FUNDAMENTALS OF TCM DIAGNOSTICS

BY MK Sastry

2nd presentation of Lucknow
Background of Diagnosis

- Unlike today’s doctors, early Chinese physicians could only depend on their own observation skills for diagnosis.
- No invasive tests or complex monitoring systems were available, just the basic techniques of looking, listening, and touching.
FIVE LEVELS OF PHYSICIANS

• The Chinese identified five grades of physician who could heal the whole person.
  - From spiritual imbalance to basic physical ills. They were:
• **Sage**: the supreme doctor capable of healing the spirit and pointing the individual to the right path for the future.
FIVE LEVELS OF PHYSICIANS

- **Food doctor**: also applied herbal remedies (food and herbs are closely linked).
- **Doctor of general medicine**: used acupuncture, acupressure, massage, moxibustion, and plum blossom needle treatments.
- **Surgeon**: charged with mending broken bones.
- **Animal doctor**: ideal for treating horses and dogs, but never treated people.
• “The superior doctor prevents sickness; 上工治未病；
• The mediocre doctor attends to impending sickness; 中工治欲病；
• The inferior doctor treats the actual sickness. 下工治已病”
“To cure a disease with medicines is like digging a well when one already feels thirsty, it is like making weapons when the war has already broken out, which could be too late to do much good.”

＜Huangdi Neijing黄帝内经＞
The Ideas of Preventive Medicine

• The idea of preventive medicine in <Huangdi Neijing黄帝内经> included two aspects, i.e., preventing disease before its occurrence 未病先防, and if it occurs, from worsening 已病防变.
• It maintains that prevention should come before the attack of an illness.
<Huang Di Nei Jing>’s Health wisdom

• Maintain a tranquilized mind and stay oblivious to fame or gain; it will help to nourish the body’s essence and energy. You are hence free from disease. 恬淡虚无，真气从之，精神内守，病安从来？

• With strong and solid immune system, no evil (sickness) can invade your body.” 正气存内，邪不可干。
TCM Diagnostics

- Diagnostics of TCM, a branch of studies guided by theory of TCM, concerns about how to make diagnosis and syndrome differentiation, judge the nature of disease, and use the basic techniques.
- It is a bridge linking the basic theories of Chinese medicine and clinical medicine.
Key contents of TCM Diagnostics

- It includes the diagnostic methods, syndrome and disease differentiation and case history writing.
- Symptoms include the patient’s subjective feeling, discomfort of the body and abnormal changes e.g. headache, tinnitus, abdominal distension.
- Signs include the abnormal conditions found through examinations, such as sallow complexion, wheezing, red tongue and rapid pulse.
- Symptoms and signs are foundation for disease or syndrome differentiation.
Syndrome Differentiation

• It is a pathological summary of the location, cause, nature and condition of a disease at a certain stage and also a conclusion about the present pathological nature.

• Is an approach to make a comprehensive analysis of the data collected from the four examinations and decide the diagnosis based on the theory of TCM.

• Alongside the development of the diagnostic theory of TCM, various differentiating methods emerged at different time and the different methods will be examined in later text.
Disease Differentiation

- Disease is a general summary of the overall characteristics and rules in the course of a disease.
- At a certain stage a disease may have different syndromes, i.e. different syndromes in the same disease, and at a certain stage different diseases with similar syndromes are seen.
- Clinically, there are same treatment for different diseases and different treatments for the same disease.
- Disease differentiation is an approach to make a comprehensive analysis of the data collected from the four examinations and decide what disease it is based on the TCM theory.
Case Record Writing

- It is the written record of the diagnosis and treatment for a patient.
- It is an important file concerning the medical treatment, scientific research and management.
- It is also an evidence used for lawsuit.
Basic Principles of TCM Diagnosis

1. **From the Exterior to know the Interior:**司外揣内
   Exterior means the manifestation of a disease, and interior means the internal pathological changes. From the manifestations one can infer and analyze the internal changes and know the disease nature.

2. **From Small Changes to Know the Overall Condition:**见微知著
   The part of the body is always closely related the whole internal organs, which will give an overall physiological and pathological information.

3. **From Normal Health State to Find Out Abnormal Changes**知常达变
   In the process of diagnosis, it is imperative to make comparison to find out a disorder.
Rules To Be Observed During Diagnosis

- Overall Observation:
  In the course of diagnosis, take the whole pathological changes into consideration and see the impact of the environment on the body.

- Equal Emphasis to the Diagnostic Methods:
  Attach equal importance to the four examination methods to collect the disease information.

