

# Large Intestine (Da Chang) (from: Davis, 2000)

## Summary of Fu Functions

The Large Intestine is the Yang Organ of the Metal Element. The main function of the Large Intestine is to receive the turbid parts of food and fluids sent down from the Small Intestine. This remaining material continues to move downward in the Large Intestine with some water being absorbed. This process culminates in formation of the faeces which is excreted under the control of the Large Intestine.

Many of the functions attributed to the large intestine in western medical biosciences (WMB) come under the functional responsibility of the Spleen in TCM. Thus,

"The Spleen controls the transformation and transportation of food and fluids throughout the digestive system, including the Small and Large Intestine. For this reason ... symptoms and signs such as diarrhoea, abdominal distension and pain are usually attributed to a Spleen disharmony" (Maciocia, 1989).

Su Wen, chpt. 8, p. 58. "The Large Intestine is the official of transportation from whom change in the shape of things is derived." (Lu, 1990).

## Shou Yang Ming Da Chang Jing, Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming

### LARGE INTESTINE PRIMARY MERIDIAN

The primary Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming starts at the radial (lateral) side of the tip of the index finger, at LI-1 (Shang Yang), and travels proximally between the 1st and 2nd metacarpal bones on the dorsum of the hand (LI-4, He Gu). It runs between the tendons of muscles extensor pollicis longus and extensor pollicis brevis at the wrist, through the anatomical "snuff box" (LI-5, Yang Xi).

It continues along the radial border of the forearm to the lateral aspect of the elbow (LI-11, Qu Chi), then up the lateral aspect of the arm to the shoulder joint, to its highest point on the shoulder (LI-15, Jian Yu). It crosses over the shoulder to the angle between the acromion process and the spine of the scapula (LI-16, Ju Gu). It intersects the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang at SI-12 (Bing Feng), then runs to the depression immediately below the spinous process of the 7th cervical vertebra, where it intersects Du Mai at DU-14 (Da Zhui). All six Yang primary Channels meet at this point.

It then travels anteriorly to the supraclavicular fossa (ST-12, Que Pen).

The main pathway descends past ST-13 (Qi Hu) to penetrate (connect to) the Lung Organ. It passes through the diaphragm and homes to its pertaining Organ, the Large Intestine. A branch descends to the lower limb and emerges at ST-37 (Shang Ju Xu) on the leg, which is the lower Sea/Uniting-He point of the Large Intestine.

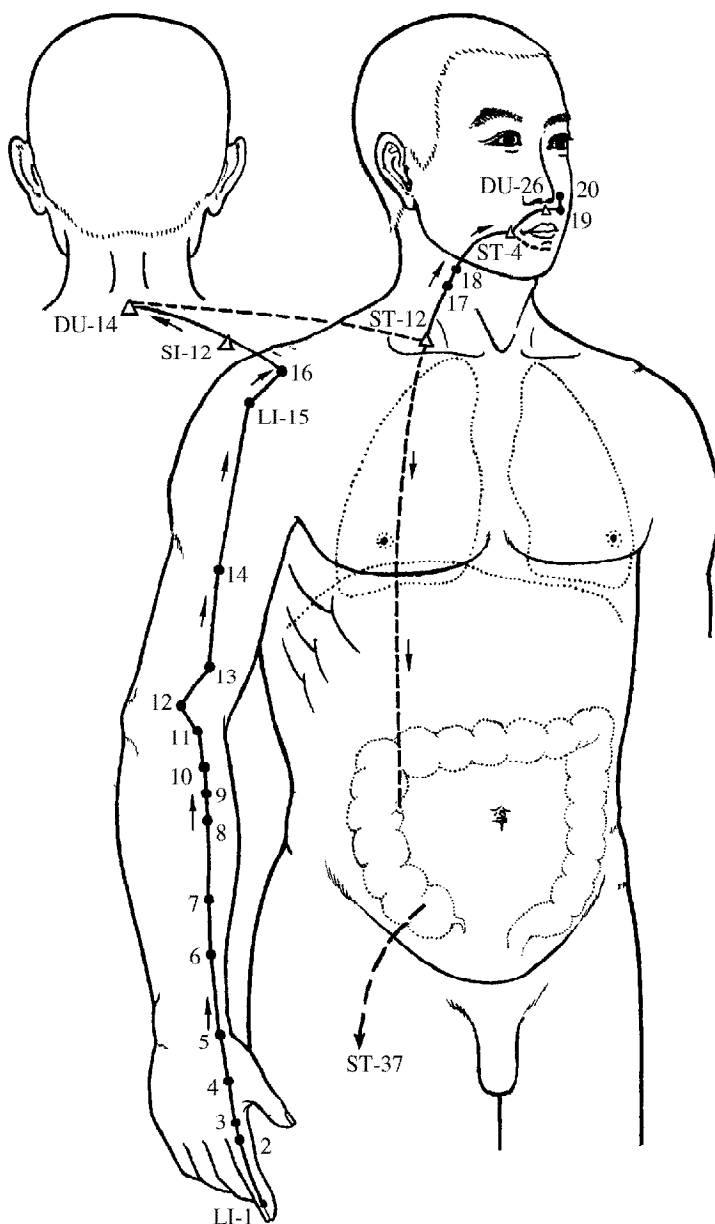
Another branch separates from the main Channel in the supraclavicular fossa (ST-12, Que Pen). It passes superficially up the neck (LI-18 (Fu Tu) and traverses the cheek before entering the lower gums and teeth. From there it curves superficially around the lips, passes the Stomach Channel of foot

