

## **“Holistic Grand Rounds”**

Sponsored by the American Holistic Medical Association (HARP) September 15, 2001  
Windsong Retreat Center, Pittsboro, NC.

**Purpose:** The workshop was designed to explore how different healing traditions evaluate and treat an identical patient.

**Participants:** Sixteen participants: the patient and her partner, three MDs (one urologist, one CAM practitioner, and a family practitioner), one medical student, three non-medical people, two nurses, one shiatsu practitioner, one counselor, one craniosacral practitioner, one TCM practitioner, and one Ayurvedic practitioner.

**Duration:** 7AM – 5PM

**Format:** **Yoga:** 7-8AM (8 participants)

**Sharing Circle:** 8:30-9:30 (16 participants)

**Patient Evaluation:** 10:00 – 1PM (CAM practitioner, Ayurvedic practitioner, TCM practitioner, Craniosacral practitioner, (medical intuitive had performed a remote evaluation several days earlier)

**Ayurvedic cooking class and lunch:** 1-2:30PM

**Grand Rounds:** (14 participants)

**Future Plans:** A synopsis of the findings and recommendations will be formulated and disseminated to the patient, group, and AHMA HARP organization. After 12 months have elapsed, the patient will be contacted again and asked to give a report on her progress. The final findings will be compiled and may be submitted to a medical journal (*Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine*).

### **History:**

**CC:** Fatigue, vertigo, ringing in the ears, tingling sensation in my legs, weight loss, and loose stools

**History of Present Illness:** The following is a compilation of information obtained from 4 interviewers:

Our patient is a 32 y.o. white female who has had fatigue (grogginess in the morning, and tiredness again by 3PM), headaches (none x 7 months, but in the past they have been sharp, sudden in onset, and located on the side of the head), vertigo, and a ringing sensation in her ears over the past year and a half (“like a rainstick”, made worse by perfume), weight loss over the past year (she has changed her diet over the same time period, though, and eliminated a variety of foods, especially concentrated sweets and wheat), fatigue and poor quality sleep (better over the past six months since being treated by her current physician. She now sleeps 7-8 hrs. night), loose BMs or diarrhea (problem for 10 years or more, had been loose stools 2-3x daily, now once daily- beer made it worse in the past but she no longer consumes alcohol and only has one cup of decaff coffee daily; no abdominal pain, bloating, or increased bowel sounds), and a “numbness” in her body parts, esp. at night, and a pins and needles tingling sensation in her lower extremities, esp. in her feet, made worse by calcium-rich food or Ca+ containing

supplements. She has also had pain in her hips over the past month (no hx. of recent trauma)

She relates her current illness as having started approximately a year and a half ago, several months after a 'nervous breakdown' and the death of her cherished dog. (She has suffered from depression in the past and characterizes her childhood family situation as being "dysfunctional". She participated in psychological therapy in her early 20s for depression.) Just before her present illness began, she was struck in the head when a kayak she was carrying spun around and hit her in the jaw. Furthermore, around the same time, she started using a humidifier at home which was subsequently shown to contain mold. Finally, over the past two years she has had her mercury fillings removed by a dentist untrained in safe mercury removal, and has had four composite crowns installed.

Prior to the current episode, she has seen a TCM practitioner approximately 10 years ago for bronchitis which resolved, and a craniosacral practitioner in the past. She has also had recurrent antibiotics to treat recurrent sinusitis, recurrent UTIs (and one bout of pyelonephritis). She also has a heart murmur and takes antibiotics before dental procedures. She has also had recurrent vaginal yeast infections.

She initially treated her vertigo and tinnitus with antibiotics and noticed improvement, but the symptoms recurred once she stopped the medication. She also self diagnosed a systemic yeast problem and tried caprylic acid orally within the past 18 months, but stopped the treatment since it exacerbated her problem. On the other hand, she searched the internet and self diagnosed herself as having Meniere's disease and went on a diet tailored for this condition and noticed that eliminating wheat products dramatically improved her condition. She subsequently saw a holistically-minded ENT surgeon and has tried a food allergy-elimination diet with some improvement in her BMs and energy level.

