DIAGNOSTIC SKILLS
OF ACUPUNCTURE

I) The Four Pillars
1) Asking (10 Questions)
2) Looking (tongue, face, &tc.)
3) Smelling and Listening
4) Palpation (pulse, ahshi points, &tc.)

II) The 8 Parameters
1) Yin/Yang
2) Interior/Exterior (just chills, or just fever = internal condition)
3) Excessive/Deficient
4) Hot/Cold

III) Diagnoses
1) Zang/Fu
2) Channels
3) Qi (Deficiency; Stagnation; Rebellion; Collapse)
4) Blood (Stasis; Deficiency; Heat)
5) 6 Levels (Shan Han Lun)
6) 4 Stages (Wen Bing)
7) Divergent Channels
8) Luo Channels
9) Sinew Meridians
10) 8-Extra Vessels

IV) 10 Questions
1) Chills and fever
   - If simultaneous – Exterior condition
   - Mostly chills – Wind-Cold
   - Mostly fever – Wind-Heat
   - Chills only – Internal condition
   - Fever only – Internal condition
   - Alternating chills & fever – Internal condition (Shao Yang condition)
   - Low daily fever – Yin Deficiency
   - 5-Palm Heat – Yin Deficiency
– Constant low-grade fever – Damp-Heat

2) Sweating
– Area of body
– Time of day
– Type of sweat (i.e., oily?)
– Oily sweat on forehead – Yang collapse (happens during heart attack)
– Extremities – Spleen-Qi Deficiency
– Only on hands – Lung-Qi Deficiency
– Whole body with minimal exertion – Lung-Qi Deficiency
– Night sweating – Yin Deficiency
– Axillary sweating – Heart-Qi Deficiency
– Lower back – Kidney-Qi Deficiency

3) Head and Body
– Headache
  – Onset
    – Sudden – attack of Wind
    – Gradual – Qi or Blood Deficiency

  – Location
    – Occiput – Tai Yang
    – Forehead – Yang Ming
    – Temples – Shao Yang (migraines due to GB/Lr Heat)
    – Vertex – Jue Yin
    – Interior – Shao Yin (often comes and goes gradually)

  – Quality
    – Heaviness – Damp
    – Boring – Blood Stasis
    – Dizziness – Wind; Fire; Phlegm; or Blood or Qi Deficiency

  – Condition

– Body
  – Pain after exertion – Qi Deficiency
  – Pain in back – Wind-Cold
  – Pain in muscles – Spleen/Stomach issues
  – Pain with heaviness – Dampness
  – Pain that moves from joint to joint – Wind
  – Fixed pain – Blood Stasis; Cold; or Cold Bi (very painful)
  – Dull back pain – Kidney Deficiency
  – Numbness – Phlegm (channel related)
– Numbness in first three fingers – possibility of Wind Stroke

4) Thorax and Abdomen

– Pain in the chest?
  – If in upper chest: Stasis of Blood
  – With yellow sputum
    – Lung-Heat
– Pain in epigastrium
  – Stomach/Spleen problems
– Hypogastric pain
  – Damp-Heat
– Hypochondriac pain
  – Liver-Blood Stasis

5) Food and Taste

– Lack of appetite
  – Stomach-Qi Deficiency
– Urge to eat sweet or greasy junk food
  – Spleen-Qi Deficiency
– Constipation
  – Lower GI problems
– Preference for Hot or Cold food
  – Patient trying to create balance

– Heart = bitter
– Spleen = sweet
– Kidney = salty
– Liver = sour
– Lung = pungent; spicy; acrid

– Bitter taste in mouth = Gall Bladder problems
  – …if after a restless night of sleep = Blazing Heart-Fire
– Sour vomiting = Liver invading Stomach
– Bitter vomiting = Gall Bladder/Liver Heat
– Clear watery vomiting = Stomach Cold
– Vomiting with loud noises = Excess

