

Mike

1. ABOUT THE PATIENT

1.1 This patient was a 32 year old male who had recently move to York from Hull with a change of job. His occupation was a computer programmer. He was a tall man and was well built but not overweight. He walked slightly stiffly but what he found most difficult was to turn his body and also he had to lower himself carefully into a chair with arms. He was quite flushed and was sweating slightly during his case history and although he said he was not nervous was obviously finding the occasion quite an ordeal.

1.2 He was diagnosed as having ankalosing spondylitis two years ago. It started at the centre of his back in the upper lumbar area then later it also affected the lower lumbar area with pain radiating to the top of his pelvis / hips. In the last few months his neck has become affected which means he can turn to the left but not to the right. The pain is a dull throbbing ache and stiffness which disturbs his sleep and so he has to get up in the night to try to stop the pain and relieve the stiffness. The stiffness is particularly bad in the mornings. Exercise makes the problem better and he finds swimming very good but due to moving has not been able to go so much recently but he has now found there is a pool opposite where he works and he intends to make an effort to go regularly. Rest makes the problem worse. He is better in a warm climate and has virtually no problem at all when on holiday in Spain (his wife is spanish). Cold makes the problem worse as he has tried ice packs and hot baths make it better but he cannot get in and out of the bath so this is not a good option although a hot shower gives a little relief.

Since moving to this area (approximately 1 month) he has been trying to get a special chair for his work and the lack of this has aggravated the condition. He has also done too much lifting and this has also brought on a muscle spasm that radiates from the upper lumbar spine round his ribs to his chest which is very painful when he coughs. It is a sharp acute pain.

1.3 Additional diagnostic information

On physical examination the acute pain was radiating from the area of BL13 and is worse on his left side. A muscle appears to be in spasm along this line round to the front of his chest.

Suffers from shortness of breath - he has to catch his breath to do something strenuous and this is more difficult on the inhale. He has had this since he was 8 - 9 years old.

He has a cough which brings up thick yellow phlegm.

He does not get colds easily, have asthma, have palpitations, headaches, sight problems, dizziness or tinnitus.

His digestion is fine with only slight bloating and a little rumbling.

He has a tendency to produce soft stools and these are regular.

1.3 Continued

He has a reasonable appetite.

He drinks 2 litres of water and beer daily.

Urination is clear and copious. No nocturia.

Sleep - no problem getting to sleep but wakes every 1 to 2 hours due to pain.

Energy levels - "Fair, just a bit unfit", Lower energy due to no rest.

Sweat - Nightsweats which are drenching. Slightly sweaty appearance.

Mental / emotional temperament - He described himself as "fairly emotional, I used to bottle things up then let rip but now I have this more under control"

Tongue - Red body with deep crack in the Stomach and Spleen area. A thick white coat in the centre of which is an area of yellow coating.

Pulse - Left - weak and tight

Right - weak, rapid and slightly slippery

1.4 Further relevant information

Medical history - Fluid on knees and ankles in teens when playing sport

Family history - Younger brother has bad back, Father has a skin condition associated with ankylosing spondylitis , uncle has ankylosing spondylitis.

Uses NSAIDS and paracetamol for pain relief.

1.5 Lifestyle

Patient smokes 20 cigarettes per day.

He drinks 2 - 3 cans of beer per day.

He does not drink any tea or coffee.

Diet - red meat, fresh vegetables and salad. Does not eat sweet things or fruit.

He is married with no children.

Exercise of swimming is on doctors advice to help the A.S.

He lived in Africa and India as a child as his father worked for the British consulate.

