

It's finally time to tackle the biggest, longest, and arguably the most complex meridian of them all: the Bladder Meridian, containing a total of 67 points. I've been waiting to record this one because it's so extensive that I needed to be mentally prepared; I know this will take a bit longer than usual. However, the Bladder Meridian, with its 67 acupuncture points, is incredibly important in clinical practice, so I'm thrilled to finally make this video for you to benefit from. We'll cover point functions, locations, my clinical pearls, point combinations, and much more. I'll also discuss the pathway of this meridian so we can understand why it's so powerful.

Welcome back to my channel! If it's your first time here, I'm Clara from AcuPro Academy, where I create Chinese medicine and acupuncture content for students and practitioners, making it both easy to understand and fun to learn. Let's dive in! Before we start examining each bladder point and the meridian itself, let's remind ourselves of the bladder system's function in Chinese medicine, as it's the perfect companion to the kidney organ system in TCM. Reviewing this will help us understand why we use certain points and their purposes in treatment.

The bladder is indeed a perfect partner to the kidney, assisting in fluid transformation. Specifically, the bladder expels fluids we no longer need through urination by qi transformation. This makes sense, right? From an emotional perspective, chronic or acute fear affects both the bladder and the kidney, sometimes manifesting as incontinence. For example, bedwetting in children is often associated with Kidney Qi deficiency and fear. So, we must look for the root cause of the issue, whether the fear is rational or irrational, and address both the kidney and bladder.

Other emotions connected to the bladder in Chinese medicine are jealousy, envy, and holding grudges. According to Five Element Theory, the kidney and bladder are part of the winter system, reflecting the latter stages of life. In older adults, issues with the bladder become more common, such as incontinence and frequent nighttime urination. Urinary tract infections (UTIs) also affect many elderly people, sometimes impacting brain function. There's a fascinating connection between the bladder meridian and the Du meridian, as the Du meridian reaches the top of the head, connecting with the spinal column and spinal fluid, ultimately influencing the brain. See the relationship? It's so intricate, and I love it.

Now, regarding emotions like envy, jealousy, and grudges, here's a quick story to illustrate. My mother had a close friend of 40 years, and they often helped each other set their hair with rollers. One day, my mom asked her friend to come over and help her put in rollers because she wanted to look nice for a doctor's appointment the next day—a common priority for French women, even in their seventies. Her friend, however, declined, saying she was too tired to come over. My mother was stunned and insisted, "I helped you last time; you should help me now." But her friend refused, and my mom declared, "Fine, I'll never speak to you again," and she didn't.

Years later, while visiting her in France, I saw her former friend and pointed her out. My mother, now in her eighties, brushed it off, saying, "No, I'm never talking to her again." When I asked

why, she replied, “I don’t remember the reason, but I remember I’m mad at her.” And so, she held that grudge for decades.

The Bladder Meridian plays a fascinating role in both physical and emotional health, especially when it comes to issues like envy and jealousy. My mom, for example, struggled with incontinence, a Bladder-related symptom, and often felt that others were better or had more, which are emotions linked to the Bladder Meridian in Chinese medicine. Isn’t it interesting how emotions can impact the body so deeply? This is part of why I love Chinese medicine!

Let’s dive into the Bladder Meridian as a whole—its pathway, function, and connection to other meridians. In Chinese medicine, the Bladder Meridian, with its 67 points, primarily runs along the head and back, as it’s a Yang meridian. It’s categorized as a Tai Yang meridian, meaning “greater Yang,” which refers to its more superficial pathway. The Bladder is the foot Tai Yang, while the Small Intestine is the hand Tai Yang, and they are related in that they both run through the upper back, neck, and head areas.

The Bladder Meridian is most active between 3 to 5 p.m., which is when many people start feeling tired, often due to dehydration. I always remind my patients to drink more water during this time because fatigue can be a sign of not enough fluids in the body. Often, patients have coffee in the morning and drink little to no water until later in the day, leading to that afternoon slump. So, if you’re feeling low on energy around this time, try drinking water to see if it helps.