6) Stools and Urine

– Old gold (in Chinese) = stools
– New gold = urine

– Healthy stools:
  – Defecate upon waking (or thereabouts)
  – Consistent texture
  – No undigested food
  – 1 solid piece (or a few)
- **Constipation:**
  - Due to Blood or Qi Deficiency
    - This is due to:
      - Old age
      - Hemorrhage
      - Childbirth
  - Feels worse after shitting = Empty condition
  - Sudden Heat in Stomach or Intestines = Acute condition
  - Lr-Qi Stagnation or Yin Deficiency = Chronic condition
  - With abdominal pain = Cold condition
  - Alternating constipation/diarrhea = Liver invading Spleen

- **Diarrhea:**
  - Painful and/or smelly; burning sensation = Heat condition
  - Painless or watery, or lacking urgency = Cold in Intestines
  - Cock’s crow diarrhea (shitting at 5 am) = Yang Deficiency
  - Chronic condition = Spleen-Yang Deficiency
  - Diarrhea with blood; can also have mucus mixed in with blood = Damp-Heat
    - This is a common condition
    - It’s hard to treat because Heat is Yang and Damp is Yin – so the two really stick together
  - Undigested food = Spleen-Qi Deficiency
  - Tinestmus (the feeling that if you don’t clench your anus, you'll shit yourself) = Spleen/Stomach Deficiency, or Spleen Qi Sinking
  - Stools, the blood, then water = Spleen not controlling Blood due to Qi Deficiency

- Flatulence = Liver-Qi Stagnation
  - Damp-Heat = if foul
  - Cold condition = if odorless

- Melena = black, tary stools
  - A serious condition indicating bleeding in the upper GI tract

- **Urine:**
  - Normal urination
    - 4 – 5 times a day
    - stream should be unbroken
    - should not need to pee in the middle of the night
  - Incontinence = Kidney Deficiency
  - Tinestmus (feeling like if you don’t hold it in real hard, you’ll piss yourself) = Damp-Heat
  - Burning pain = Dampness
    - Can also be cloudy
  - Pale urine = Cold
  - Dark urine = Heat
  - Copious white urine = Kidney-Yang Deficiency
  - Scanty urine = Kidney-Yin Deficiency
7) **Sleep**

- Liver and Heart have the most to do with sleep
- The quality of sleep depends on the state of Blood and Yin
- Insomnia = Heart problem
- Easily awakened = Spleen-Yin Deficiency
- Waking up very early = Kidney-Yin Deficiency
- Can’t get out of bed = Yang-Deficiency
- Dream-disturbed sleep = Liver issue
- Restless sleep with dreams = Retention of food
- Lethargy = Qi or Blood Deficiency
- Lethargy with heaviness = Qi or Blood Deficiency with Dampness
- Exhaustion = Kidney-Yang Deficiency
- Extreme lethargy with rattling sound in throat, sticky tongue and Slippery pulse = Phlegm condition
- Waking up early and not being able to get back to sleep = Gall Bladder Deficiency

8) **Ears and Eyes**

- HEENT = Head, Ears, Eyes, Nose and Throat

- **Ears**
  - Controlled by Kidneys
  - Tinnitus
    - Gradual onset = Kidney related
    - Low-pitched (Kidney-Yang Deficiency)
    - Sudden onset = Excess condition; Liver related
    - High-pitched (Liver condition; can also be due to Kidney-Yin Deficiency)
  - Deficient condition = if pressure on ears feels good
  - Excess condition = if pressure on ears feels worse

- Diminished hearing = Kidney problem

- Ear infection = local heat toxin

- **Eyes**
  - Related to Liver and Heart
  - Fire-poison in Heart channel = pain and redness

- Red eyes
  - Liver-Yin Deficiency
  - Liver Heat
  - Qi Deficiency (when tired)
  - Wind Heat
– Internal Heat
– Blurry vision or floaters = Liver-Blood Deficiency
– Feeling of pressure = Kidney-Yin Deficiency
– Photophobia = Kidney-Yin Deficiency
– Dryness = Kidney or Liver condition
– Macular degeneration = sign of Heat
– Eye crust = Dampness
– Twitching eyes = Wind

