

AACIS Seminar 10/02/23 13:00

Preconditioning for MCMC

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Outline

- Intro to Conditioning
- Intro to Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC)
- Preconditioning in MCMC
 - Condition Number
 - Linear Preconditioning
 - Nonlinear Preconditioning
- Summary
- References

Introductory Material

Our Contribution

Preconditioning

20th C Maths starts being concerned with *computability* and not simply *conceivability*:

$$\begin{array}{l}
 e_1 \quad 1.4x + 0.9y = 2.7 \\
 e_2 \quad -0.8x + 1.7y = -1.2
 \end{array}
 \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{l} e_1 \\ e_2 \end{array}} \right\} \iff
 \begin{array}{l}
 0.01 \times e_1 + e_2 \quad -0.786x + 1.709y = -1.173 \\
 e_2 \quad -0.800x + 1.700y = -1.200
 \end{array}
 \left. \vphantom{\begin{array}{l} 0.01 \times e_1 + e_2 \\ e_2 \end{array}} \right\}$$

well-conditioned

ill-conditioned

‘It is certainly true that a trivial modification improves the conditioning’

Turing coins the *condition number* and defines it in multiple ways:

- N-condition number: $\|A\|_F \|A^{-1}\|_F$ where $\|A\|_F := \sqrt{\text{Tr}(A^*A)}$
- M-condition number: $M(A)M(A^{-1})$ where $M(A) := \max_{ij} |m_{ij}|$

The condition number ≥ 1 , and 1 is the best possible value

Preconditioning: applying a transformation to reduce the condition number Turing [1948]

Markov Chain

Monte Carlo

Sample X_1, \dots, X_n from a π -stationary Markov Chain, initial distⁿ μ_0 , form the estimator

$$\hat{f}_n := \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n f(X_i)$$

Markov Chain CLT gives us that

$$\sqrt{n} (\hat{f}_n - E_{\pi}(f)) \xrightarrow{d} N(0, \sigma_f^2)$$

where

$$\sigma_f^2 := \text{Var}_{\pi}(f(X)) + 2 \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \text{Cov}(f(X_1), f(X_{1+k}))$$

Ideal MCMC is *quick to equilibrate* and has *low autocorrelation in equilibrium*



Want to estimate $E_{\pi}(f(X))$

Sample iid $X_1, \dots, X_n \sim \pi$, form the estimator:

$$\bar{f}_n := \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n f(X_i)$$

Bias is 0, Variance is $n^{-1} \text{Var}_{\pi}(f(X))$

Unnormalised π is no (theoretical) barrier

Sampling is impossible for interesting π

MCMC: algorithms

Generic structure of an MCMC algorithm: given an initial state $X_0 \sim \mu_0$ and a *proposal density* $q_\theta(x \rightarrow \cdot)$ with parameters $\theta \in \Theta$

1. Propose a new state $Y_{i+1} \sim q_\theta(X_i \rightarrow \cdot)$
2. Set $X_{i+1} = Y_{i+1}$ with probability $\alpha(X_i, Y_{i+1})$, otherwise set $X_{i+1} = X_i$

Step 2. is the *Metropolis-Hastings* accept/reject step - ensures π -stationarity

Step 1. defines the algorithm:

- $q_\theta(x \rightarrow \cdot) = p_\theta(\cdot)$: Independent Metropolis-Hastings
- $q_\theta(x \rightarrow \cdot) = N(x, \sigma^2 \mathbf{I}_d)$: Random Walk Metropolis
- $q_\theta(x \rightarrow \cdot) = N(x + \sigma^2 \nabla_x \log \pi, 2\sigma^2 \mathbf{I}_d)$: Metropolis Adjusted Langevin Algorithm
- $q_\theta(x \rightarrow \cdot) =$ the distribution of the position of a particle after T seconds, with initial position x and initial momentum $p \sim N(0, \mathbf{I}_d)$, evolving according to Hamiltonian dynamics:

HMC

Metropolis et al. [1953]

Hastings [1970]

MCMC: quantities of interest

Recall: Ideal MCMC is *quick to equilibrate* and has *low autocorrelation in equilibrium* (low autocorrelation \implies low asymptotic variance, modulo f)

Time to equilibrium of a particular algorithm is measured by the ϵ -mixing time:

$$\tau(\epsilon, \mu_0) := \inf \left\{ n : d(\mathcal{L}(X_n | X_0 \sim \mu_0), \pi) \leq \epsilon \right\}$$

Asymptotic variance *and* time to equilibrium strongly depend on the *spectral gap*: defining the *operator* P of the Markov chain, which acts on $L^2(\pi)$

$Pf(x) := E(f(Y))$ where Y is the first state in the Markov chain, started at x .

