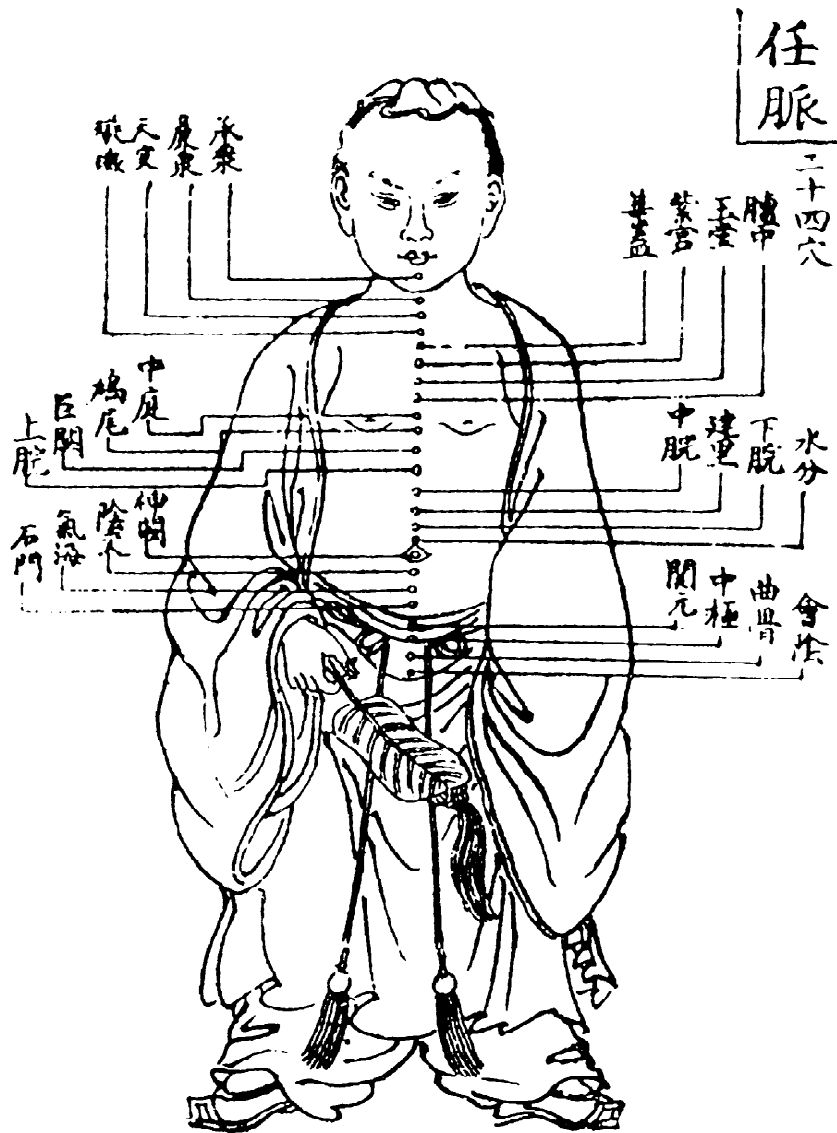


Ren Mai/ Conception Vessel/ Directing Vessel/ Controller Vessel, part#1.

Intro., Meridian, Pathology, Symptomology, Points #1.

REN MAI 任脈

任



Ren Mai,
from the
Neiwaigong
tushuo
(Larre &
Rochat, 1997).

LARRE & ROCHAT**Introductory Discussion** (Larre & Rochat, 1997)

Elisabeth Rochat: The study of ren mai itself will be quite short as some of the functions must be studied with chong mai. But first let us look at the character ren. It is composed with the radical ren, human, and the phonetic which is found in Wiegier Lesson 82C, and is etymologically speaking an image of a bamboo pole with a load hanging at each end, buckets of water for example. The meaning is to endure, to bear, to take the burden of something. When you add the radical for the human being it becomes to bear the burden of being human, which is for instance, to be able to take charge and cope at each level of human life: to cope with each situation, to endure, to withstand, and to be able to resist attack. At the same time this idea of being able to withstand is softened by the notion of following the natural way. It is coping, not by confrontation, but allowing. The character also has the meaning of to be worthy of confidence and full of sincerity, to be reliable.

The phonetic part is the character of the 9th of the ten celestial stems and gives the idea of something acting in the depths but not manifesting. The tenth celestial stem is gui, which is the secret movement of waters in the depths of the earth, and is also the character used in the expression designating human fertility (tian gui), as we can see in Su wen chapter 1, where ren mai with chong mai is in charge of producing fertility in women. If we add to the phonetic part the character for woman we have ren, a pregnant woman, or to be with child. And remember that when we added the character woman to the character du, we had the meaning of the woman in charge of all the women in the palace, a kind of governess. If we add the radical of the silk thread the meaning is to weave, ren.

The significance of pregnancy is of course very strong, and in the classical commentaries the ren mai is related to this idea. This is the meridian acting especially to nourish life, to bring all the essences, blood and liquids to nourish the new life inside the body of the woman. But of course ren mai does not exist only in women, or only in a pregnant woman, but acts in the same way at all times for all people, bringing all the elements to nourish life, not only for another life in me but also for my own life. And that is the meaning of ren; to be able to endure all things and to be able to continue and to continuously ensure the nourishing of life.

The function of ren mai is to be the commander and controller of all the yin functions within the body. Ren mai is called the sea of the yin meridians and the special master for the uterus and the function of gestation inside a woman. All kinds of enveloping and protection and bringing together of the elements of life are the yin side of vitality, and are under the authority of ren mai. This must be the reason why ren mai is sometimes translated as conception vessel, and sometimes as controller vessel. Conception is too narrow a translation, conception is only one aspect of the function of the ren mai but through the Chinese character we can understand the link between these two ideas. It is not only the conception of a new life, but the nourishment of this new life and the nourishment of my own life, with the same regulation and the same protection as for an embryo. Ren mai is also the controller, because it is able to master and control all the yin within the body.

THE PATHWAY OF REN MAI

Elisabeth Rochat: The pathway of ren mai is not so strange and complicated as du mai. The pattern is seen in Nan jing difficulty 28:

Ren mai arises below the central pole (zhong ji, Ren-3) and rises to the border of the (pubic) hair; it passes along the abdomen on the inside; it rises to guan yuan (Ren-4); it reaches the throat (hou yan, larynx and pharynx).