9) Thirst and Drink
– Need to drink copious cold fluids = Heat or Fire
– Lack of thirst = Dampness
– Thirst with no desire to drink; or drinking in sips = Damp-Heat
– Sipping = Yin Deficiency or Cold

– Prodrome = signs and symptoms before getting sick
– Syndrome = signs and symptoms of sickness

10) Pain
– Occurs from either Excess or Deficient conditions

– Find out:
  – Location(s)
  – Quality
  – Intensity
  – Chronicity
  – Etiology
  – Exacerbating and ameliorating factors
  – Concomitant symptoms (other symptoms present)

– This set of questions can be used even if the problem isn’t specifically pain

– Causes:
  – EPFs – the 6 Evils:
    – Wind
    – Cold
    – Heat
    – Summer Heat
    – Damp
    – Dryness
  – Interior pathogenic
    – Interior Wind
    – Interior Damp
    – Stasis of Blood or Qi
    – Obstructive Phlegm
– Food retention
– Body Fluid Deficiency

11) GYN

– Menstruation

– Ask about:
  – Days of cycle
  – Quality of blood
  – Quantity of blood

– Normal menstruation = 28-day cycle with 4–5-day period
  – 25 days = short
  – 32 days = long

– Generally, blood goes from bright to dark

– Heaviness and suddenness of onset depends on person

– As people get older (or after childbirth) clots appear

– A short cycle is due to:
  – Heat in Blood
  – Qi or Blood Deficiency

– A long cycle is due to:
  – Blood or Qi Deficiency
  – Blood Stagnation
  – Cold

– Irregular cycles are due to:
  – Liver-Qi or Blood Stagnation

– Amenorrhea = three months without a period
– Metrorrhagia = non-menstrual bleeding from the uterus

– A heavy period is due to:
  – Heat in Blood
  – Qi Deficiency

– Bright red or dark red menstrual blood = Heat
– Purple blood = Stasis
– Pale blood = Deficiency
– Congealed or clotted blood = Cold or Stasis
– Watery or thin blood = Yin or Blood Deficiency
– Thick blood = Damp-Heat
– Fishy or leathery smell = Damp-Heat

– Leucorrhea = white discharge, indicating:
  – Excess Cold
– Yang Deficiency
– Exterior Cold-Damp in the Uterus
– Yellow, greenish, or combined red and white discharge = Damp-Heat in the Lower Jiao
– Pain
  – Before period = Excess
  – After period = Deficiency
  – During period = Heat or Stagnation
– These questions don’t help in determining a patient’s condition if they’re on birth control pills or have had 3 or more children
– Infertility = Jing or Blood Deficiency
– Miscarriage in 1st trimester = Jing or Blood Deficiency
– Miscarriage in 2nd trimester = Sinking Spleen-Qi or Liver-Blood Stasis

12) Men
– Impotence:
  – Complete (no erection)
    – Kidney-Yin or Yang Deficiency
    – Jing Deficiency
  – Incomplete (½-assed erection, or erection only at night during sleep)
    – Kidney-Yin Deficiency (in young men)
    – Kidney-Yang Deficiency (in older men)
      – Liver/Heart related
      – Sometimes due to invasion of Shao Yang
– Prostatitis
  – Inflammation of the prostate
  – Men over 40 often get benign hyperplasia (a tumor)
    – This is a Phlegm build-up due to Kidney-Qi Deficiency
    – It’s treated very well with herbs and acupuncture
  – If malignant
    – Cancer grows slowly
    – If prostate taken out:
      – Incontinence and pain occur
      – There’re a lot of nerve endings here
– Spermatorrhea = Kidney-Qi Deficiency
– Premature ejaculation = Kidney-Qi Deficiency

V) Pulse/Blood Pressure/Respiration/Temperature
1) **Pulse**

- **Pulse** = regular expansion and contraction of blood vessels, taken at the radial or carotid artery
- **Pulse taking checks**: 1) Rate; 2) Rhythm; 3) Force

- **Normal pulse** = 60 – 80bpm
  - 72bpm = ideal pulse
  - 120bpm = newborns

- Girls from the age of 12 upward have a slightly quicker pulse than men
  - Their constitution is more Blood-based than Qi-based

