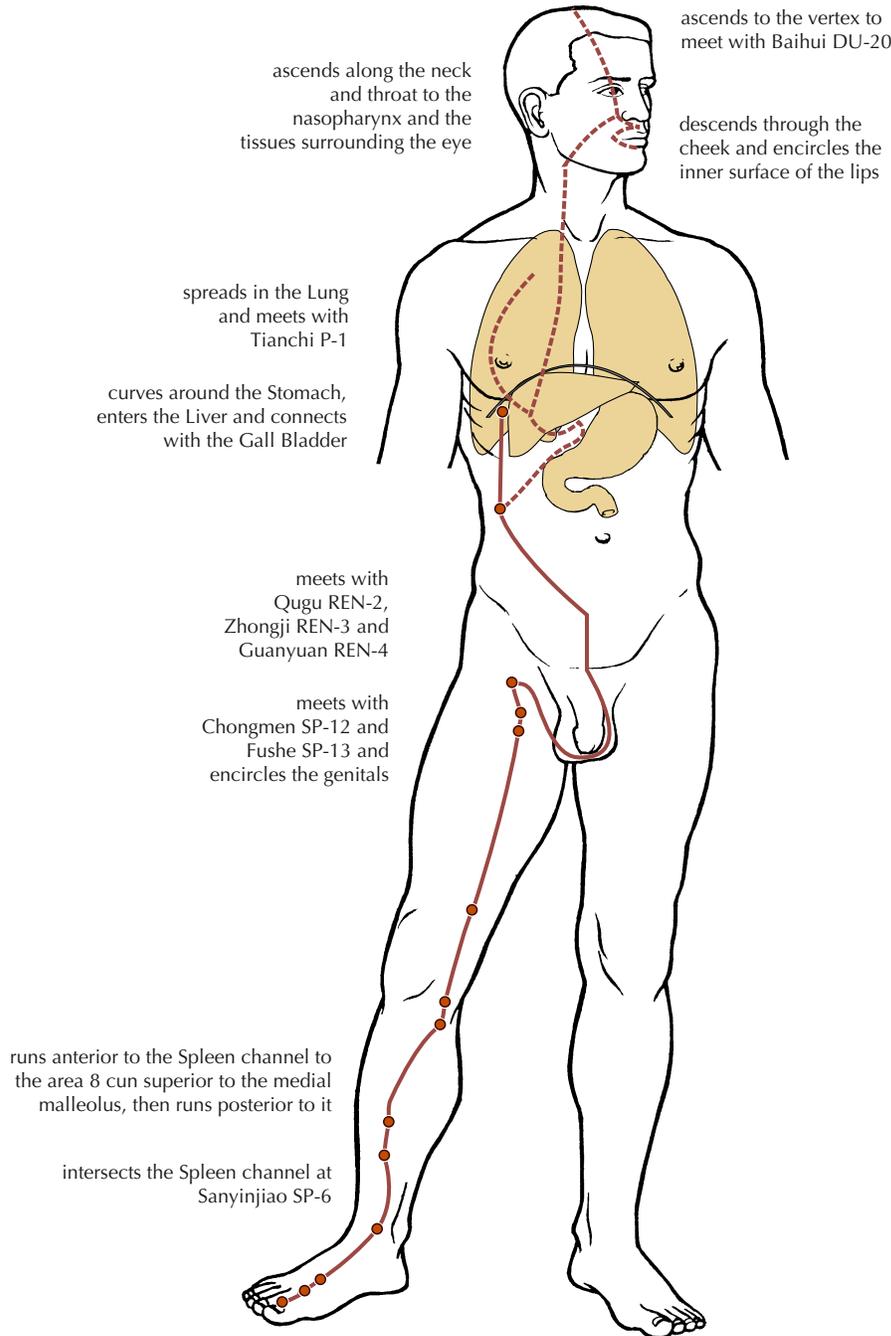

足厥陰肝經

THE LIVER CHANNEL
OF FOOT JUEYIN

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THE LIVER PRIMARY CHANNEL

- originates at the lateral aspect of the dorsum of the big toe at Dadun LIV-1, and runs along the foot to Zhongfeng LIV-4, 1 cun anterior to the medial malleolus,
- ascends along the medial aspect of the lower leg, intersecting the Spleen channel at Sanyinjiao SP-6, then continues to ascend anterior to the Spleen channel to an area 8 cun above the medial malleolus, where it crosses and continues posterior to the Spleen channel up to the knee and the medial aspect of the thigh,
- continues to the pubic region via Chongmen SP-12 and Fushe SP-13 where it encircles the genitals, then ascends to enter the lower abdomen where it intersects the Conception vessel at Qugu REN-2, Zhongji REN-3 and Guanyuan REN-4,

- continues upwards to curve round the Stomach before entering the Liver and connecting with the Gall Bladder,
- crosses the diaphragm and spreads in the costal and hypochondriac region,
- ascends along the neck and posterior aspect of the throat to the nasopharynx to link with the tissues surrounding the eye (the 'eye system'),
- ascends across the forehead to the vertex where it intersects with the Governing vessel at Baihui DU-20.

