



Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS)

The Fibromyalgia Syndrome (FMS) is a modern illness with increasing spreading. The orthodox medicine has trouble to explain its causality and the chain of causation leading to FMS. Furthermore, it has problems when using data based diagnostic methods, and also with its treatment. Commonly, it inclines to classify the illness as "psychosomatic" and passes the patient on to the psychiatrist. The Chinese Medicine does not exclude psychological disease factors for the emergence of FMS but takes the feeling of the patient seriously. It regards the illness primarily as a somatic disturbance and offers an explanation for its emergence. According to the Chinese medicine, FMS is based on erroneous trends of the immune control and usually begins with not "successfully" passed but aborted infects.

The Symptoms and their Explanation

The most important symptoms which are typically attributed to FMS:

- (1) vague pain of muscles, chords, soft tissue, and occasionally including the joints; stiffness and the feeling of swollen extremities; general hypersensitivity on pain
- (2) permanent lassitude; quick exhaustion after physical strain
- (3) a constant feeling of cold or of heat; chronic irritations of the mucous membrane including usually only meager mucous production; nasal catarrh; allergies
- (4) a general instability, menstrual cycle problems, excitability, sleep disturbance, depressions, metereosensitivity, gastrointestinal disturbances etc.

Additionally, we find with FMS patients:

- (5) an infect history during childhood and puberty characterized by frequent infects of the respiratory system where the patients were not able to get rid of the mucous in an effective manner

Based on this symptomatology the Chinese medicine wins its understanding of the illness. FMS is a typical example for diseases which are based on former and aborted infects with the typical and again and again flickering cold feeling. More clearer than at other kind of rheumatic diseases this cold feeling reveals the origin of FMS.

Childrens' diseases, infects of the respiratory system including cough, nasal catarrh and croakiness is something which the human organism needs regularly as kind of training of the immune system and as a cleaning of the mucous membranes and body tissues. Luckily, they process after a certain consequence of phases and leave a feeling of refreshment and regeneration.

Compared to this common steps of successful passing such kind of diseases, the FMS patient stops in a very early phase. It happens that the cold feeling comes up, however, the cold itself remains in this early stage and does not continue to the subsequent and necessary phases including fever, mucous

excretion and finally regeneration. As a consequence, the organism enters a state of continuous immune reaction. It is forced to be exhausted again and again during this unsuccessful defense activities. All this costs strength and lead to a dangerous habituation of the organism to this halfhearted and thus ineffective immune response. Since it comes to no excretion of the inflammatory substances they accumulate at or around the body tissues leading to tiredness, pain and the above mentioned symptoms.

Diagnosis and Methods of Treatment

A condition of a successful therapy is the comprehensive insight into the individual disease constellation. The physician will therefore offer an abundance of questions, which go far beyond rheumatology. He must know how the pain is exactly constituted since the symptomatology changes for instance with the seasons or with psychological strains.

Main topics of the anamnesis are therefore:

- (1) How did the body deal so far with infects for example of the respiratory system?
- (2) Do pain and tiredness depend on ingestion or are there food incompatibilities?
- (3) How does the menstruation influence the feeling of the female FMS patient? Are there changes during this period which can be described by the woman?

After the discussion with the patient the investigation of the pulse and the tongue is another basic tool of the Chinese medicine with amazing significance confirming, supplementing or correcting spoken words.

The way how the organism is defending against infects is the key-note of the analysis of the pathogenesis - it forms also the thread for the therapy. The use of medicinal plants is the core of the Chinese medicine. With the help of dispensing from plant materials, which are composed for the individual patient, wrong directed activities of the immune system can be corrected. First, scoriaceous substances, which are deposited inside the organism, have to be reactivated, mobilized and then released as mucous. Hereby, first alleviation for the patient can occur. The next step of the treatment constitutes in detecting often far in the past lying, aborted infects. This can lead to the fact that after years the patient develops an acute inflammation of the mid ear, bronchitis or a cystitis suddenly again. This catching up - or reactivating - of the old infects should be controlled with the help of chinese acute formulas in such a way that the cold does not go any longer inward, but becomes the main force in order to eliminate the rheumatic process and excreting it over the mucous membranes.

All other therapeutic procedures assemble around this central therapy-axis. The therapeutic dialog is of high importance. It serves to clarify the circumstances of the disease and its emergence. Furthermore, it has to guide the patient to understand for its situation as well as for the therapy process and to train him to necessary and inevitable changes in his lifestyle as well as in his diet.

A various offer of "exterior" therapies helps with the direct abatement of symptoms and supports the plant medicine therapies. This includes acupuncture, moxibustion and cupping. Furthermore, diverse massage techniques such as shiatsu, tuina, psychotonic after Glaser and foot reflex zone treatment. Such therapies also have to replace the acupuncture completely in the case of extreme pain sensitivity of a patient.

Therapy Progress and Therapy Success

The therapy goal is reached if the patient is free from complaints. On the way there it occurs frequently that former infects come up once more and have to be passed again. This happens in a reciprocal order, what means that recently passed or younger infects come up again first, and the former, older infects, thereafter.

As a solide entrance into the therapy, a stationary treatment of three to five weeks is not only reliable, but often just necessary since the crises which are caused by the therapy can be violent and require an intensive employment of the methods. The physician for his part needs the stationary situation in order to recognize how the patient reacts to the different treatment options. After this period, a subsequent ambulatory treatment of up to five years, depending on the degree of the illness, has to be assumed until healing is reached.

The therapy success of the Fibromyalgia which the TCM-clinic "Klinik am Steigerwald" could reach when using the methods of TCM is amazing. To date, for about two third of all treated cases a long-term improvement is documented.