2. IDENTIFYING THE PATTERNS

2.1

Stagnation of Qi and Blood in the Channels -

Sharp acute pain

Better for movement and slightly better with heat

Worse for rest

2.1 continued

Kidney Yin Xu

Nightsweats
Dry mouth and throat at night
Tongue body red
Pulse rapid
Lumbar pain (dull)

Kidney Yang Xu and Jing Xu

Clear copious urination
Back ache
Dull ache in back slightly better for heat and certainly better in a warm climate.
Knee problems as a child (in teens) producing fluid on knees and ankles.
Pulse weak

Spleen Qi Xu and Damp

Loose stools
Abdominal bloating
Tongue thick white coat
Pulse slightly slippery

Kidneys failing to receive Qi

Breathlessness on exertion
Difficulty on the inhale
Tight, weak pulse
Sweating

Lung Qi Xu

cough
daytime sweating
breathlessness on exertion

Phlegm Heat obstructing the Lungs

cough
yellow thick sputum
Tongue red body and yellow coat
Rapid, slightly slippery pulse

2.2 Stagnation of Qi and Blood in the Channels

This is listed as the first syndrome because it was causing him the most discomfort. A sharp acute pain follows the line of a muscle in spasm round his side to his chest. When a trauma happens this causes a blockage in the flow of Qi along the channel

2.2 continued

causing a stagnation, and as Qi moves Blood this also causes the Blood to stagnate. As a result of this blockage the muscle is not supplied properly with the Qi and Blood

and so goes into spasm and pain is felt. When there was gentle exercise the pain was reduced as the exercise moves the stagnation and the build up of Qi and Blood where as the pain gets worse when rested as the stagnation increases.

Kidney Yin Xu

In this case there are several factors that indicate Kidney Yin Xu. Firstly, the night sweats, red tongue, rapid pulse and the dry mouth and throat at night. Empty heat is generated in the Kidneys due to the lack of Yin. The deficient Yin fails to hold the Wei Qi in at night, as the Wei Qi resides in the Yin at night, and so the Yin nutrients are lost in the sweat at night. The empty heat also causes the fluids to evaporate so the Yin essences are lost. Yin deficiency leads to less Body Fluids and so a dry mouth and throat are often experienced at night along with some thirst. Secondly, the lumbar pain is due to the failure of Kidney essence, as essence is part of Yin, to nourish the bones.

Kidney Yang and Jing Xu

There are several factors that indicate this pattern. Firstly the soreness of the back along with the problems as a child with his knees and ankles particularly with oedema in these areas. When Kidney Yang is deficient there is not enough Qi in the Kidneys to give strength to the back and knees and hence they are weak and painful. When Kidney Yang is deficient it affects the Body Fluid balance considerably. Its affects are as follows :- It does not transform the fluids and so does not produce enough heat to evaporate some of the fluids and send them back up to the Lungs to help with preventing dryness. The Kidneys also do not provide enough heat for the Spleen to transform Body Fluids and so there is an accumulation of fluids. The Kidneys help the Small Intestine in the separation of the Body Fluids in to an impure and pure part. The Kidneys supply Qi to the Bladder for its Qi transformation. So the Kidney Yang is extremely important in Fluid transformation and if not functioning properly will lead to the symptoms of oedema in the lower extremities and also to clear abundant urination as in this case.

The reasoning for the Jing Xu with the Yang, although Jing is part of Yin and accompanies both the Kidney Yin and Yang is that this is due to a hereditary problem and so would be a Jing problem but also that there were more signs initially as a child of this being Kidney Yang dominated although as time has gone on both Yang and Yin have become deficient. As Kidney Yin and Yang have the same root there will always be if one is deficient a lesser degree deficiency of the other.

Spleen Qi Xu and Damp

The symptoms for the Spleen Qi Xu are loose stools and abdominal bloating. In this case the Kidney Yang Xu is causing the Spleen to not be warmed properly and this in turn leads to the Spleen failing to transform and transport food and fluids and so leads to the above symptoms. The lack of transporting of Food Qi throughout the body leads to general weakness and tiredness which is difficult to attribute directly to this patient as he is so tired due to lack of sleep because of the pain. The lack of transforming of fluids leads to the accumulation of Damp which shows with the

2.2 continued

slightly slippery pulse and the thick white tongue coat. The patient also tends to cough up yellow sputum which is mainly attributed to his smoking but also Damp is made by the Spleen but stored in the Lungs and so will give a basis on which the phlegm may develop. The yellow sputum is probably due to Phlegm heat in the Lung

but this only to a small degree and other symptoms and signs to support this are the red body and yellow coat to the tongue and the slightly slippery rapid pulse.

