

Is Glaucoma a Local or Systemic Disease?

Huang Wei Ling*

Infectious Diseases, General Practice, Nutrition, Medical Acupuncture, Pain Management Medical Acupuncture and Pain Management Clinic, Franca, São Paulo, Brazil

***Corresponding Author:** Huang Wei Ling MD, Rua Homero Pacheco Alves, 1929, Franca, São Paulo, Brazil.

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Abstract

Introduction: Glaucoma is a group of eye conditions that damage the optic nerve, the health of which is vital for good vision. This damage is often caused by an abnormally high pressure in the eye.

Purpose: To demonstrate that glaucoma is a systemic disease, caused by internal energy imbalances.

Methods: This study was centered in a study performed at the São Paulo University, in the ophthalmology department, in the glaucoma section, studying the intra-ocular pressure of 4 patients that were in treatment of glaucoma. All patients were submitted to auricular acupuncture sessions and intra-ocular pressure were measured 15 and 30 minutes after this procedure. All this reasoning was based on one specific patient that I treated in 2006, that sought acupuncture due to pains in his legs. He also presented constipation and felt cold in his lower limbs. According to traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), his diagnosis was Blood and Kidney *Yang* Deficiency. Ten acupuncture sessions, twice a week, were performed. He presented great improvement in his leg pain, and stopped treatment. One month later, he returned to be re-evaluated, and described to have a surprising drop in his Intra Ocular Pressure (IOP) (reducing from 40 to 17 mmHg) even though I was not aware of the patient's glaucoma condition.

Results: All patients evaluated had a reduction in the intra-ocular pressure after rebalancing the internal energy using auricular acupuncture associating with apex ear bloodletting.

Conclusion: The conclusion of this study is that glaucoma is a reflex of a systemic energy imbalance and the cause of the disease is not located only inside the eyes. So, it is important to know this cause of the formation of disease to treat the root of the problem, that is invisible by the naked eye associating with local treatment using eye drops, to achieve better results.

Keywords: *Glaucoma; Energy; Diet; Acupuncture; Traditional Chinese Medicine; Hippocrates*

Introduction

Glaucoma is a group of progressive retinal ganglion cells degeneration (optic neuropathies) in which the deterioration of these nerves results in cupping (a characteristic of the optic disc) and visual loss. According to studies in Western medicine, glaucoma progression has not fully characterized and the biological basis is poorly understood [1].

According to the study made by Weinreb (2014) entitled *The Pathophysiology and Treatment of Glaucoma A Review*, the author is saying that 10% of the 70 million people worldwide is blinded due to glaucoma. This disease can be asymptomatic and the number of people affected by it being higher than the number of people who knows that have this disease. It is considered the leading cause of irreversible blindness in the world [2].

In this same article, the author mentioned that only 10 to 50% of the population that have glaucoma know that they have this problem in the eye in United States [2].

They classified glaucoma in two groups of categories: open angle (80% of the cases) and closure angle glaucoma (responsible for the disproportionate number of severe vision loss). Both can be classified as primary diseases but glaucoma can be developed after use of certain medications (such as anti-inflammatory medications, corticosteroids), trauma, tumor, etc. and in all these conditions they are characterized as secondary glaucoma [2].

This article will be written following Hippocrates (c. 460 bce -c. 375 bce), father of medicine, that said that “it is important to consider other ancient medical traditions prior to the knowledge we have nowadays”. For this reason, I will use some concepts used by traditional Chinese medicine to explain if glaucoma is a local or a systemic disease. The second oath of Hippocrates (c. 460 bce -c. 375 bce) used in this article was “we need to treat the patient and not the disease” [3].

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this article is to address other possible cause of glaucoma formation, that are the energy imbalances of *Yin, Yang, Qi, Blood* and formation of internal Heat, and to emphasize that glaucoma is only the reflection of these systemic energy imbalances and all the alterations are not only inside the eyes, but the symptoms of high intra-ocular pressure are only the clinical manifestation that there are alterations in the internal energy (*Yin, Yang, Qi* and Blood) and the treatment rebalancing these energies are very important to treat the cause of the high intra-ocular pressure and not just treating the symptoms (using eye-drops).

