

**Clara Cohen:** Exams are scary. Exams are stressful. Believe you or me. I've been there. I remember that. I'll tell you a quick story. When I took the exam for the board exam, we were the first one because British Columbia had just been regulated for acupuncture.

And so we were the first one. We had no idea what was on the exam. Nobody told us what was going to happen. It was literally in the dark. And we had a. Practical. And we had a theory, so the theory exam was four hours. And I remember coming out of there feeling like I got hit by a truck.

I was so exhausted, what we had for the practice was chaos, completely chaos, which they don't do this anymore, but they had a real person and we had to locate point on that person. So they gave us a bunch of points and we had to locate, we had to needle, we had to do all those things with those people. They scheduled us all through the day and I was at the end of the day, that's when they scheduled me and my person.

Fell asleep on me while I was trying to locate back shoe point and literally fell backwards and I had to catch him. Not stressful enough. I was already sweating. There's four people on the panel and they're watching you while you're doing this and you're locating the points and this guy falls asleep and falls on me.

It was so stressful. So they don't do this anymore, thankfully, because that was just so hard and he was sweating a lot. 'cause he had been there for a lot all day and they made the room really hot because they didn't want him to be cold. 'cause he was just wearing shorts. So I was trying to put stickers and locate and it was sliding on his back.

It was just such a funny experience. So that was my experience a long time ago in 2003.. They don't do that anymore. So I just wanted to say, I totally understand where you guys are coming from with. This whole exam thing, if you are, and I know there's some practitioners that are here because they really wanna consolidate what they know.

So I really truly appreciate you wanting to deepen your knowledge and get ready to change the world one patient at a time.

A little while back, I taught a live 90 minutes masterclass on exactly how to approach your TCM and acupuncture exams. Strategically, what to prioritize, how to structure your study session, and how to basically practice exam

Today I'm giving you a 20 minute snippet from that class so you can see how I support students to prepare them for the board exam.

And if after listening, you want the full 90 minute masterclass plus the Accu exam made easy PDF, which includes 400 multiple choice questions with explanation of the answers.

So you learn, not just memorize, which is so important. In order to become the best practitioner you can be.

The link to both is below or go to [acuproacademy.com/acuexams](http://acuproacademy.com/acuexams).

Okay, let's get into it. Here's your sneak peek of the masterclass,

Welcome to AcuPro, a show dedicated to making Chinese medicine and acupuncture. Easy to grasp and fun to learn. Hi, I am your host, Clara Cohen. I support practitioners and students and like you in changing the world one patient at a time. My goal is to share my passion for TCM and empower you to achieve superior patient care.

I love to showcase the amazing benefits of acupuncture because after all, acupuncture rocks.

This is what we're gonna do today. We're gonna talk about study tips. Because I know it's a lot of information, it's a lot of points, it's a lot of knowledge to grasp and to really memorize because some of it.

It's memorization, but some of it, it's understanding. We're gonna practice, we're gonna practice exam, we're gonna practice questions,

and then we're gonna do case study. And we're gonna practice diagnosis 'cause I know that's the hardest part for everyone.

Let's start to practice. The person is depressed, anxious. 10, agitated, angry size has insomnia, dreams, chest oppression, rib pain has to clear phlegm from the throat, has a red face, constipation.

The tongue is red with a yellow, greasy coat and the pulse is wiry, slippery, and rapid.

Liver qi stagnation is everywhere, right? Obviously there is liver qi stagnation. Where are liver stagnation signs? Let's look at them. Sighing. That's a liver stagnation. Being tense.

That's a liver qi stagnation will not relax. Depressed. Now here's the thing, depression can have many patterns, but it always has liver qi stagnation. And the reason is when people are depressed, they feel stuck that they can't get out of the depression state, which makes sense, right? So they feel stuck, hopeless, et cetera.

So it could be due to many things, but there's always an underlying liver qi stagnation. So I'll put depressed in there. Tense sign. This is all liver qi stagnation, rib pain, liver qi, stagnation, wiry pulse, so those are your symptoms that come with liver qi stagnation? Yes. Okay.

Here's the thing, the tongue and pulse will tell you everything. The tongue is red with a yellow greasy coat, red as heat or fire. Obviously yellow as heat and greasy is either damp or phlegm. The pulse is wiry.

That's a liver qi technician. It's rapid, that means heat and slippery means damp or phlegm. Because the person clears phlegm from the throat. There is phlegm,

Anxious is the heart. Agitated is obviously lots of agitation, restless, that's fire or heat, insomnia. The heart dreams is the heart chest oppression.

