



Session 5: Daoist understanding of human body and health: from a natural perspective

- HPPH 5015/6015
- Thursday: 11am to 2pm
- Online lecture
- 15th April 2021

Dao and Human Body

- Daoist Philosophy put emphasis on individual personally finding within themselves: the Dao, the Body of energy , or Gods within the body.
- This inner esoteric tradition sees Creation's source and all its manifestations as contained within each human being

Scripture of the Transformations of Laozi

- Laozi exists at the beginning of the formation of the cosmos and reappears throughout human history, transforming his body each time.
- In other instances, the cosmos itself is seen as the body of Laozi, a theme that appears to have originated in myths concerning Pan Gu, the "cosmic man".

Buddhist *Xiaodao lun* 笑道论(Essays to Ridicule the Dao)

- Laozi transformed his body. His **left eye** became **the sun**; his **right eye**, **the moon**; his **head**, **Mount Kunlun**; his **beard**, the **planets** and **constellations**; his **bones**, the **dragons**; his **flesh**, the **quadrupeds**; his **intestine**, the **snakes**; his **stomach**, the **sea**; his **fingers**, the **five peaks (wuyue)**; his **hair**, the **trees** and the **herbs**; his **heart**, the **Flowery Canopy** (*huagai*, i.e., Cassiopea in heaven and the lungs in the body); and his **kidneys**, the **Real Father and the Real Mother** of humanity.
- http://www.goldenelixir.com/taoism/views_of_the_body.html

Human Body and Universe

- In Chinese literature, **guan** 官 means **organ** as well as **official** (xun zi chapter 17; zhuang zi, chp. P.507).
- Some scholars states that it is clear that beyond the metaphorical level, a whole system of correspondences is intended here:
- the body—microcosm is meant to correspond in all respects to the outer world and reflect it faithfully.
- That means, the whole human body, its organization, laws, and transformations were to be found in the universe: they can understand their body organs through observe the sky or the universe.

Body is a Microcosm of the Cosmos and the Universe the Macrocosm of the Body

- ‘The roundness of the head is an image of Heaven, the squareness of the feet follows the pattern of earth.’
- Just as the natural world functions according to the four seasons, five phases, nine directions and 360 days, ‘human beings have four limbs, five inner organs, nine orifices and 360 joints.’
- Similarly, the various forces of nature, such as rain, wind, cold and heat are matched in people’s actions of giving, taking, joy and anger’.
- Each organ, moreover, has a part to play in the natural inner world: ‘the gall bladder corresponds to the clouds, the lungs to the breath, the liver to the wind, the kidneys to the rain, and the spleen to the thunder’
- *Huai Nanzi*, chap 7, see major 1978, in John S. Major, ‘Myth, Cosmology and the Origins of Chinese Science’, *Journal of Chinese philosophy* 5:1-20, 1978.

六十骨节八万四千毛孔后有三百八十五个毛孔
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心下有心穴名曰神宫乃龙虎交会之处直下
茎黄庭宫也乃中丹田有明堂有洞房无
居右肺也亦空一寸二分乃藏火之所炼火之
火故曰天上三十六地下三十六自天至地
至骨有八寸四分而向脐门号曰生门有七窍
泄漏之窍名曰腰月即任脉下有九窍即地
气涌下一寸三分曰玉池又曰下丹田乃藏
左明堂右洞房亦空一穴方一寸二分此处
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穴此人身之相通关窍也



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神存无英同用七日自克盈

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膀胱亦主毛发黄庭经曰主诸气力振虎外
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Body is a Microcosm of the Cosmos and the Universe the Macrocosm of the Body

- Head---Roundness: image of Heaven,
- Feet--- Squareness: the pattern of Earth

- **Natural world**

- Four seasons,
- Five phases,
- Nine directions
- 360 days,

Human beings

Four limbs
Five inner organs
Nine Orifices
360 joints.'

Human Body is a Image of a Country

- The Taoists believe that human body as a country where people can see mountains and rivers, ponds, forests, paths, and barriers, a whole landscape lord out with dwellings, palaces, towers, walls, and gates sheltering a vast population.
- It is a civilized state, administrated by lords and their ministers.
- The version of the human body belongs both to Taoism and to Chinese medicine.'
- Kristofer Schipper, *The Taoist Body*, translated by Karen C. Duval, University of California Press, 1993, p.100.

內經圖

榮虛之氣



天壽之穴

平肝疏內勞山川

左右二腎府之穴

尾闾下開

泥丸宮
泥丸中藏世界
界陽府

九華山

山頂老君居神
穴皆從天連頂門

修行極路此為根

腎脈
肝脈
脾脈
肺脈
心脈
大腸脈
小腸脈
膀胱脈
膽脈
胃脈
脾脈
肺脈
心脈
大腸脈
小腸脈
膀胱脈
膽脈
胃脈

此脈通於腎
此脈通於肝
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此脈通於膽
此脈通於胃

Ge Hong's View on Human Body

- 身body=国state。
- 胸腹chest and stomach=宫室 palaces
- Four limbs = edge of the city
- Joints = officials
- Spirit= ruler
- Blood= ministers
- Qi = citizens
- Managing body same as managing country;
Cultivating Qi to preserve one's life is same as to
harmonizing citizen to keep a country in peace

Laozi 河上公注 10

- If in governing the body one cherishes one's breath, the body will be complete.
- If in governing the country one cherishes the people, the country will be peaceful.
- Governing the body means to inhale and exhale essence and breath (*jing* and *qi*) without letting one's ears hear them.
- Governing the country means to distribute virtue (*de*) and bestow grace (*hui*) without letting the lower ones know it.

