

CAM Resources for Brain Health

Molly Fleming, N.D., L. Ac

33 Main Street

Burlington, VT 05401

802-863-7099

molly@mollyfleming.com

The Brain in Trauma

1. High Alert – sympathetic tone increased
2. Insomnia or hypersomnia
3. Head pain ++
4. Cognitive issues – memory, concentration
5. Mood issues – even personality changes/dissociation
6. Fatigue – utter exhaustion– from all of the above

Therapeutic Goals

- Calm the CNS/ regulate the ANS
- Re-establish the sleep cycle
- Help to balance the circulation in the brain to keep the healing progressing
- Depending on symptom picture, to decrease pain, increase cognitive function
- Get the patient to SLOW down and do the self care necessary

Challenge for Conventional Med

- If give meds for pain could aggravate cognitive and fatigue issues
- If try to calm or sedate, even sleep meds could aggravate fatigue and cognitive issues
- If give anti-depressants – worse outcomes
- Rest helps but symptoms can go on for many months
- Anti-inflammatory meds could help initially

CAM Offers Tremendous Advantages

CAM provides gentle, non-invasive tools that address each of the area of concerns – sleep, pain, cognition

It provides active support for the body to heal, beyond rest

It can shorten the time it takes to recover, and can be used with any other treatment

Often from the first treatments patients will feel some relief

CAM TX Essential for Head Injury

- Cranial Sacral therapy / Hands on Energy Healing
- Acupuncture
- Homeopathy
- Frequency Specific Micro-current
- Chiropractic
- Nutritional and Herbal Support
- Counseling – especially body oriented psychological techniques like EMDR, Somatic Experiencing or other trauma focused therapies

Head Pain/Symptoms

Pain, buzzing, jolts, tinnitus, visual changes, dizziness, 'brain fog'

Structure - cranial, spinal, muscles

Energetic phenomenon

- Qi and Blood stagnation
- Chakra and boundary disruptions

Changes in bio-physio markers like -Heart Rate Variability

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS – MANY CAUSES

EXHAUSTION

- When the nervous system is dys-regulated, even just confused input from visual or auditory nerves – it is extremely tiring for the brain
- Dealing with your life when you have reduced capacity , especially if little support, is extremely stressful
- The longer they go without treatment, the more stress on their system. This is where different resiliency capacities come in.
- Adrenal Gland – supporting this with herbs and nutrition can help move things along

Cognitive Issues/Disorganization

- What role of Mindfulness, when the mind is injured ?
- If address sleep, structural issues, etc...this usually comes along as well
- If prolonged effect, get a neuro-psych evaluation, because it can help the patient develop more specific coping skills

Pros

- Cost effective, Low tech treatments with long safety record
- Can be used in many settings
- Little or no drug interactions
- Can decrease exposure to and need for other medications, ie. opiates
- Helpful for getting people with trauma history, even recent acute trauma “ back in their bodies”

Cons

- These treatments are often not available in most clinical settings, especially Emergency Rooms, re-hab facilities
- They are often not covered by insurance, especially Medicare
- All treatments are not the same – based on persons individual pattern, and nature of how their body responded to the trauma. This can be difficult in communication between providers and designing research studies
- Some of the mechanisms for understanding these treatments are controversial.
- Levels of training for some of these modalities is variable. Time it takes to achieve competency can be lengthy.

Case

- March of 2014 – snowmobile accident
- Shaking, loss of memory , - no fracture, etc.
- 1st seen in Jan 2015 – 10 months later
- Still cannot exercise with out shaking
returning, still has head symptoms, quick
shooting pains on R side, still has extreme
fatigue. Memory had come back some

Homeopathy

- Complex system with long history internationally
- There will never be enough “science “ to prove homeopathy to its naysayers
- Modern research into physio-chemical properties of extremely diluted solutions includes –
 - Comparing solvents to remedies spectroscopically
 - Measuring electromagnetic signals from remedies
 - Measuring exothermic heat reactions of remedies

Homeopathy in Head Trauma

- Remedies are chosen by the **symptom picture** and by the nature of the etiological event –
 - Where specifically was the injury, did the person lose consciousness, was there trembling, a seizure, is there ongoing pain, is there any changes in the person's characteristic self after the injury – ie. Personality change, sweating patterns
 - That is are there any **specific** symptoms other than the **general** symptoms of that injury – headache, fatigue, loss of cognitive function and loss of sleep

Arnica montana – the trauma remedy

- That being said, Arnica montana is almost always a good place to start!!
- It is also a great example of why we need dialogue between professions.
- If you look at the following description of the tincture of Arnica montana – you would certainly never recommend giving it to a person with brain injury

Homeopathic Arnica



Arnica montana tincture

unconscious and dies in coma.