- Consider both Differentiation of Disease and Syndrome:
  Clinically, syndrome differentiation can be made base on the disease condition, or disease differentiation based on the syndromes. When the nature of the disease has not totally exposed, syndrome differentiation is beneficial to treatment and reveal the nature of the disease.
## Progress of the TCM Diagnosis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Physician</th>
<th>Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Zhou Li (The Book of Rites), compiled about 3,000 years ago.</td>
<td>Bian Que 扁鹊</td>
<td>Was good at pulse-taking, looking at the complexion and hearing the sound to make diagnosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huangdi Neijing (Huangdi’s Cannon of Medicine)</td>
<td>Group records</td>
<td>Diagnosis based on consideration of the internal and external factors, laid foundation for the four examinations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nan Jing (Classic of Medical Problems)</td>
<td>Group records</td>
<td>Suggested taking of cunkou 寸口 pulse and greatly influence future physicians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Han dynasty</td>
<td>Cunyu Yi 淳于意</td>
<td>Emphasize necessity to keep complete clinical records, including the patient’s name, address, symptoms and formulas and herbs given.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eastern Han dynasty</td>
<td>Zhang Zhongjing 张仲景</td>
<td>Shang Han Za Bing Lun or Treatise on Cold-Induced and Miscellaneous Diseases was first to establish the system of syndrome differentiation and classification of diseases. His model is still valid today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Jin dynasty</td>
<td>Wang Shuhe 王叔和</td>
<td>Mai Jing or The Pulse Classic is the earliest book on sphygmology. He perfected and systemized the art of pulse-taking before the Han dynasty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sui dynasty</td>
<td>Chao Yuanfang 巢元方</td>
<td>Zhu Bing Yuan Hou Lun (Treatise on Causes and Symptoms of Diseases) was the first monograph on the cause of disease and diagnosis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song, Jin and Yuan dynasties</td>
<td>Shi Fa 施发 (Guidance to Diagnosis); Hua Shou (Essentials for Diagnosticians) and etc</td>
<td>More books on diagnostics were published in the Song dynasty. More books on pulse-taking were published in Yuan dynasty.</td>
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<td>Ming and Qing dynasties</td>
<td>Zhang Jiebin 张介宾’s Jingyue’s “Complete Works” had a great impact on the later generations. Li Shizhen 李时珍’s “Pinhu’s Sphygmology” gives a detailed account of the feature of the 27 pulse conditions with suggestion of disorders and methods to differentiate. Wu Youke 吴又可’s “Treatise on Pestilence”, Ye Tianshi’s “Treatise on Externally Contracted Warm Disease” and Wu Jutong’s “Analysis of Warm Disease” developed the defense-qi-nutrient-blood syndrome differentiation and triple energizer syndrome differentiation.</td>
<td>The study of pulse-taking and tongue examination had a great leap forward, especially about the principle of diagnosis and methods of syndrome differentiation.</td>
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• Unlike today’s doctors, early Chinese physicians could only depend on their own observation skills for diagnosis.

• No invasive tests or complex monitoring systems were available, just the basic techniques of looking, listening, and touching.
Four Diagnostic Techniques

Observation
Inspection of the patient’s general well-being, colour of complexion etc.

Auscultation and Olfaction
The patient’s voice, breathing patterns and breath are analysed.

Interrogation
Checking with the patient his illness, the symptoms and sensations experienced etc.

Taking the Pulse
The changes in the patient’s pulse is used to determine his qi and blood circulation.
Diagnostic Methods

- They include looking, hearing and smelling, asking, pulse examination and palpation. They are also called the “Four Examinations”.
  - **Looking**: consists of the general and local condition of the body, shen, complexion, physique, pattern of movement, excretions, collaterals and vessels of an infant’s index finger and the tongue characteristic.
  - **Hearing and smelling**: Inspecting the patient’s voice, speakck, respiration and abnormal odor of his body and excretions.
Diagnostic Methods

- **Asking:** the physician collects information of the patient through asking about the onset, progress, past case history, lifestyle and the present complains.

- **Pulse-taking and palpation:** the physician collects information of the patient through pulse-taking and palpation.

  - Through the four examinations the disease information is collected from different aspects, such as chief symptoms and signs and case history.
Skilled Observation

- Inspection or looking – the most important component – which involves examining the patient’s appearance, tongue, nose, skin color, and so on.

- Auscultation and olfaction – hearing and smelling – which includes listening to the patient’s voice and breathing rhythms, and smelling any body odors.
Skilled Observation

- Interrogation – the “asking questions” stage identifying how the patient feels – hot, cold, thirsty, hungry, or in pain.
- Palpation or touching – this includes the complexities of Chinese pulse taking, as well as feeling the body surface to assess temperature and quality, and check for any swellings.
Normal:
shiny, lustrous

Pale / white

Yellow

Red

Blue / green / purple

Black
望形态 Shape & Posture

Sturdy or weak
Obese or thin

Active or lethargic
Observe Various Parts

- Eyes
- Head/ hair
- Ears
- Skin
- Excreta
- Nose
- Mouth
- Child’s index finger
望目 Observe the Eyes

图 2-1 五轮部位与五脏分属
1. 气轮（胞睑）——属脾  2. 血轮（两眦）——属心
3. 气轮（白睛）——属肺  4. 风轮（黑睛）——属肝
5. 水轮（瞳神）——属肾
“The sage doctor knows by observation; the skilled doctor by listening and smelling; the mediocre doctor by interrogation; the ordinary doctor by palpation.

