

Heart (Xin)/ Pericardium (Xin Bao)

The Heart and Pericardium are the Yin Organs of the Fire Element.

Although these Organs are clearly distinguished in Meridian theory, and usually in the clinic, in terms of Organ function, they are considered to be a single expressions of Heart energy (Larre and Rochat, 1992a). Quotes from the classics which mention five Zang and six Fu are referring to this (Kaptchuk, 1983).

The Pericardium may be thought of as the 'outer protective shield' (Maciocia, 1989) of the Heart, both physically and emotionally. It is the initial mechanism of defense against External Pernicious Influences which may be attacking the Heart.

The Heart Rules the Blood and the Blood Vessels

The Heart regulates the flow of Blood. In normal circumstances, this flows smoothly so that the Heart, Blood and Blood Vessels are united by their common activity. The Pulse should be even and regular.

The Heart Stores the Shen

The Heart stores and rules the Shen. Appropriate response to an individual's environment requires Heart Qi and Blood to be abundant and harmonious. With disharmony of the Shen's storing function, signs and symptoms may include insomnia, excessive dreaming, or forgetfulness. In more serious cases there may be irrational behaviour, hysteria, insanity or delirium.

The Heart Opens into the Tongue

Tradition suggests that the tongue is the 'sprout' of the Heart (Kaptchuk, 1983), and it is thought the tongue is closely related to Heart Qi and Blood. Not only may Disharmonies of the Heart be reflected in the tongue, such as paleness in Deficient Heart Blood or purplish in Stagnant Heart Blood, but because speech is an expression of the Shen, the manner in which an individual expresses themselves is an indication of the quality and harmony or otherwise of the Shen.

Diseases of the tongue itself such as inflammation or ulceration may indicate Heart Disharmony.

The Heart's Brilliance is Manifest in the Face

With abundant Heart Blood an individual's complexion will be rosy, moist, bright and vibrant. In the case of insufficiency, it may be pale and lusterless.

'The Heart holds the office of lord and sovereign. The radiance of the spirits stems from it.' (Su Wen, chpt 8. Larre & Rochat, 1991, 1992b).

Shou Shao Yin Xin Jing Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin

PRIMARY HEART MERIDIAN

The primary Heart Channel of hand Shao Yin starts in the Heart, its pertaining Organ, and emerges through (spreads over) the Blood Vessels (blood vessel system) surrounding this Organ. These Vessels connect the Heart with the other Zang Fu. The main Channel descends through the diaphragm and connects to the Small Intestine Organ.

A branch separates from the Heart, and ascends along the side of the oesophagus. It meets the tissues behind (surrounding and connecting to) the eyes and connects with the brain.

Another pathway separates from the Heart and travels directly into the Lung Organ. It then runs laterally and emerges at the base of the axilla, at HT-1 (Ji Quan). It travels down the medial aspect of the arm (HT-2, Qing Ling), medial to the Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin and the Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin. It passes through the medial aspect of the cubital fossa (HT-3, Shao Hai) and continues down the anteromedial margin of the forearm to the lateral (radial) aspect of the pisiform bone at the wrist (HT-7, Shen Men). It then enters the palm and travels along the radial (lateral) side of the 5th metacarpal bone. It terminates at the lateral tip of the little finger, at HT-9 (Shao Chong), where it connects with the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang.

There are 9 points on the Heart Meridian.

This Meridian pertains to the Heart Organ and connects to the Small Intestine Organ. It also connects directly with the Organs of Lungs and Kidneys.

FLOW OF QI/ DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS:

