



**Case Report**

**BEVASS Acupuncture course 2021-2023**

**Ramsel, Belgium**

**Acupuncture as a Treatment of  
Osteochondrodysplasia in a Scottish Fold cat.**

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**TITLE**

Acupuncture was used to treat a cat with lameness because of an osteochondrodysplasia of both elbows.

**ABSTRACT**

Acupuncture therapy was used to successfully treat lameness due to osteochondrodysplasia of both elbows in a Scottish Fold cat. For a period of four weeks, dry needle therapy was used, 3 sessions in total. Gradually overall well-being and the limping symptoms improved, and the cat’s quality of life got much better. After three treatments we decided to go to four weekly intervals for “maintenance”.



**HISTORY**

A one-year-old neutered male Scottish Fold house cat presented with chronic limping on both forelimbs. The cat was from a private person, and he has been with the current owner since he was three months old. He has never been an active cat compared to the other cats. He was first diagnosed with degenerative elbow dysplasia (both sides) in April 2023. No other symptoms were noticed, he was eating well, no vomiting or diarrhea, sleeping well but he was not playing like the other cat and sometimes he was showing some aggressive behaviour against the owner and the other cat, like he was frustrated about something. He was lying sometimes isolated from the owner and showing some pain if he was moving too much. Non- Steroidal- Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAID) and a chondroprotector medication were tried out, providing very short relief. Lucifer came once in May to our clinic with a bad limp. At this time Librela was also used once but the owner wasn’t sure of the effectiveness.

After the last episode the owner came to me

and asked for treatment with acupuncture.

**CLINICAL SIGNS/DIAGNOSTICS/DIAGNOSIS – CONVENTIONAL (WESTERN)**

Lucifer was presented to the clinic on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May because of strong limping on both forelimbs. A diagnosis of bilateral elbow dysphasia was made based on the history, clinical signs, and radiographs.

The use of NSAID wasn’t a solution and the efficacy seemed less with time, so the owner decided to seek acupuncture after two months.

No other clinical signs and no further western diagnostics were done this time.

**CLINICAL SIGNS/DIAGNOSIS – TCM (EASTERN)**

During the consultation Lucifer was a bit nervous, moving around and not staying more than one minute in one position. He was moving his tail very nervously and meowing a lot. He has no tartar on his teeth but smells bad from his mouth. He also had a little bit of gingivitis. There is a bit of lack of the forelimb's muscles, but for the rest he is very robust and not overweight. The coat wasn't very nice and shiny, full but looked rather old and lifeless, especially on the back area. Lucifer was staying alone at home when the owner was at work and when she was coming back, he seemed to be a bit aggressive towards her and meowing a lot all evening.

Lucifer prefers warmer places, but he doesn't tolerate extreme hot weather and seeks cooling. He doesn't like to be petting too long. He eats a lot at once, sometimes he has diarrhea, urine is normal, and he never vomits. He has difficulties getting up and he is slower and stiffer in the morning, during the day it gets better and is most active in the evenings. He sleeps well and he drinks small quantity of water many times. Lucifer has a wood constitution, he is big and robust, has strong nails, is competitive with the other cat and he shows some aggressive behavior. The tongue has a normal shape, thin body with almost no coating on it, rather pale and its pretty wet. Pulse feels deep and weak. Rate is normal.

Active Back Shu points are: BL18 Liver, BL 20 Spleen, BL 21 Stomach, BL 23 Kidney and BL 25 Large intestine.

Active mu points are: GB 25 Kidney, LV 14 Liver and LV 13 Spleen  
He had an ashi sensation for LV 3.

TCM Diagnosis: Kidney Jing deficiency that follows Blood deficiency, Liver Qi attacking Stomach/Spleen leading to a deficiency, Kidney blood deficiency and Bony Bi (1). The anamnesis gives us information about the weak Kidney essence. The symptoms of Damp Heat with Qi and Blood stagnation in both elbow joints are compatible with Bony Bi syndrome. Blood deficiency is also a manifestation of the Jing essence deficiency with dry and lifeless coat. The warm-seeking behavior, pale tongue is compatible with Qi and Blood deficiency. The aggressiveness and eating lots explain the Liver attacking the Spleen leading to a Spleen Qi deficiency.

## **CONVENTIONAL (WESTERN) TREATMENT**

Lucifer received Metacam (Meloxicam) 0.05 mg/kg once a day for a period of 1 week before starting acupuncture. There weren't any significant changes after the owner stopped the NSAID. During the treatment the cat received only Dasuquin (advanced joint health supplement for cats).

## **TCM (EASTERN) TREATMENT**

Treatment principle is to treat the root of the problem which in this case is the Kidney Qi deficiency and the Jing deficiency and the Liver fire (2).