So that's often a phlegm problem, red face means heat or fire. The heart connects and open into the face. So red face is heart fire.

So liver qi stagnation, plus heart phlegm, fire. We all agree? Yes.

When it comes to constipation, it could be due to many things.

Liver qi, stagnation can lead to constipation, but fire or heat, and even phlegm. Phlegm can lead to constipation.

Do you guys know your foundation really well?

When there's a pale tongue, it could be a qi deficiency, a blood deficiency, or a yang deficiency, because a yin deficiency, of course, has a red tongue. Now, how do we differentiate qi deficiency, blood deficiency, and yang deficiency? For a pale tongue, that's what's important. A pale tongue is qi deficiency.

A bare fat or swollen tongue is a yang deficiency and a ba thin, like thin, the opposite of fat. Right? Tongue, his blood deficiency. So a blood deficiency is pale and very small, while the yang deficiency is pale and very big, and the qi deficiency is normal, but just pale. That's how we differentiate when we do diagnosis.

When looking at a slippery pulse, we know that a slippery pulse can be damp or phlegm.

It absolutely is a pulse during pregnancy. It's a normal pulse, but it's a pulse during pregnancy, which is slippery pulse. We forget that sometimes a slippery pulse is excess heat, it's not always dampness.

So that is really interesting. Right, because I think we forget, 'cause we always think excess heat, rapid pulse, but sometimes if it's slippery rapid and the person doesn't have any damp or phlegm symptoms, when you do your consultation, then it's only excess heat. So excess heat is still part of slippery pulse and we sometimes we forget about that.

Right. I wanted to address that 'cause I know that's something that stump my students quite a lot. That's when we like, okay, maybe I should review my pulse a little bit more so I know my pulse a little bit deeper. Right?

**Ad:** Are you an acupuncture student feeling overwhelmed by the vast TCM knowledge required for exams and boards? You're not alone. I remember those crazy exam days back in 2003, and yes, the struggle was super real. This is why I created a powerful exam prep tool designed to boost your confidence and ensure your success.

You are gonna love. Accurate exams and A-D-Z-P-D-F. It is a comprehensive collection of over 400 multiple choice questions to help you prepare with confidence. What sets this quiz, PDF apart is the inclusion of not only relevant questions, but detailed explanation to reinforce your understanding because memorizing.

Is not enough. And this Game Changer tool is over 60 video links allowing you to revisit key concepts for better comprehension. So don't settle for exam anxiety. Grab your copy of accurate exams made easy PDF today, and write your exams with confidence. So click the link in the show notes or go to my website [accu pro academy.com](http://accu-pro-academy.com) and click the shop tab on the menu bar.

You won't regret it.

**Clara Cohen:** What is the TCM diagnosis for high pitch tinnitus? That is short in duration, so it's not constant, right?

It just comes for maybe a couple of minutes or something and it doesn't last. The ear relates to the kidney. The kidney opens into the ear.

However, the gallbladder meridian goes around the ear, which is the body of the liver. When it's low pitch, it's a kidney problem. It's usually constant, and this is the tinnitus that is really hard to get rid of.

That patients have a hard time. Some people will say, I'll have this for 20 years. That is a kidney deficiency. Most of the time, depending on the sound, it's a kidney yin deficiency. It could be a kidney qi deficiency or kidney, yang deficiency depending on the symptoms. But it's a kidney deficiency. When it's high pitched and short duration, it comes and goes.

It comes from liver qi stagnation, and when our liver qi is stagnated too long, then the liver yang rises because there's more stress put upon us and it comes up so it is the liver yang rising with liver yin deficiency.

You could have tinnitus that is high pitched but constant, and that sucks because that's a kidney and liver yin deficiency. And that's not good because the high pitch is really more annoying or awful to hear than the low pitch. None are great, but the high pitch constant really sucks. So this is a liver yang rising.

Yes. Perfect.

What is the TCM diagnosis for constipation with sticky stools. I talked about it earlier when we talked about how constipation can be many things. Spleen blood deficiency. The stools will be dry, little pebbles.

Liver, qi stagnation. Constipation would be unfinished feeling with gas, bloating, but no problem with the stool. They'd be normal when they come out. It just feels like you're unfinished, right? Phlegm and damp, they both have sticky stools. You need a lot of toilet paper to wipe that sticky stool.

However, damp would have loose stool while phlegm would have constipation. I have a video on how to differentiate dampen phlegm and one of the symptoms to differentiate. 'cause they have the same pulse. They have the same tongue, right? Greasy and slippery.

