

Earth Element: Spleen Meridians & Points I

(from: Davis, 2000)

Spleen (Pi): Summary of Zang Functions

The Spleen is the Yin Organ of the Earth Element.

The Spleen Rules Transformation and Transportation

The activity of the Spleen is essential to the process whereby food is transformed into Qi and Blood. In TCM, the Spleen is the primary Organ of digestion. It extracts the pure nutritive essences of ingested food and fluids and transforms them into that which will become Qi and Blood.

The Spleen is the source of Qi and Blood in the body. It is referred to as the "foundation of postnatal existence" (Maciocia, 1989).

The Spleen is responsible for sending Gu Qi upward to the Lungs where the final synthesis of Qi and Blood takes place. It directs ascending movement and is also involved in the movement and transformation of Water in the body. This is referred to in the aphorism, the Spleen rules "the raising of the pure."

With the transforming and transporting functions of the Spleen functioning properly, Qi and Blood are abundant and digestive powers strong.

In the case of disharmony, there is likely to be Deficient Qi or Deficient Blood. Digestive symptoms may include abdominal pain or distention, diarrhoea, or anorexia.

The Spleen Governs the Blood

The Spleen is the key Organ in the creation of Blood and keeps it flowing in its proper pathways. It is generally true that Blood is commanded by Qi. It is Spleen Qi which holds Blood in its proper place. When this aspect of the Spleen's function is weak, the Blood may escape its pathways and move recklessly. In this case signs and symptoms may include easy bruising, blood under the skin, blood in faeces, vomiting blood, menorrhagia, or uterine bleeding. Chronic bleeding disorders generally have a significant Spleen component.

The Spleen Rules the Muscles, Flesh, and the Four Limbs

The Spleen transports Qi and Blood throughout the body. All tissues and Organs depend upon the Spleen, with muscles, flesh and the limbs particularly dependent on the power of the Spleen. Muscle tone and the relative bulk of flesh and muscles are generally indicative of Spleen function.

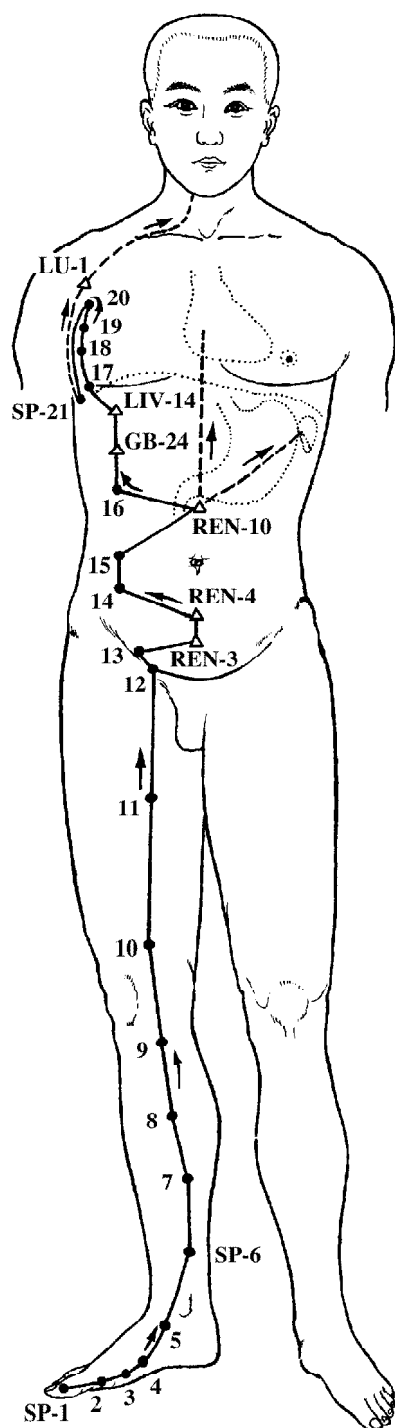
The Spleen opens into the Mouth. Its brilliance is manifest in the Lips

When the Spleen is functioning properly, the five tastes will be distinguished, and the lips will have a healthy moist rosiness. With Spleen weakness, the vibrancy of taste may be markedly reduced, and the lips may be pale, dry and cracked.

Zu Tai Yin Pi Jing

Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin

PRIMARY SPLEEN MERIDIAN



The primary Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin begins on the medial tip of the big toe (SP-1, Yin Bai) and runs along the medial border of the foot between the light and dark skin (SP-4, Gong Sun). It passes anterior to the medial malleolus (SP-5, Shang Qiu) and up the medial border of the leg along the posterior margin of the tibia (SP-6 (San Yin Jiao). At approximately 8 cun above the medial malleolus it crosses and runs immediately anterior (5 fen) to the Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin. It crosses (passes through) the anteromedial aspect of the knee, continues up the anteromedial aspect of the thigh (SP-10, Xue Hai) to the inguinal region (SP-13, Fu She), then enters the abdominal cavity. As it ascends, it intersects Ren Mai at REN-3 (Zhong Ji) and REN-4 (Guan Yuan), before homing to its pertaining Organ, the Spleen, and connecting to the Stomach Organ.

The pathway continues up the antero-lateral abdomen (SP-16, Fu Ai), passes through the diaphragm, and intersects the Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang at GB-24 (Ri Yue), and the Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin at LIV-14 (Qi Men). It then continues upward over the lateral chest.

It meets the Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin at LU-1 (Zhong Fu), and then ascends (Internally) beside the oesophagus. It finally proceeds to the root of the tongue to disperse (spread Qi and Blood) over its lower, ventral surface.

A branch separates in the region of the Stomach Organ. It crosses the diaphragm and transports Qi to (into) the Heart Organ, then connects with the Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin.

There are 21 points on the Spleen Meridian, and 7 intersecting points on other Meridians.

This Meridian pertains to the Spleen Organ and connects to the Stomach Organ. It also directly connects with the Organs of Heart, Lung and Intestines.

Primary Spleen Meridian

(modified from Shandong,
1982, p. 19)

FLOW OF QI/ DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS:

Lower Limb: SP-1 (Yin Bai), SP-2 (Da Du), SP-3 (Tai Bai), SP-4 (Gong Sun), SP-5 (Shang Qiu), SP-6 (San Yin Jiao), SP-7 (Lou Gu), SP-8 (Di Ji), SP-9 (Yin Ling Quan), SP-10 (Xue Hai), SP-11 (Ji Men)

Inguinal Region, Abdomen: SP-12 (Chong Men), SP-13 (Fu She), REN-3 (Zhong Ji), REN-4 (Guan Yuan), SP-14 (Fu Jie), SP-15 (Da Heng), REN-10 (Xia Guan), [REN-17 (Dan Zhong)], SP-16 (Fu Ai)

Chest: GB-24 (Ri Yue), LIV-14 (Qi Men), SP-17 (Shi Dou), SP-18 (Tian Xi), SP-19 (Xiong Xiang), SP-20 (Zhou Rong), SP-21 (Da Bao), LU-1 (Zhong Fu).

MERIDIANS INTERSECTED BY THE SPLEEN CHANNEL:

Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang: GB-24 (Ri Yue).

Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin: LIV-14 (Qi Men).

Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin: LU-1 (Zhong Fu).

Ren Mai (Conception Vessel): REN-3 (Zhong Ji), REN-4 (Guan Yuan), REN-10 (Xia Guan), [REN-17 (Dan Zhong)].