“望而知之谓之神，闻而知之谓之圣，问而知之谓之工，切而知之谓之巧”。”
Inspection

- When examining a patient, the physician first observes the general manifestations such as vitality, complexion, physique and behavior in hope of obtaining a general impression of a disease ie

- Whether it is a cold, heat, deficiency or excess syndrome, or a mild, severe, acute or chronic case.
Looking at Shen

- The physician observes the general manifestation of life activities to judge the nature of a disease.
- Shen is defined in both broad and narrow senses.
- In a broad sense, it refers to the exterior manifestation of life activities or life.
- In a narrow sense, it refers to mental faculties, i.e. spirit, consciousness and thinking process.
Principles of Looking at Shen

- Shen is closely related to essence, qi and zang-fu organs. It comes from the prenatal essence and is constantly nourished by the acquired essence from food and drinks.
- Sound health and vigorous spirit indicate abundance of qi.
- Observation of shen helps to identify the condition of qi, the case and its prognosis.
External Manifestations of Shen

• TCM emphasizes that “the body build and shen stay together”, i.e. when the body build is strong, shen is vigorous.

• Shen is especially reflected from the eyes.

• Eyes are directly controlled by the mind and are the place where qi of the organs converges.
External Manifestations of Shen

- Mentality and facial expressions: Mental faculty dominates the body. If it is normal, one has full consciousness and rational thoughts, natural expression and quick response.
- Physical build and patterns of movement: Strong physical build and free movement of the body are signs of vitality. Besides the above, speech, breathing, tongue and pulse condition should be observed.
Looking at the Complexion

- The face is full of blood vessels, nourished by qi and blood of the organs, and its color and luster are easy to observe because of its thin skin.
- Clinically, the face is regarded as an important part during the examination.
Looking at the Physique

- The shape of the body suggests the quality of Qi and Jing:
  - A firm, muscular body suggests that Qi and Essence are strong and the person is intrinsically healthy;
  - Obesity and fat can imply Spleen Qi deficiency or an excess of phlegm and dampness;
  - A thin body with poor appetite implies some sort of digestive weakness – typically San Jiao deficiency;
  - A thin body with a good appetite is likely to suggest yin deficiency or over-activity in the San Jiao.
Healthy Complexion

- It refers to the color and luster of the complexion of healthy people.
- It is characterized by luster and concealment.
- Luster of the complexion is a sign of vitality indicating abundance of qi, blood and body fluids, and the sound condition of the zang-fu organs.
- Concealment means that the luster is not totally exposed but concealed in the skin, a sign indicating abundance of stomach qi, and qi and essence. Due to differences in physique, season, climate and environment, healthy complexion can be described as the chief color and secondary color.
Healthy Complexion

- Chief Color: it refers to the basic complexion since birth. It is unchanged in life.
- For racial and prenatal difference, there are five colors: reddish, white, green, yellow and black.
- The color of Chinese is yellow-reddish, lustrous and concealed.
Healthy Complexion

- The secondary color of the complexion changes temporarily under the influence of external factors (such as season, day and night and climate).
- It is a temporary change and liable to restore to the chief color.
- The complexion may also change with emotional excitement, sports, wine drinking, environment, occupation, but it is still normal as long as it is lustrous and concealed.
Sickly Complexion

- Appearance of sickly complexion and luster is related to multiple factors such as the condition, location and nature of the disease.
- It is important to distinguish between favorable color and unfavorable color.
Sickly Complexion

- Favorable Color: When an obviously morbid color appears in a patient’s face and the luster remains, it is a favorable color, indicating that the disease is mild, qi in the zang-fu organs is still abundant and stomach qi is able to run upward to nourish the face. It is often seen in patients with a recent disease, mild disease and yang syndrome, which is easy to cure with fair prognosis.

- Unfavorable Color: When an obviously morbid color appears in a patient’s face and there is a dull look, it is the unfavorable color, implying that it is a severe condition. Qi in the zang-fu organs is exhausted and stomach qi is unable to run upward to nourish the face. It is often seen in patients with protracted or severe diseases or a yin syndrome and the prognosis is poor.
Five Color Diagnosis

- Sickly complexion has five color: red, white, yellow, green and black, seen in disorders of the zang-fu organs.
- According to TCM, five colors correspond to the five zang-fu organs, i.e. red to heart, white to lung, yellow to spleen, green to liver and black to kidney.
- In terms of the nature of a disease, green and black color is found in pains, yellow and red color in a heat syndrome and white color in a cold syndrome.
Five Color Diagnosis

- Red Color: it suggests a heat or yang syndrome, usually caused by heat with dilates facial blood vessels and accelerates flow of qi and blood to the face, or by upward movement of deficiency yang.
- An excess heat syndrome is characterized by flushing in the entire face, yet an asthenic yin syndrome is featured by flushing over cheekbones in the afternoon.
- In chronic or seriously ill patients, there is occasionally migratory red color as heavy make-up in a pale face. It is the “floating-yang syndrome” or a critical condition.
Five Color Diagnosis