They have a lot of greasy scalp, greasy skin, similar symptoms. Nausea can be damp or phlegm, right? But then you look at the stools, if it's loose stools it's damp, if it's constipation it's phlegm. 'cause they both have sticky stool. But constipation would be phlegm. 'cause phlegm is thicker.

What is the TCM diagnosis for bloating.

That is worse at the end of the day. You start your day, you're flat, and then the pants get tighter and tighter and by the end of the day your pants are completely tight and it's, oh my God, I'm so bloated, I gotta undo my pants. It's really important to differentiate symptoms because this is how you do diagnosis and this is how we're gonna practice.

'cause yes, it's great to pass exam, but we also wanna practice.

Spleen qi deficiency bloating would be bloating after meals. So you just ate a meal and then you feel like, oh my God, I'm six months pregnant, kind of thing for women out here. So the bloating comes after meal.

That's a spleen qi deficiency. Now, damp can lead to spleen qi deficiency and spleen qi deficiency can lead to damp, it could be one or the other, but both will be after meals. Plan would be more bloating for indigestion. If you ate a big Christmas dinner and then you feel like, oh my God, I'm so bloated because I had this massive big dinner.

It's indigestion. It creates phlegm. That's the bloating. The more stressed we are, or the longer we sit at our desk all day and not moving the qi, then the more the bloating will happen. So bloating that gets worse as the day. Keeps going, and by the end of the day, that's a liver qi stagnation.

So differentiating bloating.

Okay, last one. Before we do a full case study diagnosis with blurred vision and floaters.

So blurred vision and floaters is a blood deficiency, and of course it's affecting liver because liver opens into the eyes. You have to think that floaters blurred vision, it's poor vision. Think of blood deficiency, always pale and poor.

So blurred vision is poor vision, which we can add night vision to that. So if people have poor night vision, they don't see very well at night. That's also a

liver blood deficiency. Okay, so we've done our practice. I think that was awesome. Now let's go full on case studies.

This is one of my favorite thing to do because I think this is putting it in practice, not just for exam, but also for patients, right? That's what I think is fantastic. This is a long case. So you welcome to take notes to write things down as you listen to me, because we're gonna have to figure out the diagnosis for this person.

Non-smoker. Social drinker, exercise is a lot. Runs three times a week. Bikes to work daily. Does weightlifting three times a week. Does cross country skiing on weekend or plays tennis, obviously, depending if it's winter or summer.

'cause we're in Canada, lives in Vancouver. Works for an advertising agency in front of the computer eight hours a day. When you do a consultation, make sure you ask about lifestyle because it will give you clues, right? She's not smoking. You can confirm that she's never smoked. Great. That gives you clues that you don't have to worry too much right now about the lung at this stage,

social drinker means she drinks a little bit, but not too much. However, she exercises a lot. That's a lot of exercising. So we have to look at, uh oh, is her muscle joints ligament? How is her energy? We're gonna have to look at this, right? She also sits at the computer all day long. How does that play a role in health?

She came because she has left elbow pain for the past three months. So now it's almost chronic, right? 'cause it's been three months. How did it all start? After cross-country skiing marathon 125 kilometers long. She did this race and hasn't stopped hurting since then. You're moving your arm a lot and that's repetitive movement and that affected one side of her elbow or the left side, right?

The pain is constant but worse at night. It wakes her up. She tries ice or heat, but nothing helps and it's worse on exercise. Okay, so when she exercise, what she does a lot, the pain is sometimes very sharp. Other time it's just dull. But it's still there 'cause it's constant. She cannot grip anything with the left hand 'cause she has no force.

Right? It's very weak and sometimes even flexing or extending her arm or forearm hurts. 'cause when you do an extension or a flexion, she feels the pain is in the joints, but also in the muscles around it. When you ask people is the pain, feels like it's joint related. She was very good at telling that it was joints, muscle, and also it feels like the nerve is affected.

Her diet. She's a vegan. Which Chinese medicine doesn't quite really like since she was uh, 22 years old, so she went vegan. She eats five little meals per day, so at interval and mostly veggies, fruits, lots of nuts, seeds, grain and soy. So she doesn't eat a lot of sugar or junk food or processed food

but there is definitely a vegan diet. She loves to snack on trail mix, which is basically nuts and dried foods. Bowel movement is daily with small amount and often dry

eyes has blurred vision and floaters often look at that. She has tinnitus. High pitch for 30 seconds. Once in a while, there we go.

See all those things keep coming back for sleep. She finds it. Difficult to fall asleep due to anxiety. Takes one to two hours to fall asleep. That's a long time. Then she sleeps well when her elbow doesn't wake her up. Obviously she can sleep if she's not in pain.

