The Season of spring is upon us and along with the warmer weather and sunshine and blooming flowers, comes the wind and pollen which for many people signals the beginning of their allergy season. The classic allergy symptoms are nasal congestion with thick yellow nasal discharge or thin clear runny nose, frontal headache, itchy nose, watery eyes and possibly a fever with a sore throat. Allergic Rhinitis, or hay fever is an example of misplaced immunity. It is a learned response by the immune system wherein rapid physiological changes resulting in itchy eyes and throat, sinus congestion and sneezing, asthma, and even diarrhea are produced. Typically, exposure to an allergen releases massive amounts of IgE antibodies which attach to white blood cells located mostly in the lungs and upper respiratory tract, the stomach lining and skin. When these cells are stimulated, they release a number of chemicals including histamine which produce the allergic symptoms.

Western medical treatments for allergy include prescribing decongestants, mucolytics (drugs that thin mucus secretions), pain relievers, cortico-steroids(prednisone), and antibiotics. Nasal decongestants can become ineffective and can lead to dependency if used for a long time. Antibiotics work well in some conditions, but not all. Western medicine also emphasizes avoiding the allergen if possible and the use of air filters to reduce exposure. As a last resort, surgery may be used to clean out and drain thick secretions that are blocking the allergy if drug therapy is not effective or if there are structural abnormalities. Although western medicine is sometimes very effective at treating the allergy response, side effects such as drowsiness, immune system suppression or over reliance on medications cause many people to seek alternative approaches.
Natalia began her training in Traditional Chinese Medicine in 2001, at Yo San University in Los Angeles, CA. She left to pursue a degree in art, then in 2005, decided to complete her training in Traditional Chinese Medicine at Acupuncture and Integrative Medicine College in Berkeley, CA. While still in school, she began working in the office of Dr. Nancy Rakela, a licensed acupuncturist who has been in practice for over twenty five years. The three years she spent working with Dr. Rakela deepened Natalia’s practical knowledge in both the art of acupuncture and the business side of practice management.

Natalia was influenced by the time she spent in Thailand studying Thai massage and vipassana meditation. The mental discipline that she learned contributes to the focus that she has while treating her patients. Natalia feels that lifestyle and diet are as important as receiving regular acupuncture.

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, allergic rhinitis is seen as an exterior wind attack, noting that symptoms come and go, cause congestion, and make the person averse to wind and drafts. This often coexists with what TCM calls Wei Qi deficiency, the protective energy of the body that wards off external pathogens. Treating the person holistically, TCM will also look for constitutional deeply rooted signs in the individual allergy sufferer. Often there are signs of energetic Spleen, Kidney and Lung deficiency signs as understood in TCM. The goal is to develop a plan which addresses the person’s acute symptoms and provides relief, while addressing the underlying root of the problem—this case the immune system imbalance. Using acupuncture and specific herbal formulas modified for every patient based on their individual imbalances, the treatments work to regulate the immune system and relieve the acute symptoms. Immediate relief is sometimes noticeable after the first treatment and after three months, lasting effects can be attained. Then once stabilized, preventative maintenance treatments before the seasonal allergy begins, prevent an attack before it can take hold. Dietary modifications are also suggested as part of the treatment principle.

By Emmanuel Sargenti, Yo San Student

Meet our interns:

Yo San Clinic has an exceptional and diverse intern team. With various professional and educational backgrounds, our Traditional Chinese Medicine students bring a variety of experience, knowledge and care. In our monthly newsletter, we will introduce you to our new interns and tell you a little bit about what makes them exceptional healers.

Adam Cappuccino

Adam was born in Montreal, Canada and moved to Los Angeles in 2009 to attend Yo San University. He graduated with honors from McGill University with a B.Sc in Environmental and Agricultural Sciences with a focus on botany, genetics, and plant fungal interactions. His education and training prepared him for a career in research in his field, however, that career path didn’t appeal to him fully. One of his favorite subjects was ethnobotany, the study of people’s medicinal and cultural uses of plants. He was always fascinated by traditional medicines made from local flora, as well as gardening, he even wanted at one time to be a farmer! His summer job at a local garden centre was way more fulfilling and interesting work, interacting with people and designing their gardens, especially caring for the stock. That practical experience tending to the trees, and shrubs, and herbs, along with the theoretical knowledge he gained in university, gave him an intimate relationship with the plant world. The desire to expand this knowledge, along with the goal of augmenting his own health, brought him to Traditional Chinese Medicine. After completing university, without ever having had acupuncture, he
treatments and enjoys educating patients to help them become more involved in their healing process. In addition to managing the clinic at Yo San University, she maintains a practice in Long Beach, CA.

