive)
- Babesia FISH: Negative (no longer positive)
- B. microti ImmunoBlot IgM: Negative (no longer positive)
- Anaplasmosis HGA IFA IgG: Originally 160 and normalized to 40, now negative
- Bartonella genus ImmunoBlot IgG: Negative (no longer positive)
- B. elizabethae IgG: Negative (no longer positive)
- B. vinsonii IgG: Negative (no longer positive)

OF NOTE: The only reactive band that remained positive following treatment for Lyme disease was 41KD (IgG) band. Many practitioners know this is not a Lyme “specific” band and codes for the flagellin protein which is ubiquitous amongst a range bacteria (such as E. coli for example). This band often remains positive even after an extended treatment for Lyme Disease.

Repeat stool analysis testing revealed complete eradication of H. pylori. Steatocrit levels normalized. Beta-glucuronidase decreased and anti-gliadin IgA remained unchanged.

Repeat blood work revealed CD57 at 78uL, thyroid peroxidase antibody levels normalized at 20 (down from 55). TSH 6.750 (trended up). TGF-b1 14,502, MMP9 489, uric acid 4.5, TIBC remained below reference range at 197, Hemoglobin A1C 5.5%. ANA by IFA went from positive to negative.

Visual Contrast Sensitivity Test showed improvement as well with Biotoxin Score left eye of 83% and right eye 78% and MSIDS score was 15 (improved from original score of 27). Visual Contrast Sensitivity testing and symptom assessment went from positive to negative following herbal treatment. The follow up MSIDS score of 15 is below the threshold for a tick borne disorder.

CONCLUSION

Impressive follow-up results were seen on IGeneX testing across the board for multiple pathogens evaluated following treatment with the proprietary blend of Chinese herbs.

Thyroid peroxidase antibody levels also normalized and anti-nuclear antibody levels retested as negative.

The patient has reported feeling better and was impressed with the capacity to do so despite being in his 70s. He reported improvements in quality of life, relationships, and overall outlook. The sleep issue was more significant than he had realized and this improved as he was consistently getting 7-8 hours of sleep nightly.

There is always hope even with a complicated disease process

like Lyme and there are ways that people can recover well into in their golden years. This case study shows promise for recovery from chronic infections and immune system regulation through herbal approaches. The reduction in chances for side effects and increased safety profile make herbal treatment options an appealing choice for those who have tried and failed with conventional therapy or who might be inclined towards natural treatments first. Those who have more fragile immune and organ systems due to age or other reasons may benefit from treatments that have fewer potential complications and adverse reactions. It is our hope that through this and other case studies, clinicians can consider natural treatment options and herbal combinations for chronic infections with a better understanding of how they have worked on others. This is a relatively “simple” protocol, it is easy for practitioners to convey instructions and realistically manageable for patients to adhere to.

As for clinicians and patients who’ve had their mindset around recovery challenged, there may be a glimmer of hope as to the possibilities for effective solutions. This patient is one of many in whom we have seen remarkable objective lab changes together with subjective improvements using natural and herbal treatments as the cornerstone of their care.

Case study written by Aleksandra Deibel MD and Miles Nichols DAOM, MSOM, LAc



Golden Flower Chinese Herbs Formula Name Changes

After 30 years, the FDA informed us that some of our formula names needed to be changed. These formulas are listed below. There is no change to ingredients or percentiles.

These changes will happen gradually as new batches come out of production.