**Ad:** Before we continue with today's episode, I wanna share something that honestly feels like a big moment for me if you've been following me for a while. You know, I've always said no to all sponsorships. I've been approached many times, but I turn them all down because if I don't genuinely use a product or love it, I will never recommend it to you.

But today is different. I am super excited to introduce my very first sponsor. Drum roll please. Jane app. I'm also a Jane Ambassador, so this is a company I actually use and love. I am saying yes because I've used Jane for years in my own multidisciplinary clinic. Truly, it's the best practice management software and electronic medical record.

I've ever worked with before, Jane, we were using a clunky system that made everything harder than it needed to be. When we switched the entire clinic, felt the difference immediately. Jane is built by people who actually understand what it's like to be a practitioner. Running a busy practice. One of my favorite features is online booking.

There is nothing better than waking up and seeing patients booking their own appointment. Well, I was asleep. Your patients can book when it works for them and the wait list feature. Fills last minute cancellations automatically. I love that. I used to spend so much time calling eight to 10 people just to fill up one spot.

Jane also automates the things we never enjoy doing, like intake forms, reminders, confirmation. It honestly feels like having an extra assistant handling all the moving parts. You can focus on what really matters, which is supporting your patients and being the TCM rockstar practitioner. You truly are.

There are so many features I could talk about, but we would be here all day if you are looking for a system that brings more ease, more clarity and comment to your practice. I truly. Recommend Jane. You can check it out at [jane.app/demo](http://jane.app/demo). And because you're part of the Acupro community, you can use my code acupro one mo one month when you sign up to get a one month grace period on your new account.

The link and the code are also in the show notes below for you. Now let's get back to today's episode.

**Clara Cohen:** Observation. She has a pale face. She has a thin, bony body, so she's quite thin.

It's bony, . She has varicose veins on her calves, dark purple circle under her eyes and pale nails. She's obsessed with exercise. Does it at least two or more times, hours, daily. So every day she doesn't take a break. She exercise two hours or more every day.

She doesn't read, doesn't do anything. If she didn't have time to exercise 'cause of work, she'll come home and exercise for two to three hours before she goes to bed. Okay? She has a tongue that is pale and it's a thin tongue. The sublingual or below the tongue, the veins are prominent, so we could see them very well, and it pulses thin, choppy in the middle left position.

. Start with the eight principles. Start with the basic. Is it excess? Deficiency I think we can both see that there's excess and deficiency, right? So it's not one or the other. There is deficiency for sure, but there's some excess as well.

Is it internal or external? Internal is all the organs that are affected, External is more when it's joint ligament, tendons, skin, all external. Her chief complaint is external. It's what we call Bi syndrome, right?

Bi Syndrome is painful joints or pain, somewhere that is chronic and it can be due to pathogens or stagnation. It's like a painful syndrome. Now that's looking at the yin and yang or the eight principles. Is it hot or cold? She says the pain doesn't help or make us worse or better with heat or cold, so we can't really use that at this time.

And there's no symptoms of heat or cold in her body. However, at the beginning she did a marathon cross country, it's really cold so there could have been cold invasion at the time, but it's obviously not showing up. However, cold invasion stops circulation and can create blood stasis, right?

Because cold is ice. There's nothing that penetrates it.

What are the cause she overexercise, right? That's a cause we know that that's part of lifestyle, right?

People under exercise, over exercise, and then you exercise all the time so you're not allowing your elbow to heal. And the third thing is she's st typing all day at a computer, which doesn't help your forearm and your extensors and your wrist and your elbow at all neither. So those causes the work and the lifestyle makes it even worse.

Now the real original cause is obviously repetitive movement and the marathon. Now we could also look at diet. Think her diet may not be enough blood nourishing for healing for the elbow, but obviously over exercise, repetitive movement is what's making everything worse,

because remember, the three causes in TCM or external pathogen, which were with her, was called invasion, probably from the marathon, cross country, and then emotions. Which she is a bit obsess, right? She has a bit of an obsessive controlling exercise thing. So the obsession, it becomes a little bit of an emotional problem and she can't fall asleep at night, right?

'cause she overthinks and all this. So there is emotions. And then the third one for causes or lifestyle, trauma, injury, et cetera, et cetera. So it's like others. So it's always looking at the cause, the eight principle, which we just did, right? And the TCM pattern, pathogen code, like I said, invaded the body.

And then we had the over exercise plus the typing all day. And the control issue and the anxiety. Yes. So this gives you clue. Pathogen coals creates blood stasis. Excess cold in the body, which always creates pain. Because it leads to blood stasis and blood stasis.