MERIDIANS INTERSECTING ON THE SPLEEN CHANNEL:

Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin: SP-6 (San Yin Jiao)

Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin: SP-6 (San Yin Jiao), SP-12 (Chong Men), SP-13 (Fu She)

Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming: SP-1 (Yin Bai)

Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel): [SP-10 (Xue Hai)]

Yin Wei Mai (Yin linking Vessel): SP-12 (Chong Men), SP-13 (Fu She), SP-15 (Da Heng), SP-16 (Fu Ai)

SPLEEN SPECIAL POINTS/ COMMAND POINTS:

SP-1 (Yin Bai): Wood, Well-Jing.

SP-2 (Da Du): Fire, Spring, Gushing-Ying.

SP-3 (Tai Bai): i) Earth, Stream, Transporting-Shu. Horary point. ii) Yuan-Source.

SP-4 (Gong Sun): i) Luo-Connecting.
ii) Master point, Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel);
Coupling point, Yin Wei Mai (Yin linking Vessel).

SP-5 (Shang Qiu): Metal, River, Traversing-Jing.

SP-6 (San Yin Jiao): Intersection (common) point of the three Yin Meridians
(Kidney, Spleen, Liver) of the lower limb.

SP-8 (Di Ji): Xi-Cleft, Accumulation.

SP-9 (Yin Ling Quan): Water, Sea, Uniting-He.

SP-21 (Da Bao): Connecting-Luo point of the Great Luo Channel of the Spleen.

LIV-13 (Zhang Men): front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point.

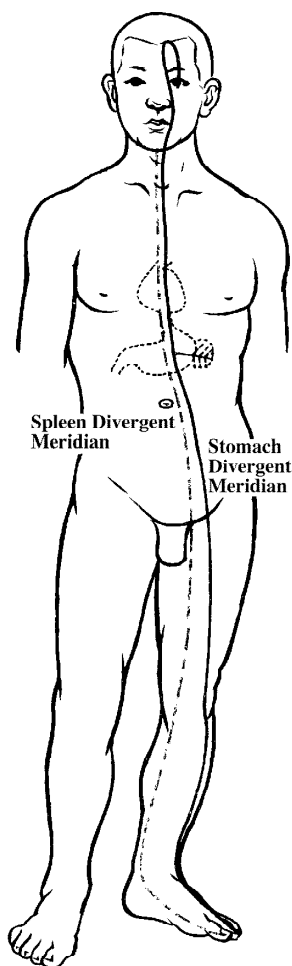
BL-20 (Pi Shu): back Associated-Shu, Transporting point.

SPLEEN PRIMARY MERIDIAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS:

Heaviness of the head or body, fatigue and weakness of the limbs, general feverishness, motor impairment or stiffness of the tongue, atony and atrophy of the muscles of the limbs, cold along the medial aspect of the thigh and knee, oedematous swelling of the legs and feet.

SPLEEN ORGAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS:

Pain in the stomach region and watery diarrhoea, stool containing undigested food, indigestion, splenomegaly, abdominal fullness and distension, borborygmus, retching and nausea, sensation of abdominal mass, reduced food intake, jaundice, dysuria, constipation.

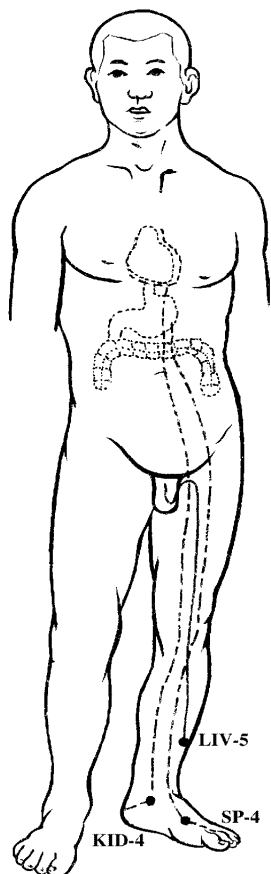
SPLEEN DIVERGENT MERIDIAN

The Spleen Divergent Meridian leaves the primary Spleen Channel on the thigh and ascends to the inguinal region, where it unites with the Divergent Meridian of the Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming, near ST-30 (Qi Chong). It then rises and proceeds to the pharynx, and enters the root of the tongue.

Earth Divergent Meridians

(from Cheng 1987, p. 85)

SPLEEN LUO (CONNECTING) MERIDIAN



The Spleen Luo Meridian separates from the primary Spleen Channel at SP-4 (Gong Sun) on the medial border of the foot, and connects to the Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming. A branch ascends to the abdomen and connects with the Intestines and Stomach.

Signs/ Symptoms:

Counterflow Qi: cholera

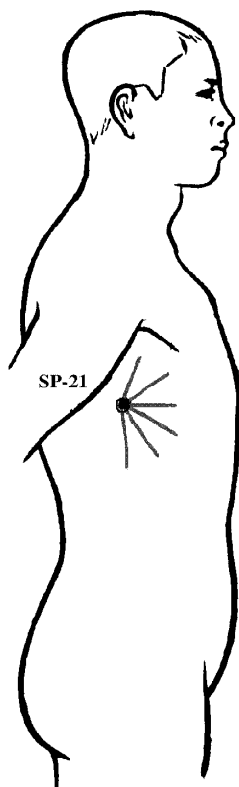
Shi: sharp/ cutting pain in the abdomen, vomiting and diarrhoea

Xu: drum distension of the abdomen, abdominal swelling

Yin Luo Meridians, Lower Limb

(modified from Cheng 1987, p. 93)

GREAT LUO MERIDIAN OF THE SPLEEN



The Great Luo Meridian of the Spleen separates from the primary Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin at SP-21 (Da Bao), then issues from GB-22 (Yuan Ye), 3 cun below the axilla. It spreads over the chest, lateral costal region, and hypochondrium. This Vessel distributes and gathers Qi and Blood around the circumference of the body, particularly the lateral aspect of the trunk, and especially the lateral costal region.

Signs/ Symptoms:

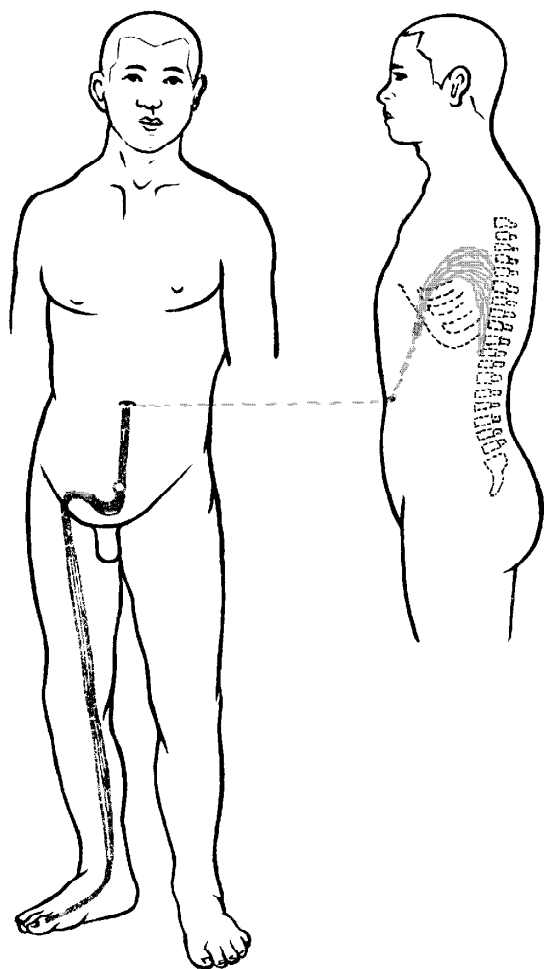
Shi: generalized aches and pains throughout the body

