



Blood deficiency as a cause of post-partum depression on the mother and giant congenital nevus on the baby

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Abstract

Introduction: In Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), Blood is one of the four energies necessary for maintaining physical, mental and emotional health. According to TCM, Blood Deficiency is one of the main causes of Postpartum Depression (PPD), due to causes such as the labor's blood loss, previous, post or pregnancy-acquired anemia, post-partum blood stasis, etc. Giant Congenital Nevus, an extremely rare melanocytic lesion presented at 1 in each 20.000 births, is also explained in TCM through Blood deficiency. The purpose of this study is to bring attention to the Blood deficiencies of pregnant women that can cause common symptoms such as PPD or more extreme symptoms such as the formation of Giant Congenital Nevus on the newborn.

Methods: a case study of 6-month-old baby boy with Giant Congenital Nevus whose mother was hopeless for treatment through Western Medicine's approaches, until a TCM physician associated the baby's condition to a Blood deficiency which was also causing the mother PPD's symptoms.

Findings: Through Chinese Dietary therapy, acupuncture sessions and quantic medication both mother and baby had their conditions greatly improved. Therefore, the conclusion of this study is that the treatment of a pregnant woman's Blood deficiency can prevent postpartum depression as well as a possible formation of a giant congenital nevus on her baby.

Keywords: post-partum depression, traditional Chinese medicine, quantum medicine, diet, energy

Introduction

Patients with post-partum depression often experience postpartum feelings of sadness and anxiety can be extreme and might interfere with a woman's ability to care for herself or her family [1,3].

Postpartum depression is a mood disorder that can affect women after childbirth. Mothers with postpartum depression experience feelings of extreme sadness, anxiety, and exhaustion that may make it difficult for them to complete daily care activities for themselves or for others [1,3].

After childbirth, the levels of hormones (estrogen and progesterone) in a woman's body quickly drop. This leads to chemical changes in her brain that may trigger mood swings. In addition, many mothers are unable to get the rest they need to fully recover from giving birth. Constant sleep deprivation can lead to physical discomfort and exhaustion, which can contribute to the symptoms of postpartum depression [1,3].

The melanocytic nevus is the melanocytic benign proliferation on the skin. In general, they are present since birth, or can appear during childhood, being them named congenital or acquired, respectively [4,5].

The syndrome is very rare and appears in about 1 to 6% of newborns worldwide. The majority, however, are small Congenital Melanocytic Nevus, level 1 or 2. The prevalence in the cases of giant congenital melanocytic nevus is extremely rare, appearing in around 1 to every 20.000 to 1 to every 500.000

newborns [4,5].

On Traditional Chinese Medicine, post-partum depression is mainly associated with Blood deficiency. The pathophysiology of melanocytic giant nevus is also Blood deficiency [6].

Purpose

The main purpose of this study is to bring attention to the Blood deficiencies of pregnant women that can cause common symptoms such as postpartum depression or more extreme symptoms such as the formation of Giant Congenital Nevus on the newborn.

It is also a goal of this study to address the importance of certain ancient medical habits during the post-partum period, specially those defined by Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Methods

The methodology of this study was based in the analysis of different articles found regarding the subject of Post-partum depression both in Western and Traditional Chinese Medicine. It was also used one case report a mother with a specific history of one miscarriage, and a new pregnancy five months later. From the pregnancy a baby boy was born, he was born with giant melanocytic congenital nevus.

Case Report

Patient named A.B.C, 27-year-old female. Diagnosed with post-

partum depression. She searched for an energy-based treatment for her son, a six-month-old baby with giant melanocytic nevus. Her baby had been diagnosed with giant melanocytic nevus on the moment of birth.

The patient had shame of her soon due to the lesions on her skin, a very low self-esteem, and reported to feel extreme fatigue and a lot of guilt over being ashamed of her son skin problem.

To understand the diagnosis of the baby, it was necessary to understand what had happened to the mother during her pregnancy. In the evaluation of the mother, it was discovered that the patient had had a miscarriage, five months before getting pregnant with her son. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, a miscarriage is considered a pregnancy, and the loss of energy related to birth is present in miscarriage. According to TCM, the main cause of miscarriage on the first three months of pregnancy is Blood deficiency. The recommendation in TCM is for the woman to wait at least two years for having another pregnancy. The patient in question got pregnant from her son five months later, without waiting the proper replenishment of her energy for having a new pregnancy. This is why the mother was diagnosed with Blood deficiency and Kidney-*Yin* deficiency, and her baby was diagnosed with Blood deficiency as well, due to the Blood deficiency of the mother.