Current Formula Name	New Formula Name
Amber Stone-Transforming Formula	Amber Formula
Chase Wind Penetrate Bone Formula	Chase Wind Formula
Children’s Clear Lung Formula	Children’s Lung Support Formula
Children’s Clear & Release Formula	Children’s Gan Mao Formula
Children’s Jade Defense Formula	Children’s Immune Support Formula
Coptis Relieve Toxicity Formula	Coptis Formula
Head Relief Formula	Gao Ben Bai Zhi Formula
Intestinal Fungus Formula	Pulsatilla & Coptis Formula
Neck Formula	Angelica & Kudzu Formula
Phlegm-Transforming Formula	Prunella Formula
Pulsatilla Intestinal Formula	Pulsatilla Formula
Restore The Lung Formula	Bu Fei Formula
Stasis-Transforming Formula	San Leng Dan Shen Formula
Trauma 1 Formula	Warrior’s Support 1 Formula
Trauma 2 Formula	Warrior’s Support 2 Formula

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HOLD THE COURSE: STEADINESS ON THE HEALING PATH

By Andrew Serman

When was it that we all began to want something new and different for dinner every day? It's a surprisingly complicated and important question. Variety is important, but the extreme mix we have today is often one of the main obstructions to healing. We seem to have lost the capacity to have steadiness in our diet. Somewhere in the midst of advertising, convenience foods, take-away food culture, cooking shows, and recipes with glossy photos, we've lost sight of what it takes to be well: consistent application of good-tasting foods that are well-suited to our individual health status. In the process of eating consistently well, we also protect the land, the farmers, our budgets, and all the crucial links in the chain connecting individual diet with global food supply. It's a surprisingly complicated and important part of life, not to be disregarded.

The originating masters of Chinese medicine knew that diet adjustment was the first change needed for genuine healing. In classic times, when a patient visited a village physician, the doctor had an accurate idea of what the individual was eating, and therefore what changes to suggest. Dinner was rarely surprising. Based on the season, the harvest, and the relative affluence of the patient, meals were consistent. Today, we live without shared village experience, and we need to enquire with each client about their dietary habits. Because people often present an over-polished report on their diets, it is helpful to set them at ease as we ask them what they are eating.

I'm not in the business of judging you, I'm here to help. We all cheat a bit with food now and then, we all have things we love to eat, at least, I hope we do! What do you really like to eat? What do you usually have for breakfast, if you have breakfast? And what about later in the day, and on weekends? With this type of exchange, we play "good cop." And it's true, it is not up to us to judge, but rather to help a person move forward. The mistake nearly everyone seems to make is to think that we can remain as we are if we ignore our health at home; in truth, we are all changing, and our choice in diet can be the difference between stumbling into the future or evolving forward with a strategy. Simply said, we don't need to fall apart as we get older.

In my last article in this series, I wrote about the impossibility of staying healthy or enacting healing while eating mostly restaurant food, or food cooked at home to emulate restaurant style and variety. The offerings are dazzling: eggs Mexican style for breakfast, Thai food for lunch, Italian for dinner. Next day, skip breakfast, Chinese food for lunch, pizza for dinner. Then, sushi, ramen bowls, katsudon; Korean, Viet-

namese, Indian; Peruvian aji de gallina, Brazilian bolinho de bacalhau, or Argentinian steak house fare; Ethiopian injira, Senegalese maafe, Moroccan tagine; and of course, when the time seems right, the rich offerings of classic French cooking. Restaurants compete by gradually increasing spices, sugar, and deep-fried selections, and we follow their lead at home. The third of the Four Great Masters in the Jin-Yuan period, the digestion specialist Li Dong-yuan, wrote in his classic *Treatise on Stomach and Spleen-Pancreas* that one of the main causes of illness is chaotic qi, and it is certainly truer today than when master Li wrote in the 13th century.

Of course, in some ways modern variety is a great improvement. Wonderful cooks from around the world have transformed cuisine for the better in world capitals and small towns alike (think of London or Berlin, which now have superb food in high contrast to tradition). And immigrant food trends offer locals insight and respect for cultures that many would otherwise rarely have considered at all. But it's not enough to just read the New York Times' senior food critic writing of his resignation in order to recover his sinking health. We have to think this through for ourselves and make something of it. We need to seek restaurants that don't wildly over-design dishes. And we need to choose our influences even within the food traditions we love.

