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Apitherapy Course, Lesson #4

Korean Study of BVT  
for Osteoarthritis  
(Part IV, Conclusion)

Insurance for Apitherapists

Website: <http://www.apitherapy.org.aas>

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## The Revitalizing Power of Bee Venom Therapy

GLENN PERRY

I first heard of the therapeutic benefits of bee stings in 1997 at a seminar on bees and beekeeping taught by Gunther Hauk, translator of Rudolf Steiner's *Bees*. At the time, I was walking painfully with a cane because of increasingly limiting osteoarthritis in my right knee. Although I was not able to start a hive until the spring of 1999, I read occasional articles on apitherapy in beekeeping magazines with the hope that it would someday help me.

Difficulties with my legs began in 1963. At the age of 15, while walking along a highway, I was struck by a car. The impact tore off my left leg two inches below the kneecap and caused a severe compound fracture of my right tibia. With an artificial leg, I was eventually able to walk quite well. At 19, part of my left knee joint was pulverized in a motor scooter accident, and I walked slightly less well. In 1992, as I walked across an avenue in New York City, two cars hit me and fractured my right leg, both hips, and other bones. Needless to say, walking has been an increasing challenge

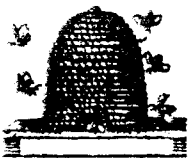


Glenn and son Noah, his Chief BVT Assistant

over the course of my life.

About three years ago I began to have severe recurring infections at a point on my left leg that bears the greatest weight onto an artificial limb. After five heavy rounds of antibiotics, I insisted that my medical doctors attempt to find the underlying cause of the symptoms. An infectious disease specialist, an orthopedic surgeon, and a vascular surgeon concurred that the probable causes were tissue degeneration, compromised circulation, and a suspected, but unconfirmed, bone infection. The

*continued on page 7*



*continued from page 1*

recommendation was to "refresh" the amputation either above or through the knee.

Although the vascular surgeon presented the topic of re-amputation gently and considerately, his most significant contribution to my health was his diagnosis of compromised circulation. I left his office emotionally stunned, and resolved to find an alternative to further amputation if one could be found. I discussed acupuncture and bee sting therapy with my wife, Nancy. Both of us have been treated with acupuncture over the years and felt confident that it would help with circulation, and the American Apitherapy Society Website had broadened my view of the therapeutic uses of bee stings. Nancy and I are experienced enough with both conventional and alternative therapies to realize the difficulties of making decisions about serious health issues. Although we prefer natural healing techniques, we have witnessed heartfelt efforts to use them fail when practitioners have no specific experience with a particular problem.

We also knew that the illness of an individual affects the entire family. Like it or not, we would also suffer through the treatments, and, we hoped, the recovery, as a family. "Would you be disappointed if I chose to set aside the medical doctors and treat myself for a serious medical condition?" I asked my wife. "I would be very disappointed if you wanted them to re-amputate your leg," was her answer. In retrospect I can imagine that it might be possible to pursue a long course of apitherapy without the support of family, but it would certainly require some other very strong support. We hoped it would work, but we did not know whether it would be enough.

I spoke with Dr. Théodore Cherbuliez, president of the AAS, who also believed Bee Venom Therapy would be very helpful in increasing circulation. I began BVT in early October 1999. I had no tweezers or other equipment other than an Epi-pen and did not want to wait. I caught a few bees in a jar from my hive and tried to grasp them with a little square of tissue. The tissue got two stings and I got one, but what a one it was!

I chose a sensitive trigger point about two inches above my left knee cap. After the initial sharp sting there was a hot feeling of swelling, then a full, strong, slow wave of comforting warmth that wrapped down under my knee cap and over to the other side of my leg where the infections had been. A few tears of relief, fear, excitement, and awe rolled from my eyes. That sting convinced me that this was going to work. Over the ensuing months there would be times when I had to

recall the conviction and feelings of that moment to keep on the path I had chosen.

I increased the number of stings per session very gradually. In the beginning, the stings would swell enormously and itch intensely for several days. I occasionally took an antihistamine to stem the itching, even

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Deadline for Registration: July 1, 2001

There will be a \$25.00 late fee added for registrations received after July 1.

**REGISTRATION:** Contact Jennifer Conover at the American Apitherapy Society Office, 5390 Grande Road, Hillsboro, OH 45133. Phone: (937)364-1108; FAX: (937)364-9109; E-mail: aasoffice@in-touch.net; Website: [www.apitherapy.org/aas](http://www.apitherapy.org/aas)

As PR point person, I need your help to get the word out. Please tell everyone you know, especially those using traditional medicine as well as those practicing complementary and alternative disciplines. Please feel free to contact me with suggestions about spreading the word. Phone: (203)438-6575; e-mail: [beefinch@yahoo.com](mailto:beefinch@yahoo.com). I look forward to seeing you in Kentucky in July. We will improve our lives and learn tools to help others improve theirs. ♡

though I realized it might reduce the effectiveness of the stings. Over several weeks, I increased the number of stings to 10 to 14 stings every other day. Occasionally, I would take 20 to 24 stings in a session. The stings were applied heavily to the area of previous infection, the amputation area, and upper left leg generally, as well as to scar tissue wherever it might be. I also stung acupuncture and trigger points from the top of my head to my toes. I took particular care to find sensitive points which resonated with other areas of my body. For example, instead of choosing a point that was only sensitive locally, I would choose a tender point on my thigh that, when pressed, gave me the feeling of energy flowing pleasantly in the amputation site, as well as in other areas, such as my abdominal organs, chest, or head.

