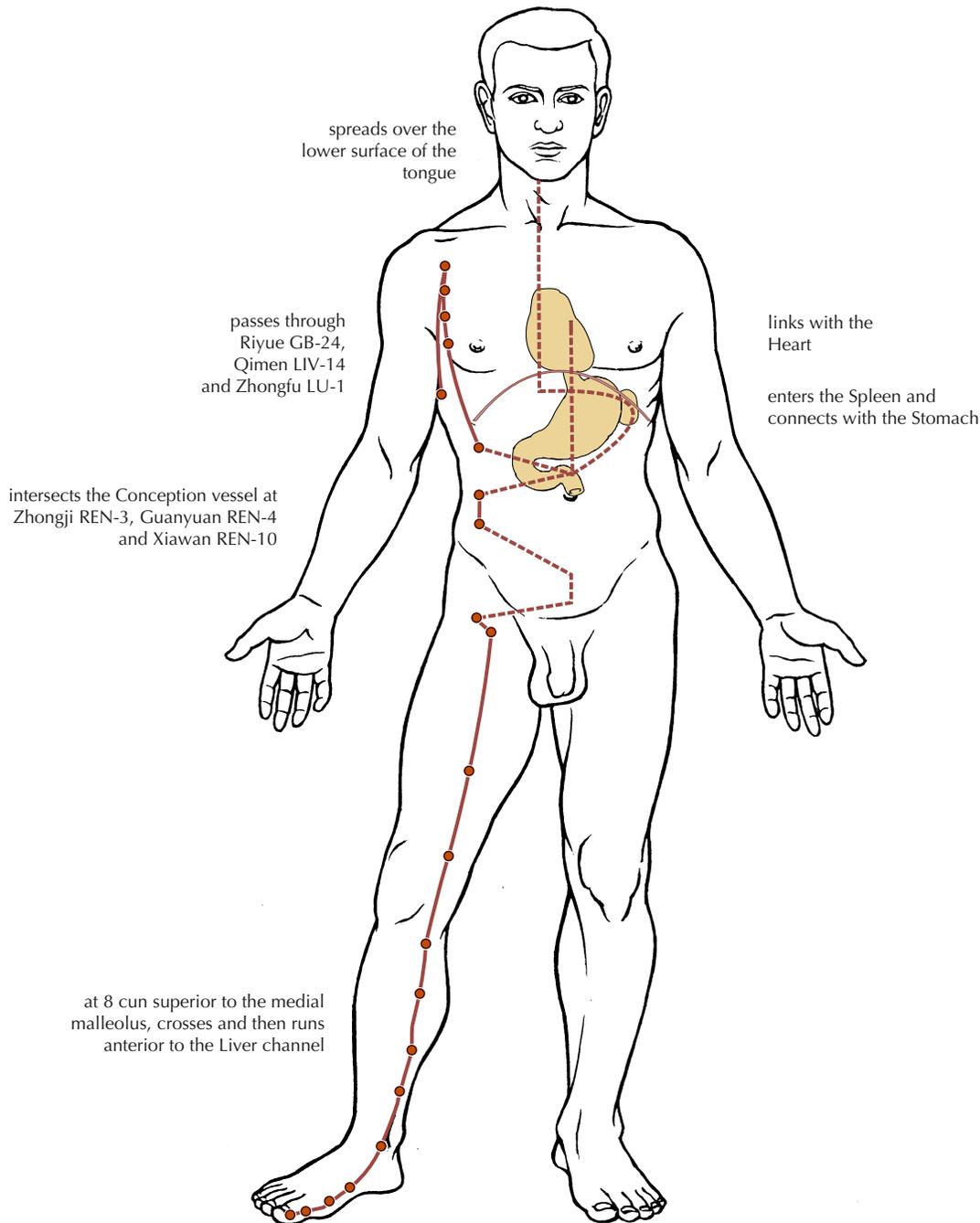

足太陰脾經

THE SPLEEN CHANNEL
OF FOOT TAIYIN

THE SPLEEN CHANNEL OF FOOT TAIYIN



THE SPLEEN PRIMARY CHANNEL

- begins at the medial side of the tip of the big toe at Yinbai SP-1,
- runs along the medial aspect of the foot, following the border where the skin changes colour,
- ascends in front of the medial malleolus at Shangqiu SP-5,
- follows the posterior border of the tibia up the medial aspect of the leg to a point 8 cun superior to

the medial malleolus where it crosses (and then travels anterior to) the Liver channel,