Now, let’s look at the pathway of the Bladder Meridian. The previous channel, the Small Intestine, ends at the inner corner of the eye, where the Bladder Meridian begins at Bladder 1. From here, it ascends to the top of the head, where it meets the Du Meridian at the vertex, creating a connection to the brain and spinal column. Another branch of the Bladder Meridian starts near the ear and connects to the Du Meridian, associating it with the temples and linking it to other meridians like the Gallbladder and San Jiao (Triple Burner). This is why the Bladder Meridian has such a powerful effect on various organs, which is reflected in the back-shu points along the spine.

The Bladder Meridian continues down from the head, along the neck, and down the back, with a mainline that goes all the way to Bladder 40 at the back of the knee. A second parallel branch starts lower on the neck, travels along the back, and joins the first branch at Bladder 40. Together, these branches continue down to the fifth toe at Bladder 67. At the level of the kidneys, one branch penetrates the lumbar region to connect directly to the kidney and bladder organs. Because of these connections, the Bladder Meridian treats issues related to pain, digestion, mental health, reproductive health, and more—essentially covering everything from the head down to the toes.

Before we start exploring each point, I have some exciting news to share: my book, **Acupoints Made Easy,** is now available in French! I’m thrilled to make this resource accessible to French-speaking practitioners and students who might find English challenging. Now, let’s start with Bladder 1, located just above the inner canthus, and move through each point.

Bladder 2 is at the medial end of the eyebrow, while Bladder 3 is directly above Bladder 2, a half-cun from the anterior hairline. The next series of points—Bladder 4 through 8—are all located 1.5 cun lateral to the midline. Bladder 4 is 0.5 cun within the anterior hairline; Bladder 5 is 1 cun, Bladder 6 is 2.5 cun, Bladder 7 is 4 cun, and Bladder 8 is 5.5 cun. Bladder 9 is 1.3 cun lateral to Du 17 at the occipital protuberance, and Bladder 10 is 1.3 cun lateral to Du 15, which is 0.5 cun within the posterior hairline.

Bladder 1 is a fascinating point, though it's rarely needed due to its location near the eye. Instead, I often prefer Bladder 2 for safety, as it offers similar benefits for treating red, swollen, painful eyes, as well as night blindness, blurred vision, and tearing due to wind exposure. Bladder 2 is particularly valuable because, besides eye conditions, it's excellent for frontal or orbital headaches, especially those triggered by external wind pathogens, and it also helps open the nasal passages. One interesting use of Bladder 2 is for hiccups—it works wonders! I've used it on myself, my husband, and even my dog, and it always delivers quick results. It's a simple technique you can share with patients who frequently struggle with hiccups, as few points provide this benefit.

Bladder 3 and Bladder 4 are both effective for clearing nasal congestion and treating dizziness, headaches, and nosebleeds, especially when excess heat or liver yang rising is involved. However, for nasal issues, I typically recommend Du 24 or Du 23 over Bladder 3 and Bladder 4, as they tend to be more effective. Bladder 5 also addresses nasal congestion and dizziness but has an additional benefit in treating epilepsy as part of a larger treatment protocol, depending on the specific TCM diagnosis.

Bladder 6, Bladder 7, and Bladder 8 have similar functions, including treating dizziness, nasal congestion, and headaches, and they're especially useful for issues related to the upper part of the head. Bladder 7, being closer to Du 20, is more effective for vertex headaches. Bladder 8, located in the occipital region, is another option for nasal congestion, especially if a patient is lying face-down for back treatment.

Bladder 8 also has a connection to the ear and is occasionally used for tinnitus, though other points might be more suitable. It can help with manic behaviour as well; a massage around the occipital region can provide relief, especially if the area is tight. Bladder 9 and Bladder 10, near the base of the skull, are beneficial for dizziness, blurred vision, eye pain, and occipital headaches. I frequently combine Bladder 10 with Gallbladder 20 for occipital headaches and use distal points like Bladder 60 or Bladder 62 for additional support. Lung 7 is also essential in this area, as it's the commander point for the head and neck.