Therapeutics: Externally, Arnica was once used extensively in domestic and professional practice, but due to its toxicity has lost favor for more safe agents.

The tincture and fluid extract, used diluted and as a fomentation, is serviceable in bruises, sprains and strains. It should not be covered nor bandaged to avoid absorption with cumulative systemic effects from repeated use. The infusion of the flowers possesses less dermal irritation.

Internally, Arnica is a potent neural stimulant, influencing the medulla and spinal cord. It is useful in stimulating these structures when enervation is evident. Its influence on the respiratory centers of the medulla is one of stimulant when this function is flagging.

As a stimulant in the debilitated, small doses assist in increasing cardiac tone, elevating bloodpressure, increasing respiration and controlling dyspnea. When the subject exhibits cardiac strain from overuse or overwork accompanied by muscular soreness or lumbago, Arnica, in small doses internally with topical applications to the tender areas, is helpful.

After the acute symptoms, causing the paraplegia or hemiplegia, have subsided, Arnica has been beneficial in increasing neuro-muscular

Knowing how another profession uses a substance

- Arnica montana is only used homeopathically or topically not as a tincture internally
- Aconitum napellus – is a potentially toxic herb of tremendous power. which is also – used homeopathically. But it is also used in very small doses in the Western botanical tradition, and in Chinese Medicine, but modified and balanced in a formula

Homeopathic Resources

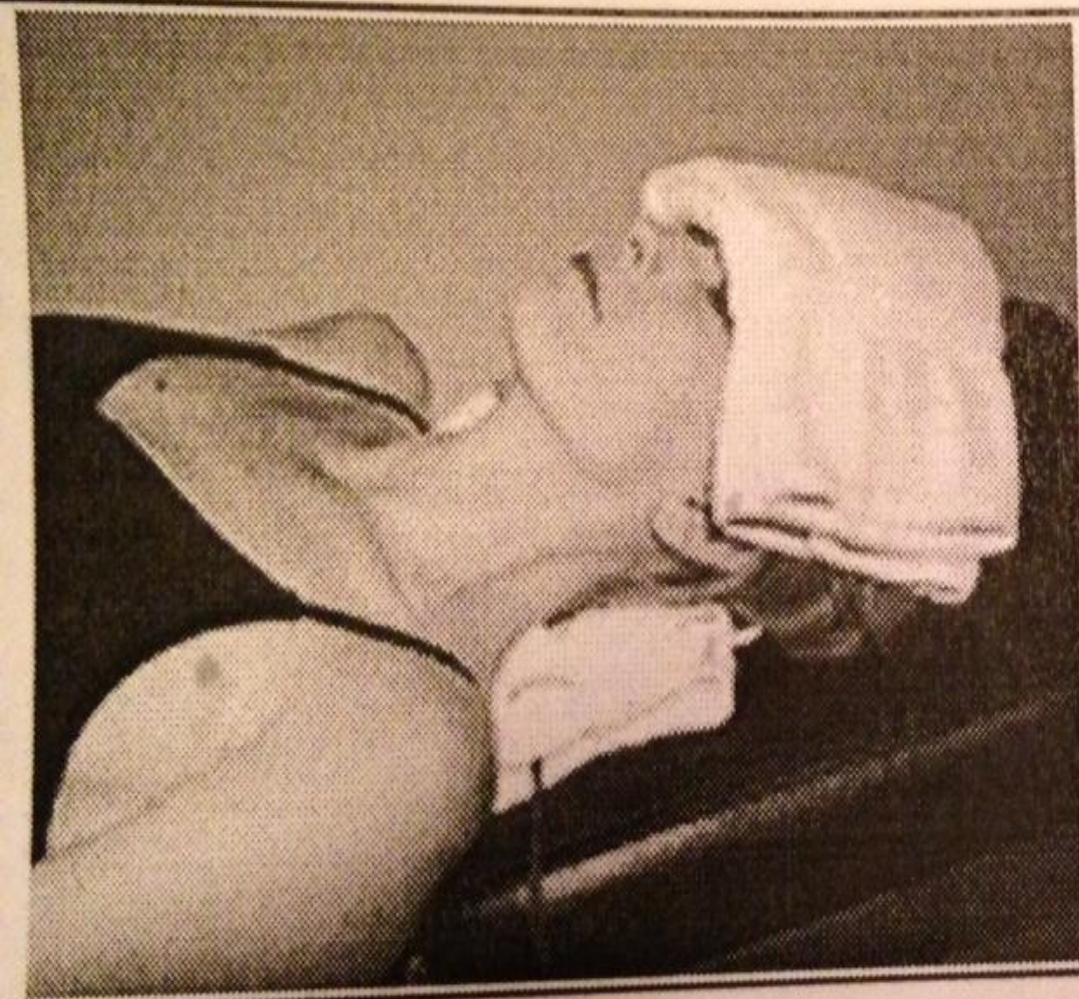
- <http://www.homeopathycenter.org/practicing-homeopathy>
- <http://www.homeopathic.com/>
this is the website for the Homeopathic Educational Services – Dana Ullman, MPH
- [Impossible Cure](#), Amy L. Lansky, PhD, 2003, R.L. Ranch Press, Portola Valley, CA 94028