- ascends along the medial aspect of the knee and the antero-medial aspect of the thigh to the lower abdomen where it intersects the Conception vessel at Zhongji REN-3, Guanyuan REN-4 and Xiawan REN-10 before entering the Spleen and connecting with the Stomach,

- emerges in the region of the Stomach and ascends first at 4 cun lateral to the midline then at 6 cun lateral to the midline, passing through Riyue GB-24, Qimen LIV-14 and Zhongfu LU-1, and descends to terminate in the seventh intercostal space on the mid-axillary line at Dabao SP-21.

A branch

- ascends through the diaphragm, runs alongside the oesophagus and spreads over the lower surface of the tongue.

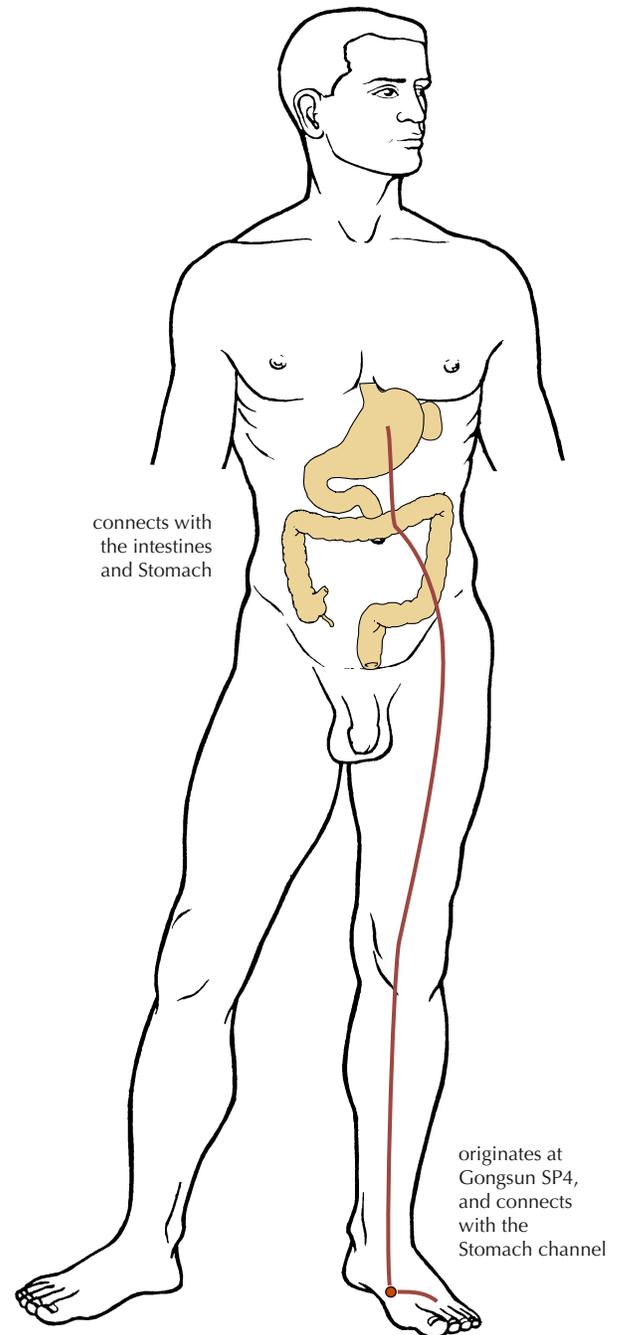
A further branch

- ascends from the Stomach, passes through the diaphragm and flows to link with the Heart.

The Spleen primary channel connects with the following zangfu: Spleen, Stomach, Heart.

