

## **Metal Element: Lung Meridians** *(from: Davis, 2000).*

### **Lungs (Fei): Summary of Zang Functions**

The Lungs are the Yin Organ of the Metal Element.

The Lungs are referred to as "the lid of the Yin Organs", because they are found at the top of the thoracic cavity. They are also referred to as the tender Organ, because they may be readily affected by External Pernicious Influences.

The Lungs are able to direct movement in two directions, descending and liquefying, and disseminating or circulating.

#### **The Lungs Rule Qi**

The Lungs administer respiration and in this sense regulate the Qi of the whole body. It is in the Lungs that the Qi of air (of the external environment) meets the Qi of the body. The Qi taken in from air is propelled downward. This is the Lungs descending property and is associated with inspiration. The disseminating property provides for expiration.

In health, Qi enters and leaves the Lungs in a smooth and even manner - regular uneventful respiration. With impairment to either the descending or disseminating functions of the Lungs, signs and symptoms such as cough, dyspnoea, phlegm, asthma or distension of the chest may be present.

The Lungs function of dissemination is very closely related to the Qi of the chest, Zong Qi. Zong Qi participates in the movement of all Qi and Blood in the body. The closeness of this relationship means that disharmonies of the Lungs may be associated with Deficient Qi or Stagnant Qi anywhere in the body. Symptoms such as oedema may result.

#### **The Lungs Move and Adjust the Water Channels**

This function involves the movement and transformation of water in the body. The Lungs move water in the same directions as they move Qi, namely they have a descending and disseminating role.

The descending function liquefies water vapour and sends it down to the Kidneys. Disturbances of the water descending function may result in problems to do with urination, or in oedema, especially of the upper body.

The disseminating function disperses or scatters water vapour throughout the body, especially to the skin and pores. Disharmonies of the dissemination function may be indicated by perspiration signs and symptoms.

The Lungs are considered to be the upper origin of water (Kaptchuk, 1983). In TCM, water in liquid form descends, whereas in the form of vapour it circulates or ascends.

#### **The Lungs Rule the Exterior of the Body**

The word 'Exterior' here refers to skin, sweat glands and body hair.

The Lungs regulate sweating, moistening of the skin, and general resistance to External Pernicious Influences. Wei Qi is also involved here, which itself depends upon the Lungs role of dissemination. This is an example of the Lungs ruling Qi. Weak Lung Qi may result in either too much or too little perspiration.

**The Brilliance of the Lungs is Manifest in the Body Hair.**

This functional aphorism means that the 'quality' of body hair may indicate the state of Lung Qi.

**The Lungs Open into the Nose**

Because the nose is the 'thoroughfare' for respiration, it is very closely associated with the functions of the Lungs. Hence the throat is the 'door' of the Lungs, and the 'home' of the vocal cords.

The Lungs are often treated in common illnesses of the nose and throat.

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## **Shou Tai Yin Fei Jing: Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin**

### **PRIMARY LUNG MERIDIAN**

The primary Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin begins in the region of the Stomach in the middle Jiao and descends internally to connect with the Large Intestine Organ. It then turns upward, passes the proximal opening of the Stomach (cardiac orifice), penetrates the diaphragm and homes to its pertaining Organ, the Lung. Continuing its ascent, it passes up through the respiratory tract into the throat. It then turns obliquely downward, emerging from the area between the Lung and the throat, at LU-1 (Zhong Fu), and follows the clavicle to enter the axilla.

From there it runs down the anterolateral aspect of the arm (LU-3 Tian Fu, LU-4 Xia Bai), lateral to the Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin and the Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin. It crosses the cubital fossa anteriorly (LU-5, Chi Ze), immediately lateral to the tendon of biceps brachii muscle, and continues along the anterolateral aspect of the forearm (anterior border of radius), to the medial border of the styloid process of the radius at the wrist (LU-8 Jing Qu, LU-9 Tai Yuan).

It crosses the radial artery at the pulse (cun kou), traverses the thenar eminence (LU-10, Yu Ji), and travels along the radial side of the thumb to its tip (LU-11, Shao Shang).

A branch leaves the main pathway proximal to the wrist above the styloid process, at LU-7 (Lie Que), passes to the dorsum of the hand, and runs down the lateral aspect (radial side) of the index finger to its tip, where it connects with the Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming, at LI-1 (Shang Yang).

There are 11 points on the Lung Meridian, and 1 intersecting point on the Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming.

This Meridian pertains to the Lung Organ and connects with the Large Intestine Organ. It crosses the diaphragm, and connects with the Stomach, Kidneys, and other Organs.