Treatment was started with iron supplementation, Chinese dietary counselling and auricular acupuncture with apex ear bloodletting.

The Chinese dietary counselling for the mother and the baby was to avoid dairy products, raw food and sweets, to improve the absorption of nutrients of the body. She and the baby were oriented to drink lukewarm water and eat boiled food to tone the energy of the Spleen-pancreas. She was also oriented to avoid coffee, soda and matte tea, to improve the energy of the Kidney. Besides, auricular acupuncture was also used, on the points described on Figure 1.



Fig 1: Auricular Acupuncture Points Used

Quantum medications were also used by the mother and the baby. The medication was named Anemone, and was indicated in one drop, in the left hypochondrium, to increase blood production, also twice a day.

In addition, the patient consulted with a psychiatric; because she had it scheduled already, after starting the treatment, and started the use of antidepressant medication.

Results

Within a month of treatment, the patient had a significant improvement, accepting her baby better. There was also improvement on the patient's self-esteem, and improvement of the guilty she felt over feeling shame of her baby, appearing happier in knowing that there was a possible treatment for her son, as the disease was considered incurable by all the doctors she had seen before.

Discussion

Post-Partum Depression and Western Medicine

The process of birth is related to a great body effort for the mother. It is common for 50 to 75% of women having what is called "baby blues", which are symptoms of mood swings, crying spells, anxiety and difficulty sleeping, starting around three days after the delivery [7,8].

Postpartum depression however, is more serious and long-lasting conjunct of symptoms, which appear in around 1 in every 10 new moms. For patients which already had postpartum depression, the risk is up to 30% [1,3].

The symptoms are frequent crying, irritability, mood swings (from euphoria to extreme sadness) and fatigue, as well as feelings of guilt, anxiety, and inability to care for the baby and the mother herself. Symptoms range from mild to severe and may appear within days of the delivery or gradually, even up to a year later [1,3].

The management of the pathology is antidepressants medications and psychotherapy [9].

Postpartum psychosis is an extremely severe form of postpartum depression and requires emergency medical attention [10,11].

It is a rare condition, affecting only 1 in 1,000 women after delivery. The symptoms generally occur quickly after delivery and are severe, lasting for a few weeks to several months. Symptoms include severe agitation, confusion, feelings of hopelessness and shame, insomnia, paranoia, delusions or hallucinations, hyperactivity, rapid speech, or mania. Postpartum psychosis requires immediate medical attention since there is an increased risk of suicide and risk of harm to the baby [10,11].

Traditional Chinese Medicine: The main differences between the two approaches

The representation of a tree creates a parallel on how diseases are treated today from the point of view of Western medicine and according to Traditional Chinese Medicine. In other articles, the author stated the importance of this metaphor, in order to address how Western and Ancient perspectives could work together [12,19].

TCM explains the functioning of the human body through a holistic view. Therefore, external factors such as wind, cold, the heat, dryness, humidity, diet and internal factors such as emotions may have an influence in the wellbeing [12,19].

The tree has a trunk with several branches. Each branch represents each medical specialty and each leaf that comes out of each branch represents the symptoms and diseases of each specialty. This visible part is the object of study and practice in the western medical profession because of the curriculum offered in the medical schools around the world. The focus is to treat each leaf in each specialty [12,19].

The part of the tree that is below the earth - invisible to the naked

eye - are the roots of the tree. This part remains unknown to western medicine mainly because its existence is not recognized or discussed in the medical faculties [12, 19].

For the compilation of this article, the author based her perspective and pathways of treatment in a specific case of a patient the author had in 2006. This patient was a 70-year-old patient, who reported pain in the legs and was diagnosed with Kidney-*Yang* deficiency, according to TCM. He received treatment with Chinese dietary counselling, acupuncture and auricular acupuncture associated with apex ear bloodletting [16, 19].

With the treatment done, the pain in the legs diminished and the patient was submitted to an interview after the treatment. In this interview, 30 days after the treatment, the patient revealed that his eye pressure had also lowered with the treatment, as his ophthalmologist confirmed. During the treatment, he had not reported to be treating glaucoma in the last 40 years with no improvement of his condition, with intraocular pressure always appearing at 40mmHg or more. With the treatment performed, his pressure lowers from 40mmHg to 17mmHg [16, 19].

This interesting case became the cornerstone of the author studies in the field, trying to comprehend how the treatment based on the root of the problem could treat different diseases and symptoms simultaneously and using the same methods [16, 19].