Xu: weakness in the muscles of the limbs and joints

Great Luo Meridian of the Spleen

(from Cheng 1987, p. 95)

SPLEEN MUSCLE-TENDINO (SINEW) MERIDIAN



Spleen Muscle-Tendino Meridian

(from Cheng 1987, p.101)

The Spleen Muscle-Tendino Meridian (MTM) begins at the medial side of the big toe, travels proximally and binds at the medial malleolus. It ascends to the knee where it binds at the medial aspect of the tibia. It then travels up the medial aspect of the thigh, binds in the hip (inguinal) region and connects at the genitals. It proceeds up the abdomen, binds at the navel, then enters the abdominal cavity and continues upward to bind with the ribs and disperse through the chest.

A deep branch of this MTM attaches Internally to the sides of the spine.

Signs/ Symptoms:

Strain (of the muscles) of the big toe (inability to stretch or support), pain at the medial malleolus, pain in the muscles around the ankle, pain along the medial aspect of the leg and knee, pain in the adductor muscles of the thigh, pain due muscle strain of the groin/genital region, which may extend to the navel and (strained) upper abdominal muscles, or to (strained) muscles of the chest or mid-thoracic spine.

DEADMAN'S MERIDIAN COMMENTARY

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, Zhoulong 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:

i. 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.

ii. Controlling the blood, dominating the first stage of its formation and holding it in its proper place and preventing haemorrhage.

iii. Dominating the muscles and the four limbs, providing vigour and bulk.

iv. Opening into the mouth and dominating the sense of taste.

v. 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 genitals.

POINTS OF THE SPLEEN ZANG

SP-1 (*yǐn bái*)

隱 *yǐn*: hidden, obscure

白 *bái*: white

隱 白

Hidden White

Location: On the dorsal medial aspect of the distal phalanx of the great toe, one fen proximal to the medial proximal corner of the toenail.

Features & Categories: Wood, Well-Jing point of the Spleen Channel; intersecting point of the Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming on the Spleen Channel; third of the thirteen Ghost points - Gui Lei, Ghost Fortress.

Functions: Regulates and manages the Blood; supports and warms the Spleen; clears the Heart and stabilizes the Shen; warms Yang and restores consciousness.

Indications: Abdominal distention or pain; metrorrhagia; menorrhagia; mania and withdrawal; excessive dreaming or dream disturbed sleep; convulsions.

Supplementary Indications: Dyspnea; Cold Qi in the abdomen; intestinal Heat with fulminant diarrhea; Heat disease with persistent nosebleed; vexation; sighing; sorrowfulness; cold in the foot and lower leg; dreaming with pressure sensation as if being held down by a ghost; persistent menstruation; blood ejection; blood in stool or urine; chronic infant convulsions.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

According to the Supplement to the Thousand Ducat Formulas "The Spleen gathers the blood; when the Spleen is deficient it is unable to unite the blood", whilst the Treatise on Disorders of Blood states "When Spleen yang is deficient it is unable to gather the blood". Yinbai SP-1, the jing-well point of the Spleen channel, is one of the fore-most acupuncture points for strengthening the Spleen's function of holding blood in its proper place. When this function is impaired there will be haemorrhage, usually chronic in nature, and occurring in any part of the body but most commonly in the lower jiao, whether as uterine bleeding or as bleeding into the urine or stools. In such cases moxibustion (either by moxa stick or direct cones) at Yinbai SP-1 is frequently employed, and it is particularly helpful to instruct the patient in the daily use of moxibustion at home. The action of Yinbai SP-1 on stopping bleeding, however, is not confined to cases of Spleen deficiency, but may also be applied where heat enters the blood level giving rise to reckless bleeding. This may manifest either in the lower or the upper part of the body (for example nosebleed or vomiting of blood). In these cases, needling or pricking to bleed is the usual method employed, although some physicians prefer to use moxibustion, despite the presence of heat.

The Essential Questions states "Dampness, swelling and fullness all pertain to the Spleen". Yinbai SP-1 is able to regulate the Spleen in the treatment of disorders such as abdominal distention, swelling of the limbs, diarrhoea etc., but as the jing-well and therefore most dynamic point of the Spleen channel, is principally indicated when these disorders are acute and of sudden onset.

According to the Classic of Difficulties jing-well points are indicated for "fullness below the Heart". Whilst the region 'below the Heart' specifically refers to the upper epigastrium, like many of the jing-well points Yinbai SP-1 treats fullness in the chest region as a whole. The Spleen primary

channel ascends through the chest and lateral costal regions, connecting with points Riyue GB-24, Qimen LIV-14 and Zhongfu LU-1, and terminates at Dabao SP-21 from where the great luo-connecting channel of the Spleen, like the Spleen sinew channel, spreads into the chest, ribs and lateral costal region. Yinbai SP-1, as the starting point of the channel, is especially effective at treating the opposite end of the channel and is indicated for a variety of disorders such as heat in the chest, fullness of the chest, dyspnoea and sighing.

The Spleen channel links with the Heart, reinforcing the close physiological relationship between the two zang. Yinbai SP-1, like many of the jing-well points, is indicated for disorders of the Heart and spirit, in this case agitation of the Heart, mania-depression and propensity to sadness. Like Lidui ST-45, it is especially used for insomnia with excessive or restless dreaming and nightmares, and in clinical practice these two points may be combined for this purpose. Such is its action on the spirit that it was included by Sun Si-miao under its alternative name of Guilei (Ghost Fortress) among the 'thirteen ghost points' for the treatment of mania-depression and epilepsy.

Finally, Yinbai SP-1 shares with most of the other jingwell points the action of reviving and restoring the senses and is indicated for loss of consciousness.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Haemorrhage: needle Yinbai SP-1 and moxa Zusanli ST-36 (Glorious Anthology).
- Red (bloody) dysenteric disorder: Yinbai SP-1, Tianshu ST-25, Neiting ST-44, Qihai REN-6, Zhaohai KID-6 and Neiguan P-6 (Great Compendium).
- Vomiting blood and spontaneous external bleeding: Yinbai SP-1, Pishu BL-20, Ganshu BL-18 and Shangwan REN-13 (Great Compendium).
- Severe and ceaseless nosebleed: Yinbai SP-1 and Weizhong BL-40 (Supplementing Life).
- Heat in the head and rhinitis with nosebleed: Yinbai SP-1, Chengshan BL-57, Feiyang BL-58, Kunlun BL-60 and Jinggu BL-64, (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Chest pain: Yinbai SP-1, Zhongfu LU-1, Yunmen LU-2, Qimen LIV-14, Feishu BL-13, Hunmen BL-47 and Daling P-7 (Supplementing Life).
- Agitation and oppression with inability to lie down: Yinbai SP-1, Taiyuan LU-9, Gongsun SP-4, Feishu BL-13, Yinlingquan SP-9 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Great Compendium).
- Epilepsy: Yinbai SP-1, Shenmen HE-7, Neiguan P-6, Houxi SI-3 and Xinshu BL-15 (Complete Collection).
- Nightmares: Yinbai SP-1 and Lidui ST-45 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Loss of consciousness: Yinbai SP-1 and Dadun LIV-1 (Systematic Classic).

