

# Our Patient Stories- Stella

Stella Lochman is an active 34-year-old Public Engagement Manager for the SFMOMA. Last summer, she was diagnosed with hypertension. “I had the blood pressure of a 70-year-old obese man,” she describes. Determined to feel better and not be on blood pressure medication for the rest of her life, Stella turned to acupuncture.

Stella is passionate about her work placing artists’ projects in the community, and bringing community artists into the SFMOMA for residencies. “It’s really fun. And it’s also really stressful,” she says. She was regularly logging 65-hour weeks, but wasn’t taking any time for herself. “I was kind of a mess. My body was done with me,” she remembers.

At the advice of her primary care physician, Stella quit smoking. She also went off of birth control medication. Despite these big changes, her blood pressure didn’t budge. This contributed even more to her stress and anxiety. Stella started going to the gym five days a week, doing 45 minutes of cardio. She was prescribed two different types of blood pressure medication, but didn’t like the way these drugs made her feel—tired all of the time. After a few months of struggling with these changes, she decided to try acupuncture.

Sabine Huey, , made Stella feel comfortable and confident from her first visit to East West Health Services. “She was sweet and professional, and I could feel her enthusiasm for her practice,” Stella remembers. After the first session, Stella’s blood pressure had dropped 20 points. She came back weekly, and noticed that the positive BP change lasted longer and longer after each time. “Sabine explained to me that with each session, I was building up my own army in my body.”

The East West Clinic is conveniently located just steps from Stella’s office, at the intersection of Chinatown and FiDi.

“It’s right by my work, so I can just walk there on my lunch break. I have yummy Chinese food for lunch,” she says.

After three months of weekly sessions, Stella’s blood pressure stabilized. Now, she is able to maintain her healthy BP with once-a-month treatments.

In addition to seeing her numbers go down, Stella has experienced other benefits from acupuncture. “It’s a whole person treatment. On top of helping me feel better physically, Sabine is a life coach. When I came in with anxiety, she would tell me: ‘We’re going to work on making you feel more brave.’ She really helped to build me up mentally and emotionally.”

Sabine also helped Stella make the connections between different symptoms in her body. She showed her how her headaches and back aches were related to her stress and high blood pressure. “She’s able to see the whole picture in a way that my Western doctors, as much as I love and respect them, can’t always do.” Thanks to acupuncture, Stella has been able to come to her primary care doctors more informed about her body and her needs. She feels like those visits are more productive now, too.