An active member of the Yo San community, Adam can often be seen in many roles: as teaching assistant, tutor, student, and now intern. His goal as a healer is bridging the gap between the western and eastern views on medicine and health, to promote a more holistic approach, but also a more specific type of medicine tailored around the individual, into his practice. You can see Adam in our clinic Monday mornings and afternoons, as well as Wednesday mornings and occasionally Sundays.

**JP O'Hara**

JP O'Hara attended Whittier College where he double majored in Philosophy and English. He earned "All Conference" honors as a member of the football and Track and field teams. In his senior year he was also accepted into the English Honors society, Sigma Tau Delta. After college he decided to seriously pursue improvisational comedy at The Second City and The Upright Citizens brigade. His training in improv, philosophy and his love for Taoism have made him an exceptional listener, as well as strengthened his intuition as a healer.

JP loves to go to the farmer's market weekly and experiment in the kitchen cooking for his friends. He is an avid cyclist, hiker, kettle bell thrower and a strong believer in daily bodily expression as a key to a healthy mind, body and soul.

Here at Yo San he has earned the honor of Teacher's Assistant to Dr. Li for Acupuncture, as well as tutoring first and second year students in all subjects.

To book an appointment with Adam or JP, call us at (310) 577-3006.

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**Did you know?**

**Yo San Clinic is Open 7 Days a Week!**

Monday through Friday: 8 am. to 9 pm.
Saturday: 8:30 am. to 5:30 pm.
Sunday: 1:30 pm. to 5:30 pm.

Reproductive Health Clinic - Sunday: 8:30 am. to 1:30 pm.
Yo San's Doctoral Students are Blazing Paths for Acupuncture Research:

In March of 2012 Yo San graduated its first Doctoral Cohort. Each student submitted a capstone project presenting initial research on a particular women’s health issue and the effects of acupuncture and Chinese Herbs. These capstone projects are available on our website but our newsletters will feature abstracts for you to enjoy.

**The Influences of Acupuncture and Chinese Herbal Medicine On Semen Parameters and Male Subfertility - by Gila Peled L.Ac.**

This research synthesis examined the effects of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine on sperm parameters and male subfertility. Nineteen studies pertaining to both animal and human subjects were included in this review. Data pertaining to sperm count, concentration, motility, and morphology in response to TCM treatment modalities, were abstracted into charts and analyzed. Seven of the total nineteen studies involved acupuncture intervention. Eleven studies involved Chinese herbal medicine intervention. One study involved a combination of acupuncture Chinese herbal medicine and Moxibustion intervention. All nineteen studies showed improvement in at least one sperm parameter following intervention with either TCM treatment modality. Different modalities were used as control intervention without impacting sperm parameters in thirteen of the nineteen studies. However, one study found statistically significant improvement in semen concentration following placebo acupuncture and four of the studies found a decrease in at least one sperm parameters in the control group. No adverse effects were reported in any of the studies. In conclusion, acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine appears to be a safe and potentially effective treatment intervention for improving semen parameters and semen quality in men suffering from subfertility. Future studies with increased number of participants, using human subjects, and Chinese herbal formulas interventions are proposed.

Treating Autoimmune Disorders with Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine

Autoimmune diseases are a group of disorders in which the immune system attacks the body and destroys or alters tissues. There are more than eighty serious chronic illnesses in this category including rheumatoid arthritis, type 1 diabetes, lupus, thyroid disease, inflammatory bowel disease, Addison’s disease, pernicious anemia, celiac disease, multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis and Guillain-Barre syndrome. According to the American Autoimmune Related Diseases Association (AARDA) twenty percent of the population suffers from autoimmune disorders. Each disease appears uncommon on an individual basis but, as a group, the disorders make up the fourth-largest cause of disability among women.

[Read full article here](#)