- **Cardiac regurgitation** = a.k.a. valvular insufficiency, when AV valve doesn’t close correctly; typically the mitre valve

- **Pulse types**
  - **Normal** = rounded (Slippery and Full)
    - ~72bpm
  - **Weak/Small** = can be indicative of Heart insufficiency
  - **Large/Bounding pulse** = can be indicative of arteriosclerosis (plaque in blood stream)
  - **Alternating pulse** (between Strong and Weak) = due to left ventricular failure
  - **Paradoxical pulse** = indicates pericardius – *i.e.*, a buildup of fluid in the pericardium; a.k.a. tamponade; beat of heart will sound slushy

2) **Blood Pressure**

- **Blood pressure** = the resistance to blood flow in the arteries, taken at the brachial artery
  - You’re measuring the peripheral vascular resistance
  - **Hypertension** = high blood pressure
  - **Hypotension** = low blood pressure

$systolic = 120 $ = pressure upon ventricular contraction  
$diastolic = 80 $ = pressure upon heart relaxation

- **newborn** = $50/47$
- **3 year old** = $90/65$
- **10 year old** = $110/80$
- **teen** = $105/80$
- **adult** = $120/80$
- **senior** = $150/85$

- **Normal** = $120-139/80-89$ now known as pre-hypertension
- **High/normal** = $140-159/90-99$ now known as Stage I Hypertension
- **Hypertension** = $160/100$
- **Hypertension II** = $160/110$ now known as Stage II Hypertension
- Hypertension III  = 180/120  SERIOUS
- Hypertension IV  = 210/120  SERIOUS

- Changes in blood pressure are due to:
  - Force of ventricular contraction
  - Elasticity of arteries
  - Peripheral vascular resistance
  - Blood volume
  - Viscosity of blood

- Blood pressure varies in various areas of the body
  - There’s more blood pressure at the calves

- HYPERTENSION

  - High blood pressure is also known as “the silent killer”
    - No signs or symptoms

  - White coat hypertension = false hypertension due to nervousness around doctor

  - Primary hypertension is caused by:
    - Stress
    - Caffeine
    - Excess sodium
    - Oral contraceptives
    - Obesity
    - Drugs

  - Secondary hypertension is caused by:
    - Kidney disease
    - Arteriosclerosis

  - WARNING SIGNS of advanced hypertension:
    - Headache
    - Shortness of breath
    - Rapid pulse
    - Dizziness
    - Sweating
    - Visual disturbances

  - TREATMENT PROTOCOL:
    - Dietary/lifestyle change
      - No smoking
      - Exercise

    - Diuretics – rid body of excess fluids and therefore lower blood pressure

    - Reduce heart rate via:
      - Beta-blockers
- Calcium channel blockers

- **Peripheral dilation** (increasing blood flow to the extremities, taking the load off the heart) via:
  - Sympathetic nerve inhibitors
  - ACE inhibitors
  - Vasodilators
  - These cause less of an incidence in arthritis among patients taking these

- Main drawback to the above drugs:
  - Hypotension
  - Impotence

**HYPOTENSION**

- Caused by:
  - Loss of fluid or blood
  - Infection
  - Iatrogenic causes (doctor or drug induced)

- Symptoms:
  - Dizziness and faintness, especially on standing (same as hypertension)

- Orthostatic hypotension/Postural hypotension = happens when carotid baroreceptors are out of whack, or when you stand up too quickly
  - Dizziness and lightheadedness occur

- High blood pressure is also caused by:
  - Heredity
    - Blacks have a tendency for this, possibly because their skin (epithelial tissue) is tougher and tighter (has more collagen)
    - Epithelial tissue extends into the GI tract and blood vessels
    - Blood vessels don’t have as much elasticity
  - Men have a tendency
  - Menopause
  - Pregnancy
    - Pre-eclampsia = high blood pressure during pregnancy

3) **Taking Blood Pressure**

- get gauge up to 180mmHg
- let air out slowly
- at the point where the pulse is no longer occluded, the needle (or mercury) will start to jump up and down at regular intervals
  - You will hear the pulse through the stethoscope
  - This point indicates the systolic pressure
- The point at which you can no longer hear the pulse indicates the diastolic pressure