SP-2 (*dà dū*)

大 *dà*: great, big

都 *dū*: unit of government organization, a capital city;
a pool (廣雅：都，池也。)

大都

Great Metropolis

Location: On the medial aspect of the great toe, in the depression just distal to the base of the proximal phalanx, at the junction of the red and white skin.

Features & Categories: Fire, Spring, Gushing-Ying of the Spleen Channel.

Functions: Fortifies the Spleen and harmonizes the Stomach; clears Heat; returns Yang and stems counterflow.

Indications: Abdominal distention or diarrhea; fever; stomach pain; constipation; Heat diseases without sweating; coma.

Supplementary Indications: Heat diseases with sweating and coma; cold in the extremities; fulminant diarrhea; pain in the stomach and cardiac region; untransformed digestate; retching; evacuation difficulty; all forms of dysentery; lumbar pain.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Dadu SP-2 is the ying-spring and fire point of the Spleen channel and the subject of somewhat contradictory statements in different classics. The Classic of Difficulties says that the ying-spring points are indicated for "heat in the body", and indeed the ying-spring points of the twelve channels are usually the principal points to clear heat of excess or deficiency type from their respective zangfu or channel. The Illustrated Classic of Acupuncture Points on the Bronze Man says "when the Spleen is deficient, reinforce Dadu SP-2", reflecting the status of Dadu SP-2 as the 'mother' point of the Spleen channel (fire is the mother of earth), according to the principle of tonifying the mother to nourish the child. The Classic of the Jade Dragon simply states that Dadu SP-2 can treat disharmony of the Spleen and Stomach.

The Spleen dominates the function of the digestive system as a whole, including the Stomach and intestines. Its transportation and transformation function places great demands on the Spleen's qi, and in disharmony the Spleen tends to deficiency, which is why most of the Spleen channel points distal to the knee have some effect on tonifying the Spleen. This deficiency may underlie the patterns of Spleen dampness or damp-heat, either because impaired transportation and transformation leads to the generation of these pathogens inside the body, or because when the Spleen is deficient, the body is especially vulnerable to attack by exterior dampness and damp-heat. It is this picture of Spleen deficiency combined with dampness or damp-heat that is able to reconcile the different statements made in the classics concerning Dadu SP-2. It should be emphasised however, that among the more distal points of the Spleen channel, the Spleen tonifying action of Dadu SP-2 is relatively minor, and its primary action is in reducing excess patterns.

Dadu SP-2 is indicated for excess dampness or damp-heat manifesting as sudden swelling of the four limbs, heaviness of the body with pain of the bones, swelling of the limbs and oppression of the chest. These indications reflect attack by exterior dampness or damp-heat, often as a consequence of underlying Spleen deficiency. Dadu SP-2 is also indicated for heat patterns of the Stomach and intestines such as abdominal distention, epigastric pain, vomiting, diarrhoea or constipation, and sudden turmoil disorder. The indication 'agitation when hungry and dizziness when full' reflects a pattern of phlegm-heat in the Stomach. The heat clearing action of Dadu SP-2 extends to the treatment of febrile diseases, and it is especially indicated when fevers are accompanied by absence of sweating.

Finally, Dadu SP-2 may be used as a local point for disorders of the big toe in combination with points such as Taibai SP-3 and Xingjian LIV-2.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Vomiting: Dadu SP-2 and Chengguang BL-6 (Supplementing Life).
- Febrile disease with absence of sweating: Dadu SP-2 and Jingqu LU-8 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Pain of the Heart and epigastrium: Dadu SP-2 and Taibai SP-3 (Spiritual Pivot).
- Stagnation of qi, lumbar pain with inability to stand: Dadu SP-2 and Henggu KID-11 (Ode of Xi-hong).

SP-3 (*tài bái*)

太 *tài*: very, extreme, supreme

白 *bái*: white

太 白

Supreme White

Location: On the medial aspect of the foot, in the depression just proximal to the head of the first metatarsal bone, at the junction of the red and white skin. The point is located between the metatarsal bone and the tendons of abductor hallucis and flexor hallucis brevis muscles.

Features & Categories: Earth, Stream, Transporting-Shu, and Source-Yuan point of the Spleen Channel. Horary Point.

Functions: Supports Spleen and Earth; harmonizes the Middle Jiao; resolves Damp; regulates flow of Qi; helps movement and transformation.

Indications: Stomach pain; headache; abdominal distention; generalized heaviness or sluggishness; oedema; dysentery; constipation; vomiting and diarrhea; acute gastroenteritis; beriberi (deficient thiamine).

Supplementary Indications: Heat diseases starting with pain in the head and face; fullness and oppression preventing the patient from assuming a reclining posture; untransformed digestate; distension in the chest and lateral costal region; rumbling intestines and stabbing pain; pain in the stomach and cardiac region; retching and vomiting; cholera; evacuative difficulty; diarrhea with pus and blood in the stool; hemorrhoids and fistulae; lumbar pain preventing movement; heaviness of the body and bone pain; chronic backache.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Taibai SP-3 is the shu-stream, yuan-source and earth point of the Spleen earth channel, and has a powerful action on strengthening and regulating the qi of the Spleen and Stomach. The Spiritual Pivot in Chapter 6 recommends the use of the shu-stream points in the treatment of disorders of the zang, whilst in Chapter 1 it says "When the five zang are diseased, select [from] the twelve yuan-source [points]". The Classic of the Jade Dragon clearly states that Taibai SP-3 is indicated for "deficiency and feebleness of the Spleen and Stomach". Since deficiency of these zangfu easily leads to excess dampness and consequent obstruction of qi, Taibai SP-3 is an important point for treating both the primary deficiency and the subsequent excess that is often generated.

The Essential Questions states "Damp, swelling and fullness all pertain to the Spleen" and "When the Spleen is diseased, damp is generated". The Stomach and Spleen together dominate the transformation of both the solid and liquid parts of food and drink, and the transportation throughout the body of the qi and body fluids transformed from them. When the Stomach and Spleen are

deficient these functions of transportation and transformation are impaired, leading to the accumulation of dampness. Taibai SP-3 is indicated for a range of symptoms reflecting this combination of deficiency and excess such as borborygmus and diarrhoea, undigested food in the stool, heaviness of the body, oppressive sensation of the four limbs etc. Although Spleen deficiency most commonly gives rise to diarrhoea and loose stools, Taibai SP-3 is included in several classical combinations for constipation and difficult defecation. This kind of constipation may arise when there is insufficient qi to move and activate the bowels.

Exterior dampness or damp-heat, which most easily penetrate when there is underlying Spleen deficiency or interior dampness, may injure the body in three main ways, for all of which Taibai SP-3 is indicated.

Firstly they may combine with wind-cold or wind-heat, giving rise to symptoms such as febrile disease with fullness and oppression and inability to lie down, and febrile disease that begins with heaviness of the head.

Secondly, they may directly attack the Spleen and Stomach giving rise to symptoms such as dysenteric disorder, diarrhoea containing pus and blood, vomiting, and heat in the body with agitation and fullness.