IMPORTANCE OF QI TOWARD LIFE & HEALTH

- Life= 精Jing+ 气 Qi + 神shen
- Among the three treasures of life, Qi is the most important because its connection with both material and spirit
- Targets of Daoist internal alchemy cultivation:
cultivate jing in order to transform in into Qi炼精化气,
- To cultivate Qi in order to transform it into shen练气化神,
- To cultivate shen in order to return to the void formed Dao炼神还虚

Whether to have Qi as the measurement of being life or death

- Seen in its most general terms, human life is the accumulation of qi, death is its dispersal.
- After receiving a core potential of primordial and prenatal qi at birth, people throughout life need to sustain it. (noted by Yanxia: When people use up this original Qi, one's life will be ended).
- They do so by drawing postnatal qi into the body from air to food, as well as from other people through sexual, emotional and social interaction.
- Livia Kohn, *Chinese Healing Exercises: The Tradition of Daoyin*, University of Hawai'i Press, 2008, p.3.

Daoist Understanding of the Structure of Human Body

- The Western notion of “body” as physical structure is inadequate to convey the complexity of the Chinese views of 身体.
- There are three main terms to define traditional Chinese views of the human body:
- **Ti 体** "body," designates the physical frame as an ordered whole made of interdependent parts.
- **Xing 形** "form," mainly refers to the body as the counterpart and residence of spirit.
- **Shen 身** "person," denotes the whole human being, including its non-material aspects ranging from thinking and feeling to personality and social role.
- **Jing 精** ‘refined form’ mainly refer to vital energy or life energy which is connected to the Qi

Qi Flow and the Waterway in the Body

- As the Dao is compared to water, the flow of qi is as a complex system of waterways in nature and in the human body.



- The Ocean of Qi is in the abdomen
- Rivers of qi flow through the upper torso, arms, and legs;
- springs of qi sprout at the wrists and ankles
- The well of qi are found in the fingers and toes.
- In both nature and the body, even a small spot in this structure can thus influence the whole, so that overall balance and smoothness are the general goal.

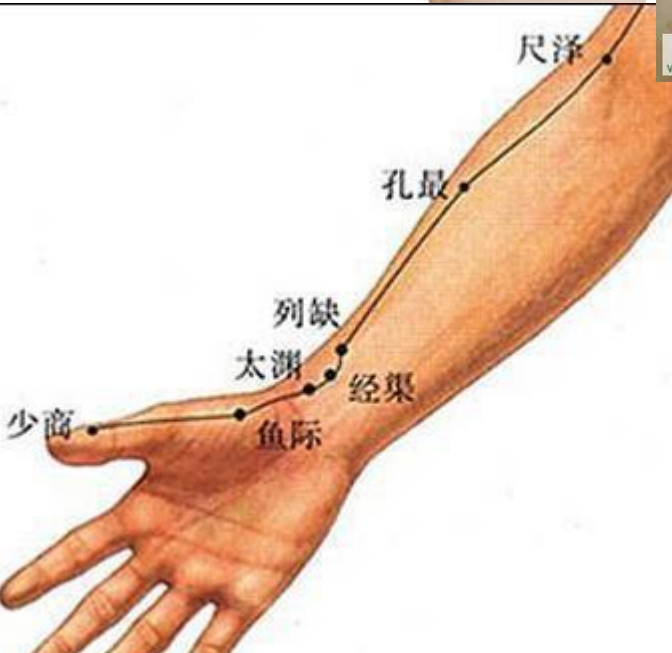
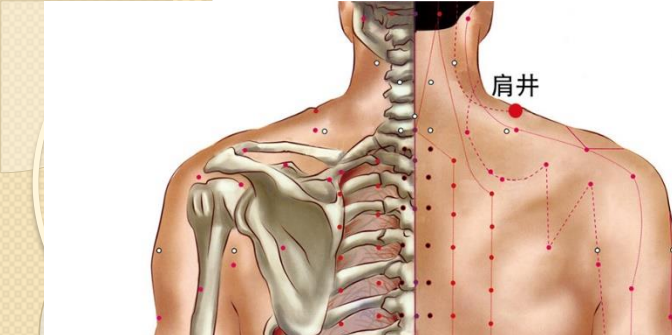


Chart of Qi flow in Meridians

- Arm Tai Yin Lung Meridian (3-5am)
- Arm Yang Ming Large Intestine Meridian (5-7am)
- Leg Yang Ming Stomach Meridian (7-9am)
- Leg Tai Yin Spleen Meridian (9-11am)
- Arm Shao Yin Heart Meridian (11am-1pm)
- Arm Tai Yang Small Intestine Meridian (1-3 pm)
- Leg Tai Yang Bladder Meridian (3-5pm)
- Leg Shao Yin Kidney meridian (5-7pm)
- Arm Jue Yin Pericardium Meridian (7-9pm)
- Arm Shao Yang Triple Burner Meridian (9-11pm)
- Leg Shao Yang Gall Bladder Meridian (11pm-1am)
- Leg Jue Yin Liver Meridian (1-3am)
- Arm Tai Yin Lung Meridian (3-5pm)