Main treatment strategies will be:

To tonify Qi and Blood, to move Qi-blood stagnation, to nourish Yin, nourish the bones and moistens the sinews. The Spleen also needs to be supported and tonified and the Liver fire must be taken down.

The TCM treatment should support the joints, tendons, and the ligament and improve the circulation, the flow of Qi and Xue; to prevent further damage like the calcification of the arthritic

joint. All this should relieve the pain and help with the forelimb lameness and mobility.

For all acupuncture treatments 0.25 x 15 mm siliconized needles with copper spiral handles were used. The needles were not rotated for stimulation or draining due to the nervous character of the patient and were left for 15-20 minutes.

All points used in the following three treatments are listed in table 1. (3)

<b>Point name</b>	<b>Anatomical description</b>	<b>Indication</b>
Liver 3	In the depression on the dorsum of the rear, between the 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> metatarsal bone, at the level of the junction of their heads and shaft.	Source point, Shu stream and earth point. Sedates Liver, promotes flow of liver Qi, calms the mind.
Kidney 3	In the depression cranial to tuber calcanei, at approximately the midpoint of a line drawn from the tip of the medial malleolus to the point of insertion of the common calcanean tendon.	Source and Shu-Stream point. Tonifies the Kidneys. Strength the caudal back and cool the heat.
Gallbladder 34	In the depression cranial and distal to the head of the fibula.	He-sea point and Hui-point of the sinews. Benefits Liver function to smooth flow of Qi, expels dampness
Bladder 11	In the depression 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the spinous process of the 1 <sup>st</sup> thoracic vertebra, midway of the spinous process to the medial border of the scapula	Influential point for Bone, increase Qi, nourishes blood and soothes the Sinews.
Bladder 23	In the depression 1.5 cun lateral to the caudal border of the spinous process of the 13 <sup>th</sup> thoracic vertebra	Kidney shu point. Tonifies Kidney Yin. Strengthens the brain, bone and marrow. Benefits the mind and strengthens caudal back and stifle. Dispels and transforms Dampness.

Spleen 6	In the depression 3 cun proximal to the tip of the medial malleolus of the tibia.	Master point for caudal abdomen and urogenital areas. Benefits Spleen function. Tonifies Qi, Blood and Yin. Harmonizes the Liver.
Spleen 9	In the depression just ventral to the medial condyle of the tibia, between it and the gastrocnemius m.	He-sea and water point. Benefits Spleen function of T and T. Dispels dampness and Heat. Local point for the stifle.
Stomach 36	In the depression just lateral to the distal aspect of the cranial border of the tibial tuberosity, approximately in the middle of the cranial tibialis muscle.	Earth element and he-Sea point. Benefits Spleen function of T and T, hindlimbs. Helps with hind limb pain and weakness and tonifies Qi.

Large Intestine 11	In the depression at the transverse cubital crease, just cranial to the lateral epicondyle of the humerus, between the extensor carpi radialis and the common digital extensor mm.	Earth, Tonification and He-sea point. Clears Heat and local pain in the elbow, resolves Dampness. Benefits Sinews and the joint.
Spleen 10	In the depression 2 cun proximal to the cranio-medial border of the patella, on the bulge of the cranial portion of the sartorius m when stifle is flexed.	Cools, strengthens, and nourishes Blood. Eliminates blood stasis.
Triple Heater 10	In the depression just proximal to the olecranon, on the midline.	He-Sea, Earth and Sedation/Son point. Removes stagnation (especially Liver Qi), resolves Dampness and Phlegm, relaxes tendons, clears Heat, and regulates the Nutritive and Defensive Qi.

Pericardium 6	In the depression 2 cun proximal to the transverse crease of the carpus, between the tendons.	Master point for chest and cranial abdomen. Calms the shen, regulates Qi.
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### Treatment 1: Mai 22, 2023

The goal of this first acupuncture session was to make him less aggressive and to give him pain relief. Move Liver Qi and harmonize Liver and Spleen and strengthen the Kidney essence (2) Points used in this session were LIV 3, KD 3, GB 34, ST 36, SP 6 and PC 6 with laser. Needles were left in between 5-10 min. I decided to tonify Qi, Kidney and Spleen to calm down the Liver and his mind.

After the treatment he didn't have reaction on his Back Shu and Mu Alarm points, and he went to sleep straight away.

### Treatment 2: Mai 29, 2023

The owner said that he was doing better, was more energetic and moving more, eating something more and slowly, happier and less aggressive to her. On the morning of my second visit, he was very active, meowing less and being more patient and calmer. His tongue was more pink than the previous week. Back Shu points sensitive: BL 18 LIV, BL 23 KD. Mu Alarm points sensitive GB 25 Kidney, LV 14 Liver. The points were less sensitive than the week before but still reactive. Points needled this time were SP 6 with SP 9, KD 3, BL 11 and BL 23. My plan was again to increase Qi, nourish the Blood, tonify Kidney Yin and benefit the Spleen. After treatment Back Shu and Mu Alarm points were not reactive. Some local points were still not possible at this time. At this time, we decided to wait for a longer period to see what would happen.