P has an eigenvalue at 1 ($P\text{const.}=\text{const.}$) and $\text{spectrum}(P) \subset [-1, 1]$

The *spectral gap* ρ is the distance between 1 and the nearest point in the spectrum λ_{\max} (bigger is better)

$$\sigma_f^2 = \frac{1 + \lambda_{\max}}{\rho} \text{Var}_{\pi}(f)$$

Condition number in MCMC

Target in the form $\pi \propto \exp(-U(x))$ on \mathbb{R}^d such that $m\mathbf{I}_d \leq \nabla_x^2 U(x) \leq M\mathbf{I}_d$ for all $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$:
 $U : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is *m-strongly convex* and *M-smooth*

m-strong convexity:

Unimodal

m measures the curvature of $U(x)$

e.g. posterior with concave log-likelihood, Gaussian prior

M-smoothness

- $\nabla_x U(x)$ is *M*-Lipschitz
- Discretisations work nicely
- *Convex quadratic upper and lower bound on $U(x)$*

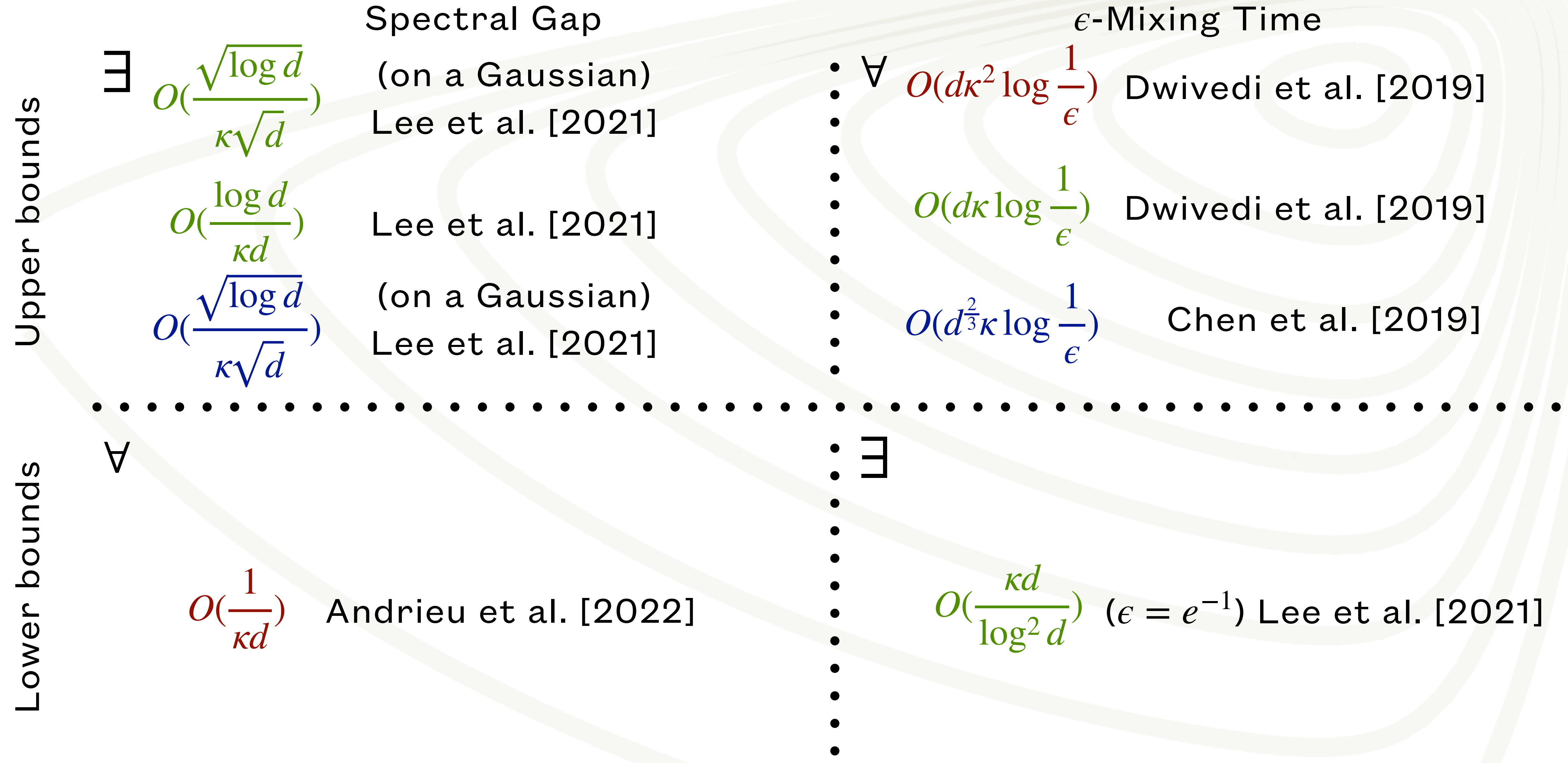
The condition number associated with *sampling from π* is

$$\kappa := \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}^d} \|\nabla_x^2 U(x)\|_2 \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}^d} \|\nabla_x^2 U(x)^{-1}\|_2$$