Here are a few guidelines for rebuilding dietary consistency that support health and healing.

- Look to the home cooking of the cuisines you like. Not haute French cuisine, rather, French home cooking dishes, etcetera.
- If you love following chefs, find out what they eat after work. It won't be fancy enough to be on the menu, but it may be the best food they've cooked all day.
- Go back in time a generation or two. A modern dish is likely based on a great-grandmother's classic. Eat that. By the way, back in the day all food was organically grown. Choose that.
- Cook so that foods taste like what they are. Avoid dishes that use food just to deliver spices, or that saturate one thing with the flavor of another. For example, if you aren't interested in seared scallops unless they are wrapped in bacon, then chances are you're not actually hungry. It's important to clear food and qi stagnation so we can feel our natural, healthy appetite again.
- Attend to your habits and cravings. Are you truly missing some nutrients, or are you craving a memory, trying to

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satisfy an unfulfilled feeling, seeking an elusive image, or sedating overwhelming emotions with sugar, dairy, alcohol, or wheat? At some point, we need to replace our habits and cravings with genuinely satisfying meals that support our being in ways that hold to our best values.

- Return sweets to their place as occasional treats; have sweet things on birthdays and holidays. These are your special occasions, returning meaning to the phrase occasional treats. In the process, our taste recalibrates. When we taste again what we had been having daily it tastes far sweeter, often shockingly so, a good sign that real change is underway.

And as we regain sovereignty over how we are nourishing ourselves, we can meaningfully apply the essential practice: *Develop an honest and insightful sense of your health status in order to support genuine healing with what you choose to eat.*

Working with many individuals on this journey, a pitfall that I see repeatedly is the lack of consistency with diet. Too much variety contributes to the chaotic qi that Li Dong-yuan points our attention to. Several factors play here:

- Our digestive health does well with consistent mealtimes, although consistency should not lead to rigidity.
- The inner body conducts itself through rhythms within rhythms, small within large. Consistency with mealtimes is very important to establish overall pacing within our day, thus tuning the finer pulses within.
- Skipping meals or eating very late easily contributes to chaotic qi.
- Skipping breakfast taxes the organs of digestion (stomach, spleen-pancreas, metabolism.)
- Rushing through meals or neglecting to rest while digesting also disrupts internal pacing, contributing to chaotic qi.
- Dessert or caffeine after eating disrupts the large rhythms of digestion.
- Please don't eat standing up or walking down the street.
- Please don't argue while eating or eat while stressed.

Li Dong-yuan writes of four points that underly chronic illness. Chaotic qi is the fourth of them. The others are also energetic-directional:

- Failure of spleen-pancreas yang qi to ascend (necessary internal uplifting is not occurring.)
- Failure of stomach qi to descend (what should descend is not descending, in varying degree.)
- Failure of gallbladder qi to renew spring (feeling fresh and restored isn't occurring after eating.)

These are the broad points. Beyond that, what is absolutely needed is clear insight into how this is playing for you, individually:

- All cases are individual cases.
- General advice in the health media may be meaningless for you or any other individual.

The individual particulars of our health status can be most meaningfully assessed through pulses, tongue diagnosis, channel status, and the fundamentals of classical medicine.

Where in the body is there:

- Cold
- Heat/Inflammation
- Dampness
- Phlegm
- Stagnation or Stasis
- Deficiency
- Excess

What is the status of our essential fluids?

- Is our diet too dry? Would we benefit profoundly from more soups, stews, porridges, wet-cooked foods?
- Are we underhydrated despite drinking lots of water?
- Do we indulge in dehydrating factors, such as alcohol, coffee, tea, carbonated beverages?
- Are we choosing "low fat foods" resulting in deficiency of thick fluids and fat-based hormonal secretions?
- Are we blood deficient in subtle or dramatic ways?

What is our status at the qi level?

- Are we tired after eating?
- Do we crave sugar or caffeine?