- **White Color**: it implies a deficiency syndrome, cold syndrome and loss of blood, usually caused by qi and blood deficiency or discomfiture of yang and excess of cold, failure of qi and blood to flow to the face.
- The blood deficiency syndrome or loss of blood is characterized by pale and lusterless complexion, and the yang deficiency syndrome by pallor.
- **Floating pallor** means the yang deficiency syndrome with water flooding, and pallor is a sign of exhaustion or yang qi or excess of yang qi or excess of yin cold.
Five Color Diagnosis

- **Yellow Color**: It implies spleen deficiency or dampness, usually caused by deficiency or malnutrition of the spleen, or retention of dampness or dysfunction of spleen in transportation and transformation.
- The deficiency syndrome is marked by sallow complexion due to qi deficiency of the spleen and stomach.
- Edema with yellow color indicates deficiency in the spleen and retained dampness.
- Yellow face and eyes imply jaundice, which is classified into two categories: yang jaundice and yin jaundice.
### FACIAL COLORS AND LIKELY ASSOCIATED SYNDROMES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Red</th>
<th>Heat syndrome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flushed red</strong></td>
<td>Excessive heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Malar flush (across the cheekbones) or flushing only in the evenings</strong></td>
<td>Yin or Heat deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow</strong></td>
<td>Dampness, or Spleen or Blood deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dull yellow</strong></td>
<td>Cold and Damp syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facial Color</td>
<td>Likely Associated Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear yellow</td>
<td>Heat and Damp syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Cold syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pale</td>
<td>Qi or yang deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Cold syndrome, or possibly pain or Blood stagnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Cold syndrome, or possibly pain or yang deficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking at Hair

- Looking at Hair aims to know the condition of Kidney qi, essence and blood. The hair of the Chinese is black, thick and lustrous, a sign of abundant kidney qi and essence and blood.

1) Yellowish hair:
   - When a person’s hair is yellowish, dry, sparse and easy to lose, he suffers from deficient essence and blood.
   - When his hair is yellow, soft and sparse, and grows slowly, the infant suffers from congenital defect and loss of kidney essence.
   - Withered hair knotted like ears of grains in infants is a warning sign of malnutrition.
Looking at the Hair

2) Grey hair: Grey hair in youngsters are caused by deficiency in the kidney or injury to blood due to overtaxing oneself. Grey hair in healthy young people is not a morbid state.

2) Loss of hair: When hair exfoliates and the scalp is exposed, it is due to deficiency of blood and pathogenic wind. Spare hair easy to lose in healthy young people indicates deficiency in the kidney. If the scalp itches with much dandruff and fat, it is caused by dryness due to heat in blood.
Looking at the Eyes

- Eyes are related to the organs, especially to the heart, liver and kidney.
- Eyes reveal the condition of the essence of qi of the organs.
- While looking at the eyes, physicians should focus on the abnormal changes in the expression, color, shape and patterns.
The Five Wheels Theory

- The wheel of flesh = Spleen
- The wheel of blood = Heart
- The wheel of Qi = Lung
- The wheel of wind = Liver
- The wheel of water = Kidney
Looking at the Eyes

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## Looking at the Mouth and Lips

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lips Conditions</th>
<th>Clinical Indications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red lips</td>
<td>A sign of abundant stomach qi and balanced qi and blood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark red lips</td>
<td>Suggest excessive heat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pale lips</td>
<td>Imply blood deficiency or loss of blood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red, dry and swollen lips</td>
<td>Indicate extreme heat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lips Condition</td>
<td>Clinical Indications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluish purple lips</td>
<td>A sign of blood stasis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluish black lips</td>
<td>Result from excessive cold or intolerable pain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry and chapped lips</td>
<td>a sign of injury to body fluids, unable to moisten the lips.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involuntary salivation</td>
<td>a sign of deficiency in the spleen and excessive dampness in infants and a sign of apoplexy in adults.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closed mouth difficult to open and lockjaw</td>
<td>often caused by stirring-up of liver wind and contraction of tendons and vessels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looking at the Throat

- A healthy throat is light red and lustrous, without pain or swelling, through which air can flow smoothly, sounds are produced well and food can go down easily.
- Dark red, painful and swollen throat suffers from accumulation of heat toxin the lung and stomach.
- Light red, painful and swollen throat suffers from deficiency of kidney yin or flaring of fire in a deficient condition.
Looking at the neck

- Both sides of the neck are symmetrical, with the trachea in the middle.
- Males have the Adam’s apple while females do not.
Looking at the neck

- **Goiter**: it is an enlargement in the front neck, close to the Adam’s apple, which moves on swallowing.
- It is attributable to stagnation of qi in the liver, and coagulation of phlegm, or due to poor adaptation to the climate and coagulation of phlegm and qi,
Looking at the neck

- Scrofula瘰疬或淋巴结结核: it is a bead-like enlargement of the side of the neck or below the jaw, attributable to accumulation of phlegm in the neck caused by yin deficiency of the lung and kidney or exogenous wind-fire.
Looking at the neck