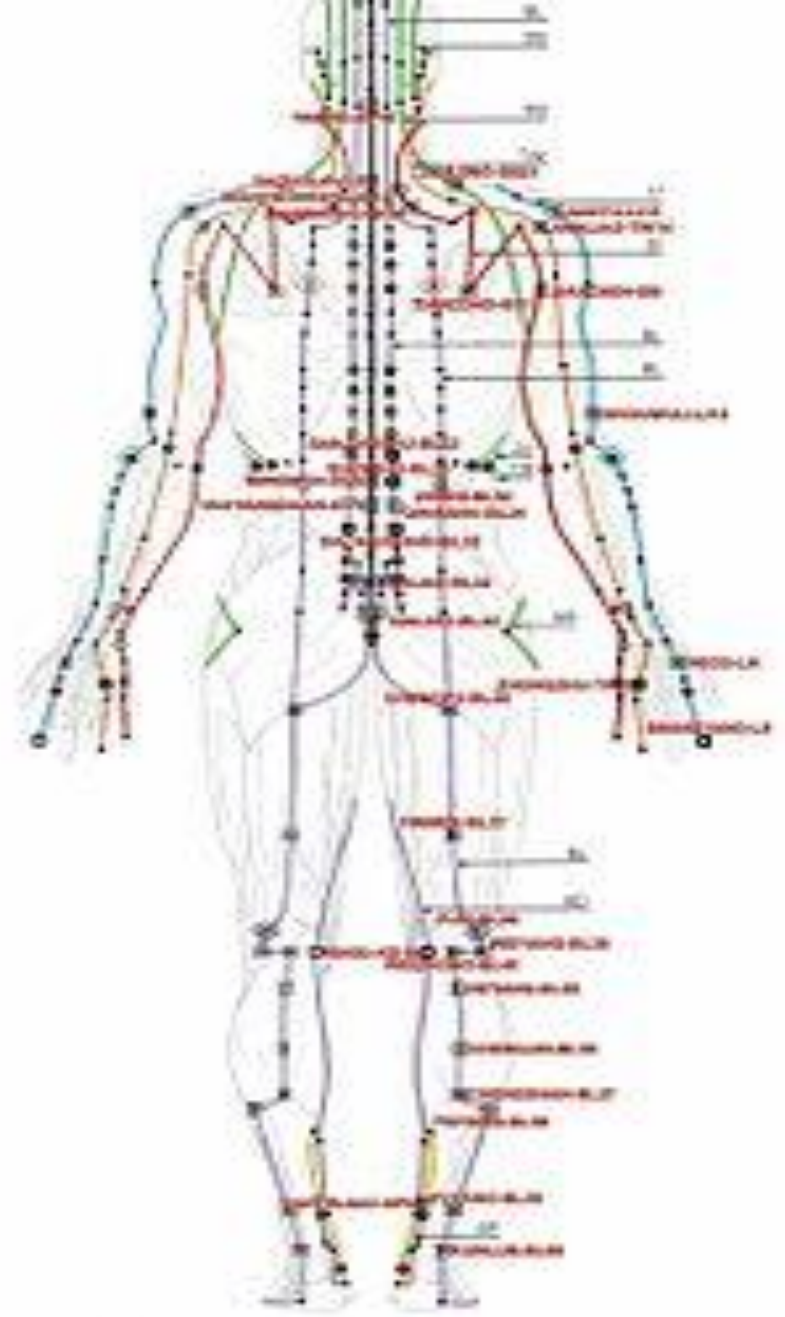
ANTERIOR VIEW

LEFT - YIN SUPERFICIAL MERIDIANS

RIGHT - YANG SUPERFICIAL MERIDIANS

APR YANG MERIDIANS & SHEN

LEFT YANG MERIDIANS & SHEN



POSTERIOR VIEW

LEFT - SUPERFICIAL MERIDIANS

RIGHT - YANG SUPERFICIAL MERIDIANS

APR YANG MERIDIANS & SHEN

LEFT YANG MERIDIANS & SHEN

Eight Extra Meridians

- 1. Ren Meridians (Conception Vessel)
- 2. Du Meridian (Governing Vessel)
- 3. Dai Meridians (Belt Channel)
- 4. Chong Meridian (Penetrating Vessel)
- 5. Yang Qiao Meridian (Yang Motility Channel)
- 6. Yin Qiao Meridian (Yin Motility Channel)
- 7. Yang Wei Meridian (Yang Regulating Channel)
- 8. Yin Wei Meridian (Yin Regulating Channel)