We have seen that the du mai began its circulation in this interior injection of vitality called the inferior pole, and that this could be referring to Ren-1, hui yin. Below zhong ji, the central pole, is perhaps another way to designate the same point. Zhong ji is the name of Ren-3, but this is not the starting point of the meridian, because the text says 'below the central pole', the centre in the depths of the lower abdomen, which is like the centre of the beginning of life. It could also be said to begin at the same place as du mai at hui yin, Ren-1. Some commentators suggest that it begins at Ren-2, others say that it begins at Du-1, to get the crossing effect of ren and du mai, the inter-penetration of yin and yang in the beginning.

The ren mai then turns to the interior. Again only one point is indicated: fengfu for du mai and guan yuan for ren mai. The choice of guan yuan is quite symbolic. There is no reason just to choose this point out of the many between the symphysis pubis and the throat, but it is just because guan yuan is below the navel in this area of great yin activity in the lower heater, and guan yuan, (The Passage to the Origin), expresses the function of ren mai very well: to be able to remain in connection with the origin, and by this connection to be able to give all the yin functioning inside the body the exact, authentic and primitive rule, and at the same time to be able to participate in the nourishment of the new life originating there.

Compared to fengfu, which is turning to the exterior at the top of the body and is related to the wind, the qi and movement, guan yuan is turning to the interior and to the origin. The du mai continues through fengfu to the brain, the ren mai to the throat. The throat is for the passage of all the yin liquids from the body to the head. All the meridians in this area, particularly the kidney meridian, are raising liquids to all the upper orifices. And the points on the ren mai like Ren-18, 22 and 23, are very important for the regulation of the ascending of fluids inside the body. The throat is also the passage of food to the stomach for the assimilation of essences. The throat is an important place for the meeting of the yin meridians, for example in the same chapter of the Nan jing, in the description of the yin qiao mai, the throat is also mentioned, making a connection with ren mai and chong mai.

So here we have the first kind of opposition of a couple of points, one on the back for the yang and one on the abdomen for the yin, and within the opposition the idea of the yang function and the yin function. For fengfu, the animation of the yang, and for guan yuan, how to build and nourish life with all the yin elements of blood and liquids. The yang and the qi are associated with 'no form', but the yin, the blood and the construction of a new life and the renewal of life are concerned with shape and form. This is also a comparison made by some commentators: that which is formless and that which has form and is concerned with the construction of the physical form. The yin and the yang. But we always have the crossing effect. The du mai even if it is in charge of the yang and the qi,

needs to have a very strong relationship with the yin, especially with the yin of the kidneys and the authentic yin, original water and so on. Ren mai, which is in charge of the blood and the yin, to nourish the body and the form, also has a connection not only with the original water but also with the original yang or fire.

The two 'seas of qi' are on the ren mai meridian, one at Ren-6 (qi hai) which is the connection with the original qi, and the other at Ren-17 (tan zhong) the other sea of qi in the centre of the chest. It is very normal to the Chinese way of thinking to have this kind of compenetration and mixing of yin and yang. Nothing can exist which is only yin or only yang; the yin can circulate only with the yang and the yang can only be effective with the yin. All the commentators emphasize the meeting of water and fire, qi and blood for ren and du mai but always in relation to this kind of mixing and crossing.

Su wen chapter 60:

Ren mai arises below the central pole, zhong ji, and rises to the border of the (pubic) hair; it passes through the abdomen on the inside; it rises to guan yuan; it reaches the throat, (hou yan, larynx and pharynx), rises to the chin, passes through the face and penetrates the eyes.

Su wen chapter 60 gives us another way to look at this inter-penetration and relationship between the yin and the yang. Here we have exactly the same description as in the Nan jing, but here the trajectory continues up to the eyes, which are like a meeting point with the du mai, but also for the yin to be able to join the yang at the top of the body and to be able to nourish all the body up to the uppermost orifices and the brain.

Ling shu chapter 65:

Chong mai and ren mai both arise in the middle of the intimate envelopes (bao zhong); they rise, running up the back on the inside and make the sea of the jing luo. Their pathway emerges and runs along the abdomen by the right and rises. They meet together at the pharynx; a divergence (bie) takes a luo relation with the lips and the mouth.

We will look at this pathway later with chong mai but just to make our understanding more complete, let us look at this vision of the ren mai. Ren mai gives a kind of support to the backbone from the first origin in the intimate envelope of vitality. The common origin of du mai, ren mai and chong mai is always in this area bao zhong, the area of the hidden origin where, according to Nan jing difficulty 39, I am able to draw from my life what is necessary to make another life. The extraordinary vessels which are so important for the building of my own life are also important for the building of a new life, because it is this same location, the same function and the same richness that is at work.

Ren mai and du mai begin together, and then ren mai just rises, passing by the Horizontal Bone, Ren-2, which also has an alternative name with the meaning of a maze, a maze leading to a hidden and secret place. Ren-3, zhong ji, is the Ridge Pole, the centre of life in the depths of the vitality, and then guan yuan (Ren-4) is the Passage to the Origin. After these points we have Ren-6, the Sea of Qi

(qi hai). At Ren-7 (yin qiao) we have the idea of exchange. Exchange not only within the yin but also an exchange between yin and yang at this level of the origin and the constitution of the body with this kind of meeting just before the navel.

The following points, Ren-10, 12 and 13 have a very strong connection with the stomach. The stomach is very important in the Nei jing for the renewal of the body for both the yin and yang. Ren mai and chong mai have to have a very strong relationship not only with the kidneys and anterior heaven, but also with the stomach and posterior heaven for the renewal of vitality.

The progression of the points on the chest suggests a kind of protection for the heart and the upper heater. Some points, like the Purple Palace (zi gong, Ren-19) not only refer to the heart, but also to the colour of the blood, and tan zhong (Ren-17), the Sea of Qi in the middle of the chest, evokes all the circulation of blood and qi in the chest and all the messengers and ministers and servants obeying the heart. If ren mai is in charge of controlling the blood and giving the rules for the circulation and renewal of the blood and other yin functions of the body, then ren mai has to have a relationship with the heart, because the heart is the place where blood becomes blood. It is also the place, with all the other functions of the upper heater, from where the circulation of blood is mastered and ruled. In all kinds of pathology linked to the circulation of blood especially for the woman, it is not only a question of the relationship between ren mai and chong mai and kidneys, liver and spleen, but also with the heart.

Then there is a Passage to Heaven (tian tu, Ren-22), which is like a chimney, a passage leading to the head and to heaven. And in the case of ren mai this passage is for the circulation of liquids, not only the blood but all the liquids of the organism which pass through the throat.