Impossible Cure

THE PROMISE OF HOMEOPATHY

Frequency Specific Micro-current

- www.frequency-specific.com
- A non-invasive resonance treatment that has been shown to decrease acute and chronic inflammation, and modify immune markers and shorten healing times
- Clinically in these cases it is useful to balance the autonomic nervous system, possibly to remove scar tissue, and promote circulation



B

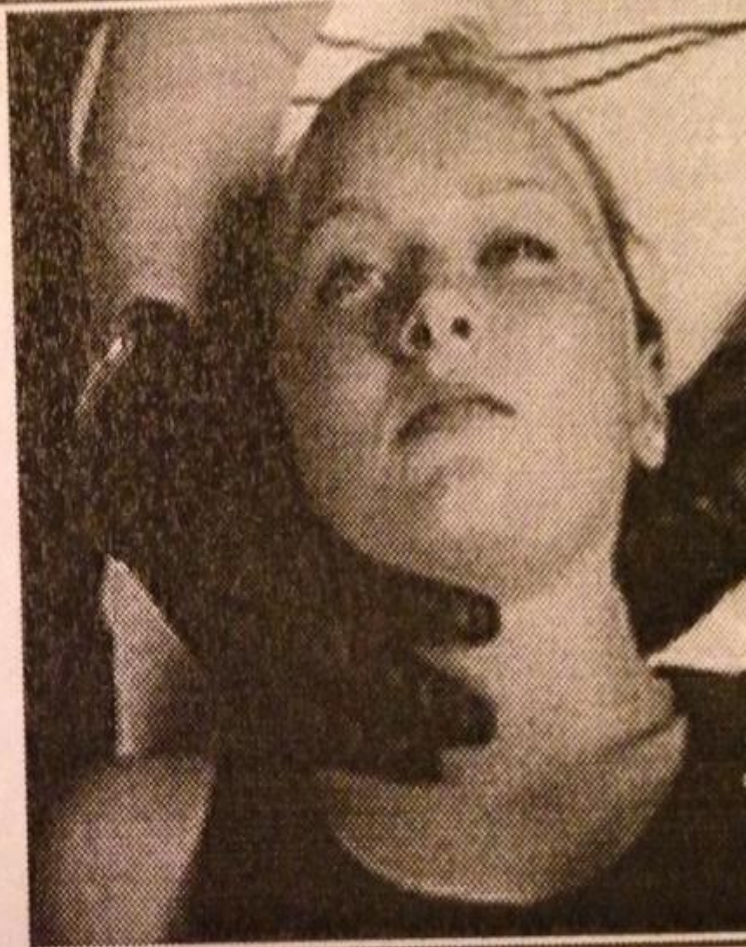
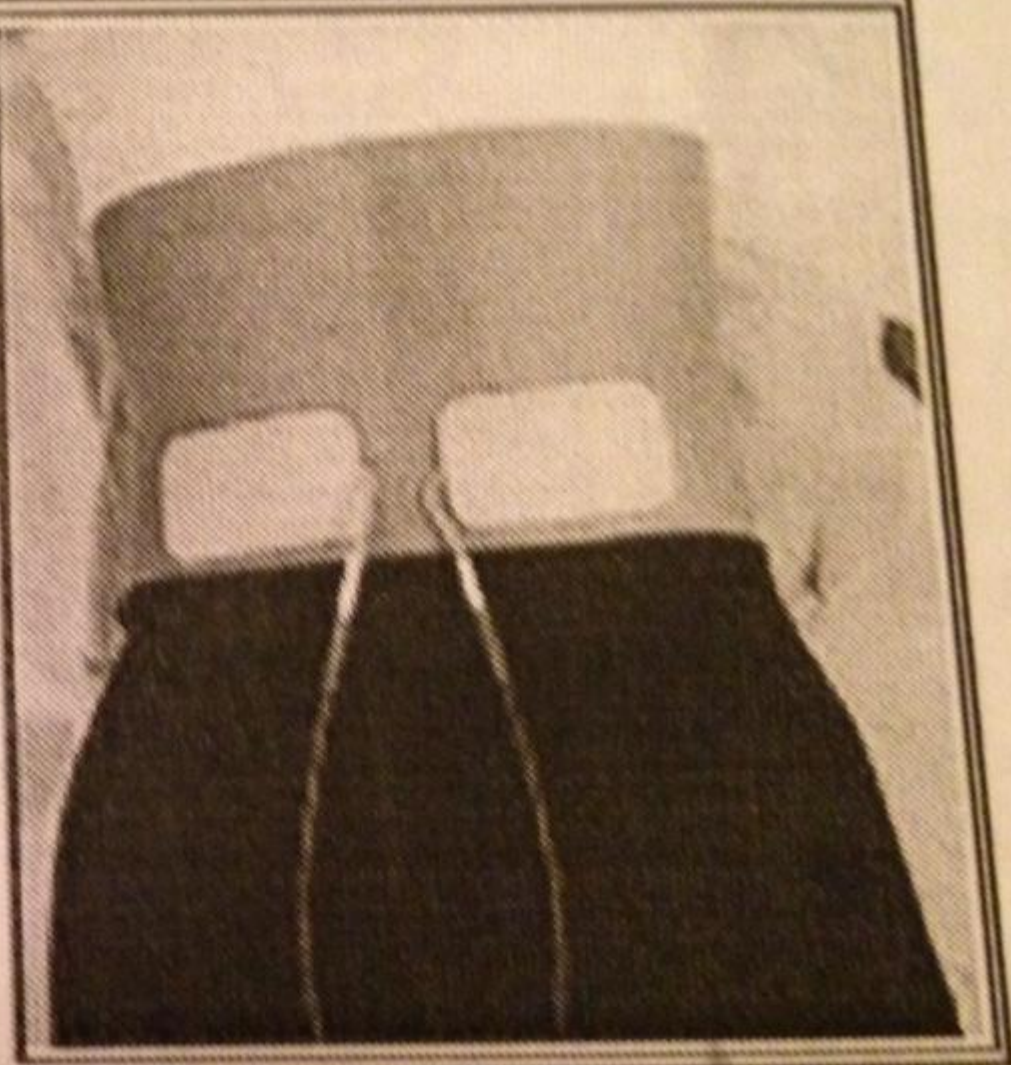