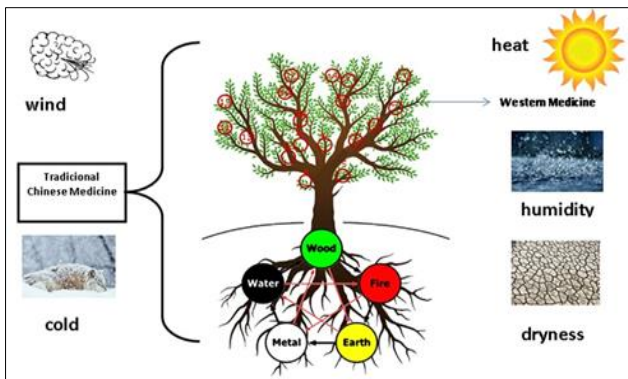


Fig 4: Schematic Relationship between Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Medicine

According to Traditional Chinese Medicine any symptom of physical, emotional or psychological illness is caused by the imbalance of what is referred to as the internal energies or *Qi* in Chinese. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, all health is related to the dynamic balance of four energies *Yin*, *Yang*, *Qi* and *Blood*, as shown in Figure 5 [12, 19].

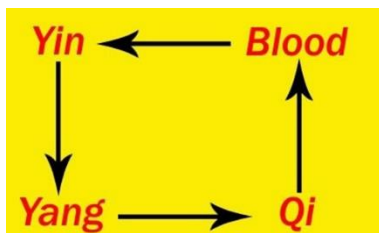


Fig 5: Yin, Yang, Qi and Blood

In the case of postpartum depression, Western medicine will observe the problem considering the levels of hormones and the

production of endorphin and serotonin. Traditional Chinese Medicine will search further, on the root of the tree, considering the energy imbalances – in the case of the patient, Blood deficiency – as the root of the symptoms of postpartum depression.

5.8. The phases of the disease progression

Before a disease is diagnosed at the laboratory, through the radiological level or by complementary tests, there has already been an alteration in energy levels, the patients have symptoms but the tests are still normal (Table 1). Elizabeth Craik, in the book *Hippocratic Corpus*, quotes that the physician would give extreme importance to the early diagnosis of all diseases. As stated in the book, acting wrong or not acting in the beginning of the diseases could difficult the cure [12, 19].

The disease progresses in various phases in a healthy body. During phases 1 to 3, only a slowing of the organ functions occurs because of energy imbalances, and the patient has and complains of symptoms, but the results of laboratory exams are normal (Table 1). At phase 4 the laboratory exams show some alterations, and the disease is still curable, and at phase 5, the exams are very altered, and the cellular damage is irreversible and the disease incurable (Fig 1) [12, 19].

PROGRESSION OF HEALTH TO DISEASE				
	Organ	Exams	Energy Reserve	Symptom
Phase 1	Slowing Down of organ functions	Normal	Energy reserves - normal	Without clinical symptoms
Phase 2	Slowing Down of organ functions	Normal	Consumption of internal energy reserves	With symptoms in other organ
Phase 3	Slowing Down of organ functions	Normal	Consumption of external energy reserves	With symptom in same organ
Phase 4	Reversible Cellular Lesion	Little alteration	Consumption of blood reserves	Curable disease
Phase 5	Irreversible Cellular Lesion	Excessive alteration	Metabolic exhaustion	Incurable disease

Fig 1: Progression from Health to Disease

The discussion about the phase of the diseases was more widely demonstrated in the article *Why Patients Still Catch Hospital Infections despite Control Programs?* Published by the Acta Scientific Journal, in April 2018 [15].

In Table 1 is possible to see how the progression of health to disease works. For example, in phases 1, there is only slowing of the organ’s functions. The patient in this phase has no symptoms, but the energy imbalance could already be present. In phase 2, the patient already complains of symptoms, but nothing appears on the laboratorial exams. In the case of the patient described on this study, she had a Blood deficiency, which lead to the miscarriage of her first pregnancy.

According to the book *Obstetrics and Gynecology in Traditional Chinese Medicine*, from Geovanni Maciocia, the miscarriage causes in TCM are associated with Kidney deficiency or Spleen-Pancreas deficiency leading to Blood deficiency and/or Blood

stasis and/or Heat retention [6].

Five months later, even though her exams did not show she had any disease, and even though she did not have symptoms, she had a Blood deficiency in the energy level, as the patient reported she did not have daily bowel movements. After the pregnancy, she had postpartum depression (phase 4). The symptoms of congenital melanocytic nevus can also be associated with the Blood deficiency of the mother.

This idea was more explained on the article entitled *Is It Possible to Treat Giant Congenital Hairy Melanocytic Nevus Clinically?* published on the Innovation Info Journal of Pediatrics, which describes the treatment that the baby received for his energy imbalances [19].