A branch

- descends from the eye system through the cheek and encircles the inner surface of the lips.

Another branch

- separates from the Liver, crosses the diaphragm and spreads in the Lung, meeting with Tianchi P-1.

The Liver primary channel connects with the following zangfu: Liver, Gall Bladder, Lung, Stomach.

The Liver primary channel meets with other channels at the following points: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Chongmen SP-12, Fushe SP-13, Qugu REN-2, Zhongji REN-3, Guanyuan REN-4, Tianchi P-1, Baihui DU-20.

THE LIVER LUO-CONNECTING CHANNEL

- separates from the primary channel at Ligou LIV-5 on the medial aspect of the lower leg,
- connects with the Gall Bladder channel,
- ascends to the genitals.

THE LIVER DIVERGENT CHANNEL

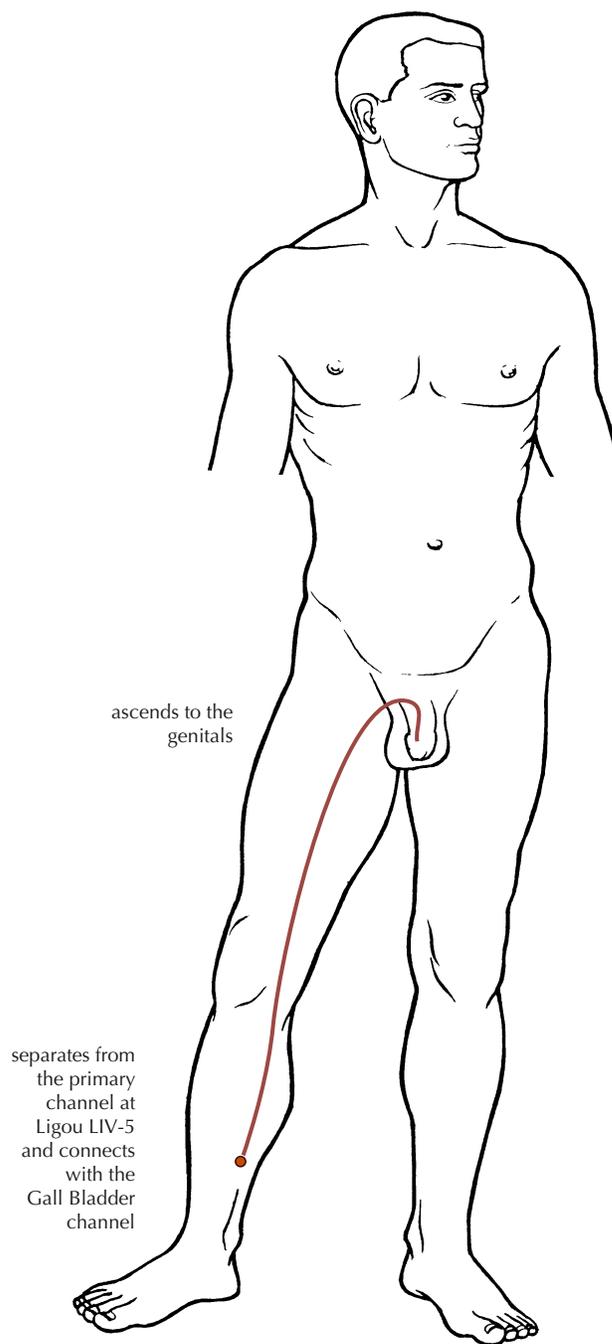
- separates from the primary channel on the dorsum of the foot,
- ascends to the pubic region where it converges with the Gall Bladder primary channel.

