Channels and Collaterals

Reference: Zheng Zhen’s Meridian handout.

Some points location and function are similar. I.e., P-6 good for stomach/motion/morning sickness. Can get in the ballpark and still have good results because you are still stimulating the channel. Choose the right channel, and you’re good.

Different groups of channels and collaterals. Another word for channel is meridian.

**What is the function for meridians/channels?**

Transports qi and blood thru the body.

The whole body is an integrated whole. Qi and blood always circulated—in ancient China thought to circulate not just in vessels, but also in channels.

Example: diabetic pts w/poor circ, tingling and numbness. Dx is block of qi/blood in channels. Treatment = soothe the channel.

Channels are not the same as the nerves/blood vessels/lymph systems. They are not currently measurable or definable.

12 cutaneous regions, muscular regions, channels, divergent channels.

Protect body.

If not enuf qi in channels, easy sickness and injury.

Fight external pathogens.

Rsvp to dysfunx in body.

Pain is most common rsvp. But not all pain is zangfu related.

Backshu points, however, are related to internal organs. These are more frequently related to zangfu problems.

Channels transmit qi to diseased area.

Example: P-6 good point for stomach ache/n/v/heart problems, chest pain. Pericardium channel starts from center of chest, down to SJ (incl upper and lower jiaos), stomach.

**P-6 acupressure, stimulate to regulate heart rate and rhythm.**

L-6 good for acute asthma attack. Use acupressure to stimulate.

Qi sensation: achy/sore/pressure, some special feeling. Better result if pt gets some sort of qi sensation. Stim points to send qi thru channel/to orgs.
Channels and Collaterals

Channels are most important in acu studies than collaterals (small branches from channels). Comparatively, collaterals more superficial, channels deeper. Mostly, channels run vertically. Some extraordinaries go lateral.

Mostly we will focus on 12 pri, 8 extraords. This is also most of what you use for treatment.

Know: meridians include channels and collaterals. Know primary channel names. Class 4 - TEST: know tai yang, shao yang, shao yang, jue yin, shao yin, tai yin...know what channels go with what.

How are the channels named?
Named for location and yin/yang status. Hand/arm, foot/leg based on where channels begin/meet ends of extremeties. As for yin/yang status, named for how much yin there is. So 3 hand yin channel = 3 channels going to hand and all related to zang/yin organs. Three factors involved in these names:
1. on hand, on leg
2. yin/yang and how much
3. related to internal organs

3 hand yin channel
Channel is collected on the hand/arm. Also called “arm” channel in some texts. All pertain to the zang organs.
♦ Heart – Hand shao yin (less yin)
♦ Pericardium – Hand jue yin (has far less yin)
♦ Lung – Hand tai yin (has the most yin)
All are above the diaphragm.

3 foot (sometimes called “leg”) yin channel
Always circulate on the lower extremeties, not on the upper extremeties. Will see them in the trunk, chest too. All pertain to the zang organs.
♦ Spleen – Foot Tai Yin channel
b/c shows more yin symptoms.
Spl often deficientin yang, but plentiful in yin. symptoms include: fatigue, tired, low energy, poor digestive symptoms.
Liver - Foot Jue Yin channel
In clinic when pt has liver problems, often see yang symptoms. Hypertension is common, headache, irrit, anger, quick temper. All are too much yang. Liver yang rising. (Liver suffers no deficiency)

Kidney – Foot Shao yin channel
Root of yin and yang in TCM for whole body. Congenital—mother and father essence here. Pts can have lower sex drive, urine incont (kid yang), night sweats, palm heat, (Kid yin def).

3 hand yang channel
All pertain to fu/yang organs
- Small Intestine (has less yang—Tai Yang)
  Paired with heart, but not too much use in the clinic…good for catch cold symptoms.
- SJ (Shao yang – has the least amt of yang)
  (aka: triple burner, triple warmer, san jiao, upper/middle/lower jiaos)
- Large intestine – Yang ming channel – has the most yang qi.
  Best point in the body to clear heat is on the yang ming channel. LI-11 and LI-4 are most often chosen. Pt often feels hot, has hot flashes, sensitive to heat, have heat signs, use LI channel. Is for whole body.

3 foot yang channel
All pertain to fu/yang organs
- Stomach – Yang Ming channel
  Can choose pts on stomach channel to clear heat, though LI is better comparatively.
  (Can use Du-20 too, fyi)
- Gallbladder – Shao Yang channel (least amt of yang)
- Bladder – Tai Yang channel

Deadman’s translation for Jueyin isn’t so good. Instead, Jue means not so much comparatively yin. Top skinny part of the taiji diagram. Shaoyin would be in the middle, Tai yin would be the big fat part of the black area.