Finally at the eyes, or at the level of Du-28 at the lips, there is a connection with the du mai closing the cycle and showing a continuous exchange and circulation. The du mai and the ren mai have a common origin, then there is divergence and differentiation before they meet again at another level, in a kind of manifestation of the vitality which always remains connected with its origin, but expresses itself in the adult and responsible human as being able to guide his or her own life. All the yang and the spirits just invade and irrigate all the body, and are stored in the interior, and all the materials needed for the animation of the body are brought regularly through the mastering of the yin function.

This is one of the great functions of the extraordinary meridians, especially the first four, du mai, ren mai, chong mai and dai mai, to preserve and ensure the link of all the diverse yin and yang functions in the body with the origin.

We have not covered the meeting of ren mai and du mai with the other meridians, but that can be found easily in other books. At this level of the throat, the connection with the kidney meridian is quite strong and below the centre of the eyes and at the lips the connection with the stomach meridian is also strong.

Claude Larre: Since there are two systems, a primary system with du mai, ren mai, chong mai and dai mai, and a secondary system, it is important to see where there is a relationship. One of the most important things about this teaching is the understanding of relationships. If one meridian follows another, or crosses with another, the difficulty is not in the relationship but in the selection of the places where this relationship is observed. Because for treatment, when touching this particular point

you will have a more specific effect, possibly bringing in the specific attributes of the twelve main meridians but also accessing the eight. Understanding where these two systems interact is most important in practice, because one is the primary and the other the secondary. Where they are touching each other - they are the same thing. The point has a particular function which encompasses the properties of both systems.

This is not an academic view, but a practical understanding of how life is functioning because it has been organised by the primary system and developed by the secondary one.

Question: I have been noticing as we go on that Bladder-1 jing ming, seems to be assuming more importance.

Elisabeth Rochat: Yes, of course, and it is also a meeting point for the qiao mai. It is a point that has so many interconnections. Its name evokes so many things, for example the luminous radiance which is proper to the eye, and which comes from essences impregnated by the spirits. Also at the eyes, according to Su wen chapter 81, or Ling shu 80, we have the gathering of the purest essences of the five zang and six fu. Ming describes this kind of luminous radiance, and jing is the pupil. The character is made with the eye and also the phonetic jing which suggests the vibrant green colour of nature but also forms part of the character for clear and pure (qing) and for essences (jing).

In Ling shu 17, for example, we can see that with all these pathways and crossings (not only ren mai, du mai, and qiao mai but all the yang meridians passing around the eyes and the brain, and the pathways of the heart and liver meridians of the yin too) we have the possibility to manifest to the exterior by the clarity and purity of the sight, the clarity and purity of the heart within, and the correct perception of people. We also have the possibility of ensuring the good rhythm of life with the regularity of the rising and setting of the sun, and adapting to the seasons. This is one of the meanings of this meeting: the brightness of the eyes and the enlightenment of our whole perception. It is also what we present to others, because it is through the pupil of the eyes, according to Zhuang zi and other authors, that we can see the depths of a person. That is not exactly an answer to your question, but it is those kinds of elements which come into play.

Claude Larre: It would be interesting to select those points which we can see to be very active in this way and to see how the twelve main meridians give the specific functions and the extraordinary meridians the more general. Because life at the origin is more chaotic, and is much more organised and elaborate when life progresses. There are so many places where life is interacting in this way, and if we can begin to see the correspondences between these processes we may come closer to an understanding of what life may be at its origin. Then we are able to call on life at the deeper level to remedy some defect on the other. We are working on the general system of twelve, but we are also calling on the sources of life. So the question could be treated theoretically, but whenever you have a good result it may be that you are using points where the purest essences are available.

Comment: Another idea would be that the effects of the extraordinary meridians are so much deeper and homogenous and profound and primitive and so close to the edge of human understanding that as we have a list of World Health Organisation approved points to use, one must have a list of points to avoid, because we have non-intervention based on the impossibility to understand.

Claude Larre: It could be that the ones that are forbidden are the ones to use - because they are powerful. But not to be used by just anybody.

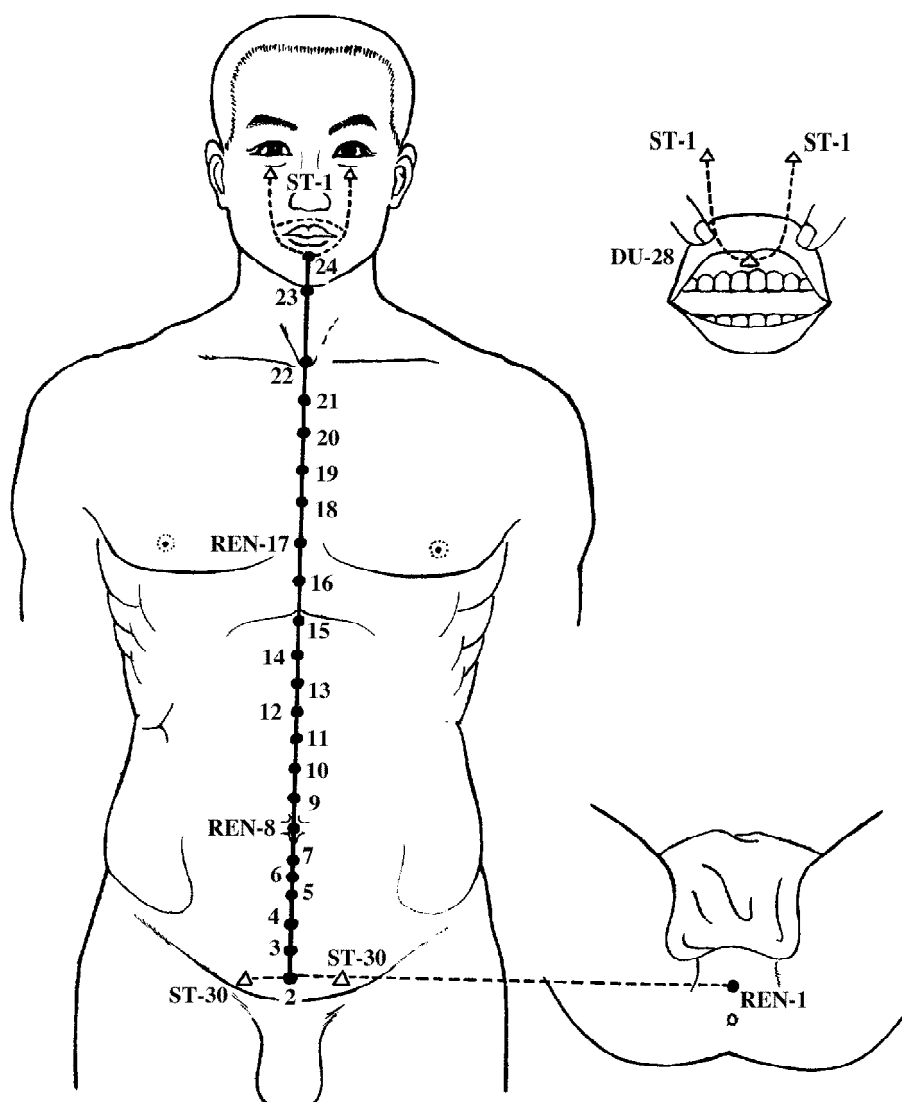
AN ACUPUNCTURE COMPENDIUM: Ren Mai (from Davis, 2000).