She has had a tick bite within the past 18 months but a Lyme test was negative. She has also seen conventional doctors and a CT scan and MRI scan of the head was normal.

Over the past year she has been seeing a classical acupuncturist who has treated her with acupuncture with gradual improvement. She has also seen a chiropractor for her neck and back pain and was treated with improvement. Approximately 6 months ago she saw a CAM practitioner who ordered a variety of blood tests which showed a normal CBC, slight elevation of AST, Alk Phos and slightly low globulin; normal iron, thyroid panel, nl. Essential amino acids but slightly low taurine (reflecting a potential problem with low sulfur), erythrocyte element analysis showing slightly low Mg, molybdenum, selenium, vanadium but normal aluminum, cadmium, lead, and mercury. Her erythrocyte vitamin E was significantly low @ 2 [15-50 nl], vitamin A was slightly low, and beta carotene was significantly elevated @ greater than 5 [.4-3.5 nl]. The EFA analysis showed a low level of ALA and DHA, LA, GLA, DHLA, and AA. Her urine organic amino acid evaluation showed a low citrate (50% below normal), and slightly low alpha ketoglutarate, a low 5-HIA and a significantly elevated tricarballylate (a marker of bacterial intestinal dysbiosis - 15.6 with normal less than 1.8). Her homocysteine and serum ferritin were normal but her lipid peroxide was low (1.6-normal less than one). Her intestinal barrier function test showed low IgM and IgA but normal IgG for dietary

protein, yeast, aerobic and anaerobic bacteria. Most notably, a challenge test after DMPS and chelation treatment showed a urine mercury level of 19 (nl less than 3; all other heavy metals were wnl.)

Based on the above tests, her CAM practitioner instituted dietary changes (elimination of wheat and a yeast prevention diet); selected supplements, vitamins, and amino acids; IV minerals and vitamins; and chelation treatments. She stated that she feels fatigued for a week or so after chelation and the tingling in her feet intensifies, but shortly thereafter she feels better. She was also treated with a two week course of Cipro and probiotics, followed by a pulse therapy with Diflucan ®200mg. daily x 2 wks, then off x 2 wks., then on x 2 wks, etc. for 6 treatments. Her fatigue level and headaches have improved since starting the above regimen and she is still undergoing therapy with this physician.

**Social Hx:** She has experienced significant stress in her chosen profession of graphic design. She had her own design firm until the past year or so, but has since changed professions and is now studying to become an occupational therapy assistant. She has been in a monogamous same sex relationship for the past 10 years.

**Family History:** She is the first-born child in her family. She characterizes the family situation during her childhood as being dysfunctional.

**Past Medical History and Review Of Symptoms:** She bicycles, swims, and walks for exercise. She attends church and prays regularly. She has a good appetite.

Her normal diet consists of one cup of decaffeinated coffee, rice, and fruit for breakfast; chicken noodle soup, vegetarian food or seafood (any low mercury fish) for lunch; and spicy Indian or Vietnamese food with vegetables, and dahl for dinner. She drinks a 'good amount' of water daily.

She urinates once nightly. Her sweating is normal. Her BMs are usually in the morning and are loose or runny. Her menstrual periods have been normal. They started at age 14, average 5-7 days, occur once every 28 days, are sudden in onset but gradual in termination, and are dark without clots and the same color throughout (# pads not specified).

History of Trauma: jaw injury after being struck by a kayak approximately 18 months ago, fell age 14 and struck the back of her head, fell off while horseback riding multiple times but no broken bones or sprains as a result, braces for her teeth age 11, fx. R ankle age 3, fx. L arm in college. No car accident.

Vaginal delivery without the use of forceps. Not colicky as a child. Hx. Bronchitis 10 years ago. Pneumonia in kindergarten. No liver problems. Hx. Guillan Barré age 7. Paralyzed below the waist for a year. Complete recovery. (She states that her only worry was about missing a planned zoo trip, and the only other recollection was a sense of loss of control because she couldn't put on her own PJs.)

### **Physical and Intuitive Examination:**

CAM Practitioner: PE not done at this time since she is already his patient.