Yang Ming at ST-4 (Di Cang), then meets its bilateral Channel from the opposite side of the body at the philtrum, at DU-26 (Shui Gou).

It continues around the nostril on the opposite (contralateral) side and terminates beside the nasal ala (LI-20, Ying Xiang). There the Large Intestine Channel links with the Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming. The right and left Large Intestine Channels cross over to the opposite sides of the body at the philtrum.

There are 20 points on the Large Intestine Meridian, and 7 intersecting points on other Meridians.

This Meridian pertains to the Large Intestine Organ and connects to the Lung Organ. It also connects directly with the Stomach Organ.



**Primary Large Intestine Meridian** (modified from Shandong, 1982, p. 9)

## FLOW OF QI/ DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS:

**Upper Limb:** LI-1 (Shang Yang), LI-2 (Er Jian), LI-3 (San Jian), LI-4 (He Gu), LI-5 (Yang Xi), LI-6 (Pian Li), LI-7 (Wen Liu), LI-8 (Xia Lian), LI-9 (Shang Lian), LI-10 (Shou San Li), LI-11 (Qu Chi), LI-12 (Zhou Liao), LI-13 (Shou Wu Li), LI-14 (Bi Nao).

**Shoulder, Neck, Trunk:** LI-15 (Jian Yu), LI-16 (Ju Gu), SI-12 (Bing Feng), DU-14 (Da Zhui), ST-12 (Que Pen).

[**Lower Limb:** ST-37 (Shang Ju Xu)].

**Head, Neck:** LI-17 (Tian Ding), LI-18 (Fu Tu), ST-4 (Di Cang), [REN-24 (Cheng Jiang)], DU-26 (Shui Gou), LI-19 (He Liao), LI-20 (Ying Xiang).

## MERIDIANS INTERSECTED BY THE LARGE INTESTINE CHANNEL:

Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang: SI-12 (Bing Feng).

Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming: ST-4 (Di Cang), ST-12 (Que Pen), [ST-37 (Shang Ju Xu)].

Du Mai (Governing Vessel): DU-14 (Da Zhui), DU-26 (Shui Gou).

Ren Mai (Conception Vessel): [REN-24 (Cheng Jiang)].

## MERIDIANS INTERSECTING ON THE LARGE INTESTINE CHANNEL:

Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin: LI-1 (Shang Yang)

Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming: LI-20 (Ying Xiang)

Yang Qiao Mai (Yang heel/motility Vessel): LI-15 (Jian Yu), LI-16 (Ju Gu)

Yang Wei Mai (Yang linking Vessel): [LI-14 (Bi Nao)]

## LARGE INTESTINE SPECIAL POINTS/ COMMAND POINTS:

LI-1 (Shang Yang): Metal, Well-Jing. Horary point.