Ren Mai commences in the pelvic cavity, below REN-3 (Zhong Ji). It connects with the Internal urogenital organs and emerges through the perineum, at REN-1 (Hui Yin). It emerges above the pubic bone (REN-2, Qu Gu) and travels up the midline [deep surface] of the abdomen, then chest and neck, to the mentolabial groove of the chin (REN-24, Cheng Jiang). There it divides into two branches that encircle the mouth and ascend to the infraorbital regions (ST-1, Cheng Qi).

A second pathway arises in the pelvic cavity, enters the spine, and ascends along the back.

There are 24 points on this Meridian: REN-1 to REN-24.

Other points on this Meridian may include: on Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming, ST-1 (Cheng Qi), ST-30 (Qi Chong); on Du Mai (Governing Vessel), DU-28 (Yin Jiao) (Matsumoto & Birch, 1986; O'Connor & Bensky, 1981).



Ren Mai (modified from Shandong, 1982, p. 61)

FLOW OF QI/ DISTRIBUTION OF POINTS:

Lower Jiao: REN-1 (Hui Yin), [ST-30, Qi Chong], REN-2 (Qu Gu), REN-3 (Zhong Ji), REN-4 (Guan Yuan), REN-5 (Shi Men), REN-6 (Qi Hai), REN-7 (Yin Jiao)

Middle Jiao: REN-8 (Shen Que), REN-9 (Shui Fen), REN-10 (Xia Wan), REN-11 (Jian Li), REN-12 (Zhong Wan), REN-13 (Shang Wan), REN-14 (Ju Que), REN-15 (Jiu Wei)

Upper Jiao: REN-16 (Zhong Ting), REN-17 (Dan Zhong), REN-18 (Yu Tang), REN-19 (Zi Gong), REN-20 (Hua Gai), REN-21 (Xuan Ji)

Neck, Face: REN-22 (Tian Tu), REN-23 (Lian Quan), REN-24 (Cheng Jiang), DU-28 (Yin Jiao), ST-1 (Cheng Qi).

REN MAI SPECIAL POINTS/ COMMAND POINTS

LU-7 (Lie Que):	Master point
KID-6 (Zhao Hai):	Coupling point
REN-3 (Zhong Ji)	front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Urinary Bladder Fu.
REN-4 (Guan Yuan)	front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Small Intestine Fu
REN-5 (Shi Men)	i) front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the San Jiao Fu, particularly the Lower Jiao.
REN-7 (Yin Jiao)	Special Command point of the Lower Jiao
REN-12 (Zhong Wan)	i) front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Stomach Fu; front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Middle Jiao ii) Meeting point of the Fu Organs
REN-14 (Ju Que)	front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Heart Zang
REN-15 (Jiu Wei):	i) Luo-Connecting point of Ren Mai. ii) Yuan point of the Yin Organs.
REN-17 (Dan Zhong)	i) front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Pericardium Zang; front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Upper Jiao ii) Meeting point of Qi.

MERIDIANS INTERSECTED BY REN MAI:

Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming: ST-1 (Cheng Qi), ST-30 (Qi Chong)
Du Mai (Governing Vessel): DU-28 (Yin Jiao)

MERIDIANS INTERSECTING ON REN MAI:

REN-1 (Hui Yin):	Du Mai (Governing Vessel) Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel)
REN-2 (Qu Gu):	Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin
REN-3 (Zhong Ji):	Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin
REN-4 (Guan Yuan):	Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin

	Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin
	Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin
REN-5 (Shi Men):	San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang
REN-7 (Yin Jiao):	Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel) [Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yang]
REN-10 (Xia Wan):	Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin
REN-12 (Zhong Wan):	Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang
REN-13 (Shang Wan):	Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang
REN-17 (Dan Zhong):	San Jiao Channel of hand Shao Yang Small Intestine Channel of hand Tai Yang [Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin] [Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin] [Pericardium Channel of hand Jue Yin]
REN-22 (Tian Tu):	Yin Wei Mai (Yin linking Vessel)
REN-23 (Lian Quan):	Yin Wei Mai (Yin linking Vessel)
REN-24 (Cheng Jiang):	Stomach Channel of foot Yang Ming [Large Intestine Channel of hand Yang Ming] [Du Mai (Governing Vessel)]

Functions:

(O'Connor & Bensky, 1981; Ellis et al, 1988): Ren Mai is the sea of the Yin Channels. The three Yin Channels of each lower limb connect to Ren Mai, which allows their bilateral pathways to communicate. Because of this, Ren Mai has a regulating effect on the Yin Channels, so it is said that it regulates all the Yin Channels of the body (Ellis et al., 1988). This is particularly true of the Kidney, Liver and Spleen Channels.

Ren Mai has very close links with the Kidneys and the Uterus. Its function is closely related to pregnancy. It regulates menstruation and nurtures the foetus. "Ren Mai governs the foetus" (Ellis et al., 1988).

(Ross, 1995): Tonifies the Kidneys (Jing, Qi, Yin, & Yang); removes Damp in the lower Jiao; moves stagnant Qi of the Heart, Lung, and breasts, of the Liver, Spleen and Stomach, and in the uterus and lower Jiao; regulates the emotions, calms fear, disperses grief, relieves depression; regulates the female reproductive cycle and associated psychological changes.

Indications:

(Ellis et al,1988; O'Connor & Bensky, 1981; Shandong, 1982): Menstrual irregularities, leucorrhoea, miscarriage, sterility, infertility, other urogenital disorders, hernia, abdominal masses, colic, pain in the epigastrium and abdomen, dysuria, haematuria, enuresis, cold sensation in the

umbilical region, vomiting, hiccup, swelling of the pharynx, swallowing difficulties, respiratory disorders.