- Taken at brachial artery
- If any problems arise while blood pressure is being taken, both arms should be done
– Also if arms are in some way diseased

– Korotkoff sounds = the sound of the pulse as the cuff loosens
  – 1st beat registers the systolic pressure
  – 2nd – 4th beats have a whooshing quality
  – 5th and last beat indicates the diastolic pressure

– Person needs to be relaxed
  – There’s a false high reading if the person just drank coffee, smoked pot, &tc.
    – Or if arm is too low

– Sphygmomanometer
  – Sphygmo = pulse
  – Bladder = the rubber piece that fills up with air within the cuff
  – Cuff = the thing you wrap around the patient’s arm
  – Aneroid gauge = analog dial gauge
  – Manometer = mercury gauge

4) Respiration

– Respiration = 1 inhalation + 1 exhalation

– When you open a soda bottle and all the CO₂ fizzes up – that’s very similar to what’s happening in the alveoli of your lungs

– Newborns: 40 – 50 respirations per minute
– Older children: 20 – 25rpm
– Adults: 15 – 20rpm; optimally – 18rpm

– Those with a higher than normal breath rate include those who:
  – Are obese
  – Smoke/use drugs
  – Have left ventricular failure

– To get the breath rate from your patient
  – DON’T TELL THEM!!!
  – Act like you’re taking the pulse, and watch their chest or some article of clothing

– Hyperpnea/hyperventilation = rapid breathing; can be deep
– Trachypnea = rapid shallow breathing
  – Commonly due to emphysema (which causes elevation of the diaphragm)
– Bradypnea = slow breathing
– Apnea = lack of breath (dead or unconscious and nearing death)

5) Temperature

– 97° – 99°F = normal
– 98.6°F = optimal
– though every part of the body has a slightly different temperature, depending on blood supply

– **Fever** = the body’s way of destroying a pathogen
  – Usually low in the morning and reaching a high in the afternoon or evening
  – The mechanism of the body to increase temperature is chills
  – You generally don’t feel hot until you’re at 102°F
  – If 104°F – there’s a severe infection
  – Above 104°F – very dangerous, especially for an adult
  – 105°F – severe condition; person should be hospitalized
  – if there’s fever at 101°–103°F for over 72 hours, medical attention should be sought (rooted infection)

– You must keep a glass thermometer in your mouth for at least 3 minutes
  – *It needs to be shaken down first!*

– If taken at axilla – add 1°F
– If taken rectally – subtract 1°F
– Oral route is the most accurate

– **Spinal meningitis** = highly contagious
  – Difficulty in being awakened
  – Convulsions
  – Difficulty breathing

**VI) Tongue Diagnosis**

1) **The Tongue**

– More reliable than pulse (less subjective)
– Color of tongue body = true condition of zang-fu
– Body/color of coat is unaffected by acute conditions

– To look at the tongue properly, you must have good lighting (a pen flashlight will do)
– You can’t have the patient extend the tongue for more than 15 – 20 seconds at a time
– Be aware of specs of food, and tobacco and coffee use
– Be aware of medication patient is on – it can change tongue appearance

2) **The 5-Aspects** *(not part of the classics)*

a) Spirit – general appearance of tongue (Ooh, you have a nice one!)
b) Body color
c) Body shape/movement
d) Coat
e) Moisture

3) **Normal Tongue**

– Vibrant
– Pale red

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- Suppleness
- No cracks, no ulcerations
- Thin white even coating (perhaps slightly thicker at back)
- Normal amount of moisture

- All channels traverse tongue either directly or indirectly
- Reflects the Stomach (source of Qi and Blood) especially
  - It generates the tongue’s coat
- The tongue is the extension of the Heart
- The Kidney meridian flows to the root of the tongue (as does the Spleen)