As we assess our health with honest thinking, using the insight of classical tools, we can finally begin to match our health aspirations with appropriate foods in an individual way. And, of course, what we find to be health-supportive must be repeated with enough consistency to make a real difference. Good eating must grow beyond token "healthy" things added to the same old eating habits. Let us start with ourselves, and only then offer advice to our patients as to which foods to sensibly abstain from as well as specific things to add. Embrace consistency. That is how real change takes hold.

A useful way to view the process is that abstaining from old

bad habits in diet loosens the grip of our old health inertia, while new habits aim the direction of the change that has begun. "I'm not doing that anymore, instead, I am doing this." The message must be clear to the body, and our bodies only get the message that change is real if we are committed and consistent.

For basic health, the fundamental meal template is a grain, some green, and some protein. Side dishes are important for bringing specific energetics to the basic meal. Avoid the idea of a "main course" and mere accompaniments. Our digestion must handle everything we eat. What's for dinner is not "chicken," or "burgers," it's "rice, steamed broccoli, and roast chicken, with side of oven-roasted carrots," or "couscous with ground beef sautéed with scallion, ginger, peas, and chopped kale, olive oil and sea salt."

Our new consistency is an updated version of seasonally rotating farm-based traditional eating. Select a grain, green vegetables, and protein foods so that there is a consistent energetic message without food boredom. A few suggestions are below. Practice variety without disruption of your individual energetic needs.

These quick suggestions are here to be adapted for your personal health awareness.

FOR BREAKFASTS:

- Congee with eggs, scallion, fresh ginger.
- Next day, oatmeal porridge with blueberries, sliced almonds, cinnamon, restrained bit of maple syrup.
- Following day, millet porridge with adzuki beans or tofu, or other protein, a drizzle of healthy oil such as olive, toasted sesame, or butter.
- The next day, perhaps toasted bread of choice (rustic bakery bread or gluten-free sliced loaf) with eggs, stewed beans, or turmeric-scrambled tofu.
- Then back to congee, millet porridge, and then perhaps whole-grain pancakes on the seventh day. Mix and repeat, following the idea of mostly wet-cooked breakfasts that include protein and healthy oils.

FOR LUNCHES AND/OR DINNERS:

- Steamed rice, chickpeas with warming spices, Bok choy splashed with tamari and toasted sesame oil. Rotate with lentils, adzuki, black beans, dal, other beans.
- Couscous with sliced pan-cooked duck breast (or chicken, including skin), with peas, carrots, mushrooms lightly cooked with pinch of butter.
- "World bowl" meals of grain, legumes, steamed carrots, roast squash, steamed leafy greens, pan-roasted pepita, with tahini sauce, (mixture of tahini and juice of fresh lemon).

- Sliced steak with good quality bread, steamed broccoli dressed with olive oil and sea salt.

- Steamed rice with fish gently pan-cooked with butter, white wine, and capers, with steamed kale, a drizzle of olive oil, some sea salt, with an optional side dish of mushrooms sautéed with tamari and butter.

- Black "forbidden" rice with tofu, dried black mushrooms, zucchini chunks, scallions, and ginger, with wakame soup.

These examples are intended to help you plan simple meals that can organize directional qi while meeting nutrient needs easily. We can avoid chaotic qi by following these guidelines, adjusting for individual needs. Avoid strictness. More therapeutic finesse naturally develops as your knowledge of food energetics increases. What is most important is to stay simple and consistent. Your greatest eating can be in your own home, however humble your kitchen or simple your cooking skills may be. There is relaxation and joy in making great home meals, combining common sense with good ingredients. It is a joy to think of everyone shopping well, saving money, taking a few moments to cook beautifully, and sharing meals that our bodies intrinsically know how to digest well.

AN ADDITIONAL WORD ON DIET

The way we eat sends a message to our body, to our being. On some level within, you already know what that message is. The learning we do—which can be vast, intimidating, and inspiring—functions primarily to bring us to awareness of what we already know.