Kidneys failing to receive Qi

There is a sub category of Kidneys failing to receive Qi as this is part of Kidney Yang. This patient developed from the age of about 8 - 9 years a difficulty in catching his breath on the inhale when needing to give a little extra exertion and he still has this problem. If the Kidneys are weak and fail to receive and hold down Qi then the Qi will accumulate in the chest leading to shortness of breath and as the Kidneys are responsible for the inhalation, then the problem will manifest on the inhale rather than the exhale which is controlled by the Lungs. This patient also by observation tends to sweat slightly and this can be explained by the fact that if the Yang energies of the body are deficient then the Wei Qi will be deficient and as this adjusts the opening and closing of the pores, if deficient will tend to allow the pores to be open and allow sweating to take place. A tight weak pulse is also associated with this syndrome.

Lung Qi Xu and Phlegm Heat obstructing the Lungs

I have put these two syndromes together as there is evidence for both but the more prominent syndrome is the Phlegm heat although I feel there may be some underlying Lung Qi Xu which excentuates the problem. Most of the breathing difficulties come from the Kidneys failing to receive Qi and I have already explained this above. With the Phlegm Heat most of the phlegm is due to Spleen Qi Xu producing Damp which is stored in the Lungs. The smoking then gives the heat to the problem.

With ankylosing spondylitis this is due to disease of the zygo-apophysial joints between the vertebrae. This is most likely to be due to the lack of nourishment of Liver Blood of the joints and sinews. In this case there does not appear to be any other evidence for this syndrome but perhaps the Kidney Yin Xu fails to nourish the Liver and so Liver Blood Xu can occur along with the Kidney Yang failing to warm the Spleen which is the basis for producing Blood. The Kidneys also produce Yuan Qi which is used for making Blood and produce marrow which makes Blood so if this is deficient the Blood will be deficient. Blood is also part of Yin.

3. AETIOLOGY AND PATHOLOGY

3.1 Stagnation of Qi and Blood in the channels - trauma due to lifting while moving house. This is a miscellaneous aetiology.

Kidney Yin Xu - hereditary, overwork from too much mental activity with his job as a computer programmer and smoking 20 a day. All of these are miscellaneous aetiologies.

Kidney Yang Xu and Jing Xu - hereditary which is a miscellaneous aetiology.

Spleen Qi Xu and Damp - see 3.2 and also diet which is miscellaneous. He tends to eat a lot of salad.