Bladder 11, an influential point for bones, is especially valuable for treating bone health issues like osteoarthritis and brittle bones, particularly in aging patients. It's also useful for managing arthritis symptoms and providing support for joints, sinews, ligaments, and tendons due to its location. Additionally, Bladder 11 can help with upper back pain and expel wind-heat in cases of common cold or asthma. However, for respiratory issues, I would typically use Bladder 13, the back-shu point of the lung, as it directly targets lung qi.

Bladder 11, as the influential point of bones, is incredibly useful for supporting sinews, ligaments, and tendons, especially for bone-related issues like osteoporosis or arthritis. Bladder 12, located at T2, is a go-to point for expelling external wind, making it ideal for common colds, flu, and other external pathogen invasions. It's particularly useful for kids—you can even apply cupping here, or on Du 14, for acute conditions.

From Bladder 11 down to Bladder 17, the points are arranged in a straightforward pattern, each located 1.5 cun lateral to the midline, aligned with the spinal vertebrae: T1 for Bladder 11, T2 for Bladder 12, T3 for Bladder 13, and so on. I typically needle these points at a downward angle to target more than one point at once, though some practitioners needle toward the midline, which also works well.

Bladder 13, the back-shu point of the lung, is my choice for lung-related issues, from asthma to chronic coughs. Bladder 15, related to the heart, sits at T5, and it's common to find clients with “knots” here, especially if they experience anxiety or worry. This tension around T5 often corresponds to emotional stress affecting the heart area.

Bladder 16 is not associated with a specific organ but is a governing-shu point. It's great for reinforcing yang qi and addressing upper chest and abdominal pain. Bladder 17, the influential point of blood, is wonderful for blood deficiencies, blood stasis, or blood heat issues—particularly beneficial for heavy menstruation or manic disorders like bipolar. I often combine it with Kidney 9 for balancing manic-depressive stages, as well as to harmonize the stomach, making it useful for acid reflux or heartburn.

Bladder 18 (Liver) and Bladder 19 (Gallbladder) are key points for liver and gallbladder conditions. Bladder 20 (Spleen) and Bladder 21 (Stomach) are excellent for digestive issues. Bladder 22, the back-shu of the San Jiao, and Bladder 23, the kidney back-shu, are also commonly used in practice, especially Bladder 23, which is essential for tonifying the kidney.

Bladder 24, known as the Sea of Qi back-shu, mirrors Ren 6 and is beneficial for tonifying qi and strengthening the lower back. Moving down the spine, Bladder 25 through Bladder 28 cover the large intestine, lower jiao, small intestine, and bladder, respectively. The rest of the points from Bladder 27 to Bladder 30 continue along the sacrum, one and a half cun lateral to the midline, corresponding to the sacral foramina.

Finally, Bladder 29 is a reliable point for lower back pain—straightforward and effective for local treatment.

On a side note, all these graphics are from my book, **Acupoints Made Easy**, which was two years in the making and has been a favourite for students and practitioners. It includes not only visuals but also video links in the PDF version to enhance understanding. If you don't have a copy yet, check out the link to grab yours!

Bladder 30, as a lower jiao point, is excellent for gynecological issues such as excessive vaginal discharge, menstrual disorders (like endometriosis), rectal prolapse, and constipation, as well as lower back pain. For endometriosis specifically, I often combine Bladder 31 to Bladder 34 (the

sacral points) using a plum blossom or seven-star needle. This technique involves lightly tapping the area to promote circulation and help break down scar tissue.

Bladder 31 to Bladder 34 are highly effective for reproductive health—ideal for issues like infertility and excessive discharge. When all four points are used together, they provide a strong therapeutic outcome for menstrual and reproductive system concerns, especially when the patient is prone. Bladder 35 is beneficial for impotence when combined with Kidney 10; it's also helpful for hemorrhoids, excessive discharge, and constipation, though I prefer Bladder 35 specifically for erectile dysfunction, using Bladder 57 for hemorrhoids.