4) Topography
5) **Tongue EPF Signs**

- In general, an initial attack will not change the tongue’s looks

a) **Wind-Cold**
   - Thin white coating; Dry; or
   - Wet thin white coating

b) **Wind-Damp**
   - Very common
   - Thin white coat; a little greasy

c) **Damp-Heat**
   - Yellow greasy coat; can be thick

d) **Wind-Heat**
   - White dry coat that changes to yellow in time

e) **Shao-Yang condition (½ internal ½ external)**
   - Thickened, slightly Slippery white coat on right side
   - Tongue body Red

f) **Deficient Cold**
   - Pale body with thin white coating
   - Excess moisture due to Yang not transforming fluids
   - If Yang Deficiency is long-standing, tongue will be Dry since Yang is so deficient it can’t bring up fluids

g) **Excess Cold**
   - Pale body since Yang is blocked
   - Moist greasy white coat
   - If there’s stagnation, tongue will be Purple/bluish
h) Deficient Heat
   - Red; no coat

i) Excess Heat
   - Red; yellow coat
   - Grey, brown or black coat = long-standing Heat
     - Black coat = residual Heat-toxin

j) Tongue can be used to tell if a condition is caused by an infection or not
   - True infection = Red with red points and a thick, greasy yellow coat
   - If not = Red with thin yellow coat (no points)

6) Tongue Qi/Blood Signs

a) Qi Deficiency
   - Tongue body usually flabby
   - Can be only one side, or middle can be convex
   - If severe, can be scalloped

b) Yang Deficiency
   - Pale puffy/swollen tongue
   - Spleen-Yang Deficiency = very Pale
   - Kidney-Yang Deficiency = very very Pale and scalloped
   - Heart-Yang Deficiency = Purple/blue tongue

c) Yin Deficiency
   - Red tongue; other signs will present according to organ involvement

d) Blood Stagnation
   - Veins under tongue will be blue/purple

e) Blood Deficiency
   - Pale and Dry tongue

7) Spirit
   - Tongue of Life = good prognosis
   - Tongue of Death = bad prognosis
     - Usually has dark color at root

8) Body Color
   - Single most important factor in tongue diagnosis
   - Does not change over a short period of time
   - Reflects over-all functioning of zang-fu
   - Front usually Pale-red

a) PALE:
   - Pale and Dry = Blood Deficiency
   - Pale and Wet = Yang Deficiency
   - Pale-Bright and Shiny = Spleen/Stomach Deficiency
- A.k.a. Mirrored, Peeled or Coatless tongue
- No coat with some moisture

b) RED:
- Red = Heat
- Red tip or Exterior level = Heart Excess
- Red beyond tip = Lung Heat
- Red sides = Liver-Yang Rising or Liver-Fire
- Swollen Red sides = chronic Spleen-Qi or Yang Deficiency
- Red center = Stomach Heat
  - Purple center = Stomach/Middle Jiao Stasis
- Red with coating = Excess Heat
- Red with no coat = Deficient Heat
- Red and Peeled at center = Stomach-Yin Deficiency (preceding Kidney-Yin Deficiency)
- Red to root = Kidney Deficiency
- Red and Wet = retention of Dampness with Heat
  - = Ying-Level Heat in Wen Bing
  - = Spleen-Qi Deficiency
  - Heat has not been in body long enough to injure Body Fluids
- Red and Scarlet = Yin Deficiency
  - Common in those 50+
  - Usually due to Lung or Heart-Yin Deficiency
  - Indicates emotional problems taxing Yin
- Crimson = old condition or more Heat
  - With coat = Heat at Yong and Blood level
- Red and Dry = Exterior Heat in Interior
  - Moisture level affected
- Red and Swollen = accumulation of Damp-Heat or Kidney-Yin Deficiency
  - Can also be due to steroids
- Bronchodilators → Red tip
- Diuretics → Peeled tongue
- Anti-inflammatory agents → Thin shape
  - All of the above cause Yin-Deficiency over a long period
- Big papillae (points) = Heat
- Red points or spots = Excess Heat
  - Possibly due to Blood Stasis
  - Where they appear on the tongue indicates the organ involved
- Blood or Yang Deficiency before attack of an EPF = red points on a Pale tongue
- White points = Cold
– Red with red spots = Heat with Blood Stasis
– Red with Purple spot in center = Heat with Blood Stasis in Stomach
– Red left or right of center = EPF ½ Interior ½ Exterior (Shao-Yang condition)