If $m\mathbf{I}_d \leq \nabla_x^2 U(x) \leq M\mathbf{I}_d$ is tight $\kappa = M/m$

As $\kappa \rightarrow 1$, the eigenvalues of $\nabla_x^2 U(x)$ get squeezed together, and π starts to look more like an isotropic Gaussian

Importance of the condition number



Key: ● - RWM ● - MALA ● - HMC

All bounds up to logarithmic factors, mixing times in TV

Preconditioning in MCMC

Preconditioning involves a process $\{X_i\}$ in \mathcal{X} , a process $\{Y_i\}$ in \mathcal{Y} , and a transformation $g : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{Y}$

We sample Y from a well-conditioned distribution and apply a Metropolis-Hastings accept/reject to $X = g^{-1}(Y)$ such that $\{X_i\}$ forms our samples to use in \hat{f}_n

Encapsulates much of adaptive MCMC and therefore generative models: learning a complex distribution is seen as equivalent to learning parameters θ of a map g_θ^{-1} which we apply to samples from a simple distribution

- Adaptive MCMC: access to π (unnormalised)
- Sampling via measure transport, Marzouk et al. [2016]
 - HMC with Inverse Autoregressive Flows, Hoffman et al. [2019]
- Generative Models: access to samples from π
 - GANs, Goodfellow et al. [2014]
 - Normalizing flows, Papamakarios [2021]

Linear Preconditioning

When $Y = g(X) = LX$ for $L \in GL_d(\mathbb{R})$ the condition number of the distribution of Y is

$$\kappa_L := \sup_{y \in \mathbb{R}^d} \|\nabla_y^2 \tilde{U}(y)\|_2 \sup_{y \in \mathbb{R}^d} \|\nabla_y^2 \tilde{U}(y)^{-1}\|_2 = \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}^d} \|L^{-T} \nabla_x^2 U(x) L^{-1}\|_2 \sup_{x \in \mathbb{R}^d} \|L \nabla_x^2 U(x)^{-1} L^T\|_2$$

Used in all major MCMC software packages (Stan, Tensorflow, Pyro etc.) even though theory is lacking.

Intuition: set L to be the square root of some *representative* of $\nabla_x^2 U(x)$ i.e.

Precision, $\nabla_x^2 U(x^*)$ for x^* the mode, hope that $\kappa_L \ll \kappa$, doesn't always work:

Diagonal Preconditioning: $L = \text{diag}(\Sigma_\pi)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$

Gaussian target:

$$\nabla_x^2 U(x) = \Sigma_\pi^{-1} \text{ so } \kappa_L = \|\text{diag}(\Sigma_\pi)^{\frac{1}{2}} \Sigma_\pi^{-1} \text{diag}(\Sigma_\pi)^{\frac{1}{2}}\|_2 \|\text{diag}(\Sigma_\pi)^{-\frac{1}{2}} \Sigma_\pi \text{diag}(\Sigma_\pi)^{-\frac{1}{2}}\|_2 = \|C_\pi^{-1}\|_2 \|C_\pi\|_2$$

There exist Gaussian targets for which $L = \text{diag}(\Sigma_\pi)^{-\frac{1}{2}}$ *increases the condition number*

$$\Sigma_\pi = \begin{pmatrix} 4.07, & -3.90, & 1.66 \\ -3.90, & 3.73, & -1.59 \\ 1.66, & -1.59, & 0.72 \end{pmatrix} \implies \kappa = 23,000, \kappa_L = 31,000$$

Linear Preconditioning: Bounding κ_L

SVD on L : $L = U\Sigma V^T$, $\Sigma = \text{diag}(\sigma_i : i \in [d])$, $\{v_i : \|v_i\| = 1, i \in [d]\}$ the right singular vectors
 $\{(\lambda_i(x), v_i(x)) : \|v_i(x)\| = 1, i \in [d]\}$ the eigenvalue/vector pairs of $\nabla_x^2 U(x)$