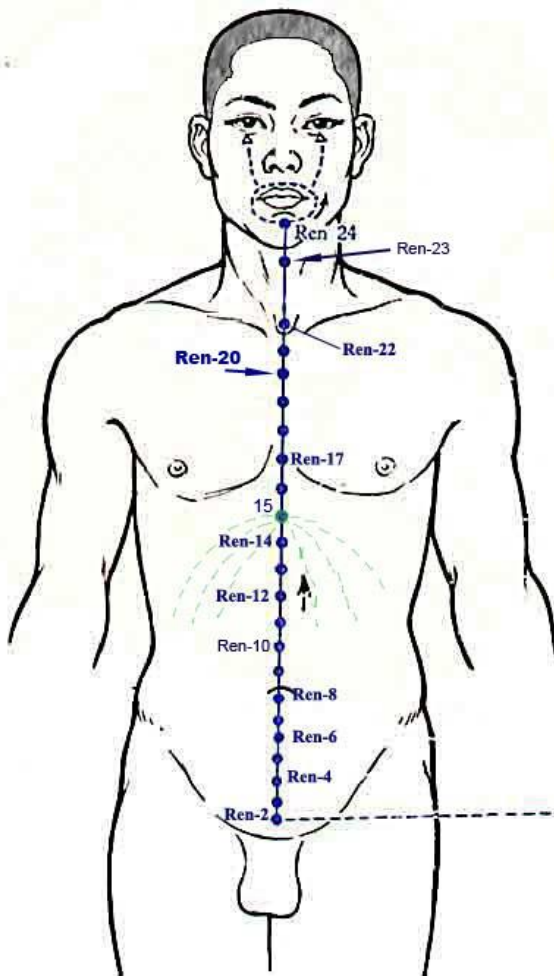
The eight ancestral meridians

- The eight ancestral meridians that have a very important function in traditional Chinese acupuncture as regulators of the 12 main meridians.
- The reason they are called ancestral meridians is that, from a Chinese medical point of view, they are the main controllers of our genetic ancestry.
- This is another way of saying they are the most powerful way of influencing genetic and epigenetic diseases in the body from the point of view of traditional acupuncture.

Ren and Du Meridians

- For qigong and Daoist Inner Alchemy practice, the Du, the Ren, the Chong and the Dai are the most important of the Eight Extraordinary Meridians.
- The Du Mai flows from the tip of the coccyx up the spine, over the head, and ends in the upper part of the mouth.
- The Ren Mai flows from the perineum up along the front mid-line of our torso, and ends in the lower mouth.

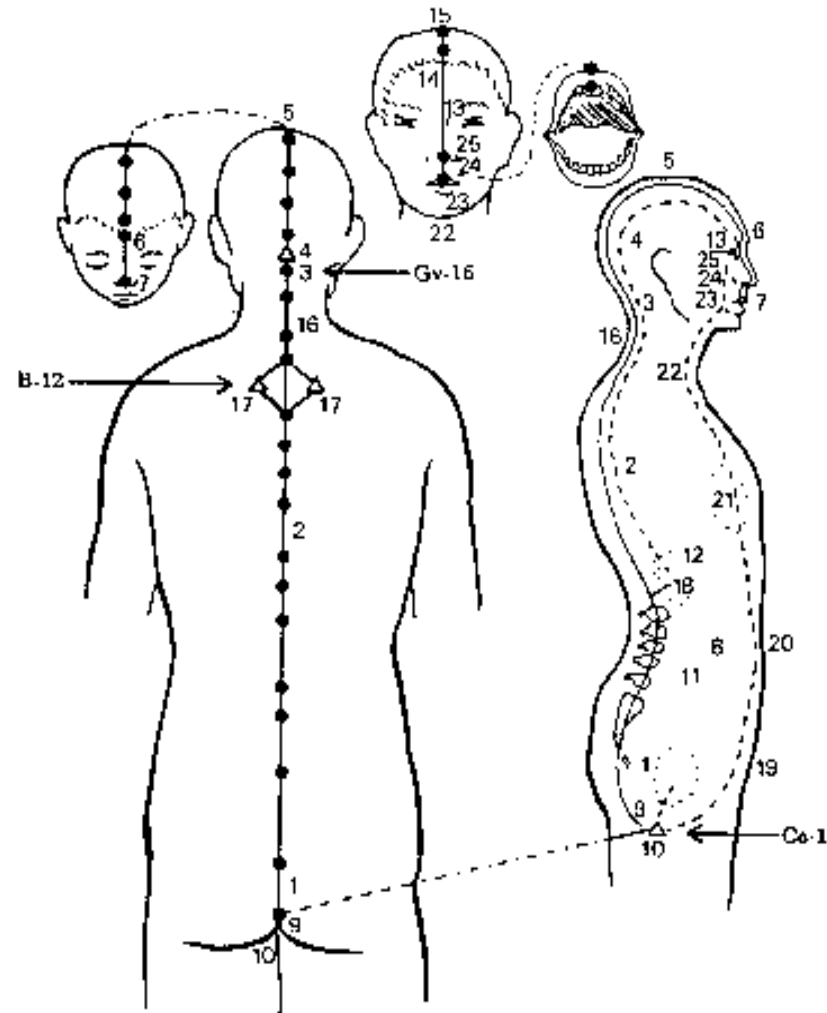
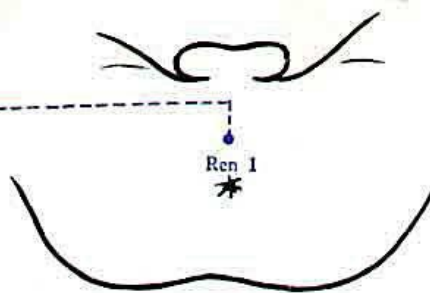
Ren Mai and Du Mai



Symptoms are: sensation of uneasiness in the interior of the body, various hernias in the male, leucorrhea or lower abdominal masses in the female.

