

Treatment Strategy

4-22-06

1. LBP

Pain below the rib cage: BL21 to the buttocks

Influenced by the kidney and the bladder. It houses the kidneys. The du channel also influences the low back.

Causes:

- Excessive physical work.
 - This weakens the kidney qi. This can actually cause a vicious cycle.
 - Trauma/acute is stagnation of QI and blood
- Excessive sexual activity
 - This also weakens the kidney qi.
 - Deficient kidney qi isn't able to nourish and strengthen the back.
- Pregnancy and childbirth
 - Physically there is strain on the back.
 - Energetically it injures the kidney qi. (Before or after the childbirth.) Too many children too close together or too early injuries the kidney qi.
- Invasion of wind-cold-damp
 - Like any other musculoskeletal problem.
 - This is exposure to cold and damp. It is easy to have your back attacked if it is left exposed. The pathogens can get into the muscles, sinews and channels. This is especially true if you are sweating. It makes you more vulnerable. (Swimming after you have been sweating, not dressing warm enough, not cooling down.) Wind-cold-damp can cause acute backache and chronic backache.
- Over work – long hours without taking a break
 - Overtime this will deplete kidney yin. This keeps the back from being nourished. It will lead to chronic backaches.
- Not getting enough exercise.
 - Sedentary lifestyles will lead to weak muscles, ligaments that hold the back together.
 - This leads to disc problems if the body can't hold the spine properly together.
 - Being overweight can also lead to herniated disc's etc...

Things to do to keep back healthy:

Don't over lift

Don't over stress

Don't be overweight

Yao Tong (back pain) (pg 190)

- Wind-cold-damp attack
- Damp-heat

- Blood stasis
- Kidney Yang deficiency
- Kidney Yin deficiency

1.1.Cold Damp

This can be acute or chronic.

Symptoms:

- This is the backache that tends to be worse in the morning.
- It takes a while to loosen up and get going.
- A little bit of exercise makes it feel better.
- It feels better with warmth.
- Person is stiff, it is difficult to turn/move
- This is worse in cold and rainy weather (because of the damp)
- Tongue: white slimy
- Pulse: slow, deep

This can happen if there is a weakness that predisposes a person to attack from cold and damp.

This can also happen from overwork. Overwork can also predispose one's self to attack. The environment can also be a part of the cause. The wind can drive it in. There can be a more predominance of cold or damp.

Cold means:

- Stiffness – muscles are more contracted from the cold.
- Cold pain is very severe pain.
- It hurts worse with rest. They can't lie still.
- Heat definitely makes it feel better

Dampness means:

- Areas of swelling or puffiness.
- Perhaps numbness.
- Heaviness in the back.

This is damaging to the yang of the body. What its attack is a deep part of the body. It can actually damage the kidney yang.

Treatment Principle:

- Dispel cold, resolve dampness, warm the channels

Points to use:

- BL23 – strengthen the kidneys
- DU3 or DU4 – pick which one is more tender. They tonify the kidney so it strengthens the back. **Add moxa, esp. with DU4!** Be careful with herniated disks, broken vertebrae with the DU points. It may be safer to do the Huato Jiaji points.
- CV4 – tonifying for the kidneys (w/ moxa)
- BL25 or 26 (L4 or L5)– palpate for pain. Where the lumbar meet the sacrum. It's the hinge. (Strengthens the lower back and knees too) It also dispels wind-cold.
- BL40 – the command point of the back. It removes excess. (Maybe not for a deficiency back ache.) Pick to bleed a swollen vessel in the area)
- BL60 – you can use this instead of 40. Especially for low sacral back pain.

- GB34 – great to put in for back aches. Especially if the back muscles are tight. It will help to relax the sinews.
- BL32 – good if there is pain in the sacrum. (Or you can thread the sacral UB points).
- The Core Tx should always include: BL23, BL40, and Ashi.

If the whole back hurts, it's another sign that it's a wind-cold-damp problem.

Needle Technique:

- Reduce
- Even method. Roll the needle's back and forth.
- W/ Moxa

1.1.1.Sciatica

This is pain that radiates down one or both legs. It covers the path of the sciatic nerve. It's a "nervy" type of pain. It's sharp pain.

This is nerve root compression causing the problem. This is usually a disc problem or spinal stenosis.

The sciatica nerve is right under GB30.

This can be associated with wind-cold-damp blocking the flow of qi and blood. However, it can also accompany kidney deficiency or traumatic injury.

You can have sciatica w/o having LBP.

You can still put the back points in as well as the sciatica points.

You can have pain along different areas, it can be front, side, or back running sciatic pain. It can be Shao yang (side), tai yang (back), and yang ming (down the front)

If the symptoms have been there for a long time, the treatment may take a while to correct. A couple of treatments aren't going to solve a 10-year problem. Even if you take away the root of the problem, the sciatic nerve may still have problems.