THE LIVER SINEW CHANNEL

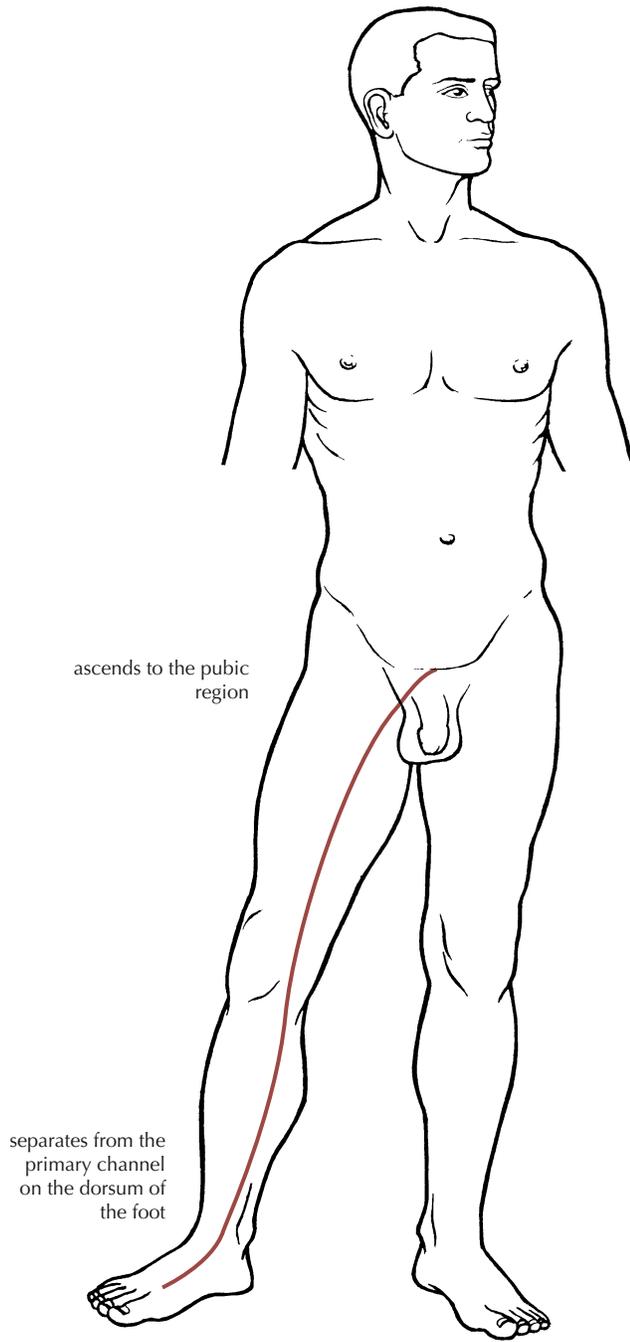
- originates on the dorsum of the big toe, and ascends to bind at the anterior aspect of the medial malleolus,
- proceeds along the medial aspect of the tibia to bind at the medial condyle,
- continues upwards along the medial aspect of the thigh to the genitals where it connects with other sinew channels.

Pathological symptoms of the Liver sinew channel

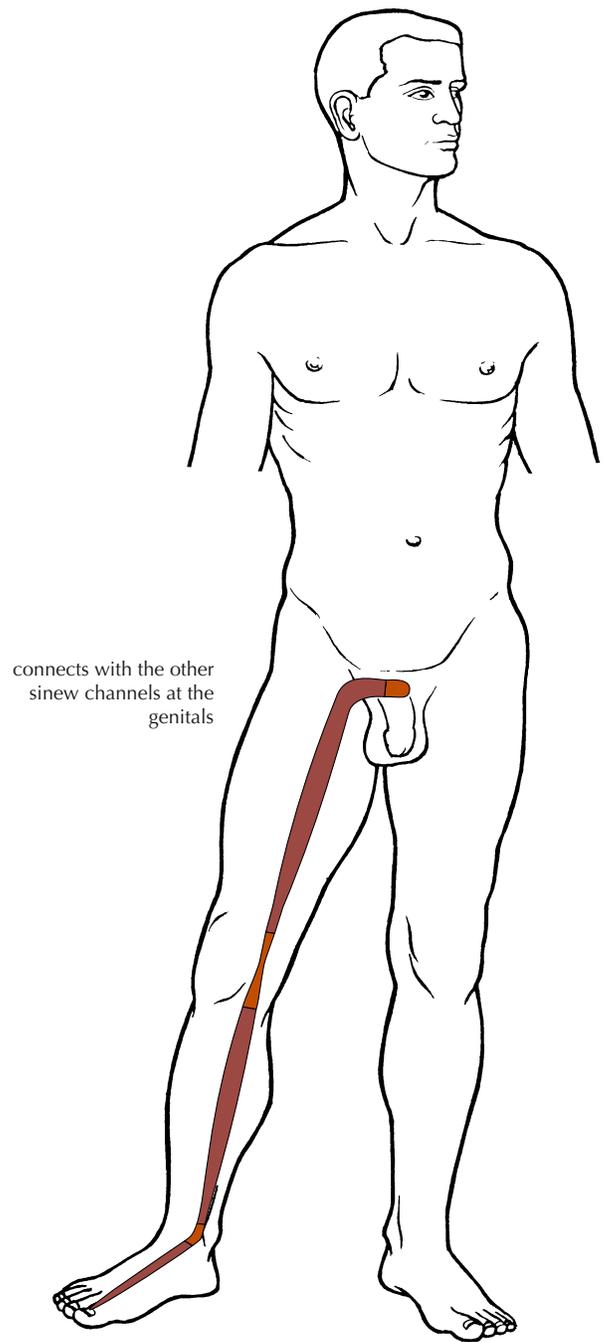
Strain of the big toe, pain anterior to the medial malleolus, pain of the medial aspect of the knee, spasm and pain of the medial aspect of the thigh, dysfunction of the genitals (with internal injury there is inability to have an erection, with injury by cold there is retraction of the genitals, with injury by heat there is persistent erection).