Main symptoms is purple and pain, and pain is sharp, fixed, really strong, which she does have, right? She said sometimes the pain is dull. Sometimes it's really sharp. So we have excess and deficiency. The over exercise lead to problem with spleen, liver, spleen is in charge of muscle liver's in charge of joints and ligaments.

So now we can look at those two as well. And then the anxiety affects the heart, which she can't fall asleep very well. And the control issue is a liver thing. When we wanna be in control, the liver is tight, A personality is in control. I ask that to patients all the time, do you like to be in control? That's a liver person.

So we have the liver blood stasis, which comes from the marathon, which come from the pathogen in cold, which led to B syndrome, which led to the blood stagnation. We have the fact that she sits at the computer all day, which is not good for her elbow, but there's also liver blood deficiency, right?

So we have liver blood deficiency, and then we have heart spleen, blood deficiency as well. If we look at those symptoms, the constant pain it's worse at night, worse at nighttime is yin time, which means worse at night is a blood deficiency. But it's sharp. And when it's sharp, that means a blood stasis.

However, sometimes it's dull. That's the blood deficiency weakness. She can't grip anything. She has no force. That is a blood deficiency. There's not enough blood to strengthen that area. She also feels pain in the joint, which we know is more liver, obviously. The fact that she has small amount of often dry bowel movement, that is again, a blood deficiency because there's no yin deficiency sign with her, right?

There's no night sweats, no feeling hot, no hot flashes, no rapid pulse. So we know it's a blood deficiency. And the blurred vision, the floaters, we know it's a liver blood deficiency. The tinnitus is a little bit of a liver yang rising, right? It's high pitch. That's when she's stressed. So even though there's liver blood stasis at the elbow, I think in general she has some liver qi stagnation.

And when she's stressed, the liver yang rises and she gets that tinnitus that goes away. She finds it difficult to fall asleep. So when we cannot fall asleep, that's a blood deficiency and due to the anxiety, worry, overthinking. So usually not being able to fall asleep is spleen and heart blood deficiencies.

And then on observation, she has a pale face, so that's a blood deficiency or qi deficiency, or yang deficiency, right? But she's a thin body. So now we know it's more blood deficiency related. Same thing with the pale thin body of the tongue, and the thin choppy pulse in the left middle position.

So that's a liver blood deficiency. Now she has the vein underneath the tongue that are prominence. That's a blood stasis. She also has varicose veins on her calf. That's blood stasis dark purple circle under the eye. That's blood stasis. If

the dark circles are black, that's affecting kidney. But if they are purple, that's a blood stagnation and she's obsessed with control.

So that's more liver. Right. Makes sense. So if we look at all those symptoms, then we know now that our patterns, are liver over control, spleen due to control issue? So control issue affects the liver, which depletes the spleen.

If spleen is depleted, it cannot produce blood because spleen produce blood to store for menstruation, for liver, and to give us strength for our muscle. Right? Because spleen is in charge of muscle, but she over exercises all the time, which depletes the spleen even more because spleen cannot produce enough blood and keep up with all this over exercise.

So now is deficient does the acute cold invasion, which we know lead to blood stasis.

So mechanism is always good to try to figure out how it'll happen.

And that's a wrap on today's sneak peek. I hope you really enjoy and benefited from the case study specifically. Let me pull out the three things I want you to walk away with. Number one, start with the eight principles.

Then look at which substance is affected and which organs are affected, but always look for the cause first, because it will lead you to what? Affected make sense. Number two, practice under exam conditions. It sounds obvious, but most students study in a relaxed environment and then panic when the clock is ticking.

Time yourself, simulate the pressure that will help you tremendously. Number three, know the exams structure before you sit down. Ask people that have gone through the board exam before you so you are aware. I didn't know anything when I did my exam because of course. We were the first one, so we knew nothing.

Oh, it's so much better now to be able to understand what the structure is. So you're more prepared

now if you want both the full 90 minutes masterclass and the Accu exams made Easy PDF, the link is below for you or go to [acuproacademy.com/acuexams](https://acuproacademy.com/acuexams).

They are designed for students like you who wanna rock their board exams. As always, thank you so much for being here and your incredible support. You are

the reason I keep showing up, and I genuinely love being part of your TCM journey. Until next time, keep going. Keep learning and remember acupuncture rocks and so do you.

Thank you so much for spending your time with me today. I truly hope you benefited from this episode, and I would love for you to share it with a friend that may benefit from it as well. Follow the show, live a review, and if you want more, go to my website, [acuproacademy.com](http://acuproacademy.com). I have tons of resources there with treatment protocols, case studies, free courses, and so much more.

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