About two weeks after starting BVT, I began working with an acupuncturist. He became my primary care physician with whom I could be completely frank and honest. Our rapport grew quickly, and I put enormous trust in him. From the outset, he knew of my commitment to BVT and agreed to use his traditional acupuncture skills as a parallel treatment to my self administered bee stings. I was treated by him almost every week for seven months and on a gradually reduced schedule over the next five months. We began each session with a summary of where I had applied stings, and I always asked which locations might be productive to use.

After several months, I said to him, "We always discuss where I have stung and where it might be good to sting. I have my own experience of what the bee stings are doing for me, but you have never directly said what benefit you think they are giving." He said simply, in a hearty voice, "Tremendous!" His support was as important to me as his skill. It proved to be vitally important to be working with a practitioner who was not only gifted and skilled as a healer and acupuncturist, but who had a keen and consistent eye. During short periods of deep discouragement, when I saw no progress, his objectivity restored my faith and kept me focused.

While I pursued acupuncture and my very experimental stinging program, I continually conferred with Dr. Cherbuliez, whose experience with apitherapy and encouragement of my efforts were of inestimable value. Not only was I totally inexperienced, but the available literature provided little help for my specific goals. Often, when I thought I had stung every possible beneficial place, Dr. Cherbuliez would ask, "Have you tried here?" or "Have you tried there?" or "You might

try this technique." Many of his ideas were points or scars that proved to be extremely helpful in promoting a sense of circulation, but were also so sensitive to touch that I had completely ruled out stinging them.

Stinging scars became one of my most helpful and fascinating avenues of approach. Dr. Leo Roy's article "Enhancing Sclerolysis with Bee Venom" (*Bee Informed*, Fall, 1999) gave me a completely new view of the importance of scars. I stung a long surgical scar on my right leg where a bone graft had been used to repair a compound fracture. The scar was nearly invisible, but I had a deep, aching feeling far underneath it. Over time and repeated stings the scar re-emerged, then faded away again, along with the deep ache. I stung the perimeter of the crater in my hip bone from which the material for a bone graft was excavated. This area had a feeling of fire when touched firmly. After many stings over time, the extreme sensitivity faded. A paper thin, but turgid red, scarred area on my shin, where the bone had broken through, relaxed into a paler flesh tone. I spent weeks softening a rope-like scar in the back of my left knee where a skin graft covering the amputation met normal skin, stinging along the edges and down the

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middle of the scar. The hard and chaotic array of hypersensitivity and numbness was ameliorated. This scar work was very specific and extensive, and resulted in the elimination of much pain, as well as perceptibly reintegrating large areas of my body with a feeling of well-being.

Occasionally, sting time would arrive and I would find myself in a state of lost confusion about where to sting. This would generally occur after dramatic progress with repeated stinging of particular points. I would reach a plateau, become discouraged, and not know what to do next. Over time, my body began to ask for stings in specific places. I developed a direct and pragmatic way of asking and listening for suggestions when stuck for a stinging plan. As chronic pain disappeared, the energy previously used to block it was devoted to a generalized observation of how less intense, wholesome feeling moved through the body. The intimacy of treating myself with bee stings gave me extraordinary information about the internal ebb and flow of imbalance, balance, vitality, and health within my body.

By January, the vascular surgeon and infectious disease specialist were no longer proposing re-amputation; by the end of February, I felt I could reintroduce myself to the artificial leg without the infection recurring. It took several months of painful efforts to readjust to the artificial leg. I believe this was partly because I had not been walking for five months, but mostly because the residual leg was literally reconstituted and rejuvenated through BVT. Because I had great difficulty squeezing back into the confines of the socket, I did few bee stings directly to that part of my body during this period. When I attended the Charles Mraz Knowledge Review Course in early August, I could only walk for relatively short distances, but by September, a full year after beginning BVT, I was walking vigorously without pain. By the year's end, I was dancing without discomfort or inhibition.

What had changed over that period? A healthy, more vibrant tone returned to the skin in the area of amputation; the tissue gained a new resilience; a patchwork area of anesthesia and painful hypersensitivity became a uniform area of normal feeling; the most debilitating effects of osteoarthritis were gone; edema was practically eliminated. My acupuncturist said, "I believe you are growing a lot of new capillaries." My vascular surgeon said, "I think we should put off doing anything. Just keep doing whatever you are doing." Friends I saw only occasionally during my treatment said, "I knew you

were going through health problems, but you look so healthy!" "You look ten years younger!" and "You have such a vital energy about you."

My use of apitherapy continues, with increased use of pollen, propolis, and royal jelly in addition to the stings. The critical period of over four months, followed by what I would consider another essential ten months is, by most standards, quite a long treatment period. Even with considerable support from others, it took enormous personal determination and persistence. I am happy I did not know the process would take this long. I started out believing that I was combating disease, hoping it would be a quick and decisive battle in my favor. Over the ensuing months it became obvious, in ever richer and more profound ways, that I was not fighting disease, but nurturing and growing health and strength. The process of growth takes time. At this point, a maintenance level of bee sting therapy allows me to continually "refresh" the amputation I suffered 37 years ago without enduring the trauma of re-amputation or recurring infections. ♡

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