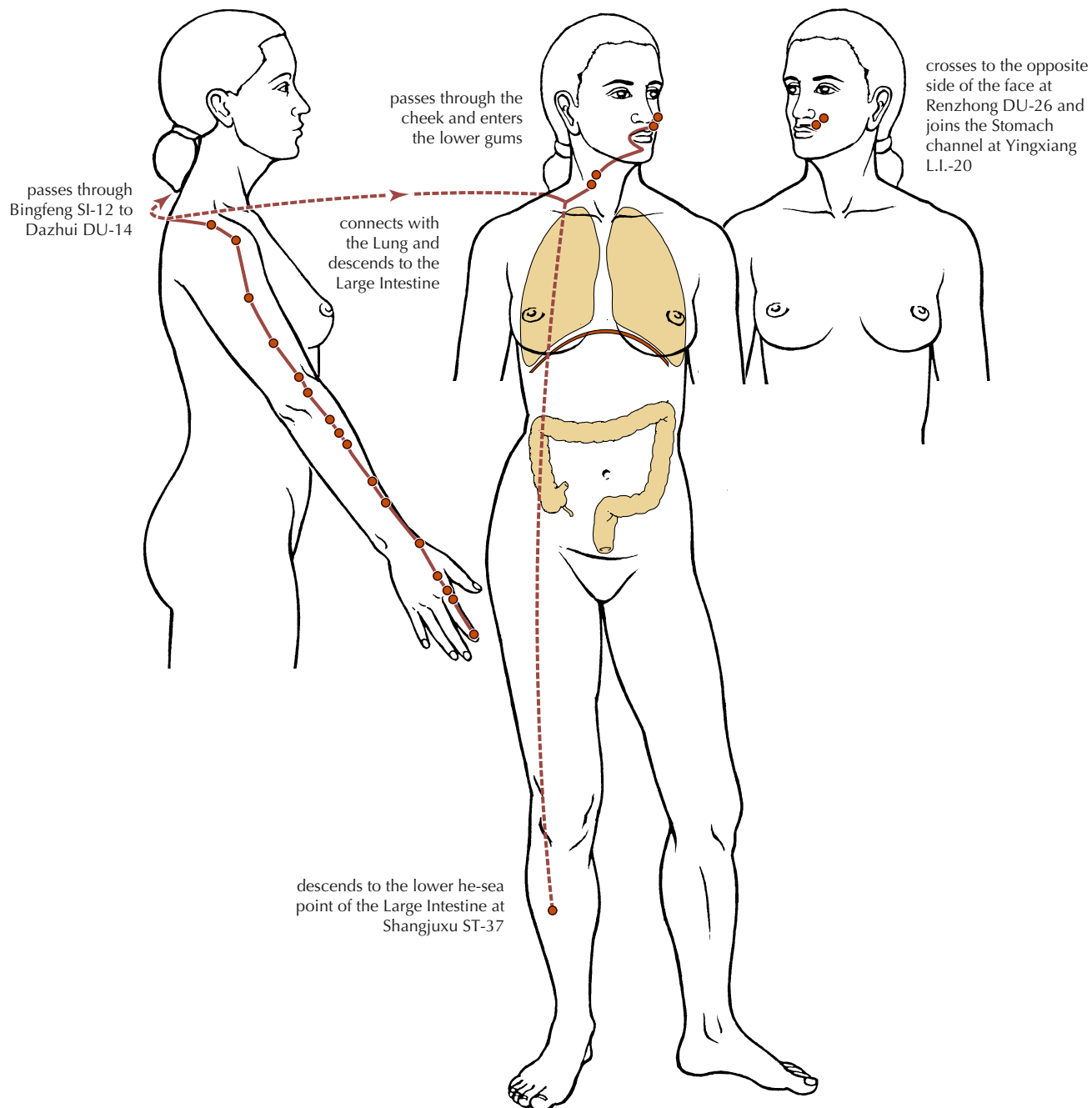

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THE LARGE INTESTINE
CHANNEL OF
HAND YANGMING

THE LARGE INTESTINE CHANNEL OF HAND YANGMING



The Large Intestine primary channel

THE LARGE INTESTINE PRIMARY CHANNEL

- begins at the radial side of the tip of the index finger,
- runs proximally along the radial side of the index finger and passes through the interspace between the first and second metacarpal bones at Hegu L.I.-4,
- reaches the depression between the tendons of extensor pollicis longus and brevis (anatomical snuff-box) where Yangxi L.I.-5 is situated,
- continues along the lateral aspect of the forearm to the lateral aspect of the elbow at Quchi L.I.-11,
- rises along the lateral aspect of the upper arm to the shoulder joint at Jianyu L.I.-15,
- crosses behind the shoulder to the depression between the scapular spine and the lateral extremity of the clavicle (Jugu L.I.-16),
- travels in a medial direction, passing through Bingfeng SI-12 (in the centre of the suprascapular fossa) to Dazhui DU-14 (just below the spinous process of the vertebra of C7) where it meets with the other five yang channels of the hand and foot,
- from Dazhui DU-14 it enters the supraclavicular fossa in the region of Quepen ST-12 and connects with the Lung before descending through the diaphragm to join with the Large Intestine,
- another branch ascends from the supraclavicular fossa along the lateral aspect of the neck, passes through the cheek, and enters the lower gums.