Luo

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Ren, Du and Chong Meridians

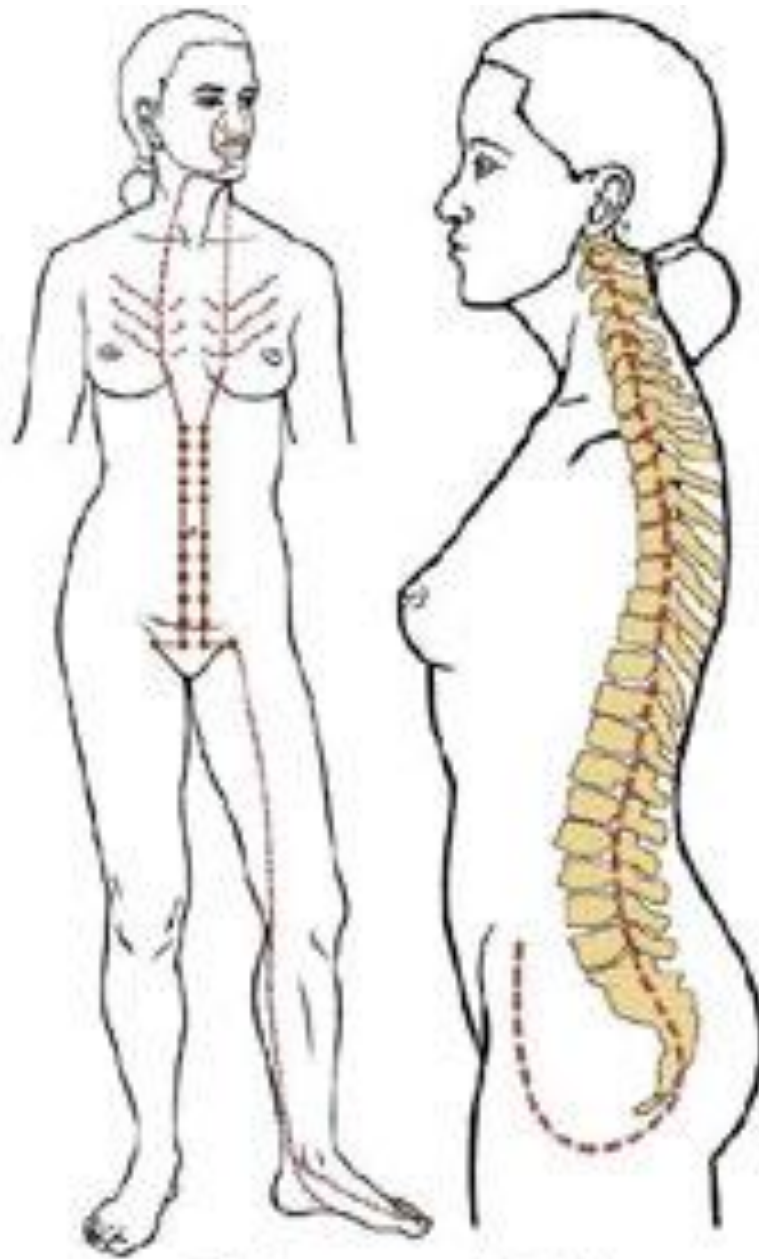
- In the Microcosmic Orbit practice, we link the Ren and the Du meridians into a single continuous circuit – which is how energy circulated when we were in our mother's womb.
- The Chong Meridian flows vertically deep within the body, along the front of the spine, and is most closely associated with Yuan Qi. It is our energetic core.

The Penetrating Meridian (Chong Mai)