FIG. 1. Examples of frequency-specific microcurrent methods for delivery. The electrodes are placed in warm wet hand towels or face cloths placed on the neck and face. The right (8) possible frequency combinations previously identified for treating skin aging are shown in Figure 1.



C



delivering microcurrents to the body. A. Conductive

Cranial Osteopathy/Cranial Sacral

- **Gentle**, hands on technique useful to:
 - down regulate excitability of CNS
 - remove fixations in the dura and structures to provide free flow of CSF
 - helps reestablish the cranial rhythm of flexion and extension

Cranial Osteopathy

- <http://www.cranialacademy.org/>
the osteopathic cranial academy
- Popular book by Dr. Robert Fulford –
Dr. Fulford's Touch Of Life
- <http://www.drweil.com/drw/u/ART03223/Cranial-Osteopathy-Craniosacral-Therapy.html>

Zoom - Zoom +

SPONTANEOUS HEALING

Dr. Fulford's TOUCH *of* LIFE

"I find
Dr. Fulford's
life and work a great
inspiration."*



Cranial Sacral

- Numerous schools or methods– different levels of training often are body workers and PT's expanding their manual skills
- Upledger Institute
- Biodynamic Cranial Sacral
<https://www.craniosacraltherapy.org/>
- <http://www.chiromt.com/content/14/1/10/comments> provides a debate on the 'pseudo-science and several articles listed
- *Is it just touch?* Is this cranial rhythm measurable?

Acupuncture

- Useful for pain, head pain, irritability of the nervous system
- Useful for relaxation and helping to re-establish the sleep cycle
- Can balance the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system
- Can treat distally – often better, so can be useful early treatment

Acupuncture

- Research results not consistent, in part because of difficulties of doing a DBRCT with a system of medicine which is based on individualized treatment
- Acupuncture Research Society
- <http://www.acupunctureresearch.org/>

Acupuncture for Trauma/Brain

- Both distal and local points used.
- Auricular acupuncture – treating the ear
- Helps by inducing the relaxation response, increasing circulation and within Chinese medical philosophy by moving the Qi and Blood that have gotten out of balance, or “congested”

SAR's Evidence Based Assessments

Current conditions include:

- Asthma
- Neck Pain
- Dysmenorrhea
- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome
- Rhinitis/Sinusitis
- Bell's Palsy
- Lower Back Pain
- Headache