3.1 continued

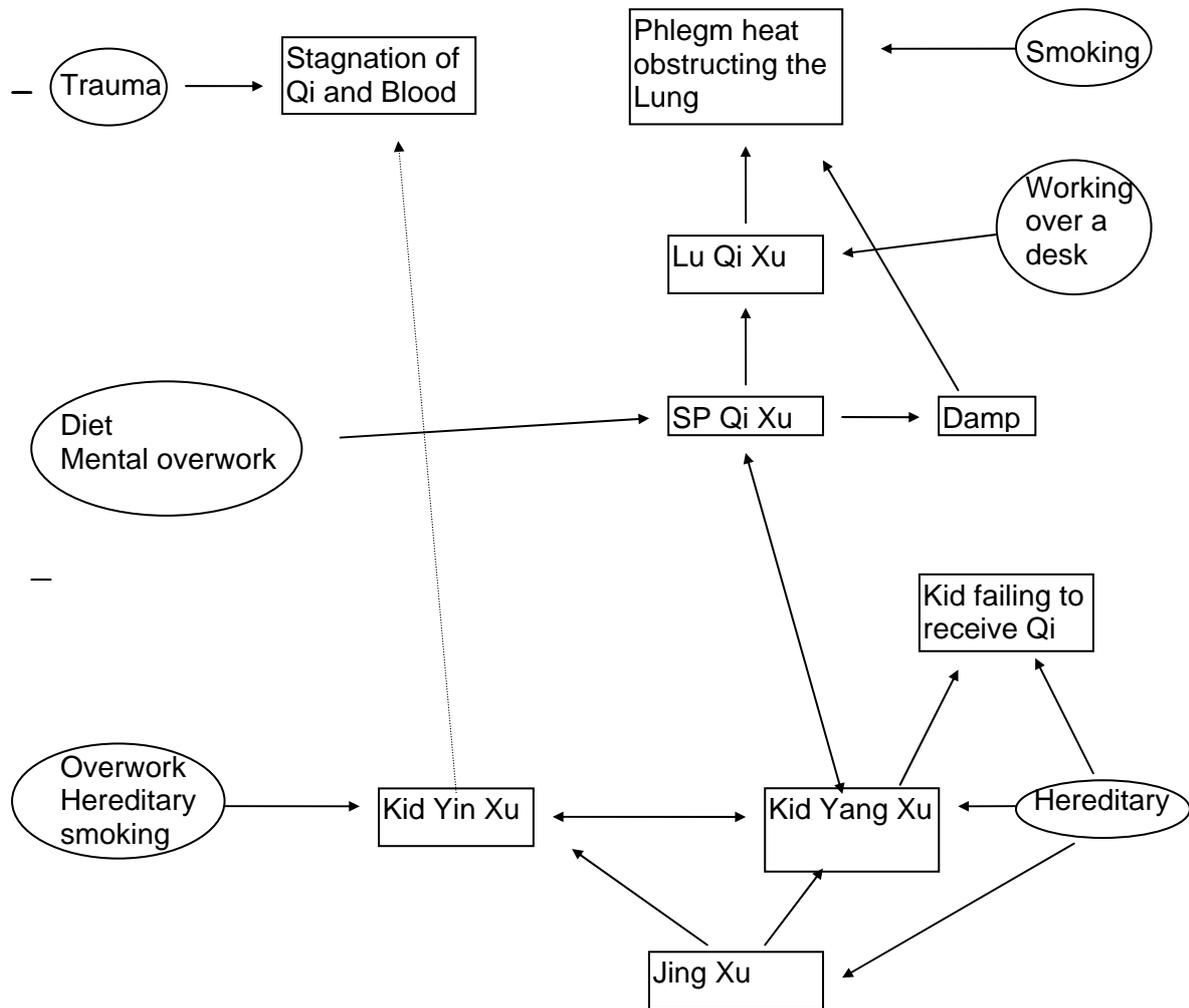
Kidneys failing to receive Qi - hereditary weakness of Kidneys and therefore miscellaneous.

Lung Qi Xu - Working leaning over a desk which is miscellaneous.

Phlegm heat obstructing the Lungs - see 3.2 and smoking (miscellaneous).

The key miscellaneous factor in this case is hereditary as his uncle has ankylosing spondylitis and so does his brother and his father has a skin disease associated with ankylosing spondylitis.

3.2 Pathology diagram



4. TREATMENT

4.1 Treatment Principle

Move stagnation of Qi and Blood, Tonify the Kidneys, Tonify Spleen, clear Damp.

4.2 Treatment Plan

Initially the treatments should be twice a week for the first 10 treatments and then once a month or once every two months to strengthen constitution and to maintain and this would be for another 10 treatments.