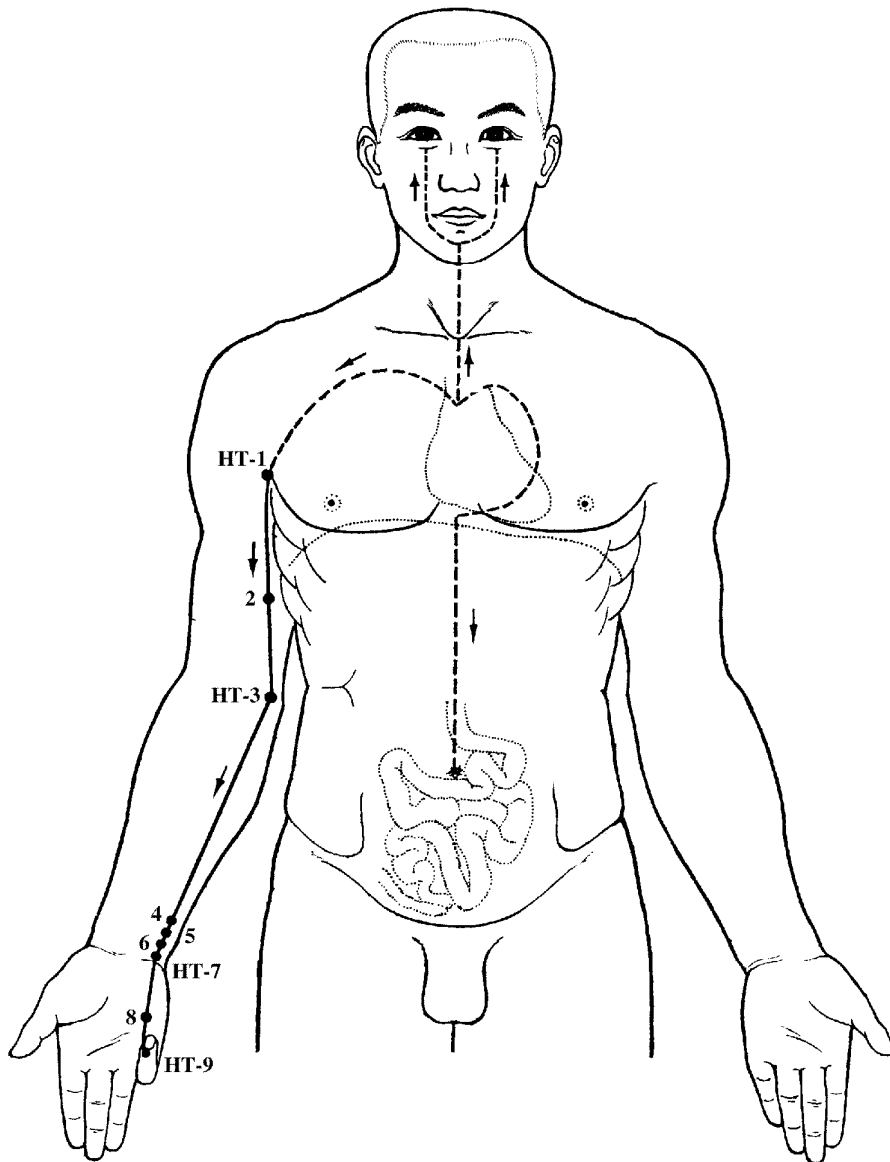
Upper Limb: HT-1 (Ji Quan), HT-2 (Qing Ling), HT-3 (Shao Hai), HT-4 (Ling Dao), HT-5 (Tong Li), HT-6 (Yin Xi), HT-7 (Shen Men), HT-8 (Shao Fu), HT-9 (Shao Chong).

HEART PRIMARY MERIDIAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS:

General fever, headache, pain in the eyes, pain in the chest and back muscles or along the back of the upper arm, dry throat, thirst with the desire to drink, hot or painful palms, coldness of the palms and soles of the feet, pain in the scapular region and/or the medial aspect of the arm or forearm. (mainly from Ellis et al., 1988; O'Connor & Bensky, 1981)

HEART ORGAN SIGNS/SYMPTOMS:

Heart pain, fullness and pain in the chest and lateral costal region, pain in the hypochondriac region, anxiety, restlessness, irritability, dyspnoea, rapid breathing, shortness of breath, discomfort when recumbent, insomnia, dizziness with fainting spells, vertigo, Jing/Shen disorders, mental disorders. (mainly from Ellis et al., 1988; O'Connor & Bensky, 1981)

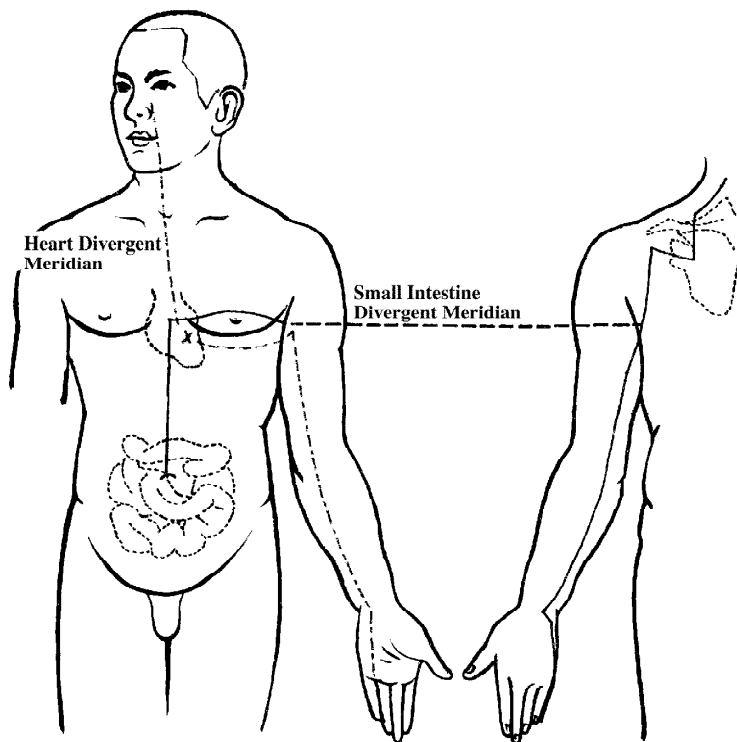


Primary Heart Meridian (modified from Shandong, 1982, p. 23)

HEART SPECIAL POINTS/ COMMAND POINTS:

HT-9 (Shao Chong):	Wood, Well-Jing.
HT-8 (Shao Fu):	Fire, Spring, Gushing-Ying. Horary point.
HT-7 (Shen Men):	i) Earth, Stream, Transporting-Shu. ii) Yuan-Source.
HT-6 (Yin Xi):	Xi-Cleft, Accumulation.
HT-5 (Tong Li):	Luo-Connecting
HT-4 (Ling Dao):	Metal, River, Traversing-Jing.
HT-3 (Shao Hai):	Water, Sea, Uniting-He.
REN-14 (Ju Que):	front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point.
BL-15 (Xin Shu):	back Associated-Shu, Transporting point.

