Arthritis and Bi Syndrome

Bi Syndrome is due to a wind/cold/damp evil which attack superficial parts of the body, the meridians, causing blockage of Qi and Blood in the meridians. It affects the superficial areas of the joints, muscles, and tendons. The tongue and pulse may not match the symptoms in Bi Syndrome. Bi is characterized by:

1. Pain in the joints and soreness
2. Swelling and stiffness (esp morning stiffness)
3. Limitation of joint movement/dysfunction

Compare this to a pain syndrome which is not the same as Bi. Pain syndrome is not limited to the joins, but is a broader definition that includes Bi syndrome.

Biomedical discussion

Arthritis is a term describing a group of conditions involving joint damage. This is the leading cause of disability among people 55 yo or greater. There are approximately 37 million people in the US affected by this condition. Arthritis is also a folk term meaning “my joints hurt.”

Arthritis refers to:

Osteoarthritis (OA)

This is related to age and affects the weight-bearing joints. Joints weaken in ability to self-repair. This compared with repetitive strain to the body result in OA. OA is characterized by bony growth and deterioration of the joints.
Rheumatoid arthritis

This is an autoimmune disorder thought to be related to food allergies such as wheat, nightshades, dairy, etc. In a normal body the wei qi equals the ying qi. If the wei qi is weaker it makes one susceptible to external influences such as common cold. If the wei qi is stronger than ying Qi, this results in an autoimmune disease.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is an autoimmune disease that causes chronic inflammation of the joints. Rheumatoid arthritis can also cause inflammation of the tissue around the joints, as well as in other organs in the body. Autoimmune diseases are illnesses that occur when the body's tissues are mistakenly attacked by their own immune system. The immune system is a complex organization of cells and antibodies designed normally to "seek and destroy" invaders of the body, particularly infections. Patients with autoimmune diseases have antibodies in their
blood that target their own body tissues, where they can be associated with inflammation. Because it can affect multiple other organs of the body, rheumatoid arthritis is referred to as a systemic illness and is sometimes called rheumatoid disease.

While rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic illness, meaning it can last for years, patients may experience long periods without symptoms. However, rheumatoid arthritis is typically a progressive illness that has the potential to cause joint destruction and functional disability.

Diagnosing RA:
1. Does patient have stiff joints in early morning?
2. More than 3 joints affected/swollen?
3. MCP joints affected
4. Bilateral affection
5. Subcutaneous nodules
6. Deviation of MCPs
7. Rheumatoid factor that is negative (normally is positive)
8. Better with movement

Compare RA to OA, OA is better with rest while RA is better with movement. Without movement RA patients get stiffer and stiffer.

Gout
Gout is due to crystalline deposits of uric acid which build up in the small joints, most commonly of the big toe (but can occur anywhere really) where the body is cooler and more prone to crystal formation. Gout is often due to a diet heavily weighted towards high protein foods. It’s often called a ‘rich man’s diet’ and involves a lot of meat and perhaps internal organ meat. This too is considered a bi syndrome. Gout can deform the bones by causing bony erosions and the formation of tophi and even cause patients to die of kidney failure due to excessive uric acid buildup.
**Rheumatic arthritis**

This results from a viral infection which

**Ankylosing spondylitis**

This is a chronic inflammatory arthritis affecting the spine and sacroilium causing eventual fusion of the spine. This is often called “bamboo spine.” The graphic below illustrates what happens in this condition. AS (ankylosing spondylitis) is one of the conditions in the cluster known as seronegative spondarthripathies. It is often treated with surgery.

![Graphic Illustration of Ankylosing Spondylitis](image)

**Gout**

**Rheumatic arthritis**

This differs from rheumatoid arthritis. Rheumatic arthritis happens in kids as the result of a common cold. The virus will attack the heart and joints.
1. Fever
2. Big joints affected (unlike RA) such as knee and elbow
3. Heart disease – rheumatic cardiac disease
4. ASO is positive.
   ASO is an antibody

**Spinal tuberculosis**
TCM Discussion

You can categorize Bi syndrome in a couple of ways: 1) by symptoms, 2) by 5 element classification, 3) according to etiology, and according to body constitution.

By Symptoms
1. Wandering Bi or Xing Bi
   The pain moves around with wandering bi syndrome

2. Painful Bi or Tong Bi
   The pain is fixed or severe in this form of bi.

3. Fixed Bi or Zhuo Bi
   The pain doesn’t move, but is fixed in a certain joint and is always the same.

4. Hot or Re Bi
   This is associated with infection. The skin is hot and red and inflamed.

By Location (Five element based)
These definitions are much broader and not just localized to joints.
1. Skin Bi
   Related to Lung, so Lung Bi

2. Muscle Bi or Spleen Bi
   Fibromyalgia is a muscle bi

3. Bone Bi or Kidney bi
   Osteoarthritis falls into this category

4. Blood vessel Bi or Heart Bi
   This corresponds to the rheumatic arthritis discussed in the biomedical section.

5. Sinews and Ligaments Bi or Liver Bi
   This is rheumatoid arthritis.

By Etiology
## Points to treat Bi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Etiology</th>
<th>Points to Address</th>
<th>Notes about the above:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wind</td>
<td>UB-12, 13; GB-20, 21; SJ-17, JS-2, LL-4, LU-11</td>
<td>Neijing says if you want to treat wind, first treat the blood – SP 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold</td>
<td>GB-20, UB-12, 13; LU-7; LI-4</td>
<td>Tonify the KI Yang for cold bi by using Ren 4 and Du 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damp</td>
<td>SJ-5; SP-9; ST-40; SP-6</td>
<td>Should in front, SI 9, LI 15, SJ 14, LI 14. These 5 needles cover most shoulder pain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heat</td>
<td>LI-4; LI-11; UB-40; DU-14</td>
<td>Watch out for the ulnar nerve! No e-stim.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Shoulder
- SI-9, LI-15, jian qian
- > 3 Needle treatment on shoulder: Jian San Zhen
- Acute: use shallow needling. Chronic: use deep needling