The first area to treat is the stagnation of Qi and Blood but at the same time some tonification of the Kidneys and Spleen could take place. One would expect the stagnation to be greatly relieved within 5 treatments but the Kidneys would need the full treatment. With tonifying the Spleen this should rectify the Damp as it is due to the Spleen deficiency that the Damp is being produced. This would also help the Lung Phlegm Heat although some help here may be necessary later. An area that I

would bare in mind and which may well appear after some syndromes had been cleared is possible Liver problems as ankylosing spondylitis affects the synovial joints, cartilage and ligaments and the Liver controls the sinews and nourishes them.

4.3 Lifestyle Issues

One of the first areas that David could do for himself is to cut down on his smoking which would help remove his thick yellow sputum and cough as well as lessen the damage on his Kidney Yin. I would suggest this within the first three treatments. Some advice on his diet would also be necessary as the consumption of a lot of raw food is not good for the Spleen and I would suggest that he tries lightly cooked vegetables. He also consumes a lot of beef and red meat which is very heating and may be excentuating his heat problems. I would suggest he tries some fish or light meat as an alternative or even think about some tofu or vegetarian alternatives. I would suggest this at about the same time as the smoking. He also consumes 3 to 4 cans of beer a day and again this may be adding to his feelings of heat and he may well help himself to alleviate this by cutting down. Advice on conserving his Kidney energies would also be wise at some time in his treatment as he has received a poor deal at birth so consideration should be given as to advice about "excessive labours of the bedroom " although it should be approached tactfully and when the patient feels more at ease with the clinic situation ! The other area of advice on conserving his energies is about warning against overwork in stressful conditions and in this case it is more of the mental side as this in time will deplete his Kidney Yin. He should also try not to eat late at night or irregularly or whilst working as this too will deplete his Yin. He should be encouraged to do his swimming as regular but not excessive exercise and perhaps some Tai Qi would be good for a gentle form of exercise. Some relaxation techniques may also be helpful to him when the pain is particularly bad or to relieve stress. These last pieces of advice on life style should be given early on.

4.4 Points

Key points :-

SI3 + BL62 - This combination of points opens the DU vessel. This tonifies Kidney Yang and helps to strengthen the back particularly with a chronic back condition like this. It also straightens the spine. SI3 was needled first on the left as it was a male patient and then BL62 was needled on the right. When removing the needles it was done in reverse order. Even method was used.

4.4 Points continued

DU14 - This point was used to move the channel to clear stagnant Qi and Blood in his neck. Reducing or even method.

BL23 - Tonifies the Kidney Yin, Yang and Jing. It also strengthens the lower back Even method was used.

BL18 - This point benefits the Liver and Gall Bladder for all of these type of syndromes. It is used here because A.S. is due to problems with the joints between the vertebrae and so some treatment of the Liver to help the nourishing of the joints and sinews would be a good idea. The Liver Blood nourishes this. Even or reinforcing technique.

BL20 - This point was used to tonify the Stomach and Spleen to help the Spleen deficiency and if this was done might reduce some of the internal Damp. This point also resolves Damp and Phlegm. Reinforcing method.

BL13 - This point was chosen not for its Lung functioning patterns but for the fact that it was from where his acute pain was stemming. Even method.

Huato points - Several of these were used through his treatment. Initially it was at his neck area at C5, 6, 7, T1 and T2. Then in the mid back area at T6,7,8, 9 and 11.

Reducing and even technique.

These points were used to move stagnation of Qi and Blood in the area around the intervertebral joints as from a western point of view ankylosing spondylitis is due to the disease of the joints.

Secondary points :-

KID3 - Tonifies the Kidneys and is good for both Yin and Yang deficiency. It also strengthens the lower back and knees. Even or reinforcing method.

SP6 - Strengthens the Spleen and tonifies Kidney Yin. Even or reinforcing method.

LI4 - Used to move channel when arm was painful. Reducing method.

GB20 - to clear channel for stiffness in the neck. Even method.

SJ5 - Moves the channel in arm and neck. Reducing method.

ST40 - Resolves Phlegm and Damp. Even method.