Traditional Chinese Medicine and Postpartum Depression

According to Giovanni Maciocia, postpartum depression is easily explained in Traditional Chinese Medicine: the loss of Blood that occurs at childbirth induces the state of Blood deficiency, associated with the preexistent energy deficiencies, making the Blood of the Heart deficient, the mind becomes depressed and anxious [6].

Other organs are also involved: a state of post-partum Heart failure almost always involves Liver Blood deficiency, a Heart *Yin* deficiency state [and often associated with Liver *Yin* deficiency and / or Kidney; Blood Stasis of the Heart is almost always associated with stasis of Liver Blood Inside the Chong Mai Channel. According to his study, the main treatments in Traditional Chinese Medicine are to nourish the Blood or the *Yin* and soothe the Mind [6].

5.9 Relationship between Pregnancy and Congenital Diseases in Traditional Chinese Medicine

The recommendations of Traditional Chinese Medicine after a miscarriage, is to consider the loss of energy similar or worse than a normal birth. The process of a miscarriage spends the same amount of energy than the birth, added to the emotional distress usually associated with the situation [20].

According to Traditional Chinese Medicine, it is also primordial that the women wait around two years to initiate a new pregnancy [21]. The mother of the patient described, got pregnant five months after the miscarriage episode, this being an indirect data that may denote that the mother was already a bearer of the Blood deficiency and other energy disturbances.

In this way, the development of the baby was originated from a mother already energy deficient, what may have influenced the congenital condition of the baby.

5.10 Arndt-Schultz's Law

The Arndt-Schulz's law, originally formulated in 1888, states the effects of different drug concentrations on an individual basis, Figure 8. The rule states that for all substances, small doses stimulate, moderate doses inhibit and overdoses kill [12, 19].

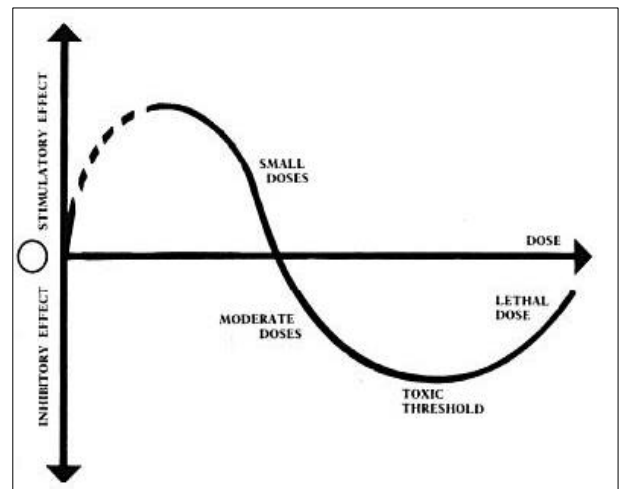


Fig 6: Arndt-Schultz Law

According to this law, highly diluted drugs improve organic processes, while high concentrations harm health. In the case of prescription drugs with high concentrations, in any case, they will be reducing the vital energy, and could worsen the lack of energy that both patients (the mother and the baby) already had [12, 19].

Yin and Yang metaphor of Western and Traditional Chinese Medicine

In order to treat patients with post-partum depression in a deeper way, the physician has to comprehend the importance of the different medicine perspectives. The body, is not only physical and constituted by organs and tissues, it is formed by energy. In Figure 7, a metaphor of *Yin* and *Yang* as the different kinds of medicine was created by the author. Nowadays, these two perspectives are separated, but they can be complementary [12, 19]. Traditional Chinese medicine can be considered as *Yang* energy, and Western medicine is considered *Yin* energy, already materialized. In the same way of the relationship of *Yin* and *Yang*, Traditional Chinese Medicine starts where Western Medicine ends [12, 19].

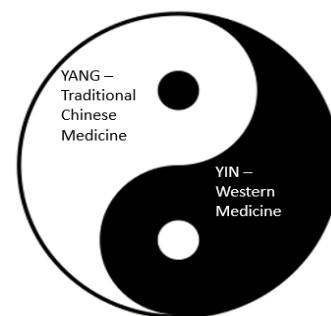


Fig 7: Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western Medicine – *Yin* and *Yang* Metaphor

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is that post-partum depression has an energy-based cause, and that the adequate treatment of this energy imbalances is important for an improvement of this kind of patient in a deeper level, treating the root of the problem and not only the symptom.

The treatment of these energy imbalances, may also improve her chances of not having another miscarriage, if she decide to have a new pregnancy, also diminishing the chances of having another baby with congenital melanocytic nevus.

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