### Treatment 3: June 12, 2023

Lucifer was doing good, for the owner moving very easily and showing no pain at all. He had no more episodes of diarrhea, eating normally and being nicer to her and the other cat. For her he was really doing fine. At this point he was calmer and was easy for me to go for some local point. During the consultation he was calm and nice like the last time. His tongue had no changes to last time. Back Shu points and Mu Alarm points were not possible at this time because he was moving too much and he wanted to play with my hands.

This time I decided to go again for KD 3, SP 6 and BL 11 to nourish blood and to tonify Kidney and Spleen. I added some local points for the elbows like TH 10 and LI 11 to benefit Sinews and the joint and to remove the stagnation. The next day he was totally fine and normal again. The owner decided to wait a bit more and see what happens. After the summer she will come again for some acupuncture sessions.

## **DISCUSSION**

Lucifer was presented for acupuncture treatment to have pain relief and make his life more comfortable. Lucifer is a house cat living with the owner and another cat since he was three months

old. Apparently, he started slowly to show some limping in the front, those were becoming stronger with time and no medication was really helping him. Except for the lameness, he was also having some episodes of diarrhea and showing some aggressive behavior towards the owner and the other cat. After the second strong episode of lameness, the owner decided to come to me for some help. In response to this problem, severe radiographs were made by a specialist. The western diagnosis was an osteochondrodysplasia of both elbows.

According to the TCM examination Lucifer was diagnosed with Kidney Jing deficiency that follows Blood deficiency, Liver Qi attacking Stomach/Spleen leading to a deficiency, Kidney blood deficiency and Bony Bi (1).

There were many symptoms for the Eastern diagnosis of Kidney Jing deficiency. The main sign leading to the inherited weak Kidney Essence fell into place from Lucifer's history: coat changes, deep and weak pulse is a sign for a deficiency problem too.

The consequences of manifestation that followed the diagnosis of Kidney Jing deficiency were many. Blood deficiency, general Qi deficiency, Liver attacking the Spleen leading to a Spleen Qi deficiency, Kidney blood deficiency and Bony Bi. All those can be explained by the interaction in the Five Element/Theory.

Lack of Jing essence fails to nourish the Kidney Yin and leads to dryness. Kidney Yin deficiency means lack of fluids and leads to malnourished bones, joint and ligament. Kidney Yang is also deficient in this case leading to the warm-seeking behavior, weak pulse and arthritis. If the yang of the kidney is not active, the fluid in the bone marrow and around the joint can become stagnant. Where there is stagnation there is always pain and unnatural calcification. The dampness-Phlegm in both elbow leads to obstruction and stagnation for blood and Qi with severe pain or Bony Bi. According to the Sheng Cycle, the Wood element is influenced because is the son of Water. According to the Ko cycle, the wood restrains earth, which explains the Spleen signs (1).

The main goals were to treat the root of the problem which was Kidney Qi deficiency. The treatment included building up and tonifying Qi and blood, moving Qi and blood to resolve stagnation, nourishing Yin, the bones and moistening the sinews. The Spleen deficiency also

needed to be addressed, as it is one of the main Qi makers and its function has to be tonified. The liver has to be sedated and tonified as well.

The Bony Bi syndrome should be treated with some local and distal points to help to eliminate the Damp-Heat and disperse it. This should lead to the release of the painful obstruction.

To sedate the liver LIV 3 was used. To harmonize liver and promote flow of Qi LIV 3, GB 34, and SP 6 were used. PC 6 was used several times to calm his mind.

SP 6 and Sp9 were also used to tonify Spleen in combination with ST 36. BL 23 and KD 3 were used to tonify Kidney Qi and BL 11 to nourish the bones and sinews and SP 10 to nourish blood and eliminate blood stagnation.

On the last session, I decided to add some local points like LI 11 and TH 10 to remove obstruction, clear the heat, improve the flow of Qi and blood to have some pain relief. After the first treatment, Lucifer got well soon, he was more active, playing and moving a lot without showing any sign of pain, being more friendly to the owner and the other cat. He didn't show any diarrhea anymore, eating properly and enjoying life as much as he can. At this point he didn't show any signs of relapse.

The effectiveness of the acupuncture treatment was overwhelming the owner with joy and Lucifer was living his life properly.

It has been scientifically proven that acupuncture can result in pain relief. Without a doubt acupuncture is mostly used to treat painful conditions.

In conclusion this was a rewarding case with a positive outcome for now. It gave me a nice and different perspective of what I thought acupuncture in practice is supposed to be.

## **REFERENCES**

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