c) **PURPLE:**
– Purple = Blood Stasis
– Blue/Purple = Cold with resultant Blood Stasis
– Red/Purple = Heat with resultant Blood Stasis
– Red/Purple tip = Blood Stasis causing Heart Heat
– Dark Red-Purple = Extreme Heat
– Red-Purple and distended = Heat and Blood Stasis in Liver and Heart
  – Usually a result of alcoholism

d) **BLUE:**
– Blue = Cold congealing
  – Due to Yang Deficiency causing Blood Stasis
– Blue without coating = collapse of Jing and Blood
– Blue in middle with Slippery/greasy coat = Damp-Phlegm (Spleen-Yang Deficiency)

9) **Tongue Underside**
– Swollen veins = Qi Stagnation or (slight) Qi Deficiency
– Darker and swollen = severe Qi Stagnation and Blood Stasis

10) **Tongue During Pregnancy:**
– Blue tongue with Red face = death of fetus, mother lives
– Herbs and acupuncture can be used to tonify Qi and Blood so that this doesn’t occur
  – Red tongue with Blue face = death of mother, survival of fetus

11) **Tongue Shape**

a) **Thin**
– Deficiency of Yin or Blood or Body Fluids

b) **Swollen**
– Qi or Yang Deficiency
– Damp-Heat
– Retention of Dampness
– Swollen and Pale = Deficiency
– Swollen and dark = Excess
– Swollen edges = Spleen Deficiency/ Liver-Blood Deficiency
– If Red or dark = congestion of Liver-Qi and/or Liver-Blood Stagnation
– If starting to curl = Heat starting to form

c) Stiff tongue
– Invasion of Pericardium by Heat
– Wind-Stroke
– Sequele of Wind-Stroke
– Heat injuring Body Fluids
– Heart-Fire

d) Flaccid tongue
– Flabby and has trouble moving
  – Can fall out of mouth
– If Red = deficiency of Body Fluids
– If Pale = Blood Deficiency

e) Long Tongue
– Excess or Deficiency, depending on color
– Phlegm
– Heart-Fire
– Qi Deficiency

f) Short tongue
– Qi and Blood problems
– Cold contracting muscles
– Heat drying out Body Fluids
– Yang-Qi Deficiency

g) Cracked
– Yin Deficiency
– Body Fluids dried up
– Cracks at sides = Spleen-Yin Deficiency
– Ice flow = little cracks concentrated in a certain area
  – Yin Deficiency (common in the elderly)

h) Deviated
– Liver-Yang Rising
– Deficient Liver-Blood

i) Quivering
– If Pale = Qi and Blood Deficiency
– If Red = Liver Heat
  – Internal Heat generating Wind

j) Ulcerated
– High Heat
– With white edges = Yin Deficiency
– *Aphthae* = *sores on tongue and inner cheek; skin sloughs off*

– Moving tongue (moves slowly from side to side) = Liver issue

– Numb Pale tongue = Blood Deficiency
  – If Slippery = Wind-Phlegm

– If tongue rolled up = Excess
– If tongue rolled down = Deficiency

12) **Tongue Coating**

  – A.k.a. – Fur or moss
  – Formed by turbid Qi rising from the Stomach
    – If coat disappears after breakfast = weak Stomach-Qi

  – Thickness determined by the strength of the EPF
    – Though some people have a natural thick coat

  – Always check if coating is rooted – *i.e.*, if it looks like it can’t be rubbed off
    – Thickness
    – Moisture level
    – Color
    – Distribution
    – Viscosity

  – A coat without a root indicates a more serious condition than one with it

  – Wind-Cold = white
  – Wind-Heat = yellow; later becomes dry
  – Wind-Damp = slimy/sticky coat

  – White, thick and slipery = Cold-Damp
  – White thin and dry = Blood or Body Fluid Deficiency
  – White thick and wet = Yang Deficiency
  – White thick and dry = Interior condition due to Stomach retension of turbid fluids, with Heat