Distribution on 4 extremeties:

Often will choose points on extremeties—long ago modesty rules required it. Also, very safe points, most damage you are likely to see are bruises. Also, the more distal the points, the wider the distribution of effect.

Deep punctures in trunk (abdomen/chest, back) can puncture lungs, organs. Youch.

Know medial/anterior = yin; know lateral/posterior = yang.

Hands:
Tai yin/yang ming = most anterior facing part of extremeties
Jue yin/shao yang = middle (medial and lateral respectively) parts of extremeties
Legs: whole anterior is yang. Stomach channel = anterior, lateral = gallbladder.

Sciatica in hip, down outside of leg, needle GB 30. Acupuncture is great for sciatica! If sciatica runs along back, Bladder channel is good. 

**Know where the channels run!**

Interior and Exterior related channels

Channels are always paired.

Taiyin paired with Yangming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tai yin</th>
<th>Yangming</th>
<th>Lung</th>
<th>Large Intestine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jueyin</td>
<td>Shaoyang</td>
<td>Pericardium</td>
<td>SJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shaoyin</td>
<td>Taiyang</td>
<td>Heart</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lung goes from hand to chest
Large Intestine goes from trunk to hand.

Each channel occupies a different place, but there is a constant circulation, like so:

All 3 hand yins flow:
    Chest to hand

All 3 hand yangs:
    Hand to head

All 3 foot yangs:
    Head to foot

3 foot yins:
    Foot to abdominal area/chest.

Yang channels (hand/foot) meet at the head.
Yin channels meet at chest/abdominal. Yin/yang channels meet at hands/feet.

Jing well points: each channel has one. Jing well is the source—where the qi starts superficially. Always on the extreme parts of extremeties. Can use these for loss of consciousness/coma. (Yin and yang separation—they are interdependent, when they begin to separate this helps yin/yang communicate and reintegrate.)
Three circuits of the pathway of primary channels.

Know: write down the circuits—which sends qi to the next channel, now the direction of each.

Slide 13—meridians.pdf This chart will be on EACH test!

Always start at the Lung channel!!!

3 circuits flow like this:
1. Hand taiyin to hand yangming to foot yangming to foot taiyin
2. Hand shaoyin to hand taiyang to foot taiyang to foot shaoyin
3. Hand jueyin to hand shaoyang to foot shaoyang to foot jueyin

Lung → Large Intestine → Stomach → Spleen → Heart. → SI → Bladder → Kidney → Pericardium → SJ → GB → Liver → Lung again…

Extraordinary Vessels/Channels
Different from 12 reg channels. Are not cnx with zangfu. Cnx to brain, bone marrow, bone, vessels, gallbladder, uterus. Have no points of their own.

8 extraordinaries are “odd” another translation besides “extraordinary” because they are not paired channels.

Functions:
1. link the 12 primary channels
   a. Du (governor) channel: meets all yang channels, so is often called the “sea of yang”, meeting at Du-14 (cervical vert 7)
   b. Ren (conception) channel: mid frontline of the trunk. “Sea of Yin channels”
   c. Chong (penetrating) channel: “sea of blood”. The sea of the 12 primary channels.
   d. Dai channel: also called “belt” channel. Binds all channels and runs lateral around the waist.
2. Act as reservoirs—when there is too much qi and blood, will store here. When not enough, will feed the channels with qi/blood
3. protect the body.

12 primaries and the 8 extraordinaries are the most important for acupuncture. Du and Ren have their own points, the rest do not have their own points. You borrow the meeting points of the extraordinary with one or more of the 12 primaries.

12 divergent channels
They always diverge from a primary channel. Do not have their own points. Names can be similar to other 12 reg channels.

Distributions
♦ **Always diverge from regular related channel.**
Usually diverges at a large joint: shoulder or hip for example.

♦ **Enters into abdomen or chest, deeply.**
Always circulated deeply, connected with internal organs. Also, goes back up, then exits and circulates more superficially, meeting with related channel.

♦ **Exits: at neck or above, goes superficial.**

♦ **Converges at the related (paired) Yang meridian.**
  (ZZ emphasized this!)
  If it’s a Yang divergent channel, converges with its own Yang channel.
  If it’s a Yin divergent channel, converges with its’ paired Yang channel.
Stomach divergent, for example, diverges from Stomach Yang channel, goes thru Stomach and more, goes back and reconnects to primary Stomach channel.