Condition 1 (C1): There exists an $\epsilon > 0$ s.t. for all $i \in [d]$ and $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$

$$(1 + \epsilon)^{-\frac{1}{2}} \leq \frac{\lambda_i(x)}{\sigma_i^2} \leq (1 + \epsilon)^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

Condition 2 (C2): There exists a $\delta > 0$ s.t. for all $i, j \in [d]$ and $x \in \mathbb{R}^d$

$$\|v_i(x) - v_i\| \leq \sqrt{2\delta} \text{ and } \|v_i(x) - v_j\| \geq \sqrt{2(1 - \delta)} \text{ for } i \neq j$$

Theorem 1: Assuming C1 and C2 we are able to make the following upper bound

$$\kappa_L \leq (1 + \epsilon) \left(1 + \delta \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^d \sigma_i^2 \sum_{i=1}^d \sigma_i^{-2}} \right)^4$$

There exist conditions C1', C2' which *only involve* $\lambda_i(x), v_i(x)$ that *imply* C1 and C2

Bounds inform decisions at each stage of the process: pre-check, constructive, verification

Nonlinear Preconditioning

Call κ_g the condition number after general transform $g : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{Y}$

Proposition: It is impossible to use linear preconditioning to achieve optimality ($\kappa_g = 1$) when π is not a Gaussian

Proof Sketch: The only distribution with $\kappa = 1$ is an isotropic Gaussian. Assume, seeking a contradiction, that we can linearly transform the state variable of a non-Gaussian to reach a Gaussian. Then we could simply take the inverse of the transform to reach a non-Gaussian from a Gaussian, which is impossible due to closure of Gaussians under linear transformations

Proposition: There exist targets with *arbitrarily high condition number* that gets worse under *any linear preconditioning whatsoever* (excluding $L = \mathbf{I}_d$)

Change of variables: $\tilde{U}(g(x)) = U(x) + \log |\det J(g(x))|$ so we need $\frac{1}{2} \|g(x)\|^2 = U(x) + \log |\det J(g(x))|$ which is a particular form of the *Monge-Ampère equation*.

Nonlinear Preconditioning the Langevin Diffusion

$$dY_t = \frac{1}{2} \nabla_y \log \tilde{\pi}(Y_t) dt + dB_t$$

Defining $f := g^{-1}$ such that $X = f(Y)$, Itô's Lemma gives:

$$dX_t = \frac{1}{2} (J(f(Y_t)) \nabla_y \log \tilde{\pi}(Y_t) + L(f(Y_t))) dt + J(f(Y_t)) dB_t$$

where $L_i(f(Y_t)) = \Delta_y f_i(Y_t)$. Changing variables, calculus:

$$dX_t = \frac{1}{2} G(X_t)^{-1} \nabla_x \log \pi(X_t) dt + \Gamma(X_t) dt + G(X_t)^{-\frac{1}{2}} dB_t$$

$$\Gamma_i(X_t) = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^d \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \left(G(X_t)_{ij}^{-1} \right)$$

where $G(X_t)^{-1} = J(f(Y_t))J(f(Y_t))^T = (J(g(X_t))^T J(g(X_t)))^{-1}$. This is exactly the diffusion on a manifold with contravariant metric $G(X_t)^{-1}$.

Diffusion forms the basis of *Riemannian Manifold* MALA:
parameter space as a manifold with *Expected Fisher Information* as metric

Xifara et al. [2014]

Livingstone and Girolami [2014]

Girolami and Calderhead [2011]

Rao [1945]

Betancourt [2013]: Use $G(X_t)^{-1} = \nabla_x^2 U(X_t)^{-1}$

Nonlinear Preconditioning the Hamiltonian

Recall $p \sim N(0, \mathbf{I}_d)$ so $\nu(p) \propto \left(-\frac{1}{2}p^T p\right)$. Make the transformation $p \rightarrow \tilde{p} := f(p)$.