FRONT ALARM-MU, COLLECTING POINTS:

Point:

LU-1 (Zhong Fu)

REN-17 (Dan Zhong)

LIV-14 (Qi Men)

GB-24 (Ri Yue)

LIV-13 (Zhang Men)

GB-25 (Jing Men)

REN-14 (Ju Que)

REN-12 (Zhong Wan)

ST-25 (Tian Shu)

REN-5 (Shi Men)

REN-4 (Guan Yuan)

REN-3 (Zhong Ji)

Related Zang Fu:

Lung Zang

Pericardium Zang, Upper Jiao

Liver Zang

Gall Bladder Fu

Spleen Zang

Kidney Zang

Heart Zang

Stomach Fu, Middle Jiao

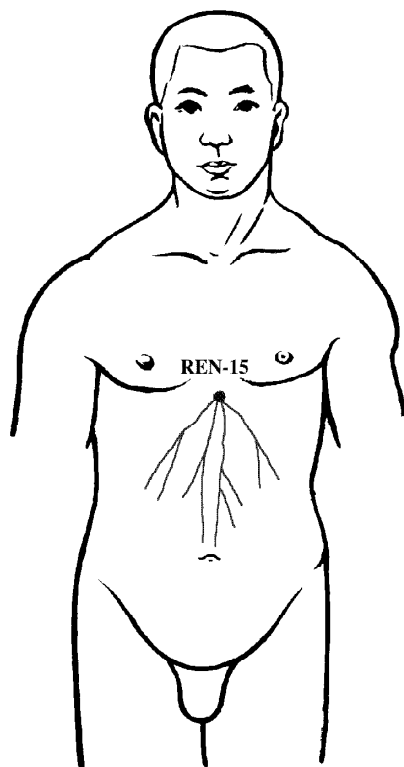
Large Intestine Fu

San Jiao Fu, Lower Jiao

Small Intestine Fu

Urinary Bladder Fu

REN MAI LUO (CONNECTING) MERIDIAN



The Ren Mai Luo Meridian separates from Ren Mai at REN-15 (Jiu Wei), at the inferior aspect of the sternum, and disperses downward over the abdomen.

Signs/ Symptoms:

Shi: stagnation pain in the skin of the abdomen

Xu: itching over the abdomen (skin)

Ren Mai Luo Meridian

(from Cheng 1987, p. 94)

LARRE & ROCHAT

PATHOLOGY OF REN MAI

Nan jing difficulty 29:

When ren mai gives rise to illnesses, one suffers by being knotted internally (nei jie). In men this gives the seven shan (qi shan) and in women concretions and accumulations (jia ju).

Su wen chapter 60:

When ren mai gives rise to illnesses, in men there is knotting internally (nei jie) and there are the seven shan (qi shan); in women there are discharges (dai xia) as well as concretions and accumulations (jia ju).

Elisabeth Rochat: The main point of these pathologies is an exaggeration of the yin movement. A knot or an accumulation is an exaggeration of the movement of condensation and accumulation leading to a piling up and the formation of some kind of clot or lump internally. If something flows out it is in the form of a liquid or a perversion of liquid in the form of discharges, especially vaginal discharge. Vaginal discharge (dai xia) is also governed by dai mai. It is the same character (dai) that is used in both. This internal knotting emphasises the function of ren mai to regulate the circulation of blood and liquids in the lower abdomen, and to nourish all the functions of the inner abdomen. If it does not do that, there may be some kind of knotting in the inner part of the abdomen. This is very often due to cold or emptiness of qi leading to blockage and congestion in the circulation and distribution of blood and all the elements necessary for life. This is the reason why there are these accumulations which may be clots and lumps of any kind.

There are two words (jia and ju) used for this kind of accumulation. Jia are quite fixed and hard, when you palpate them they do not move; ju may be moved on palpation. Here they can relate to any kind of concentration and accumulation in the lower heater and the abdomen. In the case of jia, we would definitely expect something physical and solid, with ju not necessarily, but they are very general terms.

As ren mai has the responsibility for the yin part of the body, it also has the responsibility to ensure free circulation in the yin part of the body and for the yin in general. For example, as far as the lower heater is concerned, the ren mai has a strong connection with the three yin meridians of the legs, the liver, kidneys and spleen; they can be treated at Ren-3 or at the meeting of the three leg yin at Spleen-6 (san yin jiao) to invigorate the circulation in the lower heater. You treat on the ren mai or on the yin meridians in order to do that.

Here ren mai has all kinds of stagnation and weakness in the circulation in the lower heater in its pathology, leading to knots and accumulations. You can also see the importance of the presence of the warmth of the qi and the yang. If the qi is deficient the ren mai cannot be in balance. Emptiness, weakness and cold invade this area and cause congestion and blockage, especially causing these symptoms called shan, which is sometimes translated as hernia, but actually includes all kinds of

symptoms of the lower abdomen. There may be pain, sometimes quite violent, and often a disturbance in the two lower orifices or the genitals. All those conditions may be called shan.

This is one way to divide these shan syndromes into three categories, those of hernia, those of pain in the lower abdomen and those of the genitals and two lower orifices. They are linked with ren mai because these are all symptoms of the lower abdomen and are usually caused by bad circulation, quite often due to cold. This term shan is very broad and can be used for other symptoms, not only the seven shan commonly attributed to the malfunction of ren mai. You can also find shan due to heat and dampness, and particularly in the genitals or testicles it may be due to cold. Wind may be the cause of shan too. The seven shan are described slightly differently by different commentators but the most common description is of han shan (cold shan), shui shan (water shan), jin shan (muscle shan), xue shan (blood shan), qi shan, hu shan (fox shan) and tui shan (shan of the genitals).

We have seen that this is an area where du mai is also circulating, and in the pathology of du mai, in common with ren mai and chong mai, shan syndrome appears too, with symptoms not only of the lower orifices but also of the heart, because the counter-current caused by obstruction in the lower abdomen creates pressure of qi under the heart.

The pathology of ren mai with of course chong mai and du mai as well, has a lot to do with women's fertility and all kinds of problems in the area of gynaecology and obstetrics; the regulation of menstruation, sterility and menopause and so on. In Su wen chapter 1 we have the following:

... In a woman at two times seven years, fertility (tian gui) arrives; ren mai functions fully (tong) and tai chong mai (the powerful chong mai) rises in power (sheng) the menses flow downwards in their time and she has children...

... At seven times seven years, the ren mai is empty (xu) the tai chong mai declines progressively, fertility dries up. Nothing passes any longer through the way of earth (di dao); the body declines, and she no longer has children.