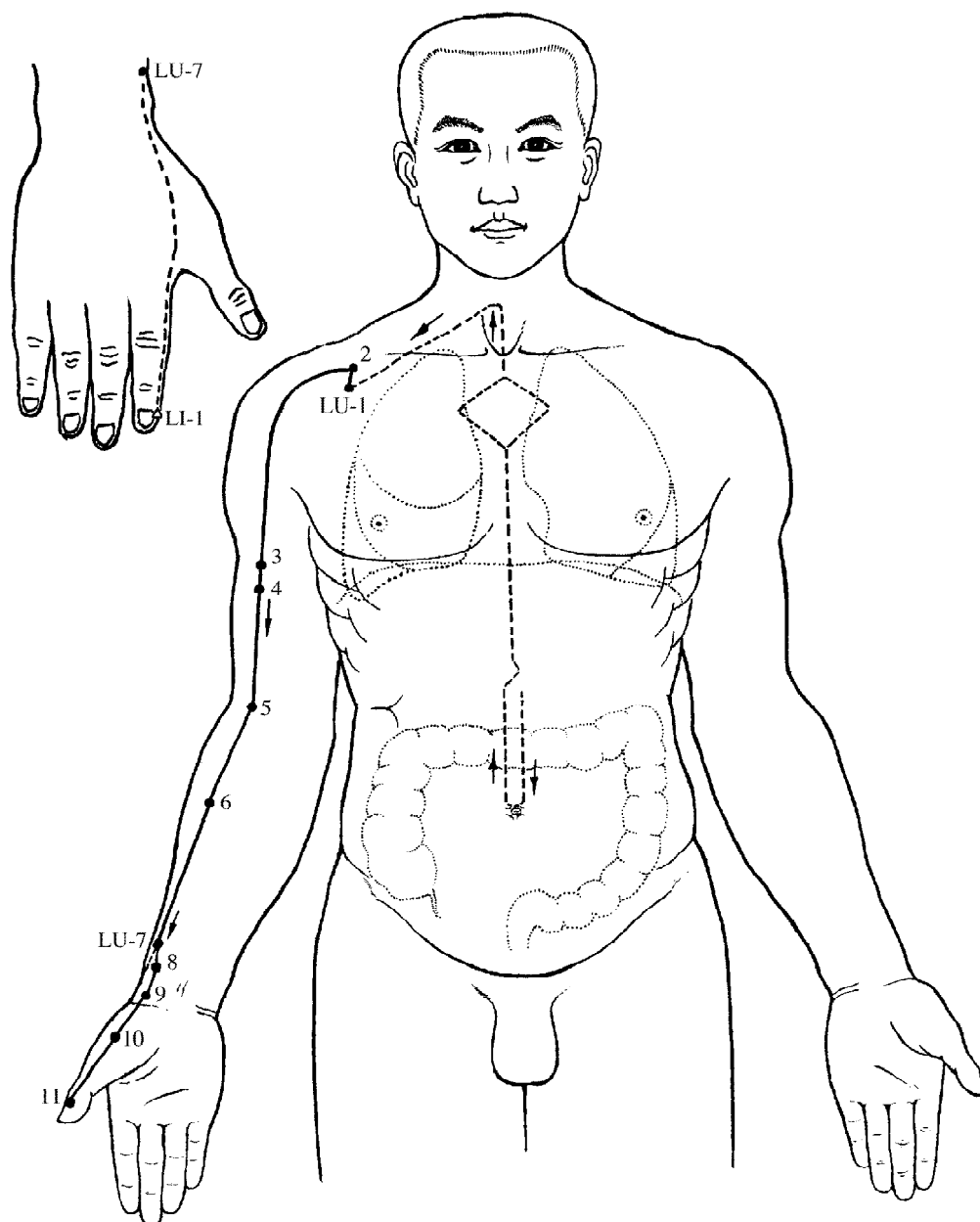
#### **LUNG PRIMARY MERIDIAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS SUMMARY:**

Fever, chills (with or without sweating), sensitivity or aversion to cold, nasal congestion or obstruction, headache, pain in the supraclavicular fossa, chest, shoulders or back, and chills and pain along the Channel on the arm, forearm and hand.

#### **LUNG ORGAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS SUMMARY:**

Cough, wheezing, dyspnoea, asthma, rapid breathing, shortness of breath, fullness or oppression in the chest, expectoration of phlegm, dry throat, abnormal (or changes of) urine colour, restlessness,

irritability, coughing or spitting of blood, blood in the sputum, heat in the palms. Other symptoms may include fullness or distension of the abdomen, loose stools or diarrhoea.



**Primary Lung Meridian** (modified from Shandong, 1982, p. 6)

FLOW OF QI/ DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS:

**Anterior Shoulder:** LU-1 (Zhong Fu), LU-2 (Yun Men).

**Upper Limb:** LU-3 (Tian Fu), LU-4 (Xia Bai), LU-5 (Cubit Marsh), LU-6 (Kong Zui), LU-7 (Lie Que), [LI-1 (Shang Yang)], LU-8 (Jing Qu), LU-9 (Tai Yuan), LU-10 (Yu Ji), LU-11 (Shao Shang).