Treatment:

- GB30 – do this on both sides. This doesn't have to be a single sided treatment.
- GB34 is another important point to add. Esp. if there is a cramping pain, a pain that is real tight.
- GB31 - Because this is a wind-type problem. It can often be an ashi point.
- BL23 – to strengthen the whole back.
- BL26 – is often part of the problem as well.
- Tai yang – BL40, BL57, BL60 – How far down does the pain go? Go a little bit further down the channel.
- Shao Yang – GB40, GB39, GB31 (esp. for all sciatica, esp. if it gets worse when the weather changes. It will test as an ashi) TW23.
- Yang ming: ashi or SP10
- If dampness SP9, ST40, SP6
- GB29 – or hip ashi – check to see
- Check ashi
- Obtain qi
- If it's chronic sciatica: perhaps some tonifying points
 - If they aren't responding, or get worse with treatment, perhaps you need to tonify the body before you can or as you heal the body.
 - This is esp. true with chronic conditions

- With cold or damp add moxa
- Plum blossom along the sciatica.
- Make sure to have a doctor check it out. This can turn into Wei syndrome. If this is nerve damage or can turn into nerve damage you need to be careful.
- You can treat people everyday or even twice a day if the pain is bad enough.
- Dr Tan's hand points can be useful if you can't lay on your stomach.
 - Lingku – specific for shooting pain/burning pain any where in the body. .5 cun proximal to LI4.
 - Da Bai - .5 cun distal to LI4 (it's an ashi point)
 - Zhong bai - .5 cun proximal to TW3 (it's ashi)
 - These points tend to be Contralateral. But check both sides.
 - Leave them in for 45 minutes. (or until you obtaining qi quickly)
 - Manipulate them every 5 minutes.
 - Have the person move (move the hips and back) as you evenly manipulate the needle.
 - Once you have performed this treatment, you can go ahead and then do local points or other treatments.

Take a course of 7-10 treatments. Take a week off, reevaluate and repeat for up to three courses of treatments.

1.2.Damp Heat

Symptoms:

- If you touch the back it will feel hot.
- If the backache is worse when there is hot and humid weather.
- If it feels better after exercise (dampness)
- With damp heat, urine is dark yellow, concentrated
- Tongue: yellow, slimy coat with red body.
- Pulse: rapid, soft, soggy

Treatment Principle

- Clear heat and dampness

Points

- BL23,
- BL26,
- BL40,
- GB34 – deals directly with damp heat
- BL32
- SP6 or SP9 – if you don't put this in, the pain will come back. The dampness keeps it from going away.

1.3.Blood stasis

This is trauma, back strain. This is qi and blood stagnation

This could be chronic blood stasis. If you are chronically straining or hurting your back, this is stagnation. The nature of blood stasis backache:

- Fixed pain, Stabbing pain, severe pain. They can point to it. (deficient pains tend to be dull pains)
- Pressure makes it worse.
- This pain is worse when they try to rest. Lying down makes it worse.
- Light exercise makes it feel better.
- This is worse at night.
- Heat does not make blood stasis backache better. (cold makes stagnation worse too) (Heat may just help a bit with the muscle cramps)
- They can't twist from side to side.
- This is worse with standing or sitting.
- This does not change with the weather.
- Usually the area of the back is small.
- Tongue: purplish tongue. Dark, dull looking tongue. Could have a dark spot.
- Pulse: rough, wiry, not smooth.

Treatment Principle:

Move blood, resolve stasis.

Points

- BL23
- GV3 or GV4 – the more tender
- BL40 – esp. looking for capillary.
- GV26 – empirical point for acute backache (traumatic backache) (Ren Zhong)
- N-UE-19 a,b,c – the little V between fingers – II – V Yao Tong Xue. Slanted insertion towards the wrist.
- SI3 – very good for lumbar sprain as well.
- You can add points specific for moving blood:
 - SP8
 - SP10
 - PC6 – moving blood in the chest area
 - BI17

1.4.Kidney Deficiency Backaches

Symptoms:

- They are chronic.
- They pain is dull.
- They come in bouts. It comes for a couple of months and then goes for a while.
- It feels better with rest.
- It feels worse when the person is overly tired.
- Aggravated by sexual activity.
- Weakness in the lumbar makes it easier to have invasion of wind-cold-damp. You are also prone to lots of sprains and strains.
- More common in middle age to older people. (If found in younger people, it's a constitutional thing)
- Too much exercise in puberty can damage a child's kidney's for pain later on.

- Traditionally this may be the root of all back aches. You can't have the other problems without having a root weakness that lets it happen in the first place.

1.4.1.Kidney Yang

- Starts slow
- Dull pain
- Feels better with massage
- Better with heat
- The back may even feel cold.
- The person feels fatigued.
- Knees are weak (or were).
- Backache worse after activity.
- Feels good when you lie down.
- The area of the pain is large and diffuse.
- Pain comes back often and is easy to get another backache.
- This is not related to weather.
- The person feels cold.
- They person looks and feels cold and pale. They like warm.
- The patient says the back feels cold. When you touch your back it feels cold.
- Tongue: pale
- Pulse: deep and weak.