- **Stiff neck**: it refers to the neck limited in motion due to contracture of acute pain of the muscles.
- **Stiff neck accompanied by cold and fever** are signs of wind-cold invasion.
- **Stiff neck unable to bend forward, accompanied by high fever, coma and convulsion** are signs of fire invasion or brain problems.
- **Stiff neck after sleep without other symptoms** is caused by stagnation qi in the channels and collaterals of the neck.
Looking at the neck

- Flaccid neck 项软: patient is unable to raise their head.
- Infant patient often caused by congenital defect, deficiency of kidney essence.
- If it occurs in patients with protracted or severe illnesses, it is a critical sign, suggesting depletion of the essence.
Looking at the chest

- Flat chest 扁平胸: the thorax is flatter than the normal. Seen in thin people with yin deficiency of the lung and the kidney.
- Chicken chest 鸡胸: sternum project forward, the anteroposterior diameter is longer than the left-right diameter and the side walls of the ribs sink.
Looking at the chest

- Barrel chest 桶状胸: the thorax is rounder than normal. Often seen inpatients with chronic cough which injures the lung and kidney.
Looking at the chest

- **Unsymmetrical thorax:**
  The thorax sinks on one side, the rib space becomes smaller, the shoulder droops and the vertebra projects to the other side.
  Usually seen in patients with lung atrophy and those after lung surgery.
Looking at the chest

- Bead-like ribs: the joints between the ribs and the cartilages become thicker and bigger like a string of beads, usually seen in infants with rickets.
- It occurred due to deficiency of kidney.
Looking at the chest

- **Mastelcosis 乳房肿溃**: during breast-feeding period, when the breasts are red, swollen, inflamed and painful resulting poor flowing of milk.
- Usually caused by obstruction of liver qi, stagnation of stomach heat or exogenous pathogenic factors.
Looking at the abdomen

- Normal abdomen is symmetrical, flat in the supine position and slightly protrudes in the standing position.
Looking at the abdomen

Bulged abdomen: Usually caused stagnation of liver qi and blood stasis; if it is accompanied by general swelling, it is a sign of edema caused by retained water in muscles.
Looking at the Abdomen

• Depressed abdomen and emaciated physique are signs of deficiency in the spleen and stomach and malnutrition or excessive vomiting and diarrhea.
Looking at the back and lower back

- The lower back and back are symmetrical on both sides in healthy person.
- On standing, the spine is in the center, and the cervical and lumbar parts bend slightly forward while the thoracic and sacral parts bend slightly backward.
1. Kyphosis 脊柱后突:
If the prothorax sinks and the back much protrude, it is called "humpback", resulting from deficiency of kidney qi or spinal disorder. It is seen also in the aged.
2. Scoliosis: It refers to that the spine deviates from the midline and bends to the left or the right side, usually caused by improper sitting posture in infancy, or by congenital deficiency of kidney qi.
3. Lower back contraction: It refers to lower back pain, restricted motion, hard to turn around, usually caused by invasion of the interior by cold-dampness and contraction of lumbar channels and collaterals or local qi stagnation and blood stasis due to fall or contusion.
Looking at the Limbs

Swollen limbs: it is edema, which is caused by retention of water, if a trace is left on swollen limbs on pressing.
Looking at the Limbs

- Swollen knees: when the kneecap is red, swollen, hot, painful and hard to move, it is due to heat transformed from accumulated wind-dampness.

- When the kneecap is swollen while the legs and thighs are emaciated, it is caused by retention of pathogenic cold-dampness and deficiency of qi and blood.
Looking at the Limbs

- Exposed blue veins: when the blue veins in the legs are exposed like earthworm, it is caused by invasion of cold-dampness and blood stagnation of channels and collaterals.
Looking at the Limbs

- Deformity of lower limbs: when the ankles are close while the knees are apart or the other way around, it is called “bowleg”, usually caused by congenital defect or acquired malnutrition and deficiency of kidney qi or dysplasia.
Sputum is a pathological product of deranged metabolism of body fluids.

White and dilute sputum caused by injury to yang or deficiency of spleen yang and accumulation of dampness.

Scanty and yellow, thick sputum caused by invasion of the lung by heat which scorches fluid.
Profuse and white sputum easy to cough out is due to malfunction of the spleen and accumulation of dampness.

Sputum hard to cough out is due to invasion of the lung by dryness and injury to lung fluid or deficiency of yin and body fluids.

Stinking purulent bloody sputum suggests pulmonary abscess due to accumulated heat to toxins in the lung that turn to pus.

 Bloody sputum is due to deficiency of lung yin and invasion of the lung by liver fire and injury to lung collaterals.
Saliva refers to eatery mucus from the mouth.

Profuse and clear saliva is caused by deficiency and cold in the spleen and stomach and failure of qi to transform to fluid.

Dribbling of sticky saliva is due to damp-heat in the spleen and stomach and upward flow of dampness.

