

My Daughter's Experience with Tongue Acupuncture

My daughter, Sophina, was diagnosed with Autism at the age of 2½ years old. Ever since then, it was an extraordinary struggle to deal with her various unusual behavior problems and communication delays. As with many other families with a child stricken with Autism, my husband and I relentlessly researched various treatment approaches to help counteract behavior and hypersensitivity issues displayed by Sophina.

In the last few years, we have been highly disturbed by an ever-increasing self-pinching behavior. Fortunately, a friend introduced us to the methodology of tongue-acupuncture developed by Dr. Sun in Hong Kong. After evaluating the research report showing positive results for children with Autism, we decided to take Sophina on her first international journey to Hong Kong so she can undergo the treatment. The following is a summary of the changes we observed in Sophina following the treatment. I will discuss our observation of Sophina in terms of three areas: sensory issues, academic and communication problems.

Sophina exhibited the most impressive improvement in managing her sensory integration issues. Her sensory imbalance would manifest in taking off shoes, self-pinching, intolerant to haircuts and showers, and lying down in the middle of the street. The most acute manifestation pertains to her persistent self-pinching throughout the day. Before the first trip, Sophina has been self-pinching sporadically since she was about 6 years old. Starting March 2005, her self-pinching escalated to an acute level such that her intense pinching was bruising her thigh, waist and arms with no relieve in sight. We have consulted different experts in the field and attempted several strategies such as redirection, verbal reprimand, physical restraint, and massage. Nothing was working to alleviate her urges to self-pinch.

My husband took Sophina to Hong Kong for 40 treatment sessions

twice a day for 20 days. Almost immediately after the first week, she was showing significant reduction in sensory issues. She did not exhibit the urge to take off her shoes where as before, she constantly took her shoes off everywhere. After treatment, Sophina can walk for hours without complaining or taking off her shoes whereas she would only walk for a short time before the treatment. She was able to ride in crowded trains, buses, railways, cars, ferries without behavior or sensory problems. More impressively, her urge to self-pinching has significantly subsided.

Also, Sophina has significant hypersensitivity and tactile defensiveness to the head area. Before the Hong Kong trip, she was crying profusely and was extremely agitated when we took her for a haircut. Both my husband and I had to hold her down on the chair. After the first 40 treatment, my husband again took her to a hair cut but miraculously with much improved result. Not only was Sophina not crying, she didn't have to be held down. In fact, she appeared happy during the hair cut. Additionally, she was able to tolerate wearing a shower cap and take a shower for the first time. Similarly, Sophina would tolerate wearing a hood and cap.

Before both of the trips, she would cry uncontrollably and become extremely stressed during routine visits to the doctor. After the 80 treatments, she readily and willingly went into the gastroenterologist's office with little resistance and no crying. The doctor commented that it was unbelievable and Sophina was like a different person. She was calm and displayed no behavior problem. This was the first time she has ever gone into an U.S. doctor's office without hysterics or resistance. Based on the foregoing, we truly felt the tongue acupuncture treatment has indeed help remediate some of her previous sensory sensitivities or other mysterious sensitivities. Overall, she appeared calmer and happier.

In terms of academic progress, her school teacher noticed increased focus and attention. After the first 40 treatments, she could sit through the entire game of Bingo whereas she could only stay still for a few minutes previously. Also, minor improvements were seen in

Sophina's writing in that she was writing more within boundaries which was another indication of increased focus.

In the areas of communication, we did not notice much improvement except there was slight improvement in eye contact. I also felt she was more approachable to others and became more affectionate to family members. Sophina showed improved response to one-step commands both at home and in school.

Academically, the school has observed Sophina to be more focus on tasks and to exhibit calmer and happier personality. While we have not seen any noticeable improvements in other academic areas, there has been no regression either. We are optimistic that academic gains may occur later on when she undergo additional treatments.

One final noteworthy observation: she exhibited minimal resistance to entering Dr. Sun's office in H.K. Sophina only required a minor restraint hold during the first week of treatment. During the last week, she would independently walk into Dr. Sun's office and received the treatment with no resistance. Needless to say, Sophina displayed an unusual liking or affinity to Dr. Sun, a relationship I have not observed with her doctors in the U.S. Her reaction is an indication that the acupuncture treatment must have generated a favorable sensation and impression for her.

Now that we are back in the U.S., I will continue to monitor her for improvements and regression, etc. In general, we do feel the tongue acupuncture has brought about positive changes in Sophina's behavior. Although there is no change in her speech and language, there has been no regression. Also, her appetite has always been poor and it has improved inconsistently since the treatment.

Overall, we are pleased with the improvements made since the tongue acupuncture treatments. These changes in sensory behavior were well worth the trip. While it is possible certain gains may be due to

her natural maturity and development, we concluded that it has to be more than a coincidence that all drastic sensory changes manifested during and soon after the treatment. We look forward to new improvements in the areas of communication and academic development with possible additional treatments going forward.

Lastly, I want to express my appreciation to Dr. Sun and his cordial staff for making special accommodations to perform treatment for Sophina 7 days a week while we were there.

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