Thirdly, in the form of wind-damp, they may enter the channels and give rise to painful obstruction manifesting as heaviness of the body with pain of the bones, joint pains, pain of the knee and thigh or lumbar pain. The use of Taibai SP-3 in this latter pattern reflects the statement in the Classic of Difficulties that shu-stream points are indicated for "heaviness of the body and pain of the joints".

In addition to treating these patterns of exterior dampness, Taibai SP-3 may also be used for leg qi due to damp-heat pouring downwards, and atrophy disorder due either to dampness or to Spleen deficiency. This pattern is discussed in the Essential Questions which says "With exposure to dampness over a period of time, the muscles and flesh will be invaded; this will lead to insensitivity and flesh atrophy" and "When there is illness in the Spleen it fails to transport body fluids for the Stomach. The four limbs do not receive the nourishment of water and grain and therefore become weak. There is no free flow through the vessel-pathways and there is no qi to engender the sinews, bones and muscles which therefore cannot function".

It should be noted that Taibai SP-3 is also strongly indicated for various symptoms characterised by distention and pain in the abdomen, epigastrium, chest, Heart and lateral costal region. These are due to stagnation of qi which may arise either due to qi deficiency, in other words when there is insufficient qi to maintain smooth circulation, or when accumulation of turbid dampness obstructs the smooth movement of qi. In the former case the pulse and tongue will reflect deficiency only and the treatment principle is to reinforce Taibai SP-3, according to the theory of 'treating by opposition', in this case 'to treat fullness by filling'. In the latter case the pulse and tongue will show signs of excess and the treatment principle is to reduce Taibai SP-3.

Finally, Taibai SP-3 is frequently used for disorders of the joints of the big toe and the head of the first metatarsal bone.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Undigested food (in the stool): Taibai SP-3 and Fuai SP-16 (Supplementing Life).
- Borborygmus: Taibai SP-3, Gongsun SP-4, Dachangshu BL-25 and Sanjiaoshu BL-22 (Supplementing Life).
- Sudden turmoil disorder: Taibai SP-3, Yinlingquan SP-9, Chengshan BL-57 and Jiexi ST-41 (Great Compendium).
- Diarrhoea and dysenteric disorder with pus and blood: Taibai SP-3, Xiajuxu ST-39 and Youmen KID-21 (Supplementing Life).
- Blood in the stool: Taibai SP-3, Chengshan BL-57, Puliu KID-7 and Taichong LIV-3 (Great Compendium).
- Constipation: Taibai SP-3, Zhaohai KID-6 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Great Compendium).
- Constipation: Taibai SP-3, Zhaohai KID-6, Zhangmen LIV-13 and Zhigou SJ-6 (Great Compendium).
- Difficult defecation: Taibai SP-3 and Zhongzhu SJ-3 (Systematic Classic).
- Difficult defecation: Taibai SP-3 and Zhongzhu KID-15 (Systematic Classic).
- Pain of intestinal abscess: Taibai SP-3, Xiangu ST-43 and Dachangshu BL-25 (Great Compendium).
- Abdominal distention, undigested food (in the stool) and drum distention with great fullness: Taibai SP-3 and Gongsun SP-4 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Abdominal distention leading to back pain: Taibai SP-3 and Taichong LIV-3 (Great Compendium).
- Drum distention: Taibai SP-3, Fuliu KID-7, Gongsun SP-4, Zhongfeng LIV-4 and Shuifen REN-9 (Bronze Man).
- Lumbar pain with inability to bend and extend: Taibai SP-3, Weiyang BL-39, Yinmen BL-37, Yinlingquan SP-9 and Xingjian LIV-2 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

SP-4 (gōng sūn)

公 gōng: grandfather; public; a surname

孫 sūn: grandson; a surname

公孫

Yellow Emperor

Location: On the medial aspect of the foot, in the depression just distal to the base of the first metatarsal bone, at the junction of the red and white skin. This is approximately 1 cun posterior to SP-3 (Tai Bai). The point is located between the metatarsal bone and abductor hallucis muscle.

Features & Categories: Connecting-Luo point of the Spleen Channel connecting to the Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming; Master point of Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel), Coupling point of Yin Wei Mai (Yin linking Vessel).

Functions: Supports the Spleen and Stomach; pacifies the Stomach; rectifies flow of Qi; regulates the sea of Blood; stops bleeding; regulates Chong Mai.

Indications: Stomach pain; vomiting; irregular menstruation; endometritis; borborygmus; abdominal pain or distension; acute and chronic enteritis; diarrhea; dysentery; pain in the medial foot or ankle.

Supplementary Indications: Stomachache; abdominal pain; intestines hard 'like a drum'; vomiting and diarrhea; tidal fevers; seizures.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Gongsun SP-4 is the luo-connecting point of the Spleen channel and the confluent point of the Penetrating vessel. Its principal actions are to harmonise the middle jiao, fortify the Spleen, regulate stagnant qi and transform dampness. One explanation of the name 'Grandfather Grandson' refers to its status as the luo-connecting point, the Spleen channel being the grandfather and the Stomach channel the grandson. An alternative explanation is that it refers to the Yellow Emperor, whose family name was Gongsun and who ruled under the earth phase, emphasising the significant action of this point on both the Spleen and the Stomach.

The Stomach and Spleen (which together comprise the middle jiao) are intimately related and their functions and nature complement each other. The 'rotting and ripening' of food and drink in the Stomach, the first stage of the digestive process, is ultimately governed by the Spleen. The Spleen ascends whilst the Stomach descends; the Spleen abhors dampness whilst the Stomach abhors dryness. Gongsun SP-4 connects with the Stomach channel (via the luo-connecting channel) and with the Stomach and intestines themselves (via the primary and luo-connecting channels). It is ideally suited, therefore, to harmonise the relationship between this paired zang and fu, and is indicated on the one hand for vomiting, cold in the Stomach, no pleasure in eating and oesophageal constriction, and on the other hand for borborygmus, diarrhoea, dysenteric disorder, tenesmus etc. It is also indicated for sudden turmoil disorder - the sudden and acute onset of simultaneous diarrhoea, vomiting and abdominal discomfort or pain. This disease is associated with eating unclean food, or with attack of cold, summerheat, dampness or epidemic qi.

The Spleen channel meets with the Conception vessel on the abdomen both below and above the umbilicus (Zhongji REN-3, Guanyuan REN-4 and Xiawan REN-10), whilst the Penetrating vessel passes through all the Kidney channel points of the lower and upper abdomen. In clinical practice, Gongsun SP-4 is an important point to treat upper and lower abdominal distention or pain due to qi stagnation, blood stasis or obstruction by dampness. According to the discussion of the 'eight therapeutic methods' in the Ode of the Obstructed River, Gongsun SP-4 is particularly indicated for abdominal pain below the umbilicus. Other sources emphasise its effectiveness for both epigastric pain and periumbilical pain. Whilst all sources therefore agree on its ability to treat abdominal pain, the variance in opinion on its precise sphere of action reflects both its effect on the Stomach in the upper abdomen and the intestines (via the Spleen) in the lower abdomen, and the pathways of the channels which it influences.