Treatment Principle

- Tonify kidney yang

Points

- Perhaps not KD40
- BL23, Huato Jiaji
- BL32, BL26, and other ashi points
- Yao Yan – three cun lateral to lower part of L3, or L4. In the eyes. Three cun lateral to the lower spinous process of L3, or three cun lateral to the lower edge of L4.
- We want Moxa because this is yang

1.4.2.Kidney Yin

- It comes on slowly. More chronic
- Feels better with pressure.
- Person feels tired, fatigues
- Feel weak in the knees
- It feels worse after exertion.
- Feels better after lying down.
- Symptoms come back easily.
- Night sweats and irritability
- Insomnia
- Dry mouth and throat.
- Mallor flush, five heart heat.
- Tongue red, peeled coat, no coat or mirrored tongue

- Pulse: rapid and thready.
- Not usually affected by the weather

Treatment principle

- Nourish the kidney yin

Points

- BL23
- BL32
- Ashi points
- (perhaps not BL40 for deficiency points)
- BL52 - nourish the yin (outer kidney shu)
- KD3 – good to nourish the yin
- Careful with moxa or heat lamp – traditionally nobody with yin deficiency should get moxa. Others say it is O.K. It depends on how hot the patient is running with the heat. (It may be mild heat at best. Not for too long though. Maybe 15 minutes on, 15 minutes off, etc...)

2. Meridian Sinew Style (Jing Jin – (muscular strength))

It's of French/Vietnamese origin.

There are different levels of energy and treatment strategies available to choose from.

It's a different approach to treatment strategy. It's another tool in the toolbox.

It's also called tendino-musclar.

This is normally for Bi syndromes (muscles are the wood phase).

In CAM this is called 12 muscle regions.

They follow the acupuncture meridians, but go off to other areas.

These are physically bands of muscles. They are more superficial and “real” or physical than the acupuncture meridians.

Levels:

- Cutaneous
- Superficial Luos
- Luo's
- Tendino-muscle/Sinew layer
- Meridians
- Extraordinary Channels
- Bone Level

They start at the jing-well points at the fingers and toes. They travel up the limbs. Once they reach the head or trunk, they separate from the main channels and go off in different directions.

They don't have specific points.

They don't have connections to the internal channels.

They protect the main meridians from trauma. (They're a cushion)

They carry the protective qi (wei qi) to the surface of the body. They are associated with the wei qi.

They have to do with our range of motion. They are connecting and supporting the body.

They protect the internal organs too.

The meeting points are different than the acupuncture meridians.

Meeting points

- 3-hand yang: meet at the corner of the forehead (TW, LI, SI) right around ST8.
- 3-hand yin: (HT, LU, PC) these meet around SP21.
- 3-foot yang: (ST, UB, GB) meet around SI18.
- 3-foot yin: (SP, LV, KD) meet around the genital area. No specific spot, the external genitalia.

Signs of problems

- Bi syndrome
- Stiffness
- Spasm
- Limited range of motion
- Weakness or paralysis (wei syndrome)
- Abnormal sensations (prickling, etc.)
- Swellings.

Although there are no acupuncture points, when there is an ashi, it is where the outside pathogen has attacked the body (or where there has been a trauma).

We are looking for pain points.

Key Symptoms

- Pain in the muscles (joint connections)
- It often just involves one of the meridians-sinews.
- Usually it's just on one side of the body.
- It's possible for the proble, to skip into other meridians, but it's usually yang channel into yang channel or yin channel into yin, it's not often yang to yin or yin to yang.

Problems can be divided into Acute (Level 1) or Chronic (Level 2).

Level 1

- This is normally due to an acute attack of the pathogenic evils or a recent trauma.
- The main meridian is going to send wei qi up to the sinew meridian to help fight/fix things. Hence, the main meridian is deficient at this point.
- Symptoms include:
 - The patient can pinpoint where the pain is, where the trauma is.
 - The patient can describe the pain.
 - It's tender to the touch.
 - There can be spasms.
 - There can be redness.
 - Maybe it feels hot.
 - Sprains/Strains/Bumps/muscles tears/recent trauma's
 - External disorders of the yang. Ling Shu's says use ashi points to treat yang of the yang. Use jing river points to treat yin of the yang. (bones and muscle) The yang of the yin (the bowels) treat using the he-sea points. The yin of the yin (the yin organs) treat using jing-spring and shu stream points.
- Treatment principles:
 - Expel pathogens from the sinew: Use ashi points.

- Locate Ashi points.
- Shallow insertion to take out the excess
- Supplement the main meridian: tonify the main meridian.
 - Pick some tonification points for the main meridian.
 - Pick a distal point w/moxa or just moxa by itself.
 - We can use the four point needle technique.
- After the treatment (15 minutes?), if pain is still present, repeat the treatment. See if it has moved a bit. Relocate the new painful areas.
- Four needle tonification techniques
 - 5-element strategy
 - Two needles are going to tonify, two needles will sedate.
 - Tonification: look at the mother point of the meridian. (Sheung cycle) i.e. take the earth point on the lung channel (LU9).
 - Sedate: look at the child point on the meridian. i.e. waer point on the lung channel (LU5).

Level 2

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