The Spleen primary channel meets with other channels at the following points: Zhongfu LU-1, Riyue GB-24, Qimen LIV-14, Zhongji REN-3, Guanyuan REN-4, Xiawan REN-10.

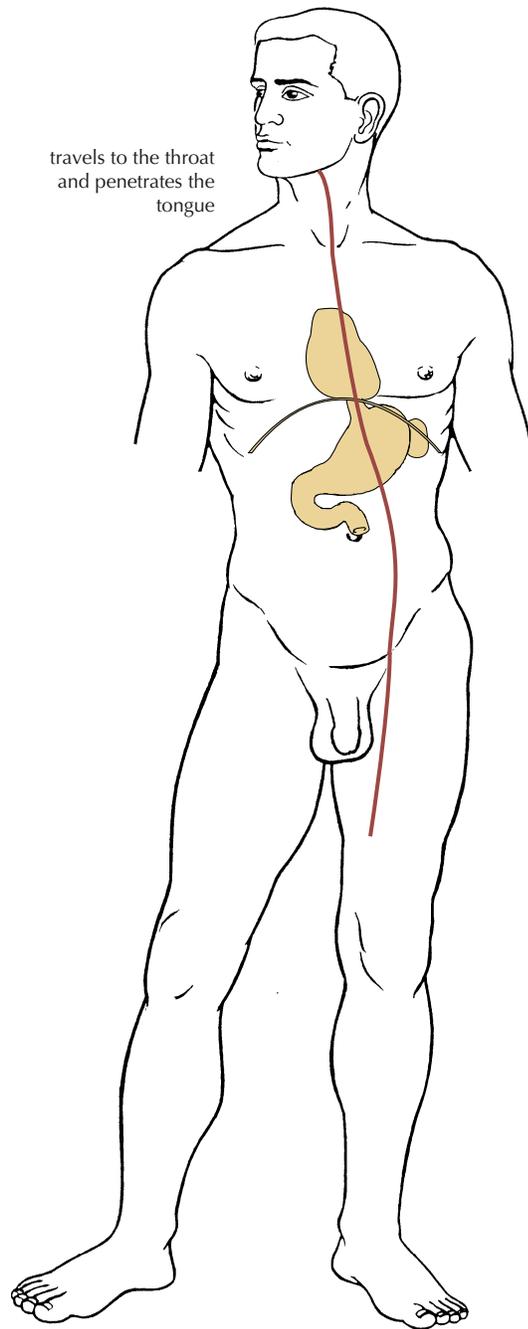
Note: Shanzhong REN-17 is classified as a meeting point of the Spleen primary channel with the Conception vessel, but descriptions of the Spleen channel pathway do not conventionally mention this point.



The luo-connecting channel of the Spleen

THE SPLEEN LUO-CONNECTING CHANNEL

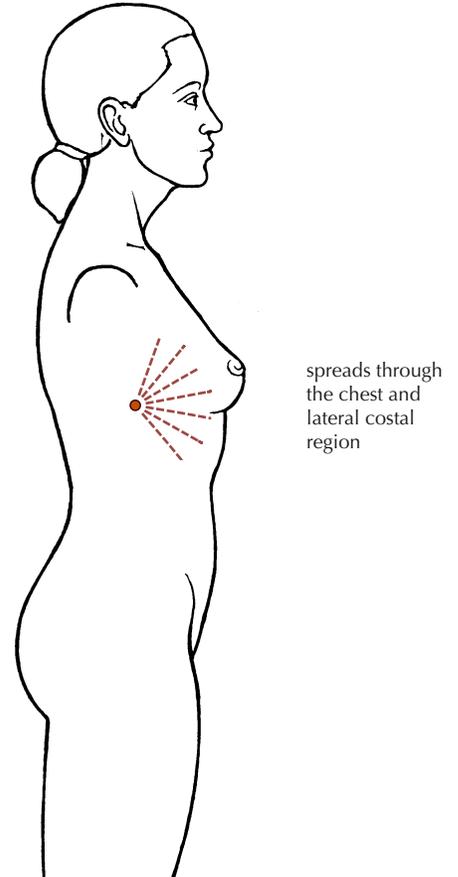
- originates at Gongsun SP-4,
- connects with the Stomach channel,
- enters the abdomen and connects with the intestines and Stomach.