- from the gums the channel passes through Dicang ST-4, curves around the upper lip and crosses to the opposite side of the body at Renzhong DU-26, at the philtrum,
- from Renzhong DU-26, the left channel travels to the right and the right channel travels to the left to terminate either side of the nose at Yingxiang L.I.-20,
- at Yingxiang L.I.-20 the Large Intestine channel joins with the Stomach channel.
- According to the *Spiritual Pivot*¹ a branch of the Large Intestine primary channel descends to Shangjuxu ST-37.

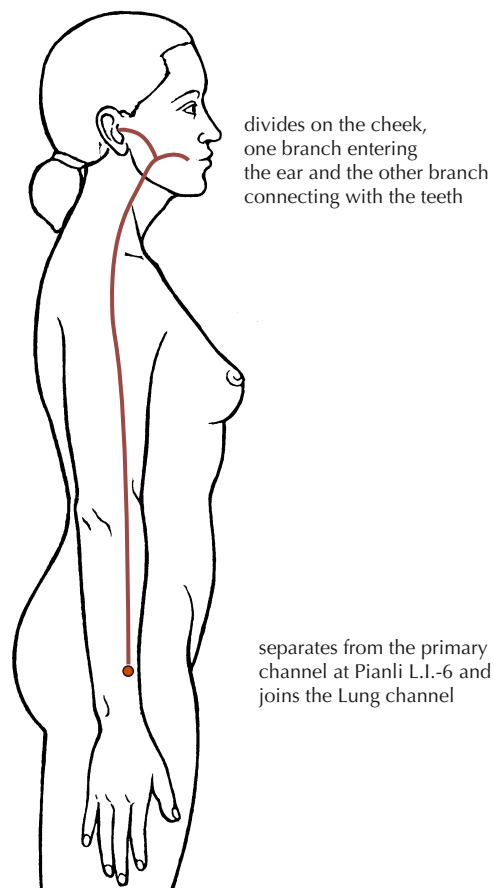
The Large Intestine primary channel connects with the following zangfu: Large Intestine, Lung.

The Large Intestine primary channel meets with other channels at the following points: Dicang ST-4, Quepen ST-12, Bingfeng SI-12, Dazhui DU-14, Renzhong DU-26, Chengjiang REN-24. Note that although Xuanlu GB-5, Xuanli GB-6 and Yangbai GB-14 are classically listed as meeting points with the Large Intestine channel, illustrations of the channel do not normally show these connections.

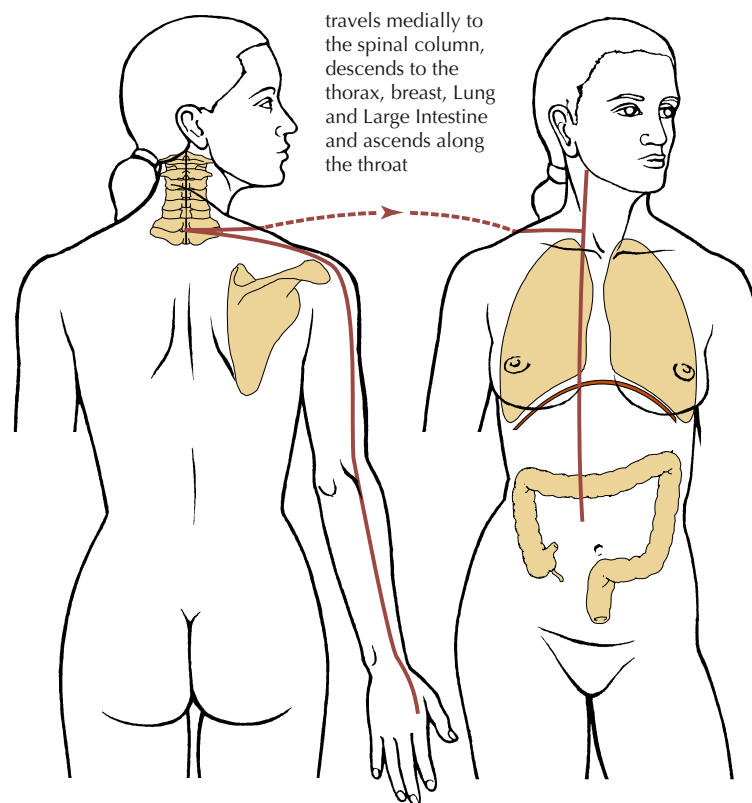
Note: i. According to descriptions of the Lung primary channel pathway, a branch of the channel runs from Lieque LU-7 to Shangyang L.I.-1. This latter point however is not classified as a meeting point of the Large Intestine and Lung channels. ii. Chengjiang REN-24 is classified as a meeting point of the Conception vessel with the Large Intestine channel. This connection is not conventionally mentioned however, in descriptions of the pathway of the Large Intestine primary channel.