Methods

Through an extensive search of article indexed in PubMed regarding glaucoma in Western and in traditional Chinese medicine, and the description of the results of patients with glaucoma that were in treatment in the University of São Paulo, in the ophthalmology department, in the glaucoma section, and were treated using common eye drops recommended by the ophthalmologists and also, using auricular acupuncture points, to rebalance the internal energy imbalances of *Yin, Yang, Qi, Blood* and taking out the Heat.

In this initial project to evaluate if the patient with glaucoma could reduce or not the intra-ocular pressure after using auricular acupuncture points in the ear (one of the tools used by traditional Chinese medicine), the patient measured the intra-ocular pressure before the auricular acupuncture session, and 15 and 30 minutes after the auricular acupuncture session using mustard seeds applied by small adhesive tapes associated with apex ear bloodletting.

The auricular acupuncture was chosen instead of using systemic acupuncture because the use of this last option needs to have appropriate rooms with litter (to lie down) for each patient that was not possible to do at that time, so the use of auricular acupuncture was a tool in acupuncture that could do the same function of systemic acupuncture (and do not need to have specific room and litter for each patient to perform each systemic acupuncture session using needles).

It was chosen aleatory 4 patients between May and June 2013, that were in the outpatient treatment of the University of São Paulo (Clinics Hospital in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil). The patient was chosen aleatory and were instructed to measure the intra-ocular pressure at

the moment of the attendance at that day (by two medical ophthalmologists) and measurement of intra-ocular pressure fifteen minutes and thirty minutes after the application of mustard seeds in some points in the ear of the patient (such as Liver, Heart, Spleen, Lung and Kidney, Large intestine, Shen-Men, Occiput and eye point). The first 5 points described are the internal organs responsible for the production of *Yin, Yang, Qi* and Blood energy responsible for our health and their balance is of major importance to maintain the normal function of all cell, organs and system in our whole body, including in this case, the internal organs that are altered in patients with glaucoma that are responsible for the production of internal energy of *Yin* and *Yang* (Kidney), *Qi* (Lung and Liver) and Blood (Spleen and Heart). The imbalances of these energy can lead the formation of internal Fire (that I will describe in the discussion section), that is one of the causes of glaucoma formation in traditional Chinese medicine.

Results

The result of intraocular pressure measurement at the moment of the attendance of the patient, 15 and 30 minutes after the auricular acupuncture session were demonstrated in the table 1-4 showing the initials of the name of each patient, the date of the attendance, the age, the initial intra-ocular (IOP) pressure before auricular acupuncture and the results of intra-ocular (IOP) measurement after 15 and 30 minutes. It was also described the symptoms presented by each patient and the city in Brazil that each patient live.

Patient Name	B.Y 16 years old	IOP measurement		Symptom	City
Date of service 05/09/2013		Right eye	Left eye	Red eye, hurt for 2 years, use of topical corticosteroids and vitamin to gain weight	Ribeirão Preto
	Before	9.0	9.0		
	15 minutes	4.0	9.0		
	30 minutes	4.0	4.0		
Data of service 05/16/2013	Before				
	15 minutes	8	8		
	30 minutes	8	8		
Data of service 05/23/2013	Before	8	8		
	15 minutes	4	4		
	30 minutes	8	8		
Data of service 06/13/2013	Before	12	12		
	15 minutes	12	12		
	30 minutes	Unrealized	Unrealized		

Note: Note that the measures from the penultimate to the last care, there was a considerable increase in the pressure measure, as we did not see patients for two weeks (Corpus Cristis Holiday and Ophthalmology Congress).

Table 1: There were a considerable reduction in the intra-ocular pressure after treating the patient using auricular acupuncture points associating with apex ear bloodletting (on the day 9th, May, 2013), reducing it from 9 to 4 mmHg after 15 minutes (in the right eye) and after 30 minutes of the procedure (reducing from 9 to 4 mmHg) in both eyes.