In infants, it is caused by inability to control fluid due to deficiency of spleen qi or accumulated heat and parasites in the stomach.
Principles for looking at the Tongue

- The tongue is the window of the heart. A collateral of the Heart Channel connects with the tongue root. The movement of the tongue body, the clarity of speech and the sensitivity of the sense of taste, to some extent, reflect how well “the heart houses the mind”.
Principles for looking at the Tongue

- The kidney stores essence and the Kidney channel terminates at the root of the tongue.
- The liver stores blood and governs muscles and its channel and collaterals connect with the tongue body.
- Lung collaterals reach up to the larynx and pharynx, linking with the tongue root.
- Other organs are connected directly or indirectly with the tongue through channels and collaterals.
- Once pathological changes occur inside the body, the tongue characteristics may change accordingly.
Tongue Diagnosis

- Root of tongue
  - Kidneys
- Side of tongue
  - Liver and Gallbladder
- Middle of tongue
  - Spleen and stomach
- Tip of tongue
  - Heart / Lung
Shape and Structure of the Tongue

- The tongue body is the main part to be observed during the examination.
- In TCM, the front part of the tongue body is usually called the tongue tip, the middle part is called the middle tongue and the back is called tongue root, and both sides are tongue edge.
Principles for looking at the Tongue

- The tongue is the window of the heart.
- A collateral of the Heart Channel connects with the tongue root.
- The movement of the tongue body, the clarity of speech and the sensitivity of the sense of taste, to some extent, reflect how well “the heart houses the mind”.
Principles for looking at the Tongue

- The tongue also reflects the condition of the spleen.
- The Spleen Channel reaches the root of the tongue and spreads over its lower surface.
- The tongue is in charge of the sense of taste.
- Tongue coating is formed by qi and fluid of the stomach, which are evaporated and move upwards to the surface of the tongue and the tongue body is nourished by qi and blood transformed by the spleen.
Principles for looking at the Tongue

- The kidney stores essence and the Kidney channel terminates at the root of the tongue.
- The liver stores blood and governs muscles and its channel and collaterals connect with the tongue body.
- Lung collaterals reach up to the larynx and pharynx, linking with the tongue root.
- Other organs are connected directly or indirectly with the tongue through channels and collaterals.
- Once pathological changes occur inside the body, the tongue characteristics may change accordingly.
舌诊 Tongue Diagnosis

- Tongue Body
  - Colour
  - Shape / Texture
  - State

- Tongue Coating
  - Colour
  - Texture
Qi, Blood and Body Fluids and Tongue Characteristics

- As a muscular organ rich in blood vessels, the tongue is nourished by qi, blood and body fluids.
- The shape and quality of the tongue body and the color of the tongue are related to the condition and circulation of qi and blood.
- Dry or moist tongue coating and the tongue body are related to body fluids.
Qi, Blood and Body Fluids and Tongue Characteristics

- In TCM, saliva is a part of body fluids and its generation and distribution are related to the organs, especially the kidney, spleen and stomach.
- Thus observing the tongue body helps judge sufficiency or deficiency of body fluids.
Precautions - Light

- Light: The quality and hue of light may have a great impact on the color of the tongue.
- Light should be directly shone on the surface of the tongue, avoiding colored lights.
- At night or in a dark place, daylight lamps are the best choice.
- The reflected light from colored objects around may make the tongue look different accordingly.
Precautions – Food or Drug

- Food and some drugs may alter the tongue characteristic.
- After food intake the tongue coating may become thinner because of the friction due to chewing and the self-cleaning action of the mouth.
- Drinking more water makes the tongue coating moister.
- Cold, hold or irritant food may alter the color of the tongue.
Precautions – Food or Drug

• After hot and spicy food intake, the color of the tongue may become reddish.
• Taking too much candy, sweet and heavy food or a large amount of sedatives makes the tongue coating look thicker.
• Long time consumption of some antibiotics may result in black greasy or curd-like tongue coating.
• Milk and soya bean milk may turn the coating white and thick.
Precautions – Food or Drug

- Orange and riboflavin may turn the coating into yellow.
- Black and brown food or drugs, live, plum or cigarette smoking may turn the coating into grey or black.
- Stained coating may disappear soon or alter wiping, and it often unevenly attaches to the surface of the tongue and is inconsistent with the nature of a disease.
- Physician should ask about food or drugs that the patient takes if in doubt.
Influence of the Mouth

• Impaired tooth may thicken the tongue coating of the same side.

• Artificial tooth may leave a tooth print on the tongue.

• Breathing with the mouth open may cause the tongue coating become drier.

• These manifestations cannot be considered as pathological signs, which should be carefully differentiated to avoid wrong diagnosis.
NORMAL

Qi Deficiency
- Fatigue
- Poor appetite
- Spontaneous sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Over-thinking and worrying...

Qi Stagnation
- Stressed
- Tendency to be depressed
- Upset
- Unstable emotional state
- PMT....

Damp Heat
- Skin problems
- Urinary infections
- Clammy skin
- Angry
- Uncomfortable...

Heat
- Feel hot
- Sweat easily
- Thirsty
- Constipated
- Irritable and bad tempered
- Skin problems...

Damp Retention
- Bloated
- Fullness in chest and abdomen
- Feel heavy and lethargic...

Blood Stasis
- Cold limbs
- Varicose veins
- Painful legs
- Headaches
- Chest pain
- Liver spots
- Lack of skin lustre...