LI-2 (Er Jian): Water, Spring, Gushing-Ying.

LI-3 (San Jian): Wood, Stream, Transporting-Shu.

LI-4 (He Gu): Yuan-Source.

LI-5 (Yang Xi): Fire, River, Traversing-Jing.

LI-6 (Pian Li): Luo-Connecting

LI-7 (Wen Liu): Xi-Cleft, Accumulation.

LI-11 (Qu Chi): Earth, Sea, Uniting-He.

ST-37 (Shang Ju Xu): lower Sea, Uniting-He point of the Large Intestine Channel.

ST-25 (Tian Shu): front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point.

BL-25 (Da Chang Shu): back Associated-Shu, Transporting point.

## LARGE INTESTINE PRIMARY MERIDIAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS SUMMARY:

Fever, parched, dry mouth and thirst, sore throat, nosebleed, toothache, redness and pain of the eyes, pain and swelling of the neck, palpable red swelling and inhibited flexion and extension of the fingers (motor impairment). Other signs and symptoms may include pain and sensation of cold, or

painful and palpably hot (burning), red swelling in the region of the shoulder blade, shoulder and upper arm.

#### LARGE INTESTINE ORGAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS SUMMARY:

Lower abdominal or periumbilical pain, abdominal pain which migrates/wanders, borborygmus, loose stool, excretion of thick, slimy yellow matter/mucus. Possibly also rapid breathing, belching and dyspnoea.

#### DEADMAN'S MERIDIAN COMMENTARY

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 LI-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 "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

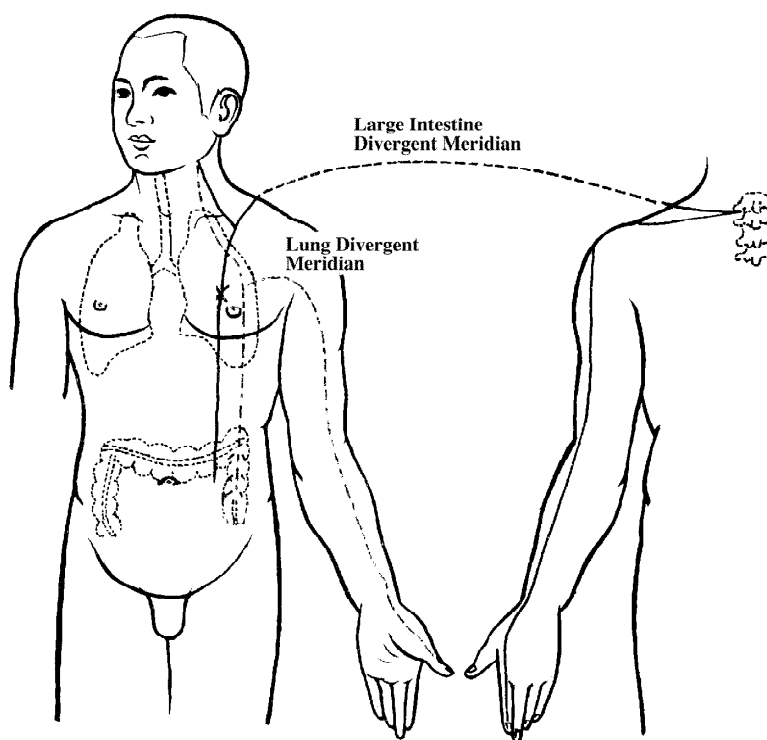
among the most important points to clear excess of yang in the form of heat and fever, notably Hegu LI-4 and Quchi LI-11.

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.

## LARGE INTESTINE DIVERGENT MERIDIAN

The Large Intestine Divergent Meridian leaves the primary Large Intestine Channel on the hand. It ascends the upper limb and crosses the shoulder to the breast region.

