

By GYC



GP Column

Aches & Pains

Arthritis, rheumatism and "angin" are some of the commonest complaints in General Practice and Primary Care. These aches and pains may occur in any joint or tendon insertion, cartilage and in whole muscles. Though rheumatoid arthritis is indeed a specific entity on its own, most of the rheumatic symptoms can be ascribed to too much acid in the diet.

For instance, throughout the durian (*Durio zibethinus*) season when the boys go out and eat many seeds of this delectable fruit, the doctors' clinics will be full of complaints of "angin", aches and pains the next morning. These symptoms often appear in the most frequently-used parts of the skeletal system, which are stressed at work.

The symptoms may appear in the shoulder, as carpal tunnel or repetitive strain syndromes such as tennis elbow or golfer's forearm, backache and sharp pains in the os calcis.

There are other influencing factors stemming from one's diet. The high content proteins in special offal meats, tightly-fleshed protein of shell-fish, fish eggs of any kind and caviar down to the humble crab all share a similar histology. Under the microscope, the blue stain of multiple-packed nuclei is most evident. This is also noted in many young vegetables; the bean sprouts and mange-tout peas, asparagus tips, young juicy Chinese vegetables and even in the young leaf-tips of the tea bush.

One is looking at nucleo-protein, the protein from the nucleus of those cells that

will break down through alanine, guanine and xanthine to uric acid. If one is not able to rid oneself of uric acid, then it will lay itself down in the often-used joints and ligaments as mentioned above.

The "normal" uric acid level dictated by laboratories is fiction. Each person has his own threshold above which he will experience pain. In some people, a high 25mg level will produce neither kidney stone crystals nor pains in a joint. Others may suffer if their uric acid levels reach 2.5mg. This indicates that uric acid levels are "personal".

Two factors inhibit the excretion of uric and oxalic acids (Oxalates may often replace urate crystals in the development of either stones or joint pain). One is alcohol, and the other is the fruit sugar, fructose.

On the occasion a patient suffers from "rheumatically" symptoms, the intake of beer, wine and spirits should be stopped for some days and also the over-eating of good local fruit as well as the imported out-of-season variety. Strangely, cherries do not seem to fall into this category but this has yet to be explained.

Doctors can treat by locating the offending article of diet, instructing the patient to drink lots of water for dilution and using the old-fashioned Colchicine (from *Colchicum autumnale*, the Autumn Crocus, Meadow Saffron like *Kunyit*) and Nancaricin (Benzbromarone). Sometimes, one may temporarily resort to a mild steroid. ■

This article is contributed in the author's personal capacity