Patient Name	J.F.L 77 Years Old	IOP measurement		Symptom	City
		Right eye	Left eye		
Data of service 05/16/2013	Before/08:45	Has not been measured	12.0	Glaucoma 8 years old, can't see right eye for 7 years	São Sebastião do Paraíso
	15 minutes/09:20	Has not been measured	11.0		
	30 minutes/ 08:35	48.0	10.0		
Data of service 05/23/2013	Before/	48.0	15.0	SHAN	
	15 minutes/ 09:05	38.0	13.0		
	30 minutes/ 09:25	14.0	12.0		
Data of service 06/13/2013	Before	34.0	8.0	Insomnia and pain in the right eye, feeling of sand in the eye	
	15 minutes / 10:25	34.0	8.0		
	30 minutes / 10:40	Unrealized	Unrealized		
<p>Note: Note that Shan Acupuncture was performed during the appointment on 05/23, without the use of seeds and only the adhesive tapes on the points hand, foot and shoulder, and even so, there was an important reduction in IOP, after fifteen and thirty minutes.</p>					

Table 2: In this case, there were a reduction in intra-ocular pressure (from 48 to 38 mmHg after 15 minutes and to 14 mmHg after 30 minutes in the right eye and from 15 to 13 mmHg in the first 15 minutes and to 12 mmHg after 30 minutes in the left eye) even I did not put in the auricular acupuncture points recommended in this study. It was used the hand, shoulder and foot points in the ear (Shan acupuncture). What I want to emphasize in this patient was that even cleaning the ear using cotton ball and alcohol, it was possible to see a reduction in the intra-ocular pressure and do not necessary the insertion of seeds in the auricular points to feel the reduction in this intra-ocular pressure. This result can show us that all the points are integrated by the energy flow that can affect the intra-ocular pressure, even if I do not use the specific points recommended by the literature or used in this study.

Patient Name	A.V.R.M 56 Years Old	IOP measurement		Symptom	City
		Right eye	Left eye		
Data of service 05/23/2013	Before / 10:00	16.0	12.0	Cannot see closely to read	Cristais Paulista
	15 minutes / 10:15	13.0	14.0		
	30 minutes /	14.0	13.0		
Data of service 06/13/2013	Before/	11.0	11.0	Important improvement of anxiety and stress.	
	15 minutes/ 09:45	10.0	10.0		
	30 minutes /	Not Seen	Not Seen		

Table 3: In this patient, you can note that the intra-ocular pressure reduced in the first 15 minutes after the auricular acupuncture session (from 16 to 13 mmHg) and from 11 to 10 mmHg, after 15 minutes of the date 06/13/2013. You can note that it was reduced the intra-ocular pressure from one month to other (May to June 2013) from 16 in May to 11 mmHg in June 2013, before the use of auricular acupuncture session. In the left eye, it occurred an increase in the intra-ocular pressure (from 12 to 14 mmHg in the first 15 minutes and from 12 to 13 mmHg and I cannot understand the reason for this increased in the IOP measurement).

Patient Name	M.M.O	IOP measurement		Symptom	City
		Right eye	Left eye		
Data of service 06/13/2013	Before / 08:25	13.0	14.0	He does not have Glaucoma; eye tremor accompanies his uncle in the Glaucoma clinic	
	15 minutes /	12.0	12.0		
	30 minutes /	Unrealized	Unrealized		

Table 4: In this patient, the patient does not have glaucoma and when doing auricular acupuncture, there was a reduction of intra-ocular pressure, after 15 minutes of auricular acupuncture session reducing from 13 to 12 mmHg in the right eye and from 14 to 12 mmHg in the left eye.

Discussion

I will address this theme in this research article, whether glaucoma is a local or systemic disease, telling the reader how I generated the whole theory that I am basing on today, for the treatment of the most diverse diseases, in this case, for patients with diagnosis of glaucoma [3].

It all started in 2006, when I attended a 70-year-old male patient, who was experiencing pain in his legs and had been using anti-inflammatory drugs for 6 months, without any improvement [3-5].

He went to an appointment with me to try another type of treatment, as the medications he was taking, according to Western medicine’s reasoning, were not having an improvement of his condition [3].

The patient underwent 10 acupuncture sessions and received Chinese dietary orientations. After the 10 acupuncture sessions, the patient returned to be re-evaluated and said to me that his pain in his legs had improved and that he had improved too much from another problem that he had not mentioned to me [3].

The patient had been treating glaucoma for the last 40 years and was using eye drops throughout this period, but he was not having an improvement in the intraocular pressure which was always above 40 mmHg and for the first time in his life, his intraocular pressure reduced from 40 to 17 mmHg, confirmed by your ophthalmologist [3-5].