Ayurvedic Practitioner:

**Ayurvedic pulse diagnosis:**

Vata dosha imbalance, pitta dosha low (low digestive pulse)

Pulse is thready, feeble and moves like a snake.

**Physical characteristics:**

- Light and thin built
- Eyes look dull and dry
- Hair looks dry and rough
- Dry skin
- Hands and feet feel cold and looks pale
- Face looks tired
- She has imbalance Vata (air-life energy)
- Cause loss of weight
- Loss of energy, stamina
- Severe and acute pain in the body
- Muscle spasm
- Back pain and joint pain
- Numbness and ringing in the ear
- A tingling sensation in legs
- Fatigue and irregular heart rhythm
- Imbalance in digestive fire means low Pitta, causing indigestion problem and tends to develop intestinal gas

**Mental, emotional and behavioral attributes:**

- Imbalance in Vata causes light and interrupted sleep; difficulty in falling asleep
- A restless mind
- Feeling of nervousness and fearfulness
- Tendency of worrying
- Often occurrence of mood swings

TCM Practitioner: evaluated her tongue, skin color, muscle tension, muscle movements, body odor, and radial artery pulses at 3 levels on both sides and abdominal tension.

Pertinent Findings: pulses, both sides were balanced and were of a slippery quality with enough energy but some stagnation. The tongue had a thick yellow coating (damp retention) and was furry (heat condition, evaporation of fluids) with thin cracks in the middle (yin [heat] deficiency). Abdominal palpation showed excess heat with an overactive digestive system (strong pulse), and tension on the interior. Her abdominal pulses were balanced but there was stagnation in the abdominal area.

CranioSacral Therapy Practitioner:

**Exam:** Whole body diagnosis using craniosacral therapy and Manual Thermal Diagnosis.

**Diagnosis:** Craniosacral rhythm was 8-9 but mildly sluggish. There was a pull deep in the meninges under the L parietal bone; some asymmetry in the movement of most of the cranial bones; the L temporal bone felt pulled medial; the L sphenoid bone was compressed inward and medial; and the spinal dural tube moved more freely on the R than the L, and restrictions were felt

at the L sacral region and the L occiput. **Abdominal:** there was increased tension in the pelvis with findings suggestive of IBS. Increased upper abdominal tension. **Lungs:** There was restriction in the upper lungs.

Medical Intuitive (remote reading done 48 hours earlier): The patient was thin with lots of energy but the energy seemed to be going in circles. There is a lot of creative energy but no creative outlet. The patient is smiling but hurting on the inside. The patient has emotional pain and difficulty expressing herself due to blocks in the throat and heart chakra. The only flow in these areas is circular and the energy is less than in other areas of the body. She can speak but has difficulty expressing anger. Control is an issue. If the energy could be made to flow better it would help the liver handle toxicity better. Energy is trapped in the third chakra, which explains her irritable bowel problems.

### **Grand Rounds: Treatment Recommendations**

CAM Practitioner: eliminate excess mercury; eliminate infection (evaluate for *H. pylori* and parasitic infection); consider adding digestive enzymes; correct mineral and vitamin deficiency; and develop a plan to increase cholesterol, triglycerides, and essential fatty acids into a more normal range.

#### Ayurvedic Practitioner:

##### General:

- Deep breathing throughout the day (suggested taking a course called the *Art of Living* which teaches breathing techniques)
- Exercise: avoid excess heavy exercise, focus on activities that increase joint activity; breathe and relax during exercise. Obtain plenty fresh air and sunlight.
- Mind: get in touch with your body and ask your body what it needs. Ponder the message your body is sending you and radiate love to your body. Two times daily, before breakfast and later in the day, send messages of gratitude to your body and massage your head (gets rid of excess Vatta and keeps the head cool and improves concentration). Listen to your heartbeat. Obtain plenty of rest for the body and mind.
- Embrace Joy and Happiness: Satisfy your physical urges when they occur. That is, don't repress defecation, urination, coughing, sneezing, yawning, burping, thirst, hunger, sleep, passing gas, etc. In other words, cleanse your body. Don't give energy to your negative emotions. Play uplifting music and dance.
- Meals: · Vata constitutions should select a diet that is calming, strengthening, grounding and nourishing. Food should be warmed, moist and fresh, and properly cooked. Meals should be small and frequent, but regular. Avoid fast foods, instant foods, and junk foods. Avoid cold and dry foods and drinks. Before eating the Vata person should make sure that she is not nervous, anxious, or worried. She should concentrate on eating; avoid watching TV, reading, or conversing amongst others. Eat slowly and in silence with awareness of the food. Try to drink warmed herb tea and warm fluids. Chew food properly. Use canola oil as your principal oil. Eat one tsp. of ghee daily (balances vatta).