The divergent channel of the Spleen

THE SPLEEN DIVERGENT CHANNEL

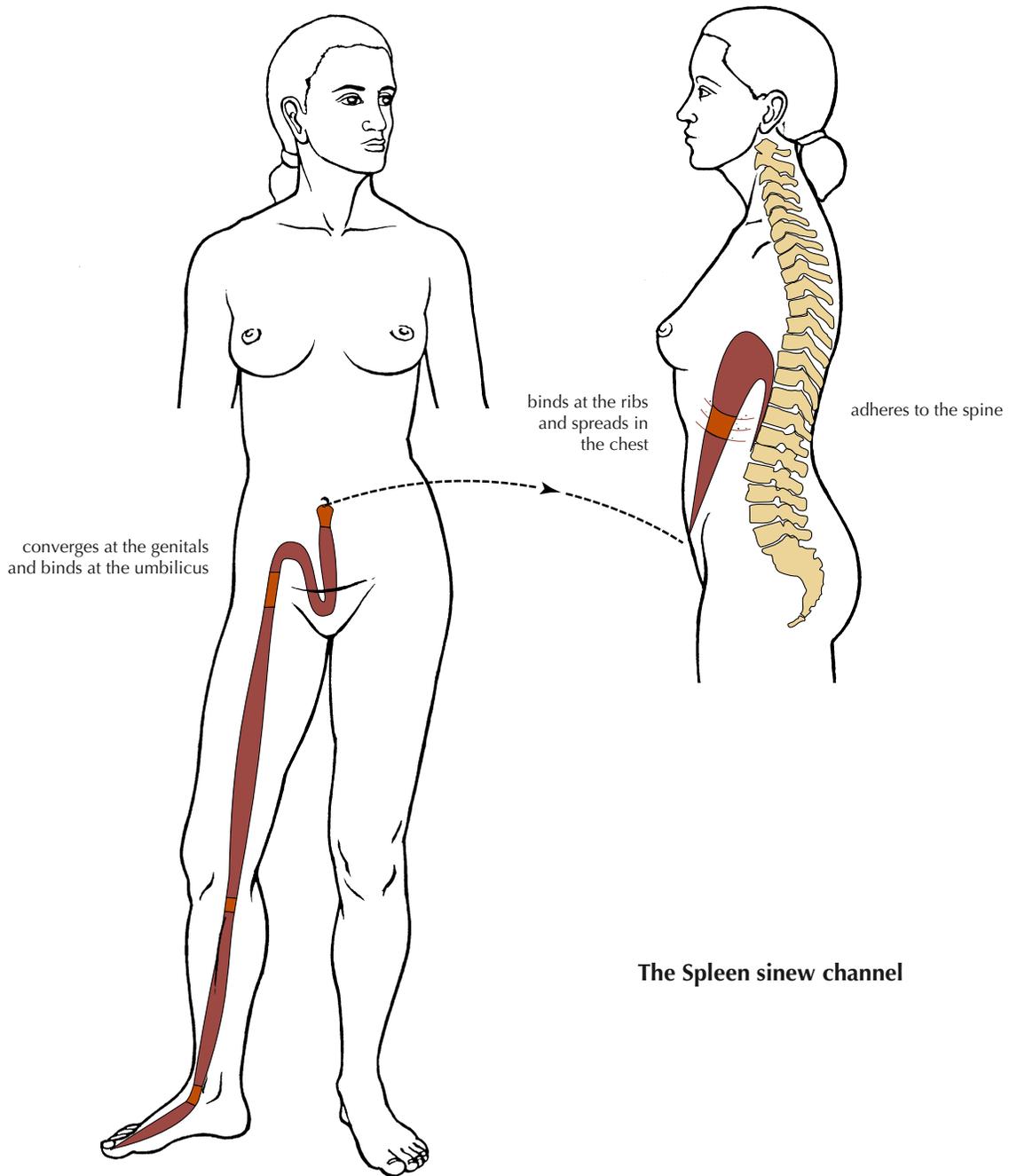
- branches from the primary channel in the middle of the anterior thigh,
- follows the Stomach divergent channel to the throat where it penetrates the tongue.