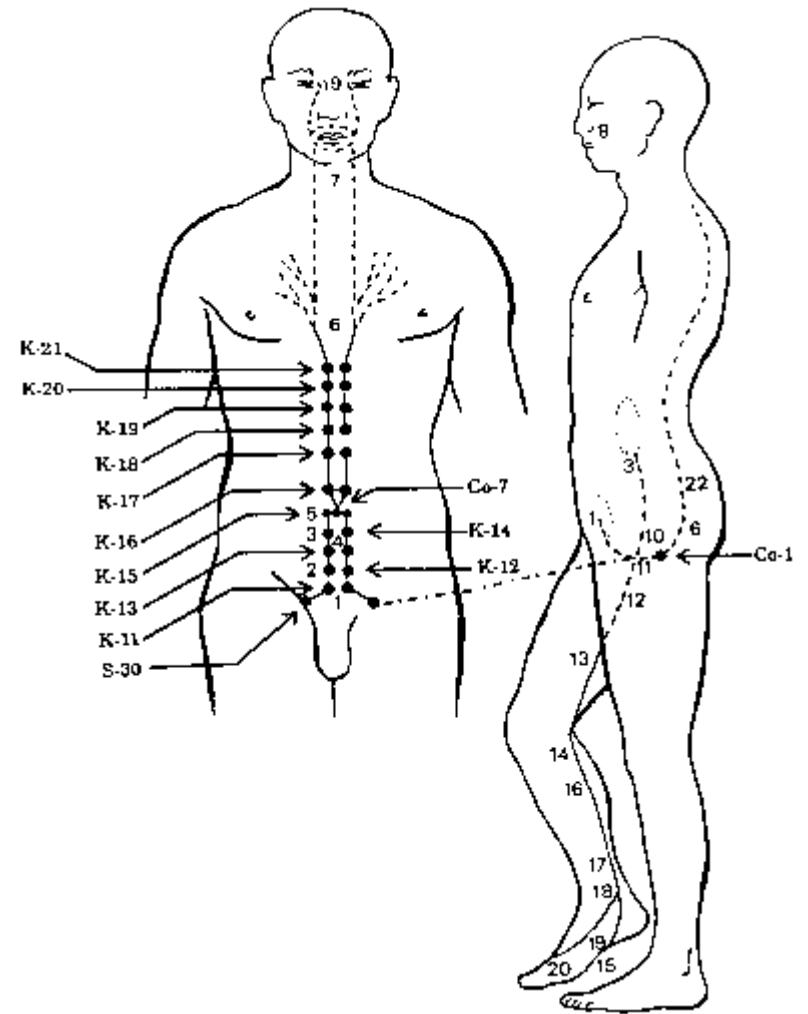
- The Chung Mai meridian is one of the eight ancestral meridians that have a very important function in regulating the Qi
- The main Chong Mai pathway starts in the perineum, then flows up to a point just above the pubic bone, and continues to flow bilaterally right up through the abdomen into the chest, and then up into the face.
- It gives out many branches to all the vital organs, and its main function is to regulate the Qi and blood in the 12 main meridians and their corresponding organs.

Its upward energy flow helps to maintain the position of the organs.

- Any weakness in the Chong Mai will lead to prolapse. (The Spleen meridian also shares this function of maintaining bodily structures in place and preventing prolapse.)
- It also strengthens everything in its pathway by filling the organs and tissues with healthy Qi and blood. It also fills the breasts.



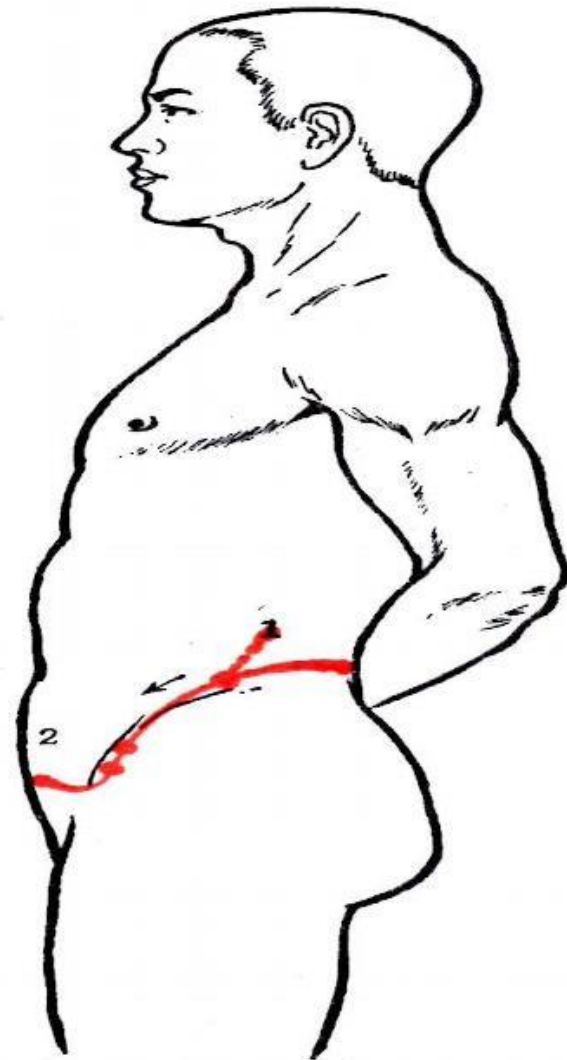
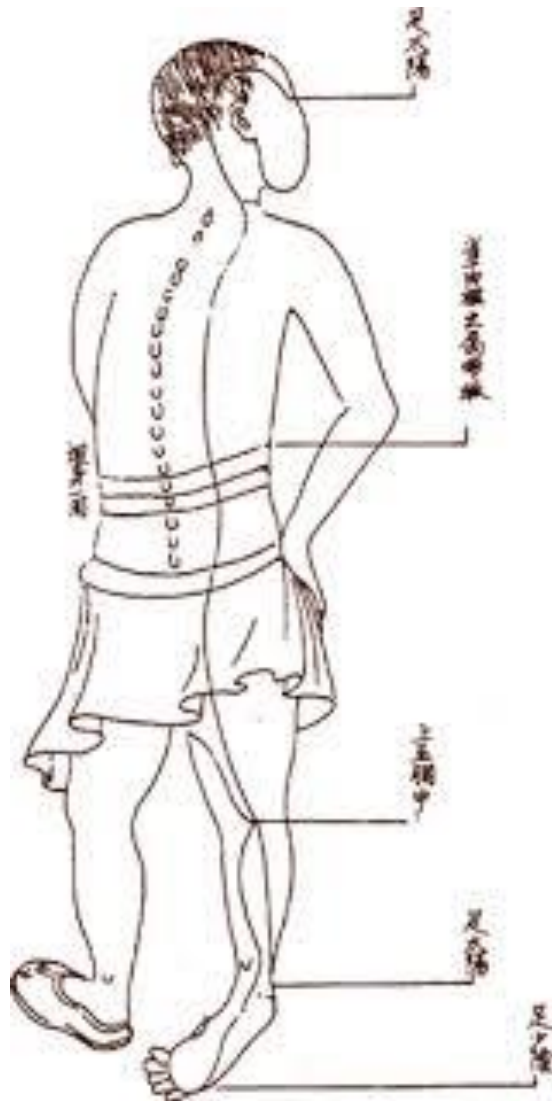
Chong Mai



