



Case History of Treating Genetic Metabolic Disorder: Niemann-Pick Disease Type A (NPD "A", one type of Lysosomal Storage Disease)

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Abstract

Niemann-Pick Disease Type A (NPD "A") is a genetic metabolic disorder. It is a rare disease which occurs largely in certain ethnic groups. Due to its rarity, it is difficult to diagnosis and considered untreatable by Western medicine.

In this case, the child had been very weak since birth. Her parents had taken her to visit several well-known conventional Western medical clinics, but the child's condition continued to worsen. When her parents brought her to the author for alternative medical treatment, they had little hope. At that time, the child was only 7.5 months old. Her parents indicated that she was having feeding and sleeping difficulties, digestive discomfort, diarrhea, continual crying, exhibiting progressive muscle weakness, and experiencing chronic respiratory and ear infections. Further, examination revealed jaundice and a greatly enlarged liver and spleen. Based on the author's experiences, the child's symptoms could be caused by a genetic metabolic disorder. It was recommended that the child should receive further tests at the renowned Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford and the Palo Alto Medical Foundation. The test results confirmed that the child did have a genetic metabolic disorder, Niemann-Pick Disease Type A (NPD "A").

NPD "A" is a degenerative disease that first manifests in the liver and spleen, but soon progresses to the other systems of the body. NPD "A" infants continue to lose milestones (eating, drinking, muscle strength, mobility, learning, etc) until typically succumbing to respiratory infections, ending in death at two to three years. At present, there are no specific therapeutic methods for treating NPD "A" in conventional Western medicine. Researchers are moving towards breakthroughs in enzyme replacement, gene and stem cell therapies, which are still in the research phase. We may have to wait for another 2 to 5 years until these new methods of treatment become available.

Based on the theory, diagnosis and therapeutic methods of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Pediatrics, the author has implemented a regular course of herbs, acupuncture and an over 2000 year old, Chinese baby Tuina (massage) treatments for the child. This treatment plan is designed to stimulate immunity and detoxification, as well as to improve the immune, neurological and digestive systems. In the meantime, herbal formulas have been adjusted from time to time according to the development of the child's condition. After 34 months of treatment, despite some neurological deterioration, the child's immunity and vitality have been maintained.

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) came to the United States more than one hundred years ago with Chinese workers. It was not recognized by mainstream medicine until President Richard Nixon made his groundbreaking visit to China in 1972. The New York Times columnist, James Reston who accompanied the Nixon delegation to China, reported his amazing experience with acupuncture treatment. At that point, the West began to accept TCM as one of the valid modalities in the healthcare profession. In the 1970's, the State of California was the first state in the U.S. to set up acupuncture licensing examination to allow licensed acupuncturists to open clinics for treatment of patients. Other states in the country have gradually followed with licensing over the last thirty years.