The great luo-connecting channel of the Spleen

THE GREAT LUO-CONNECTING CHANNEL OF THE SPLEEN

- separates from the primary channel at Dabao SP-21 on the lateral aspect of the chest,
- spreads through the chest and lateral costal region, gathering the blood of the luo-connecting channels of the whole body.



The Spleen sinew channel

THE SPLEEN SINEW CHANNEL

- begins at the medial side of the big toe at Yinbai SP-1 and ascends the foot to bind at the medial malleolus at Shangqiu SP-5,
- ascends the medial aspect of the tibia to bind at the medial side of the knee at Yinlingquan SP-9,
- follows the medial face of the thigh to bind in the groin before converging at the external genitalia,
- ascends the abdomen to bind at the umbilicus,
- enters the abdomen, binds at the ribs and spreads in the chest,

- from the inside of the chest a branch adheres to the spine.

Pathological Symptoms of the Spleen sinew channel

Strained big toe, pain of the medial malleolus, pain and cramping (along the course of the channel), pain of the medial aspect of the knee, pain of the medial thigh that reaches the inguinal region, twisting pain of the genitals that may reach the navel and the lateral costal region or lead to pain of the chest and interior spine.

DISCUSSION

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

- the interior pathway of the Spleen primary channel connects with the Stomach fu.
- the Spleen luo-connecting channel connects with both the Stomach channel and the Stomach fu.
- the Spleen divergent channel connects with the Stomach divergent channel.

In addition, it is important to note that:

- the Spleen primary channel joins with the Conception vessel below the umbilicus at Zhongji REN-3 and Guanyuan REN-4 and above the umbilicus at Xiawan REN-10.
- the Spleen primary channel passes through the hypochondrium (meeting with the Gall Bladder and Liver channels at Riyue GB-24 and Qimen LIV-14).
- the Spleen primary channel ascends along the chest to meet with the Lung channel at Zhongfu LU-1, whilst the sinew channel spreads in the chest.
- the Spleen primary channel passes through the lateral costal region at points Shidou SP-17, Tianxi SP-18, Xiongxiang SP-19, Zhourong SP-20 and Dabao SP-21.
- both the Spleen primary and divergent channels connect with the tongue.
- the Spleen primary channel connects with the Heart zang.
- the Spleen luo-connecting channel connects with the intestines.
- the Spleen sinew channel converges at the external genitalia.

The Spleen has five principal functions:

- Dominating the transportation and transformation of the liquid and solid products of digestion after they have been 'rotted and ripened' by the Stomach. It therefore plays a major role in the digestive process, the production of qi and blood, the function of the intestines and the proper discharge of fluid.
- Controlling the blood, dominating the first stage of its formation and holding it in its proper place and preventing haemorrhage.
- Dominating the muscles and the four limbs, providing vigour and bulk.
- Opening into the mouth and dominating the sense of taste.
- Controlling the raising of qi to counteract sinking and prolapse.

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 Spleen channel can be explained. These can be summarised as:

- treating failure of the transportation and transformation function, resulting in borborygmus, loose stools, undigested food in the stool, poor appetite etc.
- treating disorders of the intestines such as dysenteric disorder, diarrhoea and constipation.
- treating retention of dampness and consequent qi stagnation resulting in distention and pain of the abdomen, oedema, heaviness of the body, soreness of the muscles and joints, swelling of the four limbs, difficult urination, leucorrhoea, somnolence, lethargy etc.
- tonifying qi and blood.
- resolving blood stasis, especially in the uterus, and cooling the blood.
- reinforcing the Spleen function of holding blood in its proper place.
- raising qi and treating prolapse.
- treating dyspnoea, fullness and distention of the chest and lateral costal region, sighing etc.
- calming and regulating the spirit.
- treating disorders of the genitalia.