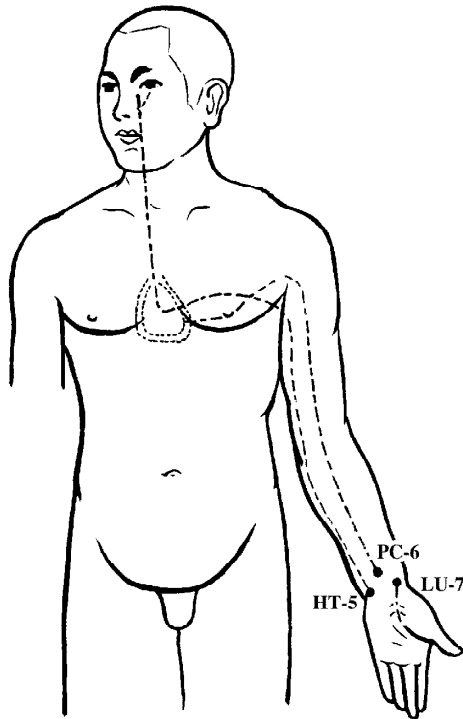
HEART DIVERGENT MERIDIAN



The Heart Divergent Meridian leaves the primary Heart Channel at the base of the axillary fossa, near GB-22 (Yuan Ye). It enters the chest and homes to the Heart Organ. It then runs up the throat, emerges on the face, and unites at the inner canthus of the eye with the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang, near BL-1 (Jing Ming).

Sovereign Fire Divergent Meridians (from Cheng 1987, p. 88)

HEART LUO (CONNECTING) MERIDIAN



The Heart Luo Meridian separates from the primary Heart Channel at HT-5 (Tong Li), 1 cun proximal to the wrist, and connects to the Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang. Almost immediately it separates from the Small Intestine Channel and runs upward, following the main Heart Channel and enters the Heart Organ. It then ascends and connects to the root of the tongue and to the eye (or the region behind the eye, Ellis et al., 1988).

Signs/Symptoms:

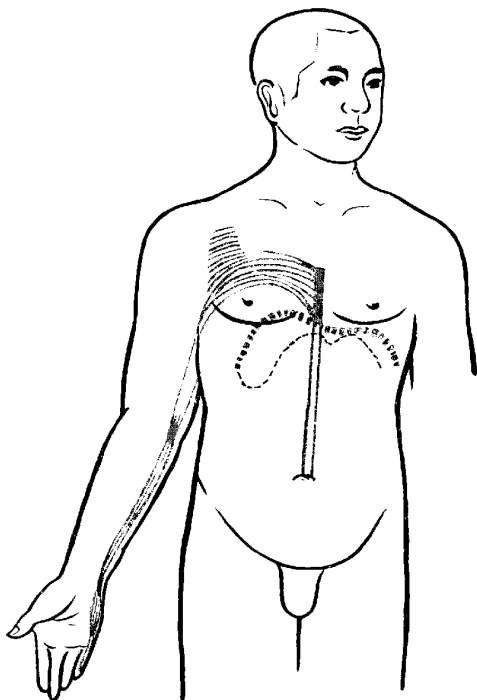
Shi: distension, fullness or pressure causing discomfort in the region of the diaphragm and chest.

Xu: inability to speak

Yin Luo Meridians, Upper Limb
(modified from Cheng 1987, p. 91)

(mainly from Ellis et al., 1988; O'Connor & Bensky, 1981)

HEART MUSCLE-TENDINO (SINEW) MERIDIAN



The Heart Muscle-Tendino Meridian commences at the medial aspect of the little finger and binds at the pisiform bone on the wrist. It then ascends the forearm and binds at the medial aspect of the elbow. It travels up the medial arm and enters the chest below the axilla. It intersects the MTM of the Lung Channel of hand Tai Yin in the breast region and binds in the chest (sternum). This MTM then descends across the diaphragm (follows it down) and connects at the umbilicus.

Signs/ Symptoms:

Internal tension or cramping sensation, stiff, strained or cramping muscles and pain along the course of the Sinew Meridian, mass below the heart or in the umbilical region mostly caused by binding stagnation of Qi and Blood. (mainly from Ellis et al., 1988; O'Connor & Bensky, 1981)

Heart Muscle-Tendino Meridian
(from Cheng 1987, p. 107)