THE LARGE INTESTINE LUO-CONNECTING CHANNEL

- begins at Pianli L.I.-6,
- joins with its interiorly-exteriorly associated Lung channel three cun above the wrist,
- ascends the arm through Jianyu L.I.-15 to the jaw and cheek, where it divides, one branch connecting with the teeth, the other entering the ear to join the 'zong mai' (where the channels of the Large Intestine, Stomach, Small Intestine, Gall Bladder and Sanjiao gather and collect at the ear).



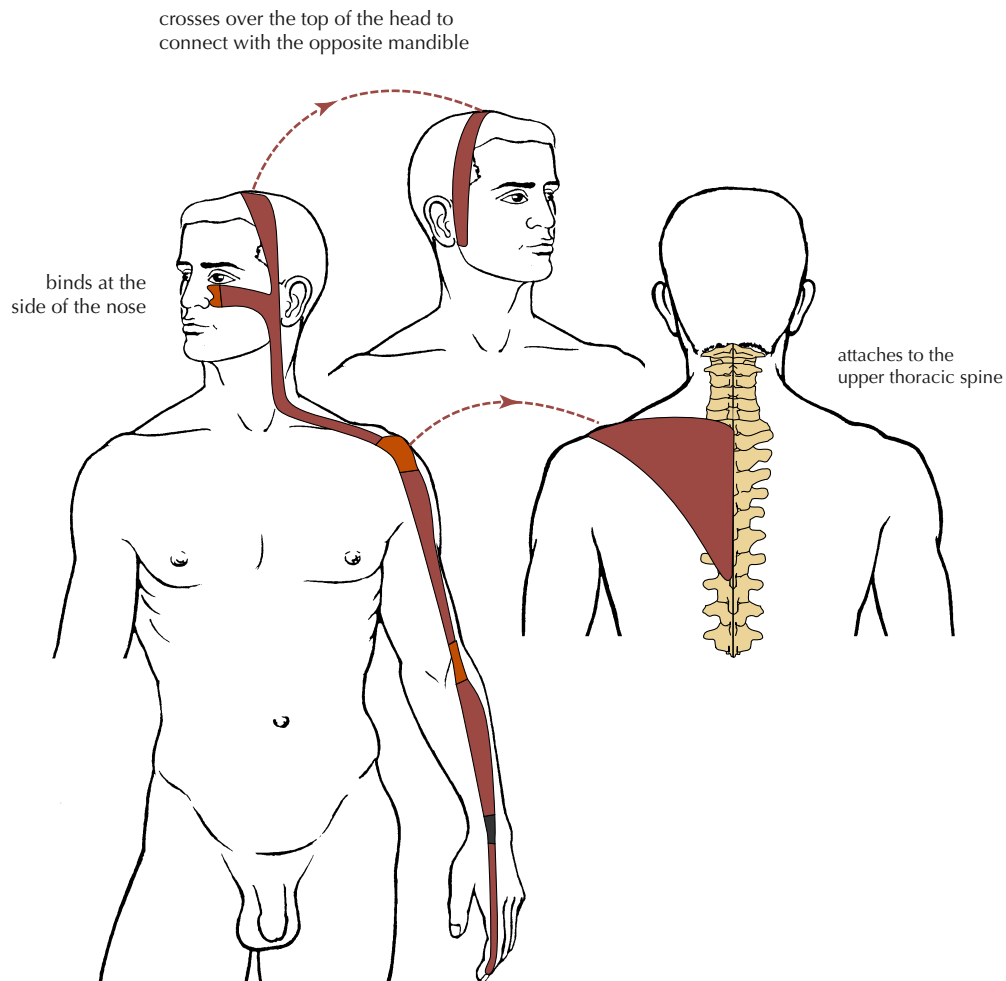
The Large Intestine luo-connecting channel