The description of this story is in almost all scientific articles written by me, because it was through this patient result that I have been treating all my patients today, that is focusing in treating the root of the problem (which are the energy imbalances), which are at the root of tree, a metaphor often used by me to explain the different level of treatment in a variety of diseases. The tree being the symbol of the human body, where the various branches symbolize each medical specialty and the leaves that is coming out of each branches symbolize each symptoms and diseases treated by each specialty. In this metaphor, I am explaining the different levels of treatment performed by Western medicine and traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), as showed in the Figure 1 [3-8].

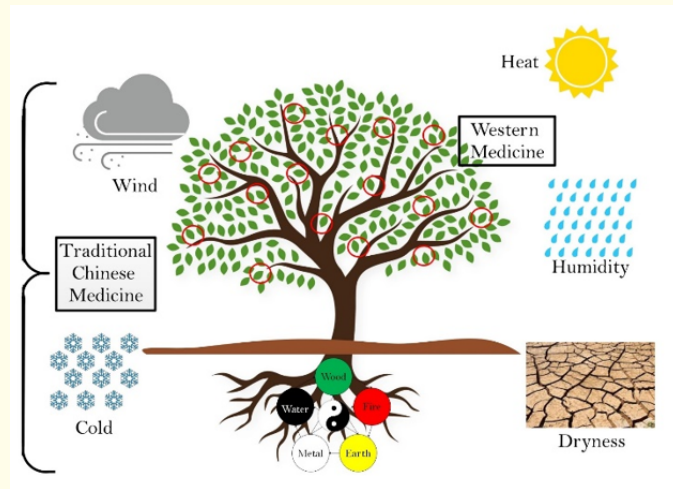


Figure 1: Metaphor of the tree showing the different level of diagnosis and treatment in Western medicine and in traditional Chinese medicine.

Western medicine treats at the leaf level, and Chinese medicine understands that all symptoms at the leaf level are only reflections of energy imbalances that are present at the root level of the tree, and invisible to the naked eye (where there are two theories: *Yin* and *Yang* and Five Elements). In addition, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) considers the influence of external pathogenic factors as potentially inducing factors for disease formation, as described by me in some scientific articles such as in the article written by me (2018) entitled *Why do Patients Still Catch Hospital Infections Despite the Practice of Infection Prevention and Control Programs?*, and in the second article also written by me (2020) entitled *Invasion of Wind and Cold as Cause of Respiratory Tract Infection Outbreak in a School Kinder Garden Group of Kids*. [3-8].

In the case of glaucoma, Western medicine is treating at the leaf level, while Chinese medicine understands that all manifestations in the leaves, in the case of glaucoma, are only manifestations of energy imbalances located at the root of the tree, which is invisible to the naked eye (and usually do not demonstrate alterations in the laboratory or radiological tests in the beginning of energy imbalances). TCM also understands that the human being is influenced by external pathogenic factors (Wind, Cold, Dryness, Heat, Humidity), so I (2019) already published an article whose title is *The Importance of Correcting Energy Imbalances and Chakras Energy Deficiencies in the Treatment of Patients with Glaucoma*, in which I demonstrated that patients who have glaucoma have a deficiency in energy of the five massive internal organs (Kidney, Liver, Heart, Spleen and Lung), which corresponds to the theory of the Five Elements (which are located at the root of the tree). These energy deficiencies are leading to increased intraocular pressure, and that for the treatment of glaucoma, it is necessary to treat all energy imbalances, which are at the root level of the tree, and which are not currently being treated by Western medicine. Because of this fact, this patient reported in this discussion section did not show improvement in his intraocular pressure, as his problem was not located in the eye, but his problem was systemic, with a localized manifestation of the problem [3].

According to TCM, one energy imbalance of *Yin*, or *Yang* or *Qi* or Blood or a combination of these four energy imbalances can cause several different clinical manifestations and one clinical manifestation can come from different energy imbalances as I demonstrated in the article written by me (2021) entitled *Energy Alterations and Chakras' Energy Deficiencies and Propensity to SARS-CoV-2 Infection* and showed in the Figure 2 [8].



Figure 2: Yin, Yang, Qi and blood interrelationship.