In common with the other luo-connecting points of the yin channels (Lieque LU-7, Tongli HE-5, Dazhong KID-4, Neiguan P-6 and Ligou LIV-5) Gongsun SP-4 has a pronounced effect on emotional disorders. The Spleen channel connects with the Heart, and when phlegm and dampness accumulate and transform into phlegm-heat, this may be carried upwards to obstruct the Heart and agitate the spirit giving rise to mania-depression, manic raving, insomnia, restlessness and epilepsy. Alternatively, if Spleen qi is deficient, the source of blood will be weak and the Heart and spirit will lack nourishment resulting in insomnia and restlessness. Unusually for a Spleen channel point,

Gongsun SP-4 is also indicated for Gall Bladder deficiency and much sighing. For a fuller discussion of this pattern, see Danshu BL-19.

The Penetrating vessel disperses in the chest, whilst the Spleen channel connects with the Heart, chest and lateral costal region. The Complete Collection of Acupuncture and Moxibustion recommends Gongsun SP-4 for the 'nine types of Heart pain' as well as for low-grade pain of the chest. Neiguan P-6, the confluent point of the Yin Linking vessel is frequently combined with Gongsun SP-4, the confluent point of the Penetrating vessel, to enhance the latter's ability to treat Heart and chest pain, as well as to calm the spirit and regulate qi in the middle jiao and hence treat pain, distention and nausea.

The Penetrating vessel (known as the sea of blood) originates in the lower abdomen and has a specific effect on the uterus. The Classic of the Jade Dragon states that Gongsun SP-4 may be used for 'all gynaecological disorders'. Despite this recommendation, however, it is notable that other gynaecological indications in both classical and modern texts are relatively few.

One pathway of the Penetrating vessel ascends to the face, and Gongsun SP-4 is indicated (and included in various classical combinations) for oedema, especially swelling of the face.

Finally the Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion gives specific indications for excess and deficiency of the luo-connecting points. In the case of Gongsun SP-4, these are cutting pain of the intestines (excess); drum distention (deficiency).

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Abdominal pain: Gongsun SP-4 and Neiguan P-6 (Ode of Xi-hong).
- Stagnation of food in the mid-abdomen, stabbing pain that does not cease: Gongsun SP-4, Jiexi ST-41, Zhongwan REN-12 and Zusanli ST-36 (Complete Collection).
- Borborygmus: Gongsun SP-4, Taibai SP-3, Dachang shu BL-25 and Sanjiaoshu BL-22 (Supplementing Life).
- Vomiting phlegm and watery saliva, dizziness that does not cease: Gongsun SP-4, Fenglong ST-40, Yangxi L.I.-5 and Shanzhong REN-17 (Complete Collection).
- Sudden turmoil disorder: Gongsun SP-4, Jique REN-14, Guanchong SJ-1, Zhigou SJ-6 and Jiexi ST-41 (Systematic Classic).
- Chronic malaria with no pleasure in eating: Gongsun SP-4, Neiting ST-44 and Lidui ST-45 (Great Compendium).
- Pain of the lateral costal region: Gongsun SP-4, Zhigou SJ-6, Yanglingquan GB-34 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Complete Collection).
- Swelling of the face and head: Gongsun SP-4 and Yanglingquan GB-34 (Supplementing Life).

SP-5 (*shāng qiū*)

商 *shāng*: one of five sounds of the musical scale; market
丘 *qiū*: hill

商丘

Shang Hill

Location: At the medial ankle, in the depression midway between the tip (medial prominence) of the medial malleolus and the (medial) tip of the navicular tuberosity. The point is located immediately

anterior (and superior) to the tendon of tibialis posterior muscle. This is distal and inferior to the medial malleolus.

SP-5 (Shang Qiu) should be distinguished from LIV-4 (Zhong Feng), which is located approximately one cun anterior to the tip of the medial malleolus, in the depression immediately posterior (and inferior) to the tendon of tibialis anterior muscle.

Features & Categories: Metal, River, Traversing-Jing point of the Spleen Channel.

Functions: Fortifies the Spleen and Stomach; transforms Damp stagnation.

Indications: Borborygmus; abdominal distention; pain and stiffness at the root of the tongue; indigestion; gastritis; enteritis; constipation; diarrhea; edema; beriberi; diseases of the ankle and surrounding tissue.

Supplementary Indications: Spleen deficiency; thin-stool diarrhea; Heart sorrow; constipation; fever and chills and retching; pain in the venter; jaundice; untransformed digestate; gastric reflux; pain in the thighs; breast pain; hemorrhoids; colic; lower abdominal pain; hypertonicity of the Sinews; impaired flexing and extending of the knee with inability to walk; pain in the medial ankle; infertility; child fright Wind (convulsions); throat Bi; glomus; bone Bi.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

The term 'Shang' in this point's name refers to the note associated with metal in the theory of five phase correspondences, and Shangqiu SP-5 is the metal and jing-river point of the Spleen channel. According to five phase theory, therefore, it is the child point of the Spleen earth channel, suitable for reducing excess conditions. The Illustrated Classic of Acupuncture Points on the Bronze Man says "when the Spleen is excess, reduce Shangqiu SP-5".

The Spleen, dominating the ceaseless yang functions of transportation and transformation, easily becomes deficient in qi and yang, and therefore most of its patterns of disharmony involve deficiency. There are two meanings, however, to the pattern of Spleen excess in relation to the actions of Shangqiu SP-5.

Firstly, if exterior pathogenic dampness or damp-heat attack the body, they may disrupt the function of the middle jiao giving rise to acute onset of symptoms such as chills and fever with vomiting, abdominal pain, diarrhoea, coughing and diarrhoea in children with loss of appetite, heaviness of the body and lethargy.

Secondly, deficiency of Spleen qi and yang may lead to excess of yin in the form of accumulation of interior dampness, giving rise to chronic lethargy, indolence, somnolence, swelling of the face, diarrhoea and digestive difficulty. In both cases, there will be a thick and greasy tongue coating and a slippery pulse, indicating an excess pattern. Like many points of the Spleen channel, for example Taibai SP-3, Shangqiu SP-5 is able to address both the deficient and excess aspects of Spleen disharmony.

According to the Spiritual Pivot "When the disease is at the yin within yang (sinews and bones), needle the jing-river points of the yin channels". Shangqiu SP-5, the jing-river point of the Spleen channel, is an important point in the treatment of disorders of the sinews, muscles and bones due to invasion and retention of pathogenic dampness. Damp painful obstruction, also known as fixed painful obstruction, is characterised by stiffness, swelling and heaviness of the joints and a tendency

to worsen during humid weather. Since Spleen deficiency may predispose to or result from damp painful obstruction, points of the Spleen channel such as Shangqiu SP-5 which both tonify the Spleen and resolve dampness are most often employed in the treatment of damp painful obstruction anywhere in the body, in combination with local points. Shangqiu SP-5 is also mentioned in various classics for the treatment of bone painful obstruction, the development of painful obstruction where deformity of the joints occurs. Shangqiu SP-5 is of course especially effective in treating disorders of the ankle joint and its surrounding soft tissue, whether due to painful obstruction or traumatic injury. In such disorders the needle may be directed to join with Jiexi ST-41 at the anterior of the ankle joint.

According to the Spiritual Pivot "When the disease manifests itself in the voice, the jing-river point should be selected". Both the Spleen primary and divergent channels rise to the tongue and Shangqiu SP-5 is indicated for stiffness and pain at the root of the tongue as well as for impaired speech.

