



Center for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine, P.A.

Chronic Sinusitis

Mr. Y is a 58 year old man with a severe case of chronic sinusitis. He has had this problem for approximately 50 years. He has been on every over the counter medication for sinusitis over the past few decades, including Claritan. All work for approximately 3 days then begin to have no therapeutic effect. His nasal congestion is yellowish/white, but his nose does not run. He has constant pressure in his sinuses and feels very dry in his nose. He uses an ointment for the nasal cavity to symptomatically relieve this dryness. Y denies experiencing post nasal drip or having a feeling of clogged ears. His symptoms are aggravated during a full moon and in any weather that causes a drop in the barometer. On a clear sunny day, he feels his best (about 60%). He tried surgery 8 years ago which provided only 6 weeks relief.

To complicate the picture, Mr. Y also has sarcoidosis which was diagnosed at the age of 8. This manifests with sarcoid spots on his lungs and with skin rashes on his face and extremities. His voice is raspy/groaning and his energy is low. He consistently wakes from sleep after only 5 hours and has difficulty returning to bed. He has cold hands and feet and has joint pain, particularly affecting his left knee and right hip. His digestion is poor, with gas, bloating, abdominal distention and acid reflux. His tongue is pale red, dry with a center crack. The coating is dry with greasy patches on the sides. His sublingual veins are thin but dark and slightly distended. His pulse is irregular, thin, slippery with changes in intensity and slight vibrations throughout. His middle positions were both yielding and empty. His right distal pulse was thin tight full-overflowing, with the Special Lung pulses being thin feeble slippery and vibrating.

Due to the extreme chronic nature of Mr. Y's condition, his diagnoses were multifaceted. Based on the pulse, tongue and symptoms, he evidenced signs of HT yin and blood deficiency (waking after 5 hours sleep with inability to return to sleep, thin tight left distal position with changes in intensity and irregular rhythm, 22 beat increase with pulse taken on exertion), SP qi deficiency with dampness and phlegm (poor digestion, gas, bloating, abdominal distention, thin yielding empty right middle pulse, sinus pressure and congestion, center crack on tongue with greasy coating), LU qi and yin deficiency (thin tight full-overflowing right distal pulse with thin feeble slippery and vibrating Special Lung pulses, skin blotches from sarcoid which are red dry and itchy) and KI yin and yang deficiency (50 year history of illness, tight feeble left proximal pulse and tight empty right proximal pulse, coldness in hands and feet, joint problems, low energy).

Initially treatments have been focused on the Spleen and Lung deficiency in order to alleviate Mr. Y's main complaint of sinusitis. Acupuncture points used were as follows: LU 5, LI 11, ST 36, SP 9, Inner and Outer Xi Yan, Yin Tang, LI 20 and ST 3. An herbal extract was prepared consisting of 1/3 each of Er Chen Tang modified with Gua Lou and Bei Mu; Bi Yan Pian; and Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang/Bai He Gu Jin Wan combination. Sarcoid patients often present with Lung and Spleen deficiency and significant digestive complaints with moderate to severe damp accumulation. Thus, it is often necessary to strengthen the Lungs, Spleen and Stomach as well as dry and transform dampness in the treatment protocol. However, because Mr. Y's presentation includes dryness along with the dampness and phlegm, herbs which supplement yin and nourish fluids must also be used in order to moisten the dry phlegm before it can be dried and transformed. Without the inclusion of the Sha Shen Mai Dong Tang/Bai He Gu Jin Wan combination and the Gua Lou/Bei Mu, Mr. Y's condition would be further aggravated.

Mr. Y's response has been very favorable to the treatments. As of the time of writing this case report (approximately 8 months since the onset of treatments at a schedule of once per week for the first 4 months and once every two weeks thereafter), Mr. Y is symptom free. He is able to breathe more easily and clearly. In addition to the sinusitis, Mr. Y's other symptoms have resolved as well. Mr. Y was only eating one meal per day at the onset of treatments due to lack of appetite and poor digestion. Currently, he eats three meals per day with no adverse digestive symptoms.