This is the normal cycle for women, but if the ren mai empties before its time there is a closing of the 'way of earth'. The way of the earth may be used to designate the vagina, but is also all the things that happen in the body of the woman according to the properties of the earth, which of course are more active in the woman: the ability to receive and to condense, to keep firm, and to nourish, which is all important to the fertility of the woman. For the man fertility is rather to do with having emissions. So ren mai, by its proper movement in mastering the yin, is the basis of this kind of earthly movement, especially for women. If the ren mai is too weak, then the function of receiving and being able to nourish and protect, to condense and to keep, is too weak, and that is one kind of sterility. All the causes and different kinds of sterility may be linked with different meridians, for example the yin meridians of the foot, particularly the kidneys and the liver, but also the spleen and heart and so on.

These are some symptoms which are regularly given for the ren mai in classical texts:

Movement like a beating, with acute hard pain in the lower abdomen and especially around the navel, with radiation from the navel to the symphysis pubis.

All kinds of hard pain at the level of the genitals, as we saw with the shan syndromes.

Pain in the abdomen 'like a finger' which has a regular movement hurting the heart. Unable to bow down or to stand up, due to a weakness in the ren mai and a lack of irrigation, lack of liquids and blood, leading to this kind of congestion of qi and stiffness of the body.

Ren mai and the points on the ren mai meridian have a great importance in the treatment of women, but if there is a disturbance in a man in the genitals and sexual organs it is not only du mai which should be treated, but also ren mai. In impotence, spermatorrhea or premature ejaculation the diagnosis would often lead to treatment on both ren mai and du mai. Ren mai is also very important in the treatment of miscarriage, because it is the power of the yin to contain and retain, and to envelop and keep.

Question: What about the relationship of ren mai with the upper and middle heaters?

Elisabeth Rochat: That comes more with the command points and with the connection with yin wei mai. I think that we can treat points on the ren mai for many other things. We have been talking about the symptoms particularly linked to a weakness in the functioning of ren mai, and these symptoms are always in the lower heater and to do with the production and reproduction of the innermost elements of life, maintaining a good rhythm for their regulation and distribution.

Of course we may use the points on ren mai in many different ways. If there is a problem with the stomach we may use the points of ren mai at this level, and ren mai, in its function of mastering the yin has a relationship with the root of the essences in posterior heaven and the distribution of all the elements of life, and the constitution and circulation of the blood. Tan zhong Ren-17, has this function. We must not confuse the indications of all the points of ren mai and du mai with the main symptoms at the root of the functioning of ren mai and du mai. For du mai the characteristic of these symptoms is this kind of stiffness, which is a lack of suppleness in the verticality of the body and a lack of good circulation bringing animation and dynamism especially to the head. With ren mai there is a kind of excessive condensation and concentration in the lower part of the trunk.

Question: Some teachings say that one should not mix the treatment of the extraordinary meridians with other points. Is there any reference in the classics to that?

Elisabeth Rochat: There is always contradiction in the teachings of different schools, within China itself as well as in the West. It is similar to the question asked previously on the forbidden points. And it depends on what you call the classics. I am sure you will find it somewhere, but I have no answer to your question. I think it may be part of the teaching of some special schools, and sometimes things are really forbidden, but often it is just advising that you must know what you are doing. This is certainly not a general teaching.

MATSUMOTO & BIRCH

Ren Mai Symptomology

The Nan Jing symptom sets are based on the discussion found in the Su Wen. The author of the Nan Jing describes the following symptoms as indicative of problems associated with the ren mai:

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Suffering or uncomfortableness of the insides, like a knot {a palpable lump}. Men can have seven kinds of lower warmer pain. Women can have lumps, or something collected or gathered in the lower abdomen.

The seven kinds of pain in men range from hernia to abdominal pain. Lumps in women come from a variety of sources, including congealed or stagnant blood. Wang Shu He expands the Nan Jing symptoms, describing eight types of lumps:

1. Shrimp lump, 2. Blue lump, 3. Abdominal lump, 4. Yellow lump, 5. Dry lump, 6. Blood lump, 7. Single lump, 8. Turtle lump.

The shrimp lump seems to be named for its shape. The blue lump may be seen as a superficial blood vessel. Wang Shu He does not explain if the abdominal lump covers part of the abdomen or is inclusive of the whole abdomen. A yellow lump might reference a general yellow pallor in a specific area. The dry lump could relate to dry stools or constipation. The blood lump seems easily related to congealed blood. A single lump may be a differentiation from the other lumps, which could occur in multiples. The turtle lump, like the shrimp lump, would be most easily associated with a particular shape. A "congealed or coalesced" lump indicates an obstruction where something collects. It will move and have an irregular or changing shape.

The seven kinds of men's pain are:

1. Rebellious pain
2. Flat and round pain
3. Cold pain
4. Lump pain
5. Fu pain
6. Pain that is accompanied by a palpitation or pulsing
7. Qi pain

Rebellious pain may be related to rebellious qi. Flat and round pain is less clear, possibly a description of the type of abdomen. Cold pain would be caused by or accompanied by cold and pain related to inflammation or swelling, as with a hernia. Fu pain may be associated with either a pulling or stretching pain or with pain in the lymph nodes. Pain accompanied by palpitation or pulsing seems straight-forward; and qi pain would be most easily associated with stagnant qi. Wang Shu He also tells us that the character for ren means pregnancy, and thus implies that it is the source of "life's nourishment." He argues that the use of this character means that the ren mai may be used for internal heart pain.

It is hard to find a clear definition of these symptoms. Wang Shu He and the Nan Jing associate the ren mai with abdominal lumps in women, and sexual organ pain in men. Since lumps are often found in the abdomen upon palpation, knowledge of their significance is important. However, the descriptions are sufficiently vague to require further confirmation before we may assume that treatment of the ren mai is necessary. When we find a lump on palpation, we should investigate the ren mai to see if it is the appropriate treatment target.

Wang Shu He indicates in the Mai Jing that when the ren mai is affected, one will feel something "like a ball at the horizontal side of the pulse {along the edges}". Symptoms will be: suffering from a feeling of wind in the abdomen, a feeling in the heart as if a stick were poking up from the lower abdomen, inability to lay down, and a feeling of tension. If the pulse is tight, thin, full and long, this too is a ren mai pulse. Symptoms will be: pain in the lower abdomen caused by movement, a sensation below the navel of pulling down to the pubic bone, stabbing pain in the sexual organs. Wang Shu He recommends treating three divisions below the navel (CV-4).