The next points, Bladder 36 to Bladder 38, are primarily local, used to treat musculoskeletal pain in the gluteal and thigh areas. Bladder 39, being the lower he-sea point of the San Jiao, addresses damp-heat in the lower jiao, helping with bloating, urinary retention, and nocturia, and is also excellent for leg cramps or lower back issues.

Bladder 40 is a must-use point for lower back pain as the commander point of the lower back. It's especially effective when paired with points like Bladder 60 and Kidney 3, and adding Spleen 6 is fantastic for pelvic or hip pain. Since Bladder 40 also clears heat from the blood, it's useful for conditions like rashes, heavy menstruation due to heat, and acute, smelly diarrhea. You can reinforce this effect with Bladder 25, the back-shu point of the large intestine, for digestive issues.

Moving to the second bladder line, Bladder 41 corresponds to neck pain and is also beneficial for respiratory conditions. From Bladder 42 to Bladder 52, each point is positioned at the same vertebral level as its related back-shu point on the primary bladder line, allowing it to reinforce the function of the associated organ. For example, Bladder 23 paired with Bladder 52 enhances kidney function and helps with lower back pain.

Bladder 53, located near Bladder 28 (the back-shu point of the bladder), primarily supports lower back strength and alleviates pain without directly addressing bladder functions. Similarly, Bladder 54 is a go-to for sciatic pain. A reliable sciatica protocol might include Gallbladder 30, Bladder 54, Gallbladder 31, and Gallbladder 34 down the leg, or along the hamstrings using bladder line points, depending on the pain pathway.

These combinations and approaches allow for a more holistic treatment of pain, reproductive health, and organ support—simple yet powerful when applied in practice!

Bladder 30 is a lower He-sea point, making it great for issues such as excessive vaginal discharge, menstruation-related conditions like endometriosis, rectum prolapse, constipation, bowel issues, and, of course, lower back pain. The next four points, Bladder 31 to 34, are located in the sacral area and are especially effective for reproductive system concerns. In cases of endometriosis, I often use these points with a plum blossom or seven-star needle, which resembles a small hammer. I tap on the area of these four points up and down until redness appears. This technique is a bit different from gua sha, but it works to activate and help break up the scar tissue that affects women with endometriosis, a method I also use in my

practice. Bladder 31 to 34 are also beneficial for reproductive system issues like fertility and excessive vaginal discharge. If you apply all four points, it leads to an excellent outcome in treatments where the patient is lying face down.

Bladder 35 is specifically useful for impotence, especially when combined with Kidney 10. These two points work well for erectile dysfunction in males. Bladder 35 can also be used for hemorrhoids, excessive vaginal discharge, and constipation, but I primarily use it for ED. For hemorrhoids, however, Bladder 57 is a better option, often paired with Er Bai for effective results. The next points, Bladder 36 and 37, are mainly used locally for muscular and skeletal pain. Bladder 38 is also highly effective when used locally for pain.

Bladder 39 is the lower he-sea point of the San Jiao and is, therefore, beneficial for treating San Jiao-specific issues, especially when there's damp heat in the lower jiao. It's excellent for conditions like edema, bloating, urinary retention, nocturia (getting up at night to urinate), as well as lower back pain and cramps in the legs. I love Bladder 40, the commander point of the lower back. It's essential for addressing any lower back issues, where it can be used as a distal point. Adding points like Bladder 60 and Kidney 3 can be effective, but Bladder 40 is a must. For sciatica, hip joint issues, lumbar, or sacral pain, Bladder 40 is highly effective. I often combine it with Spleen 6 if the pain extends into the pelvic region. As the commander point of the hips and pelvis, Spleen 6 is an ideal complement, especially given its relationship to the Dai meridian, or girdle vessel. Adding Gallbladder 41, the confluent point of the Dai vessel, reinforces the treatment plan.