The energy imbalances that can cause high-intraocular pressure is excessive Fire of the Gallbladder and Liver, extreme Heat producing internal Wind and Wind-Fire producing the attacking of the orifices causing poor drainage, emotional alterations causing the smooth flow of the Liver Qi to do not flow adequately and stagnation of Qi and transforming into Fire, causing the blocked of the humor aqueous inside the eyes. The excessive Phlegm produced by the Spleen and pancreas can lead to excessive Fire, resulting in stagnation of aqueous humor according to traditional Chinese medicine, in the book entitled *Ophthalmology in Chinese Medicine*, written by Wei-Qi-Ping (2011) [9].

I became a researcher at the University of São Paulo, in the ophthalmology department, in the glaucoma section, in 2013, where I started to do the treatment of patients with diagnosis of glaucoma, using auricular acupuncture [3].

In this study, it was observed that the vast majority of patients reduce intraocular pressure, only performing auricular acupuncture with apex ear bloodletting and using mustard applied to the recommended points through a small adhesive tape. In this same study, I also showed in the table 2 and 4, that patients that do not received the treatment using the auricular acupuncture points recommended in the literature, can reduce their intra-ocular pressure also, because in traditional Chinese medicine, all the organs and systems are integrated by the energy flow and the treatment of one organ can influence on the result of other organ, as I am showing in the table 2. In the table 4, I am showing that even patients with normal intra-ocular pressure and without the diagnosis of glaucoma, can reduce the intra-ocular pressure when treating with auricular acupuncture associating with apex ear bloodletting. This study was presented in the 18th Asia Pacific Ophthalmologists Annual Meeting that was held in July 29-30, 2019 in Melbourne, Australia [10].

Auricular acupuncture is a micro system and the ear is considered an inverted fetus, where all the organs in the human body are represented in the ear [3-8].

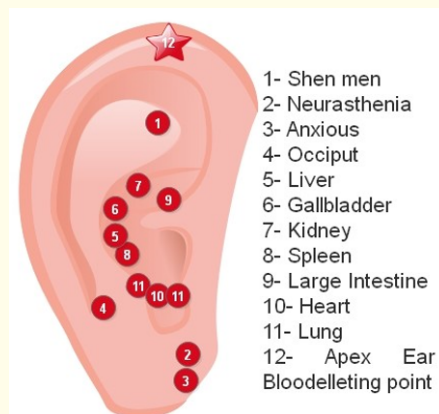


Figure 3: Auricular acupuncture point used to treat patients with glaucoma.

In order to rebalance the energies of *Yin*, *Yang*, *Qi* and Blood, I placed the mustard seed points in the corresponding Kidney (responsible for the formation of *Yin* and *Yang* energy), Liver (responsible for the distribution of *Qi*), Spleen (responsible for the Blood production), Heart (responsible for the controlling the Blood flow inside the Blood vessels) and Lung (responsible for the *Qi* distribution), showed in the Figure 3 and do the apex of the ear (to take out the Heat) showed in the Figure 4, it was observed a reduction in the intraocular pressure in most of the patients studied (Table 1 to 4) even in patient without high intra-ocular pressure (Table 4). The energy function of each auricular acupuncture point was published in the article written by me (2018) entitled *How Do You Treat Back Pain in Your Practice? Part 2* [11].

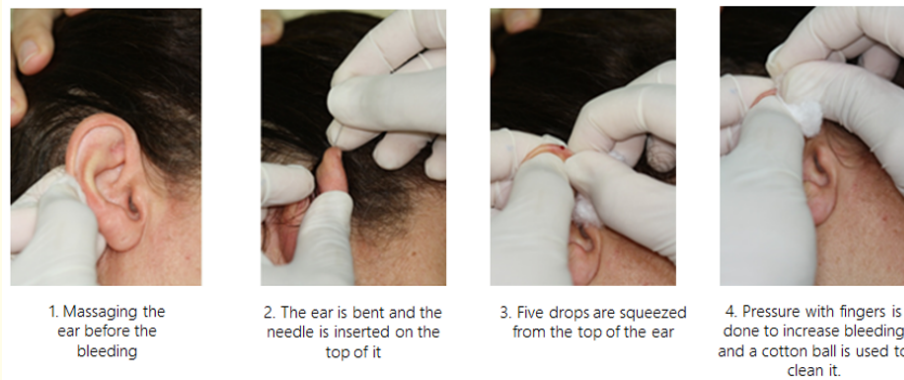


Figure 4: Apex ear bloodletting.