MERIDIANS INTERSECTED BY THE PRIMARY LUNG CHANNEL:

Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming: LI-1 (Shang Yang)

## MERIDIANS INTERSECTING ON THE PRIMARY LUNG CHANNEL:

Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin: LU-1 (Zhong Fu)

## LUNG SPECIAL POINTS/ COMMAND POINTS:

- LU-11 (Shao Shang): Wood, Well-Jing.  
 LU-10 (Yu Ji): Fire, Spring, Gushing-Ying.  
 LU-9 (Tai Yuan):  
 i) Earth, Stream, Transporting-Shu.  
 ii) Yuan-Source.  
 iii) Meeting point of the Blood Vessels.  
 LU-8 (Jing Qu): Metal, River, Traversing-Jing. Horary point.  
 LU-7 (Lie Que):  
 i) Luo-Connecting.  
 ii) Master point, Ren Mai (Conception Vessel);  
 Coupling point, Yin Qiao Mai (Yin heel/motility Vessel).  
 LU-6 (Kong Zui): Xi-Cleft, Accumulation.  
 LU-5 (Cubit Marsh): Water, Sea, Uniting-He.  
 LU-1 (Zhong Fu): front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point.  
 BL-13 (Fei Shu): back Associated-Shu, Transporting point.

**DEADMAN'S MERIDIAN COMMENTARY**

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

- the interior pathway of the Lung primary channel descends to the Large Intestine fu.
- a branch of the Lung primary channel separates from Lieque LU-7 to connect with Shangyang LI-1.
- the Lung luo-connecting channel connects with the Large Intestine channel.
- the Lung divergent channel descends to the Large Intestine fu and connects with the Large Intestine channel in the neck.

In addition, it is helpful to note that:

- the Lung primary channel originates in the middle jiao in the region of the Stomach.
- the Lung primary and divergent channels ascend to the throat.
- the Lung channel does not connect directly with the nose, but does so indirectly via the Large Intestine channel.

The Lung has five principal functions:

- i. governing qi and controlling respiration.
- ii. controlling disseminating and descending.
- iii. regulating the water passages.
- iv. controlling the skin and body hair.
- v. opening into the nose.

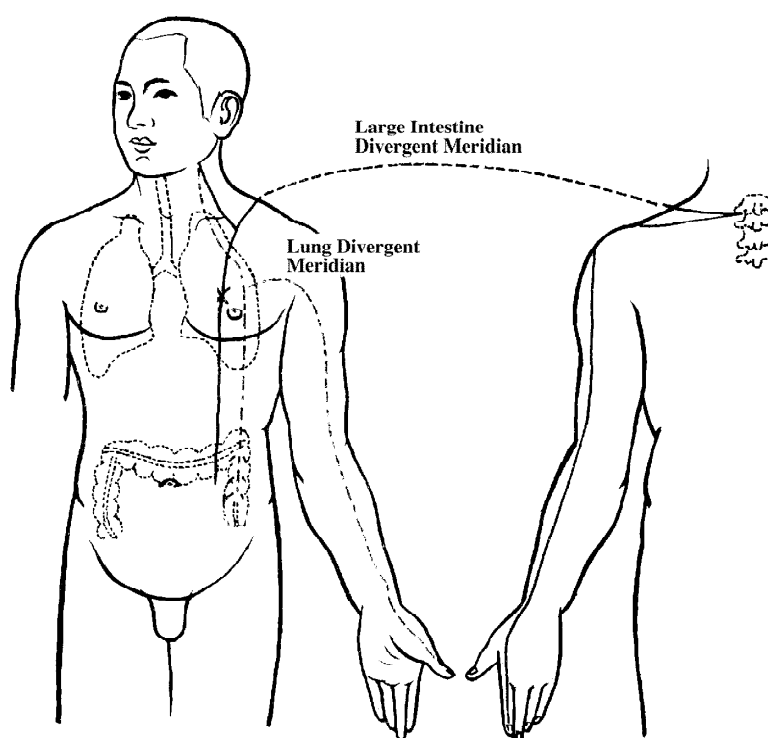
It is by virtue of these functions, as well as the channel pathways discussed here, that many of the actions and indications of the points of the Lung channel can be explained. These can be summarised as:

- treating rebellion of Lung qi manifesting as respiratory disorders such as coughing, dyspnoea, wheezing, asthma and shortness of breath.
- restoring the Lung's disseminating function when this is impaired by exterior pathogenic factors which lodge in the superficial portion of the body.
- treating nasal disorders, including nosebleed and nasal obstruction.
- treating disorders of the throat such as dryness, soreness, congestion, swelling and pain.
- treating oedema and obstructed urination when this is caused by impairment of the Lung's function of regulating the water passages and controlling disseminating and descending.
- treating vomiting due to rebellion of Stomach qi.