**Most divergent channels pass through HT organ!**
  Sometimes the passage is indirect, however. Bladder divergent, for example, doesn’t connect, but Kidney does and Bladder is cnx with kidney. For this reason, and more, heart is the most important organ in the body.

**Supplements the distribution of the regular channels/meridians.**

**No points on divergent channels (runs deeper than regular channels)**

**Functions:**
  ♦ Strengthens yin/yang rel btwn internally and externally paired channels and zangfu (**converge**)
  ♦ Distribute qi and blood to head and face.  
    **(exit: at neck or above)**  
    Yin channels do not circulate to the face. This is how it gets there.
  ♦ Integrate areas of the body not supplied or interconnected by the primary channels (**supplement the distribution of the regular meridians**)
  ♦ Helps explain the clinical action of some commonly used acu pts.
  ♦ Pass thru the HT organ → HT controls the whole body/extremeties →inward  
    **(most divergent channels pass thru HT organ)**
  ♦ Integrate body tissues as a whole: joints → HT → face/sensory organs.

Know: divergent, no pts, cir deeply, makes paired channel closely related, ht and other systems closely related (incl joints, sensory)

**Twelve muscular regions**

**Pathways very similar to pri channel pathways.**

**Pathways:**
  ♦ **Start** at extremeties (around jing-well points)
  ♦ **Bundle:** big joints.
  ♦ **Distribution: Superficial area** – along it’s related primary area.
  **Never connect to internal organs!**
Unite:
- At head: yang channels
  - 3 hand yang: GB 13
  - 3 leg yang: ST 3 or SI 18
- At trunk: yin channels
  - 3 arm yin: GB 22
  - 3 leg yin: Ren 3

Functions:
1. Nourish muscle, tendon, joint (in charge of movements)
2. Form defensive layer of body (skin → muscle → etc…)

Symptoms: muscle and/or joint pain.

Techniques:
Use ashi points.
Usually identifiable by tender spots. Can use acupressure, massage, cupping.
Note: cupping leaves bruises most of the time. Worse pain tends to = worse bruising.
Also, area of worse pain = more bruising and deeper bruising.

Superficial, not rel to internal organs, related to muscles, unites primary channels.

Twelve Cutaneous Regions

Not channels so much as areas overlying broad netwk of superficial channels linked to them. Not often used—sometimes for diags and trtment of skin problems.

Functions:
1. Provides the theoretical foundation fo the idea of invasion by exogenous pathogenic factors thru the skin to the deeper layers of the jingluo system.
2. manifest deep-lying channel disorders . . . like skin color changes indicating pain, cold, heat, etc. Manifestations on the skin:
   a. blue green = pain
   b. red = heat
   c. white/pale = deficiency/cold.
   d. black = blood stasis
3. explains how therapy at level of skin has a deep therapeutic effect.

Blisters with liquid = damp heat. Red skin = heat. Hives can be blood deficiency, deficient cold. Some skin conditions are hard to treat from a channel perspective, easier from a skin region perspective.

Dry skin = blood def. dark skin = bld stasis.
The Luo Connecting Channels
Aka, Collaterals Channels.

There are 15 prin luo-cnx channels branching out from primary channels and extraordinary vessels; are distributed superficially throughout the body.

More thoroughly connect the primaries.

**Luo connecting channels branch out:**
1. 12 from primary channels (4 extremeties)
   one for each primary channel. Connects the primaries more thoroughly.
2. one from conception vessels (REN) (trunk)
3. one from governing vessels (du) (trunk)
4. one from the great luo connecting channel of the Spleen (trunk)

**Pathways of collaterals**

*From the luo cnx pts of their own channel to connect with their intern/extern paired channel. After joining with their paired channel they usually continue to follow their own pathway.*

Luo cnx points start from 12 primaries. (Lung luo cnx, for instance, starts at Lu7.) There are 2 branches for each luo-cnmx channel. One on part of it’s own primary channel, one part goes to the paired channel.

Lung, for instance, has one part that goes to thenar eminence, part connecting to LI channel.

**Functions:**

**Strengthen the cnx between internally-externally paired channels and zang-fu.**
Divergent channels do this too, but go deep. These are superficial and on the extremeties.

Know: All the stuff on the hand out (meridians.pdf) that are bolded or blue.
Know also, the 3 complete circuit chart in the same .pdf.