### Elbow
- LI-11, SJ-10, SI-8

### Wrist
- LI-5, SJ-4, SI-5

### Interphalangeal
- Ba Xie: LI-2, 3, SI-5
- Herbal Patch: Shang Shi Zhi Tang Gao

### Hip
- GB-30, 29; UB-54, 36; ST-31

### Knee
- ST-35; UB-40; GB-34; he ding: SP-9 (only w/ swelling)

### Ankle
- ST-41; GB-40; UB-60; SP-6 (only w/swelling)

### Toes
- Ba Feng: SP-2, 3, GB-44, UB-67
- Herbal Patch: Shang Shi Zhi Tang Gao

### General bi everywhere
- SI-3; UB-62; SP-21 (GB-34 is good, too)

### Green Dragon Swings Tail
1. Insert into joint (from LI-15 → HT-1).
2. Swing needle side to side 5-9 times.
3. Then flick needle 9 times

#### Additional -
- ☯ Sacral: bai liao, yaoyu (eye of lumbar)
- ☯ If has autoimmune disease: nourish the yin on lv, sp, ki. More yins. Shu, yin, he sea points such as LV 8
Differentiations and Treatment

**Wind invasion or Wandering Bi**
Fibromyalgia is a wandering pain – like wandering bi. Neijing says if you want to treat wind, first treat the blood.

- Acute onset
  - Wandering pain in joints; mainly upper part of body & upper extremities
  - Other wind invasion symptoms: aversion to wind; slight fever; sweating from time to time (slight)
  - T: Normal; white coat
  - P: Superficial; soft

**Remove external pathogenic wind,**
**Promote qi & blood circulation,**
**Alleviate pain**

CAM: will have greasy tongue coat because of wind-cold-damp combination

---

**Cold Invasion or Painful Bi**
2/3 of pain is cold related.

- Acute onset: severe stabbing pain w/spasm (contraction of extremities)

- Alleviated by warmth: worse in cold; cold extremities; aversion to cold; profuse, clear urine
- Slight fever no sweat
- More pathogen = more pain

T: Normal or slightly pale
C: Thin, white or wet
P: Superficial & tight, or deep & slow

**Warm body yang,**
**Remove external pathogenic cold,**
**Promote qi & blood circulation;**
**Stop pain**

Use moxa: esp. herbal ai ye: mixed moxa sticks are stronger, more warm
> Chuan Wu Tang: cook for hours: great for cold bi

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**Damp Invasion or Fixed Bi**
Sometimes numbness due to damp retention. MS for instance, will cause pts to feel heavy, numb and will have damp tongue coating.

- Acute or chronic onset
  - Mainly on lower extremities (damp sinks);
  - Dull pain with heaviness sensation; swelling in local area; even edema; severe numbness
  - Other damp symptoms: general heaviness; foggy/muzzy; morning nausea; decreased appetite; vomiting, middle distension gas bloating; profuse vaginal discharge; loose stool w/ sticky pieces
  - T: Normal or pale; swollen w/ teeth marks
  - C: Thin white or thick, greasy or wet
  - P: Deep; slippery or soft; superficial

**Remove/Resolve Damp,**
**Promote qi & blood circulation to stop pain**

If Yin xu also; treatment more complicated: balance between removing damp & nourishing yin

Moxa is also fine for damp - dry out

Add SP 9, ST 36, use moxa which often better than just needling.
Heat Bi

This could be other pathogens blocking and generating heat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clear Heat, Promote Qi &amp; Blood circulation to stop pain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can use moxa on hot bi because heat is wrapped in damp &amp; can't escape: use moxa to remove damp to allow heat to escape</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Acute onset
  - Burning pain around joints w/ red skin, higher temperature of skin (swollen joints)
  - Other heat: fever or high fever; slight aversion to cold; thirsty; desire for cold drink; sore throat

T: Red body or tip
C: Thin yellow; or thick greasy, yellow
P: Slippery, fast

Moxa in the upper body can guide heat away. One cone only. Can use this for heart bi for instance.

Li Jie

This is a very traditional name – jie means joint and li means severe. Rheumatoid arthritis. Bi due to LV/KI xu with dampness retention. Better with moving, indicating stasis. Damp, phlegm and stasis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remove External Pathogen, Strengthen Liver and Kidney, Promote Qi and Xue Circulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KID-3; SP-6; UB-23, 43, 52, 11 GB-34, 39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Chronic onset - mostly begins in small joints
  - Soreness/stiffness; a.m. stiffness
  - Better after exercise or by mid-day
  - Severe cases: joint deformity
  - Other Liver and Kidney Xu signs:

T: Thin & small; red or scarlet; cracks
C: Less coat; mapped or peeled; mirror or yellow
P: Thin; rapid w/o strength

UB 43 for chronic stubborn disease – L 4 level.