DEADMAN'S MERIDIAN COMMENTARY

The Conception vessel is one of the eight extraordinary vessels, but along with the Governing vessel is exceptional among these eight in that it has its own acupuncture points. For this reason the Conception and Governing vessels are often included with the twelve primary channels (and together known as the fourteen [main] channels). The other six extraordinary vessels have no points of their own, passing instead through points of the fourteen channels.

The Conception vessel is principally understood to be the channel that ascends along the midline of the anterior of the body. As the above description shows however, a branch enters the spine and ascends along the back, whilst a branch of the Governing vessel also ascends along the midline of the anterior of the body. Li Shi-zhen therefore said "The Conception and Governing vessels are like midnight and midday, they are the polar axis of the body ... there is one source and two branches, one goes to the front and the other to the back of the body ... When we try to divide these, we see that yin and yang are inseparable. When we try to see them as one, we see that it is an indivisible whole".

As far as the pathway of the Conception vessel is concerned, it is important to note that:

- according to the Spiritual Pivot the Conception vessel originates in the uterus in females.
- the primary channel winds around the mouth and terminates below the eye.

The actions of the points of the Conception vessel can be summarised as follows:

- Treating disorders of their local area. All the Conception vessel points below the umbilicus treat disorders of urination and defecation, genital diseases, stagnation in the lower abdomen and uterine and menstrual diseases. Shenque REN-8 and Shuifen REN-9 treat disorders of the intestines and abdomen. From Xiawan REN-10 up to Xuanji REN-21 all the Conception vessel points treat stagnation and rebellion of Stomach qi, even when their location is high up on the chest. From Shangwan REN-13 upwards, most points treat disorders of the Heart, and from Juque REN-14 upwards, of the Lung and chest.
- Located on the soft, yielding and yin anterior surface of the body, the Conception vessel points allow direct access to the zangfu. Six of the front-mu points therefore are located on this channel (Zhongji REN-3: the Bladder, Guanyuan REN-4: the Small Intestine; Shimen REN-5: the Sanjiao; Zhongwan REN-12: the Stomach; Juque REN-14: the Heart; Shanzhong REN-17: the Pericardium). In most cases these are fundamentally important points to regulate their respective zangfu.
- The lower abdomen is the location of the dantian (cinnabar field), the residence of the deepest energies of the body. Guanyuan REN-4 and Qihai REN-6 are therefore among the most important

tonifying and nourishing points of the body. Along with Shenque REN-8, they are also able to rescue yang and restore consciousness in cases of yang collapse.

POINTS OF REN MAI

CV-1 (*huì yīn*)

會 *huì*: meeting, convergence

陰 *yīn*: yin, the complement of yang

會陰

Meeting of Yin

Location: In the centre of the perineum, midway between the anus and the posterior margin of the external genitalia - which is the posterior border of the scrotum in males and the posterior labial commissure in females.

Features & Categories: Intersection point of Du Mai (Governing Vessel) and Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel) on Ren Mai - initial acupuncture point of all three Vessels. 11th of the 13 Ghost points - Gui Cang, Ghost Store. General Luo-Connecting point of the Yin.

Functions: Strengthens the lumbar and benefits the Kidneys; benefits Jing; regulates Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel) and Ren Mai; nourishes Yin; clears Heat and resolves Damp; restores consciousness.

Indications: Genital itch; vaginitis; irregular menstruation; urethritis; vaginal discharge; pruritis vulvae; pain and swelling of the anus; urinary retention; enuresis; incontinence; nocturnal seminal emission; prostatitis; mania and withdrawal; fainting; respiratory failure; asphyxia.

Supplementary Indications: Genital sweating; pain at the glans of the penis; postpartum stupor; vaginal protrusion; pain and swelling of the vagina; chronic hemorrhoids; inability to urinate and defecate; Cold at the glans of the penis; Heat in the Portals; Connecting Vessel Excess or Deficiency; abdominal skin pain; itch; sudden infantile convulsions; pain or swelling of the lower abdomen, possibly reaching the genitals; hernia; revival from drowning.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Huiyin REN-1 (Meeting of Yin) derives its name from its location in the area between the anus and the external genitalia (the two lower yin) and the fact that the perineum is where the Conception and Penetrating vessels meet (with the Governing vessel). It is also directly beneath and opposite to Baihui DU-20 (the point at which all the yang gathers) and hence the deep, dark, hidden and protected place where yin meets. This is reflected in the importance of Huiyin REN-1 in qigong practice. In the practice of small heavenly circuit rotation, qi is focused in the lower dantian (cinnabar field), directed to Huiyin REN-1 and then to Changqiang DU-1 before being directed up the Governing vessel to Baihui DU-20 and then down the Conception vessel to return to the lower dantian.

Historically there has been some discussion as to whether Huiyin REN-1 rather than Jiuwei REN-15 is the Luo-connecting point of the Conception vessel. The Spiritual Pivot refers to the Luo-connecting point of the Conception vessel as Weiyi (Tail Screen), an alternative name for Jiuwei REN-15, and gives symptoms of excess (pain of the skin of the abdomen) and deficiency (itching of the skin of the abdomen). Later classics, including both the Systematic Classic of Acupuncture and

Moxibustion and the Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion refer to the luo-connecting point of the Conception vessel as Pingyi (Flat Screen), an alternative name for Huiyin REN-1, and ascribe these symptoms of excess and deficiency to this point. Huiyin REN-1 as the luo-connecting point of the Conception vessel would reflect a neat symmetry with Chengqiang DU1 as the luo-connecting point of the Governing vessel.

Huiyin REN-1 has a strong action on the genito-urinary and anal regions, especially in disorders due to damp-heat, and is indicated for genital pain and swelling, as well as recalcitrant urinary disorders. It is unfortunate that due to its location it is clinically less used than it otherwise might be.

Huiyin REN-1, under its alternative name of Guicang (Ghost Store) is one of the 'thirteen ghost points' of Sun Simiao, used in the treatment of epilepsy and mania disorder. The Supplement to the Thousand Ducat Formulas in fact specified that in men Yinxiang (Extra) should be needed, whilst in women Yumentou (Extra), located at the posterior labial commissure, should be needed. Both points more or less correspond to Huiyin REN-1.

Finally, Huiyin REN-1 is indicated (for example in the Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion) for reviving from drowning and is said to have the ability to promote the expulsion of water from the lungs.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Sudden swelling, redness and pain of the vagina: Huiyin REN-1, Zhongji REN-3 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Great Compendium).
- The five types of haemorrhoids: Huiyin REN-1, Weizhong BL-40, Chengshan BL-57, Feiyang BL-58, Yangfu GB-38, Fuliu KID-7, Taichong LIV-3, Xiashi GB-43, Qihai REN-6 and Changqiang DU-1 (Great Compendium).