Bladder 40 also has the function of clearing heat from the blood, making it useful for treating rashes, hives, and heavy menstruation caused by blood heat. It's also effective for acute diarrhea caused by excess heat (specifically foul-smelling diarrhea). Pairing it with the back-shu point of the Large Intestine, Bladder 25, works well to address digestive issues. Moving up to Bladder 41, this point is excellent for treating stiff neck pain locally, but it also works well for upper respiratory tract issues when combined with other points like Bladder 13 and Bladder 12.

The second bladder line from Bladder 42 to Bladder 52 is at the same level as the back-shu points discussed earlier. For example, Bladder 42 corresponds with the lung's back-shu point, Bladder 13. Each of these secondary line points reinforces the corresponding back-shu points, making them valuable in protocols targeting organ functions. For instance, if there's a kidney-related issue, I might combine Bladder 23 (kidney back-shu) with Bladder 52 to strengthen the treatment. This is especially effective for lower back pain, as Bladder 52 is highly beneficial when used locally.

I didn't mention Bladder 28 and Bladder 53 earlier. Bladder 28 is the back-shu point of the bladder, while Bladder 53 doesn't specifically address bladder issues; instead, it's primarily used locally to strengthen the lower back and alleviate pain. The same applies to Bladder 54, which is very effective for treating sciatica and other localized pain in the area. For sciatica, one of the best protocols includes Gallbladder 30 and Bladder 54, combined with points along the side of the leg, such as Gallbladder 31 and Gallbladder 34. You can also work along the back of the

hamstring with points like Bladder 36 and 37, where cupping and gua sha are common additions that really enhance the treatment.

Bladder 38 is one cun above Bladder 39 on the medial side of the biceps femoris tendon, while Bladder 39 is lateral to Bladder 40 on the popliteal crease. Bladder 40 sits at the center or midpoint of the popliteal crease. Moving down, Bladder 55 is two cun below Bladder 40, and Bladder 56 is five cun below Bladder 40, following the line from Bladder 55 to Bladder 57. Bladder 57 is eight cun below Bladder 40 on the gastrocnemius, and Bladder 58 is seven cun above Bladder 60, positioned one cun inferior and lateral to Bladder 57. I prefer to needle Bladder 57 perpendicularly, stimulating it with a quick, up-and-down motion combined with gentle twirling. This technique makes it an excellent point for hemorrhoids.

Bladder 60, located midway between the lateral malleolus and the Achilles tendon, is one of my favourite distal points for neck and occipital pain or headaches, though it's contraindicated in pregnancy unless it's needed to induce labour. The next few points — Bladder 61 and Bladder 62 — serve as local points for heel pain. Bladder 62, a ghost point, is excellent for patients who carry heavy emotional burdens, particularly those dealing with unresolved childhood trauma. This point may prompt a release of emotions and, in my practice, has been invaluable for patients with childhood trauma-related anxiety. Additionally, as the Yang Qiao confluent point, it addresses neck pain, back pain, insomnia, and manic behaviour, and supports the occipital region.

Bladder 63 is the xi-cleft point, often used for pain and calming the mind, and sometimes as part of an epilepsy protocol. Bladder 64, the yuan-source point, is suitable for long-standing issues like chronic lower back pain or Essence deficiency. This point can also help with mental confusion, especially for elderly patients with infections that lead to cognitive issues. Bladder 65, the shu-stream point, is notably effective for relieving allergic reactions to insect bites and can also help with low back pain and neck pain, though it's not the best point for those issues. Bladder 66, the ying-spring point, clears heat and wind and is suitable for nosebleeds, stiff neck, and manic behaviour, effectively bringing the energy down.

Finally, Bladder 67, the jing-well point, is contraindicated in pregnancy but effective with moxa for turning breech babies between weeks 32 and 36. In labour, it can help with pain and facilitate delivery. Although it can be used for nasal congestion, eye pain, and headaches, these aren't its primary indications.

I hope you found this breakdown helpful! If you want to dive into more meridians with detailed functions, point locations, and clinical applications like this, check out my playlist. Keep rocking it with TCM, and have a fantastic day. Don't forget to subscribe and let me know what you think in the comments below. See you in the next video!