The Dai Mai

- The Dai Mai circles the waist, and is the only horizontally-flowing meridian.
- As such, it acts as a kind of “belt” - containing the other vertically-flowing meridians.
- In certain Kan/Li qigong practices, we learn to spiral the Dai Meridian up to connect with the energy of the planets, stars and galaxies, and then down to connect with the core of the earth.

Dai Mai Meridians



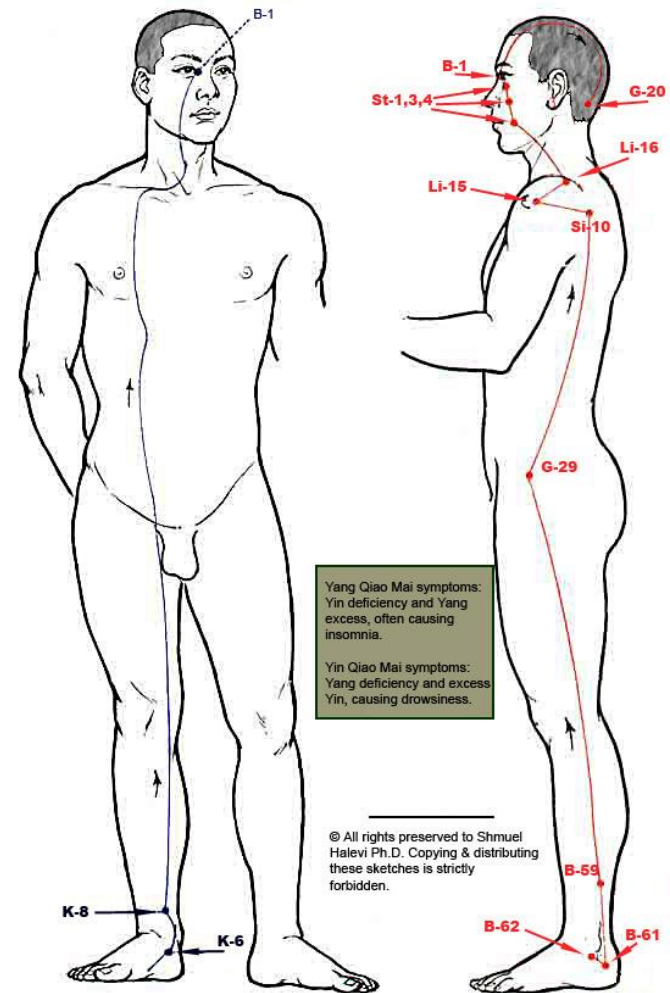
Yin Heel Vessel, 阴跷脉

- Yin Heel Vessels are two of the Eight Extra Meridians.
- Heel vessels appear in pairs and consist of yin heel and yang heel vessel, both of which originate from below the ankle and run separately along the right and left sides of body.
- Yin heel vessel is called Yin Qiao in Chinese.
- Qiao in Chinese means "agile and nimble movement";
- Yin heel vessel has the function of regulating the muscular movements and communicating yin-yang in the body, which makes the movements of the lower limbs more vigorous and nimble.

Function of the Yin-Yang heel vessels

- Since yin heel vessel and yang heel vessel meet with each other at the inner canthus, they are believed to provide the nourishment for the eyes and control the opening and closing of the eyelids.
- Ancient people held that yin heel and yang heel vessel govern yin-yang of the right and left sides of the whole body respectively, that is to say, yin heel vessel controls the yin of the right and left sides of the whole body while yang heel vessel controls the yang of the right and left side of the whole body.