  – Dry, thick yellow coat = Excess Heat
  – Thin yellow coat = Deficient Heat

  – Wet coat = Dampness or Yang Deficiency

  – Watery coat just behind tip = Cold in Lung

  – Greasy coat = Yang Deficiency
    – Damp-Phlegm
    – Phlegm-Heat
      – Pot-heads have this due to smoke steaming fluids in the Lungs
    – Phlegm-Cold
- Moldy coat = Excess Heat
  - looks like cottage cheese
  - Not rooted
  - Heat in Stomach with Stomach-Yin Deficiency

- Peeled/mirror coating = Damp; no coat

- Coat on left = Liver
  - On right = Shao-Yang
    - If Slippery = Damp-Heat in Gall Bladder

- A True Thinning of the coat – from hard to soft, from tip to root – can indicate the condition is improving
  - Usually happens over the course of ~3 days
- A False Thinning of the coat indicates condition is getting worse
  - Happens suddenly
  - Indicates Body Fluids are drying up or Qi Deficiency

- If coat gets progressively thicker towards the back or towards the center, the disease is getting more serious

VII) Pulse Taking

Mai = vessel or tide

In the Jin dynasty (1115 – 1230 AD) 24 pulses were decided upon, with 3 positions
Li Zhi Zhen (~1550) wrote about the 27 pulses (which are still used)

1) The Normal Pulse

- Ping Mai = normal pulse
  - Has spirit/shen (rhythm and strength)
  - Has force
  - Its coming and going is distinct
  - Has qi (it’s related to the Stomach)
  - Is supple
  - Is uninhibited
  - Has root (i.e., the last position is felt)

2) Points at which Pulse is taken

- Cun Kou = Cun Gates, located at Lu-9
- Ren Ying = Man’s Prognosis, located at St-9

- Right hand = Yang pulse (Yang and Qi)
- Left pulse = Yin pulse (Yin and Blood)
### Left Hand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acupuncture Point</th>
<th>Classical Chinese Medicine</th>
<th>Acupuncture Point</th>
<th>Classical Chinese Medicine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SI/Ht Cun</td>
<td>Cun: Upper Jiao</td>
<td>LI/Lu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lr/GB Guan</td>
<td>Guan: Middle Jiao</td>
<td>St/Sp</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bl/Ki Chi</td>
<td>Chi: Lower Jiao</td>
<td>P/SJ (typically not used)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ki-Yin</td>
<td>Ki-Yang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Yang Xi-cleft points
  - LI-5
  - Bl-40
  - K-3
  - St-42
  - Lr-3
- These points are used to diagnose (via pulse) the energetics of the point’s pertaining organ

3) **The Methods of Pulse Taking**

- Lifting – superficial level
- Seeking – moderate level
- Pressing – looking for the pulse at the deepest level

- The three positions of pulse taking (at the wrist) are:
  - Cun (inch) — .6 cun in length
  - Guan (bar or gate) — .6 cun in length
  - Chi (cubit) — .7 cun in length

a) Pulse taking

- The best time for taking a pulse is in the morning

- The patient should have their arm at the level of their heart
  - Breathing and posture should be relaxed

- When taking a pulse, find the guan position just medial to the styloid process of the radius, then lay down the other fingers

- Take the pulse for 1 – 15 minutes

b) Pulse qualities to keep in mind

1) Speed
2) Depth (3 depths)
3) Force
4) Length (can go beyond the chi position, or be shorter)
5) Rhythm (has to do with Yang)
6) Width (has to do with state of Yin)

c) Things that affect the pulse

- Age (faster in youth)
- Sex (has to do with thinness of pulse – man have a stronger pulse)
- Body type
- Life-style
– Seasons
– State of Qi/Blood and zang-fu

d) Organs that affect the pulse
– Lung – supplies Qi
– Spleen – generates Qi/Blood
– Liver – governs flow and storage of Blood
– Heart – has to do with the force of the Blood and the state of the vessels
– Kidneys – has to do with the storage of Blood and prevents reckless overflow