Furthermore, in the article written by me (2019) entitled *The Importance of Correcting Energy Imbalances and Chakras Energy Deficiencies in the Treatment of Patients with Glaucoma*, I state that patients with glaucoma have chakras' energy centers deficient in energy and that the treatment, replenishing the energy of these chakras, using highly diluted medications such as homeopathies, according to the theory created by me (2020) entitled *Constitutional Homeopathy of the Five Elements based on Traditional Chinese Medicine*, it is a very important tool nowadays, to treat the cause of the formation of glaucoma, and not just treating the symptoms (that is the high intra-ocular pressure) [3,12].

Therefore, through this article, I would like to emphasize that local treatment is important, but it must be accompanied by systemic treatment, as glaucoma is only the reflexes of systemic energy imbalances and not only located in the eye and the holistic treatment of the patient is very important for the treatment of the cause of the problem, that is usually not visible by the naked eyes [3].

In light of what was said above, the treatment associating Chinese dietary therapy, (as said by Hippocrates, *make your medicine your food and your food your medicine*), accompanied by apex ear bloodletting and auricular and systemic acupuncture, and the treatment replenishing the energy of the chakras' energy centers using homeopathic medications, according to *Constitutional Homeopathy of the Five Elements based on Traditional Chinese Medicine* are some forms of treatment recommended by me, associated with local treatment [3,12].

In this article, I am not using the replenishment of the chakras' energy centers with highly diluted medications because the focus of the treatment was only to rebalance the internal energy and it was not used at that time the diagnosis of energy deficiency in the internal five massive organs in traditional Chinese medicine, through the use of measurement of energy in the chakras' energy centers using radiesthesia procedure, as I demonstrated in the article entitled (2019). *The Importance of Correcting Energy Imbalances and Chakras Energy Deficiencies in the Treatment of Patients with Glaucoma* [3].s

According to Hippocrates, “natural forces within us are the true healers of the diseases” [13].

I would like to say that acupuncture is considered a medical specialty in Brazil by the Federal Medical Council since 1995 and it is an important toll in traditional Chinese medicine to treat all kinds of diseases, including in this case, glaucoma’s patients. In this case, the focus of the treatment was not the diseases itself but rebalancing the internal energy of *Yin*, *Yang*, *Qi* and Blood and taking out Heat retention through the use of apex ear bloodletting [14].

To understand if glaucoma is a local or systemic disease, we need to understand the two kinds of medicine, Western and traditional Chinese medicine, because the first is visualizing the materialized energy and the second, the energy alterations in the root of the tree before materializing, in the energy level, as I am showing in the table 5 that is showing the different phases of formation of disease from a healthy person [4-8].

Progression from Health to Disease				
	Organ	Exams	Energy Reserve	Symptoms
Phase 1	Slowing down of organ functions	Normal	Energy Reserves-normal	Without clinical symptoms
Phase 2	Slowing down of organ functions	Normal	Consumption of internal Energy Reserves	With symptoms in other organ
Phase 3	Slowing down of organ functions	Normal	Consumption of external Energy Reserves	With symptoms in same organ
Phase 4	Reversible cellular lesion	Little alternation	Consumption of blood Reserves	Curable disease
Phase 5	Irreversible cellular lesion	Excessive alteration	Metabolic exhaustion	Incurable disease

Table 5: Evolution from health to diseases.

To show that we need to have the two kinds of medicine in our mind to understand the whole and not only the parts, in this case, eye pathology, we need to integrate the knowledge of Western and traditional Chinese medicine, as I am demonstrating through the *Yin* and *Yang* metaphor, in the Figure 5. In this metaphor, I am showing that both kinds of medicine are different but they are complementary, when one ends begin the other [4-8].



Figure 5: Metaphor of Yin and Yang symbolizing the relationship between traditional Chinese medicine and Western medicine and the importance to have the two kinds of medicine in the mind to treat in the deepest level, glaucoma’s patients.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is that glaucoma is a systemic condition of internal energy deficiency and formation of Heat and the treatment of these energy imbalances is very important to treat the root of the problem and not just treating the symptoms. The use of Chinese medicine's tools, that exists for more than 5000 years, following Hippocrates oath, is of paramount importance to treat all energy imbalances presented by each patient that are leading to the formation of glaucoma in the energy level.

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Conflict of Interest

I would like to say that there is no conflict of interest in this study.

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