The Spleen channel links with the Heart, and like several other points of the channel Shangqiu SP-5 has many indications for disturbance of the spirit, for example mania-depression, agitation, melancholia, propensity to laughter, nightmares etc. This can be explained by the ability of Shangqiu SP-5 both to tonify the Spleen and to clear dampness. If Spleen qi is deficient, the source of blood will be weak and the Heart and spirit will lack nourishment. Alternatively when dampness accumulates and transforms into phlegm it may be carried upwards to obstruct the Heart and cloud the spirit, whilst if phlegm transforms to phlegm-heat there will be agitation of the spirit. The Spiritual Pivot says "The Spleen stores the nutritive qi; nutritive qi is the residence of thought" whilst the Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and Moxibustion says "Thought has its origins in the Spleen but takes shape in the Heart". Shangqiu SP-5 is one of the few points indicated for excessive thinking, the mental activity which both results from Spleen disharmony and leads to injury of the Spleen.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Vomiting: Shangqiu SP-5, Youmen KID-21 and Zutonggu BL-66 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Spleen deficiency constipation: Shangqiu SP-5 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Great Compendium).
- Infertility: Shangqiu SP-5 and Zhongji REN-3 (Great Compendium).
- Infertility: Shangqiu SP-5, Ciliao BL-32 and Yongquan KID-1 (Supplementing Life).
- Hypogastric pain radiating to the genitals: Shangqiu SP-5 and Shimen REN-5 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Contraction of the legs: Shangqiu SP-5, Chengjin BL-56, Chengshan BL-57 and Jinggu BL-64 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Sighing with propensity to sadness: Shangqiu SP-5 and Riyue GB-24 (Supplementing Life).
- Wasting and thirsting disorder: Shangqiu SP-5, Chengjiang REN-24, Jinjin (M-HN-20), Yuye (M-HN-20), Renzhong DU-26, Lianquan REN-23, Quchi L.I-11, Laogong P-8, Taichong LIV-3, Xingjian LIV-2, Ranggu KID-2 and Yinbai SP-1 (Great Compendium).

SP-6 (*sān yīn jiāo*)三 *sān*: three陰 *yīn*: yin, the complement of yang交 *jiāo*: to intersect, join, meet, cross**三陰交*****Three Yin Intersection***

Location: On the medial aspect of the distal leg, 3 cun proximal to the tip (medial prominence) of the medial malleolus, immediately behind the posterior border of the tibia. The proportional distance between SP-9 (Yin Ling Quan) [or LIV-7 (Xi Guan)] and the tip of the medial malleolus is 13 cun. SP-6 (San Yin Jiao) is 2.5 fen distal to one quarter of the distance between these landmarks.

Features & Categories: Intersection point of the Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin and the Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin on the Spleen Channel; one of the nine needles for returning Yang. Group Luo-Connecting point of the three Yin Meridians of the lower limb.

Functions: Strengthens the Spleen and resolves Damp; helps movement and transformation; moves Blood and frees Qi stagnation; promotes and spreads Liver Qi; enhances the Lower Jiao; benefits the Kidneys; regulates the Uterus and the palace of Jing; nourishes Blood and Yin; dispels Wind Damp from the Channels and Connecting Vessels.

Indications: Rumbling intestines; abdominal distention or pain; thin stool with untransformed digestate; irregular menses; metrorrhagia; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; prolapse of the uterus; amenorrhoea; nonconception; difficult labor; nocturnal seminal emission; genital pain; hernia; inhibited or difficult urination; enuresis; incontinence; muscular atrophy; loss of locomotive ability of the lower extremities; insomnia; hemiplegia; neurasthenia; neurodermatitis; eczema; urticaria.

Supplementary Indications: Deficiency of Stomach and Spleen; distension and fullness of the upper abdomen; no thought of food and drink; untransformed digestate; vomiting water after eating; Spleen disharmonies with heaviness of the body and impaired movement of the limbs; poor digestion; borborygmus and diarrhea; colic; women's concretions and conglomerations; stirring of the fetus; retention of lochia; Deficient Blood dizziness; headache; pain in the penis; white turbid urethral discharge; hernia pain; shank sores and beriberi; infant disruption; frigidity of the limbs; thigh Bi with inability to walk; medial knee pain; diseases of the head; throat Bi; fullness in the neck; pulmonary distention with phlegm cough and inability to lie down.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Three Yin Intersection) is the meeting point of the three yin channels of the leg (Spleen, Liver and Kidney) and is one of the most important and widely used of the acupuncture points. Its actions and indications are extraordinarily broad, and it is a primary point in the treatment of many digestive, gynaecological, sexual, urinary and emotional disorders.

Located on the Spleen channel, its strongest action is on harmonising all the functions of the Spleen. The Spleen dominates transportation and transformation and is thus the primary zang responsible for the formation of qi and blood. When Spleen qi or yang is deficient there may be:

- i. impairment of the transportation and transformation function (undigested food in the stool, diarrhoea, abdominal distention and fullness, borborygmus etc.)
- ii. inadequate formation of blood (palpitations, blurred vision, amenorrhoea, post-partum dizziness, dizziness associated with uterine bleeding etc.),

- iii. failure of the Spleen to hold the blood (uterine bleeding, menorrhagia), and
- iv. sinking of central qi (uterine prolapse).

Furthermore, deficiency of Spleen qi and incomplete transportation and transformation may lead to the formation of excess dampness. According to the Essential Questions "The lower is the first to suffer from dampness". Dampness, whether damp-heat or cold-damp, may lead to heaviness of the body and limbs and oedema, or pour down to the lower jiao giving rise to such symptoms as diarrhoea or leucorrhoea. Sanyinjiao SP-6, exceptionally balanced in its action, is unique among points of the Spleen channel in being able to treat all these different manifestations of Spleen disharmony.

Although its primary action is on the Spleen, Sanyinjiao SP-6 is also an important point to treat disorders of the Liver and Kidneys. It is able to soften and harmonise the Liver, by both spreading the Liver qi and nourishing Liver blood, and at the same time to benefit the Kidney qi. This threefold action of harmonising the Spleen, Liver and Kidneys finds expression in the forte of Sanyinjiao SP-6 in treating all disorders of the lower jiao.

The three leg yin channels dominate menstruation, conception, pregnancy, leucorrhoea and the external genitalia. Sanyinjiao SP-6 is the single most important distal point in the treatment of any gynaecological, obstetrical or post-partum disorder whether characterised by deficiency of qi, blood, yin, yang or Kidney essence, failure of Spleen qi to hold the blood, or stagnation of qi, blood, dampness, damp-heat or phlegm.

So wide is its range of action, and so universal its indications, that Sanyinjiao SP-6 appears in classical combinations for the treatment of virtually any disorder of the reproductive system. Sanyinjiao SP-6 is also an essential point to induce labour, assist in transverse presentation and alleviate the pain of childbirth. Despite its indication for restless foetus syndrome, however, its ability to expedite delivery of the live or dead foetus, and the lochia, means that Sanyinjiao SP-6 is generally contraindicated in pregnancy.

According to the Essential Questions "The genitals are the gathering place of the sinews". The Spleen sinew channel binds at the genitals and Sanyinjiao SP-6 is an essential point in the treatment of sexual and genital disorders in both men and women, including pain and contraction, seminal emission, impotence, and excessive sexual drive in men. Although impotence is generally related to deficiency of Kidney fire, two classics help to explain its relationship to the Spleen. The Complete Works of Jing-yue says "Ming men [the fire of the gate of life stored in the Kidneys] is the sea of the essence and blood, the Spleen is the sea of water and grain; the two together form the foundation of the five zang and six fu", whilst the Essential Questions explains "The Kidneys dominate water; they receive essence from the five zang and six fu and store it, therefore only when the five zang are flourishing is ejaculation possible".