Yang Deficiency
- Feel cold easily
- Pale complexion
- Back pain
- Tendency to panic
- Emotionally low
- Impotence
- Infertility...

Yin Deficiency
- Hot flushes
- Sweat at night
- Insomnia
- Irritable
- Ringing in the ears
- Menopause...

Blood Deficiency
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Palpitations
- Poor concentration and memory
- Insomnia
- Women's problems...
Shape and Structure of the Tongue

- The tongue body is the main part to be observed during the examination.
- In TCM, the front part of the tongue body is usually called the tongue tip, the middle part the is called the middle tongue and the back is called tongue root and both sides are tongue edge.
Principles for looking at the Tongue

- The tongue is the window of the heart. A collateral of the Heart Channel connects with the tongue root. The movement of the tongue body, the clarity of speech and the sensitivity of the sense of taste, to some extent, reflect how well “the heart houses the mind”.
Qi, Blood and Body Fluids and Tongue Characteristics

- As a muscular organ rich in blood vessels, the tongue is nourished by qi, blood and body fluids.
- The shape and quality of the tongue body and the color of the tongue are related to the condition and circulation of qi and blood.
- Dry or moist tongue coating and the tongue body are related to body fluids.
Normal Tongue Characteristic

- A soft and nimble tongue with light but bright red color and a thin and moist white layer is considered as a normal tongue.
- In brief, it is a “light red tongue with thin white coating”.
- Normal tongue characteristic indicates the organs function well, qi, blood and body fluids are abundant and stomach qi is sufficient.
# The Tell-Tale Tongue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Indications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pale</td>
<td>Cold syndrome, yang deficiency, Qi deficiency, Blood deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddish</td>
<td>Heat syndrome, yin deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark Red</td>
<td>Extreme Heat in the Blood, yin and internal Fire deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purplish and Dry</td>
<td>Extreme Heat, yin, and Fluid deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purplish and Moist</td>
<td>Extreme Cold, Blood stagnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>Internal Cold syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Coating</td>
<td>Heat syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Coating</td>
<td>Cold syndrome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pinkish, Bright, not Thin nor Thick, Soft and Nimble

Coating is Thin, White, Evenly Spread, not Moist nor Dry, not Greasy.
Pale, Slim, Thin Coating
Qi and Blood Deficiency

Pale, Fat, Thick Moist Coating
Yang Deficiency Cold Syndrome

Pale Tongue
红舌  Red Tongue

Bright Red, Cracked, Little or No Coating
- Deficiency Heat

Bright Red, Prickled, Thick Yellow Coating
- Excess Heat
绛舌  Crimson Tongue

Crimson, Moist, Little or No Coating
Blood Stasis with heat

Crimson, Cracked, Little or No Coating
Yin-Deficient Heat
Purple Tongue

Purple, white, smooth Coating blood stasis

Blood Stasis
## Significance of Tongue Colour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colour</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pale or Whitish</td>
<td>Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cold Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright Red</td>
<td>Excess Heat</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deficiency Heat</td>
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# Significance of Tongue State

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stiff</td>
<td>Heat in Pericardium, Wind in the Liver, Stroke or Pre-Stroke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaccid</td>
<td>Qi &amp; Blood Deficiency, Dehydration from strong Heat, Extreme Yin Depletion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wry</td>
<td>Stroke or Pre-Stroke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
舌苔厚薄  Thickness of Coating

Thin Coating

Thick Coating
舌苔润燥 Moistness of Coating

Moist Coating

Wet Coating

Dry Coating
## Significance of Coating Texture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Texture</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thickness</td>
<td>Duration and Severity of Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moistness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rotten</td>
<td>Wetness, Indigestion, Excess Heat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greasy</td>
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白苔  White Coating
黄苔  Yellow Coating
灰黑苔 Grey / Black Coating
## Looking at the Tongue Shape

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<tr>
<td>Tough Tongue</td>
<td>Texture of the tongue is coarse or crimpled. The tongue body is hard and tough and tongue color is dark</td>
<td>Excess syndrome. A confrontation between the pathogenic factors and healthy qi, and the former rushes upward, so the tongue appears tough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swollen Tongue</td>
<td>The tongue is so swollen that it occupies the entire space of the mouth; or failure to close one’s mouth or draw back the tongue</td>
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舌苔润燥 Moistness of Coating

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闻诊 Auscultation and Olfaction

- voice
- respiration
- cough
- belching
- breath
- phlegm
- excreta
- Secreted substance
Smelling the Odor

- Abnormal odor of a patient is often related to deranged metabolism of the zang-fu organs, stagnation of qi and blood or pathologic changes in local tissues or organs.
Smelling the Odor

- Abnormal odor of a patient is often related to deranged metabolism of the zang-fu organs, stagnation of qi and blood or pathologic changes in local tissues or organs.
## Smelling the Odor