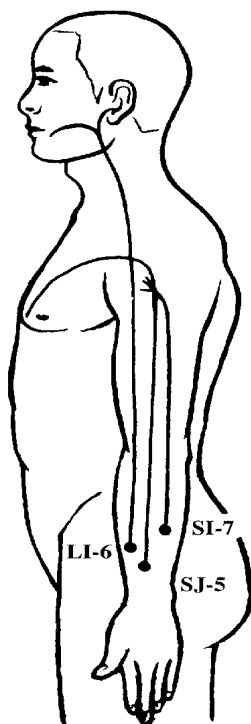


A branch diverges at the top of the shoulder near LI-15 (Jian Yu). It crosses to the nape of the neck (to the 7th cervical vertebra), enters the spine, then enters the body cavity and proceeds downward to the Large Intestine Organ. It also connects with the Lung Organ. Another branch ascends from the shoulder and rises along the throat. It surfaces at the supraclavicular fossa and rejoins its primary Channel, the Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming, near LI-18, Fu Tu.

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

## LARGE INTESTINE LUO (CONNECTING) MERIDIAN

The Large Intestine Luo Meridian separates from the primary Large Intestine Channel 3 cun proximal to the wrist at LI-6 (Pian Li), and connects to the Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin. Another branch separates from the primary Channel at the same point and ascends the upper limb.



It passes through the shoulder region, at LI-15 (Jian Yu), and proceeds to the angle of the jaw, where it divides into two branches. One branch spreads over the teeth. The other branch enters the ear and connects with the primary Meridians of the Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang, San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang, Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang and Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming.

**Signs/ Symptoms:**

Shi: tooth decay, deafness

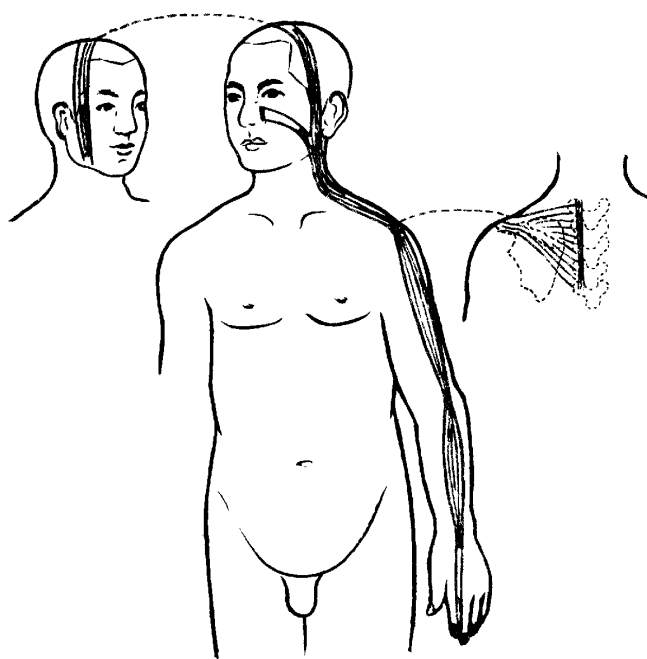
Xu: tooth sensitivity to cold, Bi, fullness and congestion in the chest, diaphragmatic area

**Yang Luo Meridians, Upper Limb**

(modified from Cheng 1987, p. 91)

## LARGE INTESTINE MUSCLE-TENDINO (SINEW) MERIDIAN

The Large Intestine Muscle-Tendino Meridian (MTM) begins at the distal end of the index finger and binds at the dorsum of the wrist. It continues up the forearm, binds at the lateral aspect of the elbow, then travels up along the lateral aspect of the arm, to bind at the shoulder, near LI-15 (Jian Yu). A branch separates at the shoulder, encircles the scapula, and attaches to the spine.



Another branch separates at the shoulder and ascends along the neck. This branch divides at the jaw with one fork binding at the side of the nose. The other fork runs up over the head, anterior to the MTM of the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang, and binds at the mandible on the opposite side of the head.

**Signs/ Symptoms:**

Stiffness, strain or (muscle) spasms and pain along the course of the Sinew, inability to raise the arm at the shoulder, inability to turn the neck from side to side.

**Large Intestine Muscle-Tendino Meridian**

(from Cheng 1987, p. 105)