The Liver luo-connecting channel



The Liver divergent channel



The Liver sinew channel

DISCUSSION

The Liver channel of foot jueyin is interiorly-exteriorly coupled with the Gall Bladder channel, and paired with the Pericardium channel of hand jueyin according to six channel theory. The Liver-Gall Bladder relationship is further strengthened by the fact that:

- the Liver primary channel connects with the Gall Bladder fu.
- the Liver luo-connecting and divergent channels connect with the Gall Bladder channel.

It is also interesting to note that:

- the Liver primary, luo-connecting and sinew channels go to the genitals, whilst the divergent channel ascends to the pubic region.
- the Liver primary channel enters the lower abdomen.
- the Liver primary channel curves around the Stomach.
- the Liver primary channel spreads in the Lung.
- the Liver primary channel ascends just posterior to the throat.
- the Liver primary channel passes through the nasopharynx.
- the Liver primary channel links with the eye system (the tissues surrounding the eye).
- the Liver primary channel ascends to the vertex to intersect the Governing vessel at Baihui DU-20, the highest point reached by any yin channel.

The Liver has five primary functions:

- storing the blood.
- spreading (maintaining the free flow of) the qi.
- dominating the sinews.
- opening into the eyes.
- manifesting in the nails.

In addition:

- the Liver zang belongs to the wood phase and corresponds to wind.
- the Liver governs uprising, and in disharmony its qi may therefore rise excessively.
- the Liver is entrusted with the ming men fire which in disharmony may easily flare upwards as pathological heat.
- the Liver free-flowing function assists the qi movement of the zangfu, especially the descending of Lung and Stomach qi and the ascending of Spleen qi.
- the Liver free-flowing function assists the qi transformation function of the Bladder.
- the Liver stores the ethereal soul (hun) and as the wood zang is the 'mother' of the Heart.
- the Liver stores the blood which flows into the Conception and Penetrating vessels to become menstrual blood, and its qi is responsible for the smooth flow of menstruation.

- the Liver is closely associated with such emotions as anger, irritability, fractiousness, frustration, resentment, depression weepiness and mood swings.

It is by virtue of these functions as well as the channel pathways discussed above, that many of the actions and indications of the points of the Liver channel can be explained. These can be summarised as:

- resolving distention and pain due to stagnation of Liver qi in the head, throat region, chest, Heart, Lung, Stomach, abdomen, lateral costal region, lower abdomen, intestines and genitals.
- assisting in the descent of Stomach and Lung qi and the ascent of Spleen qi.
- pacifying interior wind and uprising of yang giving rise to headache, dizziness, epilepsy, spasm etc.
- cooling Liver fire affecting any region of the body.
- benefiting the eyes.
- treating disorders characterised by pain and swelling of the external genitals (especially in men) as well as seminal emission, ejaculatory disorders, priapism and impotence.
- regulating menstruation and the menstrual cycle.
- treating shan disorder (a broad category that includes hernia, genital swelling and pain, and severe pain of the lower abdomen).
- treating disorders of urination such as urinary retention, painful urinary dysfunction, incontinence, frequent urination etc.
- treating lumbar pain.
- treating psycho-emotional disorders deriving from Liver blood deficiency, Liver qi stagnation or Liver fire, all of which may disturb the ethereal soul and spirit.