Yin Qiao and Yang Qiao Meridians





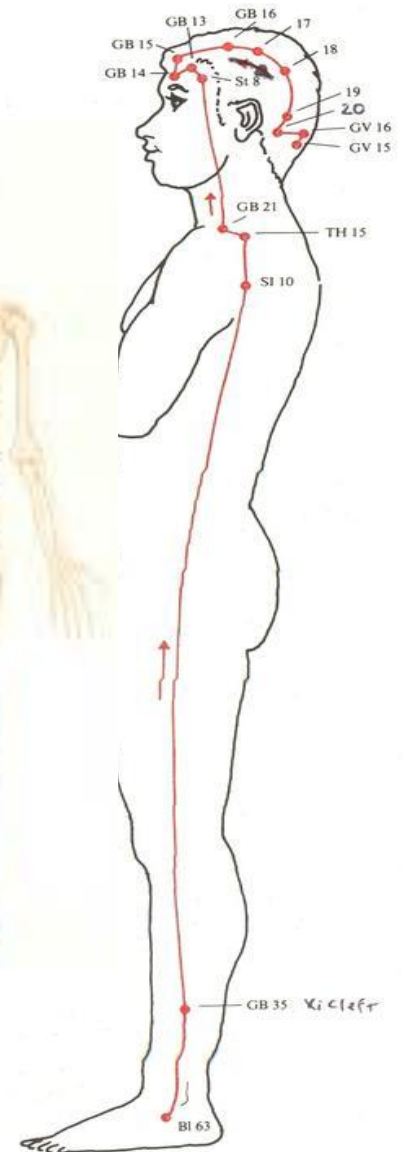
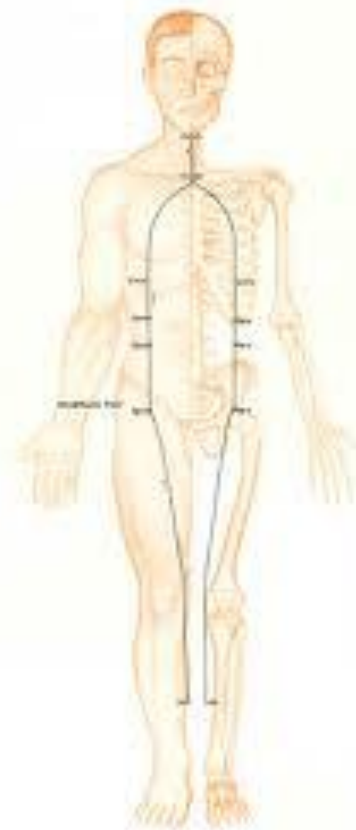
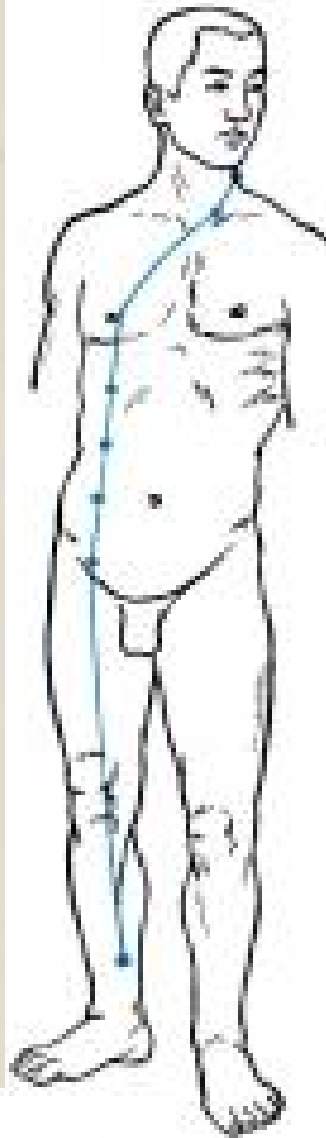
Yin Wei Mai (Yin Linking Vessel)

- **Yin Wei Mai Functions:**
- Connects all Yin channels
Balances the emotions
Reinforces Blood and the Heart

Yin Wei Mai Symptoms

- Heart, chest, Stomach disorders
Emotional disorders
Used to open the chest

Yin Wei and Yang Wei Meridians



Yin wei Mai Pathway:

- Originates at UB 63 and ascends along the GB meridian up the leg and sides of the body passing thru GB 35.
- It continues to UB 59 and up to the hip (GB 29).
- Then it continues along the lateral aspect of the body to LI 14 at the shoulder, to TH 13, TH 15 and to GB 21.
- It then travels down to SI 10, over to GV 15, GV 16 and then to GB 20.
- It continues downward along the GB meridian from GB 19 thru to GB 13 where it ends.



Are body, thought and emotions separated entities?

Chinese Medicine:

Both body and mind are composed of Chi/Qi and controlled by the state of that Chi/Qi.

Through the medium of chi/Qi, the mind can affect the physical body for good or ill, and vice versa.

Thus, mental and emotional stress creates physical illness.

Physical health

- Physical health begins with a lack of obvious symptoms and also requires the chi/qi energy of your various bodily systems to be balanced, abundant and functioning well.
- **Manifestation of healthy & energetic person:**
 - Reasonably rapid healing and recovery time
 - A lack of incipient or potentially hidden, long-term cause of disease.
 - A feeling of being fully alive and vibrant during various age
 - Strong and well balanced internal organs and glands
 - Flexible and spring joints, muscles and tendons
 - Good concentration and mental stamina.

Psychological Health

- For the Chinese, many common problems that we could call psychological positively affected, mitigated or cured by acupuncture, herbs and etc.
- Because those psychological problems are considered to be generated by energetic malfunctions in the body.



Emotional Health

- From the perspective of Chinese Medicine, organic disease, the way your mind operates and emotional predispositions are all intimately interconnected.
- The Chinese have always thought that prolonged excessive emotions easily lead to unhappiness and allow the mind to fall into morbid or destructive paths, both to oneself and others.



Spiritual Health

- In Taoist meditation, spirit is part and parcel of non-physical realities rooted deep in mind, psyche, soul and karma, or whatever one wishes to call essential spiritual qualities
- In Chinese medicine, spirit reflects the underlying conditions of the body's acupuncture channels and internal organs.