Disharmony of the Liver, Spleen or Kidneys is responsible for the majority of urinary disorders, and the principal patterns are accumulation of damp-heat or cold damp, Kidney deficiency, qi deficiency, stagnation of Liver qi or Liver fire. Due to its ability to treat all these pathologies, Sanyinjiao SP-6 is an essential point for the treatment of urinary disorders, including difficult urination, retention of urine, enuresis, painful urinary dysfunction and cloudy urine.

The actions of Sanyinjiao SP-6 are not, however, confined to the middle and lower jiao. Its inclusion in many prescriptions for the treatment of any kind of insomnia (usually in combination with Shenmen HE-7) dramatically illustrates its wide-ranging actions.

Insomnia is normally differentiated into five main patterns:

- i. deficiency of Heart and Spleen (qi and blood deficiency),
- ii. disharmony of Heart and Kidneys (yin deficiency),
- iii. disharmony of Heart and Liver (Liver blood and yin deficiency or Liver fire),
- iv. deficiency of Heart and Gall Bladder (qi deficiency),
- v. disharmony of Heart and Stomach (accumulation of food or retention of phlegm-heat).

Since Sanyinjiao SP-6 is able to fortify the Spleen, tonify qi and blood, nourish Liver and Kidney yin, spread the Liver qi and harmonise the digestion it may be used in any of these patterns.

The especial importance of treating the Spleen in cases of disharmony of the Heart and Kidneys is emphasised in a number of classics. The Standards of Patterns and Treatments says "In order to tonify the Kidneys it is best to tonify the Spleen; use the Spleen to connect with the Heart in the upper and with the Kidneys in the lower ..." and "The essence of the five zang is all transported from the Spleen; when the Spleen is flourishing then the Heart and Kidneys are in communication". The Helpful Questions in Medical Cases says "If you desire to establish communication between the Heart and the Kidneys it is necessary to use the Spleen earth as an intermediary".

Along with Geshu BL-17, Xuehai SP-10 and Diji SP-8, Sanyinjiao SP-6 is considered one of the most important acupuncture points to harmonise and cool blood and to promote and invigorate its circulation. This action finds its most important application in the treatment of gynaecological disorders, but extends to other disorders where blood disharmony plays an important role, for example skin diseases such as eczema and urticaria.

Finally Sanyinjiao SP-6 is cited in the Song of the Nine Needles for Returning the Yang, for the treatment of collapse of yang characterised by loss of consciousness, aversion to cold, cold counterflow of the limbs, purple lips etc.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Diarrhoea containing undigested food: reinforce Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Yinlingquan SP-9 (Spiritual Pivot).
- Diarrhoea with thin stools: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Shenque REN-8 and Taichong LIV-3 (Great Compendium).
- Undigested food (in the stool): Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Zhongwan REN-12 (Supplementing Life).
- Undigested food (in the stool): Sanyinjiao SP-6, Liangmen ST-21, Zusanli ST-36, Dachangshu BL-25, Xiawan REN-10, Sanjiaoshu BL-22 and Xuanshu DU-5 (Supplementing Life).
- Sudden turmoil disorder, headache, chest pain and dyspnoeic rales: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Renying ST-9, Neiguan P-6, Guanchong SJ-1 and Zusanli ST-36 (Compilation).
- Spleen deficiency constipation: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Shangqiu SP-5 (Great Compendium).
- Irregular menstruation: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Daimai GB-26, Qihai REN-6, Zhongji REN-3 and Shenshu BL-23 (Great Compendium).
- Inhibited menstruation: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Zulinqi GB-41 and Zhongji REN-3 (Great Compendium).

- Profuse and ceaseless uterine bleeding: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Jiaoxin KID-8, Yingu KID-10 and Taichong LIV-3 (Supplementing Life).
- Profuse and ceaseless uterine bleeding: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Taichong LIV-3 (Great Compendium).
- Women who have had too many children: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Shimen REN-5 (Great Compendium).
- Difficult delivery: reduce Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Taichong LIV-3, reinforce Hegu L.I.-4 (Great Compendium).
- Retention of the placenta: reduce Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Zhongji REN-3 (Great Compendium).
- Retention of the placenta: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Jianjing GB-21 and Zhongji REN-3 (Meeting the Source).
- Post-partum dizziness: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Zusanli ST-36 and Zhigou SJ-6 (Great Compendium).
- Post-partum blood clot pain: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Qihai REN-6 (Great Compendium).
- Sudden swelling, redness and pain of the vagina: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Huiyin REN-1 and Zhongji REN-3 (Great Compendium).
- Red and white leucorrhoea: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Baihuanshu BL-30, Daimai GB-26, Guanyuan REN-4, Qihai REN-6 and Jianshi P-5 (Great Compendium).
- Pain of the penis: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Yuji LU-10, Taixi KID-3 and Zhongji REN-3 (Great Compendium).
- Sagging and swollen testicle without pain: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Guilai ST-29 and Dadun LIV-1 (Great Compendium).
- White turbidity and chronic seminal emission: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Qihai REN-6 (One Hundred Symptoms).
- Lower abdominal pain from the seven kinds of shan disorder: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Zhaohai KID-6 and Ququan LIV-8 (Ode of Xi-hong).
- Obstructed urination: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Yinlingquan SP-9 and Qihai REN-6, followed by Yingu KID-10 and Daling P-7 (Great Compendium).
- Inability to urinate: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Shimen REN-5, Guanyuan REN-4, Zhongji REN-3 and Qugu REN-2 (Supplementing Life).
- Oedema of the four limbs: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Zhongdu LIV-6, Hegu L.I.-4, Quchi L.I.-11, Zhongzhu SJ-3, Yemen SJ-2, Xingjian LIV-2, Neiting ST-44 and Yinlingquan SP-9 (Great Compendium).
- Running piglet qi in women: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Qimen LIV-14, Guanyuan REN-4, Zhongji REN-3, Shimen REN-5 and Xuehai SP-10 (Supplementing Life).
- Running piglet qi: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Zhangmen LIV-13 and Shimen REN-5 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Palpitations and insomnia: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Daju ST-27 and Qihai REN-6 (Supplementing Life).
- Insomnia: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Yinlingquan SP-9, Yinbai SP-1, Gongsun SP-4, Feishu BL-13 and Taiyuan LU-9 (Great Compendium).
- Cold damp leg qi: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Zusanli ST-36 (Song of the Jade Dragon).

- Hip pain: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Huantiao GB-30, Shugu BL-65, Jiaoxin KID-8 and Yingu KID-10 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Pain of the hip with difficulty in walking and pain of the skin of the lateral aspect of the leg: Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Zulinqi GB-41 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).
- Leg qi: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Zusanli ST-36 and Xuanzhong GB-39 (Ode of the Jade Dragon).
- Insomnia due to Heart and Spleen deficiency: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Shenmen HE-7, Zusanli ST-36 and Yintang (M-HN-3).
- Insomnia due to disharmony of Heart and Kidneys: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Shenmen HE-7, Taixi KID-3 and Zhaohai KID-6.
- Insomnia due to Liver fire: Sanyinjiao SP-6, Shenmen HE-7, Anmian (N-HN-54), Ganshu BL-18 and Danshu BL-19.