- Hygiene: Buy a tongue scrapper and scrape your tongue first thing in the morning before brushing your teeth. Take frequent warm baths and showers to relieve the Vata
- Massage: before each meal lie down and massage your stomach with warm sesame oil for a few minutes and relax your abdominal muscles. This process improves digestion and increases bile production. After each meal lie on your left side (decreases vatta over the lower intestine and helps keep the liver healthy). Massage hands and feet daily and other parts of her body with warm oil daily. Rubbing the scalp and the soul of your feet with warm oil before sleeping, produces calm and quiet sleep.

Specific Measures:

- Food:
  - Hot tapioca
  - Soak lentils and rice before cooking
  - Spices: cook garlic (use in moderation) with rice or glie; cook with ginger; use roasted curcumin powder in any food (cuts down on gas and good for balancing vatta); use tumeric in cooking (balances pitta and vatta); use cilantro and try making a chutney in the blender with a little cilantro, garlic, lime and sea salt. Eat a small amount of the chutney with meals.
  - Eat fish and lentils for protein; no heavy meats, but chicken soup is okay. No nuts but you can enjoy roasted pumpkin seeds. Eat a handful of dried fruit (raisins or cranberries) daily or alternatively, since yeast is a problem, soak the raisins or cranberries and eat a few pieces daily.

CranioSacral Therapy Practitioner: As part of the workshop, the patient was treated with craniosacral therapy, starting at the R ankle and continuing up the leg, through the pelvis, sacrum, and the transverse diaphragms of the body. The neck and cranium were also gently treated and brought into balance. Visceral manipulation was also used on the lungs. It was noted that treating the R ankle might free up the stomach meridian, and assist in relieving the R pelvis, head and jaw. Treatment is still needed for the mouth, specifically the zygoma and maxilla. The digestive system is noted to be sluggish and would benefit form some gentle visceral manipulation and also color therapy; yellow on the upper abdomen to nourish the digestion and the 3rd chakra. Yoga and walking regularly were suggested.

TCM Practitioner: Prior excessive antibiotic exposure was deemed a major cause of her present complains. Antibiotics cause toxic heat to accumulate and adversely affect the adrenals. It caused a deficiency in the kidney energy (the kidneys supply energy to the other organs) resulting in yin deficiency affecting the stomach, and the pancreas/spleen are not getting enough energy. Consequently, heat is lodging in the gastrointestinal system and drying up secretions. Spleen Qi is deficient with Qi and blood are not able to circulate to the extremities causing cold hands and feet. Recommendations to correct the situation include:

- Regular hot baths
- Tonic herbs- angelica root to tonify the blood and improve circulation, ginger to help the spleen and sinuses (balance these two herbs with neutral or cooling herbs

- or food such as whole grains or cooked fruit, vegetables such as celery, cucumber, or okra); and garlic (balance by cooling foods such as longee (rice porridge).
- Acupuncture to large intestine 11 ('drawing' forth a drop of blood will let out excess heat) and stomach 44 for heat in digestive system. Spleen 6, and 3, stomach 36, conception vessel 12, and 10, to strengthen digestive ability. Kidney 3, and 7, and Urinary Bladder 23 to strengthen Kidney and subdue heat.
  - Deep breathing. Try forceful rhythmic exhalations for 30 seconds to one minute occasionally.
  - Further recommendations per your TCM practitioner.

Medical Intuitive: Speaking your truth and taking responsibility for your health will open up energy blocks and promote well being. Failure to do so will impede healing or may even increase the chances for developing an autoimmune disease later in life such as Parkinson's disease.