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{\nu}(\tilde{p}) &\propto \nu(f^{-1}(\tilde{p})) |\det J(f^{-1}(\tilde{p}))| \\ &= \exp\left(-\frac{1}{2}f^{-1}(\tilde{p})^T f^{-1}(\tilde{p})\right) |\det J(f(p))|^{-1} \\ &= \exp\left(-\frac{1}{2}f^{-1}(\tilde{p})^T f^{-1}(\tilde{p}) - \log |\det J(f(p))|\right)\end{aligned}$$

In particular $f(p) = \sqrt{G(x)}p$ has a Jacobian $J(f(p)) = \sqrt{G(x)}$ so

$$\tilde{\nu}(\tilde{p}) = \exp\left(-\frac{1}{2}\tilde{p}^T G(x)^{-1}\tilde{p} - \frac{1}{2}\log |\det G(x)|\right)$$

The joint distribution targeted by HMC is

$$\pi(x, \tilde{p}) \propto \pi(x)\tilde{\nu}(\tilde{p} | x) = \exp\left(-U(x) - \frac{1}{2}\tilde{p}^T G(x)^{-1}\tilde{p} - \frac{1}{2}\log |\det G(x)|\right)$$

which has Hamiltonian

$$H(x, \tilde{p}) = U(x) + \frac{1}{2}\tilde{p}^T G(x)^{-1}\tilde{p} + \frac{1}{2}\log |\det G(x)|$$

Unification via Nonlinear Preconditioning

Recent algorithms inspired by 'mirror descent' technique use heuristic in the last slide: simulate process using the Langevin diffusion, and transport to samples using a 'mirror map':

Zhang et al. [2020]:

Well-conditioned process: $dY_t = \frac{1}{2} \nabla_x \log \pi(X_t) dt + \nabla_x^2 h(X_t)^{\frac{1}{2}} dB_t$ f map: $X_t = \nabla_y h^*(Y_t)$ (no MH accept/reject)

$h : \mathbb{R}^d \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is convex, h^* its convex conjugate, $\nabla_y h^* = (\nabla_x h)^{-1}$

Dynamics can be shown to be equivalent to Langevin on a *Hessian Manifold* i.e. a manifold with Hessian metric: $G(X_t)^{-1} = \nabla_x^2 h(X_t)^{-1}$

Chewi et al. [2020] propose using $h = U$, matching the metric proposed in Betancourt [2013]:

$$G(X_t)^{-1} = \nabla_x^2 U(X_t)^{-1}$$

Therefore use a transformation such that $J(g(X)) = \nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ (since recall:

$$G(X_t)^{-1} = J(f(Y_t))J(f(Y_t))^T = (J(g(X_t)))^T J(g(X_t))^{-1})$$

Nemirovskii and Yudin [1979]

Hsieh and Cevher [2018]

Chewi et al. [2020]

Hessian Based Transformation

g s.t. $J(g(X)) = \nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ makes sense:

$$\begin{aligned} \nabla_y^2 \tilde{U}(y) &= J(g)^{-T} \nabla_x^2 U(x) J(g)^{-1} + J(g)^{-T} \nabla_x^2 \log |\det J(g)| J(g)^{-1} + R \\ &= \mathbf{I}_d + \nabla_x^2 U(x)^{-\frac{1}{2}} \nabla_x^2 \log |\det J(g)| \nabla_x^2 U(x)^{-\frac{1}{2}} + R \end{aligned}$$

R is a remainder involving derivatives of $\nabla_x^2 U(x)^{\frac{1}{2}}$ and $U(x)$.

Go from conditions on $\nabla_x^2 U(x)$ being *global* in the case of linear preconditioning to *local*

Make the guess: $g(X) = \nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}} X - c(X)$. Jacobian is $J(g) = \nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}} + \partial \left(\nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}}, X \right) - J(c)$ where

$\partial \left(\nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}}, X \right) \in \mathbb{R}^{d \times d}$ has j th column $\left(\frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}} \right) X$

In 1 dimension:

$$c(X) = \sum_{k=2}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^k x^k}{k!} \frac{\partial^{k-1}}{\partial x^{k-1}} \left(\sqrt{\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} U(x)} \right)$$

$$= x \sqrt{\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} U(x)} - \int_0^x \sqrt{\frac{\partial^2}{\partial t^2} U(t)} dt$$

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-
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- In d dimensions: need to solve $\partial \left(\nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}}, X \right) = J(c)$
-
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- Compromise: let $g(X) = \nabla_x^2 U(X)^{\frac{1}{2}} X$
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Summary

- Intro to Preconditioning
 - Condition Number
- Intro to Markov Chain Monte Carlo (MCMC)
 - Defined quantities of interest: spectral gap, ϵ -mixing time
 - Recently introduced bounds on the quantities, polynomial in dimension and condition
- Preconditioning in MCMC

Introductory Material

- Linear Preconditioning
 - Global conditions on the Hessian of the potential characterise the effectiveness
 - Bound can be used: as a pre-check, constructively, or for verification
- Nonlinear Preconditioning
 - Derive Riemannian manifold techniques as an instance of nonlinear preconditioning
 - Identify Mirror Langevin techniques as the same
 - Use these classes to identify nonlinear transformations

Our Contribution

Thanks! 

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