Through our diet we tell ourselves that we love our being, or that we don't. We eat to meet some ideal, or to ensure we stay away from any chance of being our best or true selves. We run hidden games, or we do the hard work to expose those games to ourselves, if we have the guts to look.

Many of us have knowledge of deep and complex aspects of healing. We know complexities in acupuncture, herbs, meditation, western medicine, laboratory science, or philosophy. When we cook, we have a chance to bring simplicity to what matters most. The classic French gastronome Brillat-Savarin famously said, "We are what we eat," but it is more true that "we are as we eat." We show care or disregard, we show intellect with or without heart, we care for the world or we seek to consume it, we live by what we teach, or we finish our workday and disregard our own advice when home, indulging in food and sleep disorders. We are as we eat.

To eat is to enact your truly held personal philosophy. We may speak many things, but what we truly believe is revealed as we shop, cook, and eat. More than merely revealed, our lives are open to change if we make simple, clear changes in diet, or even in the pace of our eating habits. At the practical level, change

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requires a lever and a fulcrum. Diet is the lever; intention is the energy to move it. Done well, very little effort is needed; locate the change to make, place the lever, plant the feet, and press just enough to move our world. It may creak and strain but move it will. The skill is in knowing how to make it easy.

Shifting to really great tasting foods that are easy to digest is hands down the easiest way to elicit major change. With more knowledge—or the advice of a good dietary clinician—we can make changes that amplify the strategies of the acupuncture or herbal sessions we are receiving. If our food practice is skillful enough, it can function as the treatment, especially useful while traveling or for patients we can't see often enough.

There can be no doubt that our culture is traveling ever deeper into food crisis. Junk and ultra-processed foods are widely acknowledged to be undermining public health in body and spirit. The situation is serious; known effects of these new foodstuffs are now epidemic and endemic, including anxiety, depression, diabetes, obesity, and myriad other serious chronic problems. The good news, however, is how easy it is to improve from here. While dietary recommendations can be refined to the level of art, replacing “convenience” foods with almost any real food can be a lever for potent change.

Try your own version of this most simple pantry dinner at home.

RICE, PEAS, ADZUKI BEANS

Buy the best quality rice you can. Rinse, then steam 1 measure of rice with 1.5 measures water for 15 minutes for white rice, 40 minutes if brown. Turn off the heat, leave on the lid, allow to rest 5-10 minutes. One cup raw rice is enough for 3-4 people; for four I usually cook 1 ¼ cups, measured uncooked.

Open a can of pre-cooked adzuki beans. Pour them into a pot along with their juice. Warm over medium heat, add 1 tablespoon butter and 2 tablespoons good soy sauce or tamari. Simmer, do not allow it to dry out.

Take some frozen peas from your freezer, pour about half a packet into a pan, without water, over medium-high heat. Stir occasionally as they thaw. Add 1 tablespoon butter, 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, juice of ½ fresh lemon, chef's pinch of sea salt, and a comfortable few grinds of black pepper. Heat thoroughly but do not let the peas get too soft.

Scoop a portion of rice into a modest serving bowl, cover with adzuki beans on one side, peas on the other.

It's a beautifully simple and inexpensive dinner. When I eat something like this, I can hardly imagine anything I'd rather have. The next night is something else, and I feel the same about that simple meal. If you like, substitute pasta or polenta for the rice.

String beans can replace the peas, or broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, and so forth.

Some days lentils replace the beans, or fish, chicken, turkey, beef, lamb, tofu, etcetera. If you like mushrooms, cook some to be added. Rotate your meals to be sure, but start a habit of super simple, excellent meals made at home that save time and money.

When you can see food with fresh eyes, the levers for change are all around, and change has never been so pleasant.

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To find past articles on food and diet by Andrew Sterman go to our past newsletters on our website. Andrew has been contributing articles to the Golden Flower Chinese Herbs newsletters since 2015.

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