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<th>Types of Odor</th>
<th>Clinical Indications</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Odor from the mouth</td>
<td>An offensive odor may be produced after taking food such as garlic and leek, drink liquor or smoking. A foul breath is caused by a filthy mouth, decayed teeth or indigestion. An acid foul breath indicates indigestion or stomach heat and a fetid breath suggests ulcer or abscess.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Body odor</td>
<td>A foul smell from the armpits, aggravated by perspiration, indicates armpit odor. A bloody smell suggests loss of blood; a urine smell implies edema at the late stage; a smell of rotten apples indicates diabetes; a rancid or corpse-like smell suggest ulcer or abscess or a critical condition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odor from the secretions and excretions</td>
<td>A strong filthy smell indicates the excess or heat syndrome and a weak fishy smell suggests the deficiency or cold syndrome. A clear vomitus without odor indicates stomach cold and a dense thick vomitus with foul odor suggests stomach heat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Taking the Pulse
The changes in the patient’s pulse is used to determine his qi and blood circulation.
切诊 Pulse-Taking
切诊 Pulse-Taking

图 5-3 指目部位

Fig. 42. The pulse diagnosis is the key to treatment.
Floating pulse: located on the surface, can be felt by light touch, growing faint on pressing hard, but offering no sense of emptiness, “wood floating on the water”

Deep pulse: deeply located, can hardly be felt by light touch, palpable by moderate force, distinct only by heavy pressing
Rapid pulse: a pulse coming and going quickly at 90 to 139 beats per minute, rhythm generally regular

Slow pulse: a slow beating pulse about 40 to 59 beats per minute, rhythm generally regular

Rapid pulse: a pulse coming and going quickly at 90 to 139 beats per minute, rhythm generally regular
Knotted pulse: a slow pulse with irregular intervals

Intermittent pulse: a pulse pausing at regular intervals
Full pulse: a pulse with a large volume felt like waves surging, coming vigorously and going gently.

Thready (fine) pulse: a thin but distinctive pulse on pressing “as thin as a silk thread”
Slippery pulse: a pulse coming and going smoothly, feeling slick to the finger like beads rolling on a plate.

Uneven (hesitant) pulse: a pulse that comes and goes unsmoothly, giving a feeling of unevenness but no feeling of slickness.
Taut pulse: a forceful, straight and long pulse like a tight string of a musical instrument

Tense pulse: a tense and forceful pulse light a stretched twisted cord
Replete pulse: forceful on both light and heavy take, long and large, giving a feeling of fullness, can be felt at the locations of cun, guan and chi.

Feeble pulse: weak on light and heavy touching at the locations of cun, guan and chi, giving a feeling of emptiness, opposite to replete pulse.
## Abnormal Pulses and their indications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Syndrome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Floating</td>
<td>Superficial syndromes, e.g. colds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep</td>
<td>Internal syndromes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow</td>
<td>Cold syndrome; yang deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid</td>
<td>Heat syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Deficiency syndromes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solid /hard</td>
<td>Excess syndromes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smooth/slippery</td>
<td>Phlegm/Damp syndromes; usual pulse in pregnancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rough</td>
<td>Qi or Blood stagnation; Blood or Essence deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thready/feeble</td>
<td>Qi and Blood deficiency; Damp syndromes</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Abnormal Pulses and their indications

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<tr>
<th>Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full</td>
<td>Heat excess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiry</td>
<td>Liver or Gall Bladder imbalance/pain; Phlegm or Damp syndromes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular – slow/weak</td>
<td>Qi exhaustion; Qi and Blood deficiency; yang deficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular – slow/breaking</td>
<td>Cold or Phlegm stagnation; Blood stagnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irregular - rapid/breaking</td>
<td>Heat excess; Qi or Blood stagnation; Phlegm syndromes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very deep/hidden</td>
<td>Extreme pain; yang Qi exhaustion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very fast</td>
<td>Extreme yang excess; yin exhaustion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very weak</td>
<td>Qi and Blood deficiency; yang exhaustion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long (beyond Chi position)</td>
<td>Excess syndromes; Heat syndrome; Qi stagnation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short (no Guan or Chi)</td>
<td>Qi deficiency; Qi depression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Palpation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pulse position</th>
<th>Left hand</th>
<th>Right hand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cun</td>
<td>Heart/Pericardium</td>
<td>Lung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guan</td>
<td>Liver/ Gall Bladder</td>
<td>Spleen/Stomach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chi</td>
<td>Kidney/ Urinary Bladder</td>
<td>Kidney/large and small intestine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Child’s index finger < 3 years old
Pathological Venules of the Index Finger in Children

- The venules of a baby’s index finger are divided into three passes: namely feng-guan or wind-pass (the proximal segment), qi-guan or qi-pass (the middle segment) and ming-guan or life-pass (the distal segment).

- When the venules appear near the wind-pass, physician should infer that the pathogenic factors have invaded the collaterals and it is a mild case, seen at the early stage of an external affection.
Pathological Venules of the Index Finger in Children

- When the venules appear near the qi-pass, it means that the pathogenic factors have invaded the channels and it is a severe case.
- When the venules appear near life-pass, it means that the pathogenic factors have invaded zang-fu organs and it is a rather severe case.
- When the venules appear at the finger tip, known as “extension through passes toward the nail”, it suggest it is a critical condition and the prognosis is poor.