## LUNG DIVERGENT MERIDIAN

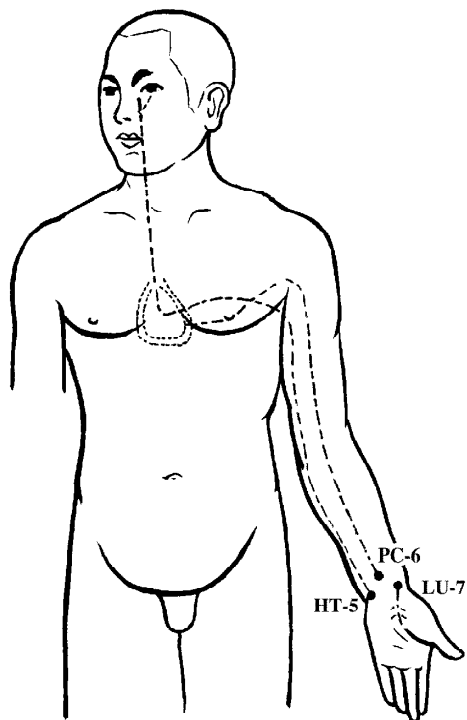
The Lung Divergent Meridian separates from the primary Lung Channel in the axilla (near LU-1, Zhong Fu), then enters the region below the axilla, near GB-22 (Yuan Ye). From there it travels anterior to the Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin, and anterior to the Divergent Meridian of the Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin. It enters the Lung Organ, then travels downward and disperses over the Large Intestine Organ.

A branch rises from the Lung and emerges at the supraclavicular fossa. It ascends the throat and unites with the Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming, near LI-18 (Fu Tu).



**Metal Divergent Meridians**  
(from Cheng 1987, p. 89)

## LUNG LUO (CONNECTING) MERIDIAN



The Lung Luo Meridian branches from the primary Lung Meridian at LU-7 (Lie Que), 1.5 cun proximal to the wrist, and connects to the Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming. A branch separates from the primary Lung Channel at the same point, follows it into the palm and disperses through the thenar eminence, around LU-10 (Yu Ji).

### Signs/ Symptoms:

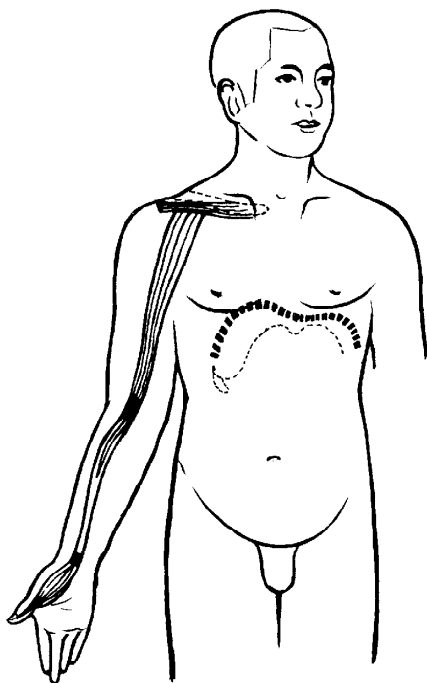
Shi: heat in the palm/ thenar eminence or wrist

Xu: coughing, yawning, shortness of breath, frequent urination, urinary incontinence, enuresis

### Yin Luo Meridians, Upper Limb

(modified from Cheng 1987, p. 91)

## LUNG MUSCLE-TENDINO (SINEW) MERIDIAN



### Lung Muscle-Tendino Meridian

(from Cheng 1987, p. 106)

The Lung Muscle-Tendino Meridian (MTM) begins at the thumb. It runs along the medial (ulnar) aspect of the thumb and binds at the thenar eminence, distal to the wrist. It crosses the wrist at the 'pulse' (cun kou), and follows the forearm to the elbow and binds again. It then rises along the medial aspect of the arm and enters the chest below the axilla. This MTM emerges in front of the clavicle, binds near LI-15 (Jian Yu), then travels to the supraclavicular fossa where it binds to the clavicle.

A branch separates from the binding at the supraclavicular fossa, descends and binds in the chest, then penetrates and disperses over the diaphragm. It continues below the diaphragm and unites in the region of the 12th rib.

### Signs/ Symptoms:

Stiffness, strain or (muscle) spasms and pain along the course of the Sinew Channel. In serious cases there may be accumulation lumps below the ribs, muscle spasms or tension over the ribs, spitting of blood, and Qi counterflow.