The Large Intestine Divergent channel

THE LARGE INTESTINE DIVERGENT CHANNEL

- separates from the Large Intestine primary channel on the hand,
- ascends the arm to the shoulder at Jianyu L.I.-15,
- travels medially to the spinal column,
- crosses to the supraclavicular fossa and descends to the thorax, breast, Lung and Large Intestine,
- a branch ascends from the supraclavicular fossa along the throat and unites with the Large Intestine primary channel.



The Large Intestine sinew channel

THE LARGE INTESTINE SINEW CHANNEL

- begins at the tip of the index finger at Shangyang L.I.-1 and binds at the dorsum of the wrist,
- ascends the forearm and binds at the lateral aspect of the elbow,
- ascends the upper arm to bind at the shoulder,
- a branch winds around the scapula and attaches to the upper thoracic spine,
- from the shoulder the main channel ascends to the neck from where a branch ascends across the cheeks to bind at the side of the nose, whilst,

- the main channel ascends anterior to the Small Intestine sinew channel, crosses the temple to the corner of the forehead, and crosses over the top of the head to connect with the mandible on the opposite side.

Pathological symptoms of the Large Intestine sinew channel
Cramping and pain along the course of the channel, inability to raise the shoulder, inability to turn the neck to the left or to the right.

DISCUSSION

The Large Intestine channel of hand yangming is interiorly-exteriorly coupled with the Lung channel of hand taiyin, and paired with the Stomach channel of foot yangming according to six channel theory. The Large Intestine-Lung relationship is further strengthened by the fact that:

- both the interior pathway of the Large Intestine channel as well as the Large Intestine divergent channel enter the Lung zang.
- the Large Intestine luo-connecting channel from Pianli L.I.-6 joins with the Lung channel.

In addition it is clinically valuable to note that:

- the Large Intestine primary channel enters the gums of the lower teeth.
- the Large Intestine primary channel crosses to the contralateral side of the face at Renzhong DU-26.
- the Large Intestine sinew channel ascends to the corner of the forehead and crosses over the top of the head to connect with the opposite mandible.
- the Large Intestine luo-connecting channel enters the ear as well as the teeth.
- the Large Intestine divergent channel descends to the breast.
- the Large Intestine sinew channel attaches to the upper thoracic spine and the divergent channel travels medially to the spinal column.

The function of the Large Intestine fu is to receive waste material sent down from the Small Intestine, absorb its fluid content and form the remainder into faeces to be excreted. Despite this, although several points of the Large Intestine channel have an action on the intestines and lower abdomen (particularly in the treatment of borborygmus and diarrhoea), in clinical practice they are considerably less used than points of the Spleen and Stomach channels. Also there is no Large Intestine channel point indicated for difficult defecation or constipation. This paucity of Large Intestine indications is not surprising in view of the fact that whilst the channel traverses the upper body, the fu lies in the lower abdomen.

According to the *Spiritual Pivot*² “Yangming channel is abundant in qi and blood”. Points of both the arm and leg portions of yangming channel are therefore much used clinically to regulate qi and blood in the limbs and treat atrophy disorder and painful obstruction, hemiplegia and pain of all kinds.

In the Chinese tradition ‘the sage faces South’ and thus the light and warmth of the sun fall on the front of the body. The yangming channels, on the anterior of the limbs,

receive the full intensity of the sun, as does the abdominal and chest portion of the foot yangming Stomach channel, the only yang channel to run along the anterior of the body. For this reason, yangming or ‘yang brightness’ is considered to be particularly replete with yang qi. Points of the Large Intestine channel, therefore, are among the most important points to clear excess of yang in the form of heat and fever, notably Hegu L.I.-4 and Quchi L.I.-11.

Apart from the above, the primary actions and indications of the points of the Large Intestine channel can be summarised as:

- treating all disorders of the yangming channel in the head; this area includes the face and cheeks, forehead, eyes, nose, lips, gums and teeth.
- treating disorders of the ear (Large Intestine luo-connecting channel).
- expelling wind, cold and heat from the exterior portion of the body.
- clearing wind-heat, interior heat and fire poison from the areas traversed by the channel, especially in the head.
- clearing yangming fire which disturbs the Heart and spirit.
- assisting the Lung in its function of opening the water passages.