Other points that could have been used :-

DU4 - to nourish Yuan Qi and benefit Jing which might help as this is effective in chronic disease. It tonifies Kidney Yang. Strengthens the lower back. Even method.

DU3 - Strengthens the lower back and legs for chronic backache. It also expels Cold and Damp which I will explain in 5.1. Even method.

REN4 - tonify Yin and Kidneys. Tonifying method.

LIV3 - to promote the free flow of Liver Qi and tonify Liver Blood and Yin. The movement of Qi will help to clear the stagnation. The tonification of Yin may help in the lubrication of the joints. Reducing or even method.

REN6 - To tonify Qi and Yang and moves stagnant Qi in the lower jiao but if combined with ST36 this would be more generalised. Tonifying method.

Massage was used to try to relax muscles and move stagnation before needling. As treatment progressed this tended to be mainly in the neck and shoulder area.

4.4 Points continued

An example of a point prescription early in treatment was BL23[”], SI3^L, BL62^R, DU14, BL13[”], BL20[”], BL18[”].

An example of a point prescription later in treatment was SI3^L, BL62^R, KID3[”], Huato C5[”], T1[”], T2[”], T7[”], T8[”], BL23[”].

4.5 Referrals and Medication

There were no referrals or change of medication.

5. PROGRESS AND OUTCOME

5.1 After Mike's first treatment he was much better. The sharp pain was greatly reduced and he felt very pleased. The stagnation of Qi and Blood was cleared after 4 treatments over a period of 14 days. This left him with his normal neck and back

pain and stiffness but he knew that this would be quite a long process. He found that he was much better after the treatment but this only tended to last for a day or two before the problem would return. By the fifth treatment he had only the stiffness in his neck unless he sneezed when he would get pain, and the night sweats had greatly reduced although he was still warm in the day. He had this improvement for about a week and then his neck became swollen and sensitive which with treatment went down and improved only leaving the stiffness. Unfortunately this patient then went on holiday after only having 9 treatments and never returned to the clinic.

On closer examination of this case there may have been some Damp Bi present as this would explain the swelling around the neck area. There also was the fact that the back pain was better for a dry warm climate, there was a thick tongue coat and a background of Spleen Qi Xu and Kidney Yang Xu. If he had returned for further treatment I would have used points such as SP9, SP6, GB34, ST36 and BL20. These points would have even method applied except for BL20 which would have reinforcing method. These points are used to clear Damp and tonify the Spleen. GB34 is used as it invigorates the circulation of Qi and Blood and relax the tendons as well as promotes the smooth flow of Liver Qi.. Moxa could be applied to the swollen area although as he is hot already moxa should be used with caution. Along with these general points I would also use some distal points for the neck such as GB39, SI3, SJ5 and BL60 depending on which channels are affected. Local points such as huatos, BL10 and GB20. Adjacent points such as GB21, DU14 and BL11. As mentioned in 4.4 the problems in the lower back could be treated with DU3 for clearing Damp in the lower back, along with Shiqizhuixia as a local point and distal points BL60 and BL40.

5.2 The positive angle to this case was that we were able to clear very quickly the acute stagnation of Qi and Blood that he had due to the lifting whilst moving house. He was very please with this. Unfortunately as he decided to discontinue treatment after treatment 9 we were not able to help further the main back and neck problem. He had requested help with his diet which he had been given and so he could do quite a lot to help himself. I believe that if we had have been able to clear the Damp that there would have been a marked improvement over time. The problem of such a chronic disease is that because he was extremely deficient in Kidney Yin, Yang and Jing that he would have to be very careful throughout his life to conserve these

5.2 continued

energies and that he would need regular treatment to help this. If we could have helped to tonify his Kidneys and Spleen he probably would have improved slowly.

On a final positive note he had seriously started to consider going to live in Spain where the warm weather had cleared most of his symptoms. I believe that in these circumstances this would be his best option.