ST-30 (*qì chōng*)

氣 *qì*: qì

冲 *chōng*: to flush, surge; a thoroughfare; important place;
to rush against

氣冲

Surging Qi

Location: At the lower border of the abdomen in the depression immediately superior to the pubic bone. The point is located 2 cun lateral to Ren Mai point REN-2 (Qu Gu), 1.5 cun lateral to KID-11 (Heng Gu), and medial to the femoral nerve and vessels. This location is 5 cun inferior to the level of the umbilicus (ST-25, Tian Shu).

Features & Categories: Intersection point of the Gall Bladder Channel of foot Shao Yang, Ren Mai (Conception Vessel), Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel), and Du Mai (Governing Vessel) on the Stomach Channel. Point of the Sea of Nourishment (ST-30, ST-36).

Functions: Soothes the Sinews; disperses counterflow Qi; regulates Stomach Qi; regulates the Urinary Bladder; harmonizes Ying and Blood; regulates Chong Mai (Penetrating Vessel); benefits Jing.

Indications: Pain and swelling of the external genitalia; hernia; abdominal pain or masses; borborygmus; irregular menstruation; other menstrual disorders; retained placenta; swollen prostate; impotence; diseases of the reproductive organs generally.

Supplementary Indications: Abdominal pain and sagging; infertility; fullness in the lateral costal region; severe abdominal distension and fullness; colic; prolapse of the rectum; sensation of pain and weakness of the shins; urinary retention; dysuria; oedema; difficulty in lactation; foetus surging up below the heart causing pain that makes rest difficult; disorders related to childbirth; impotence; Stomach/Spleen deficiency; rumbling intestines.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

The name of this point Qichong may be translated as 'Rushing Qi' or 'Pouring Qi'. The character 'chong' is the same as in the Penetrating vessel (chong mai). This name reflects both the ability of Qichong ST-30 to regulate the circulation of qi in the lower abdomen and its status as the point where the Penetrating vessel emerges on the abdomen. Qichong ST-30 has a broad action in treating many disorders affecting this area. By regulating qi, Qichong ST-30 may be used to disperse stagnation, pain, cold and heat in the genital region, intestines, Bladder and the abdomen as a whole, and is indicated for such disorders as pain, fullness and distention of the lower abdomen, abdominal heat, twisting pain of the abdomen, heat in the Large Intestine, retention of urine and faeces, hot painful urinary dysfunction, stone oedema etc.

The Penetrating vessel emerges at the perineum and meets the Stomach yangming channel at Qichong ST-30. The Penetrating vessel influences the lower abdomen as a whole, including the genital organs, and especially helps regulate the function of the uterus and menstruation. Qichong ST-30 is therefore indicated for such genital disorders as swelling and pain of the penis and vagina, pain and retraction of the testicles, impotence etc., and such gynaecological and obstetrical disorders as irregular menstruation, sudden amenorrhoea, abnormal uterine bleeding, infertility, retention of the placenta and difficult lactation.

According to the Classic of Difficulties, when the Penetrating vessel is diseased, there will be upsurging qi and acute abdominal disturbance. Qichong ST-30, located on the lower abdomen and the point where the Penetrating vessel emerges, is the single most important point in the treatment of running piglet qi. According to the Essentials from the Golden Cabinet "Running piglet disorder arises from the lower abdomen; it rushes up to the throat with such ferocity that the patient feels he is close to death. It attacks and then remits. It is brought about by fear and fright". Running piglet qi primarily arises when stagnant Liver qi transforms to heat, or when Kidney yang deficiency leads to accumulation of cold in the lower jiao. In both cases, qi is violently discharged and rushes upwards along the Penetrating vessel causing great agitation and anxiety. Qichong ST-30 is also indicated for foetal qi rushing up to the Heart. This condition, described by Zhu Dan-xi, manifests as distention, fullness and pain of the abdomen and Heart in a pregnant woman.

In the chapter 'Discourse On the Seas' in the Spiritual Pivot Qichong ST-30 is given as the upper point of the 'sea of water and grain' (Zusanli ST-36 is the lower point). According to this passage, when the sea of water and grain is in excess, there is abdominal fullness, and when it is deficient there is hunger with inability to eat. Finally, the Essential Questions includes Qichong ST-30 among the eight points to clear heat from the Stomach (bilateral Qichong ST-30, Zusanli ST-36, Shangjuxu ST-37 and Xiajuxu ST-39).

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Insomnia: Qichong ST-30 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Supplementing Life).
- Prolapse of the rectum: Qichong ST-30, Dachangshu BL-25, Baihui DU-20, Changqiang DU-1, Jianjing GB-21 and Hegu L.I.-4 (Compilation).
- Stone oedema of the upper abdomen: moxa Qichong ST-30, Rangu KID-2, Siman KID-14 and Zhangmen LIV-13 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

CV-2 (qū gǔ)

曲 qū: curved, bent

骨 gǔ: bone

曲骨

Curved Bone

Location: On the anterior midline of the lower abdomen, in the depression immediately superior to the pubic symphysis. Deep needling at this point should be avoided due to the proximity of the urinary bladder. KID-11 (Heng Gu) is located 5 fen lateral to REN-2 (Qu Gu), ST-30 (Qi Chong) is 2 cun lateral.

Features & Categories: Intersection point of the Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin on Ren Mai.

Functions: Warms Yang and tonifies the Kidneys; regulates menstruation and stops vaginal discharge.

Indications: Seminal emission; impotence; orchitis; irregular menstruation; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; dysmenorrhoea; uterine prolapse; cystitis; urinary retention; enuresis; hernia.

Supplementary Indications: Nocturnal seminal emission; Deficiency exhaustion of the Zang; red and white vaginal discharge; impotence; dribbling urination; painful hernia; distension and fullness of the lower abdomen; lower abdominal pain; fetal pressure causing an inability to urinate; dryness and pain of the genitals; edema; cholera with cramps.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Qugu REN-2 acts primarily on the genito-urinary regions, being able to treat a variety of urinary, lower abdominal, sexual, genital and gynaecological diseases. Its importance in the treatment of these disorders however, is overshadowed by neighbouring points such as Qichong ST-30 and Zhongji REN-3.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Inability to urinate: Qugu REN-2, Shimen REN-5, Guanyuan REN-4, Zhongji REN-3 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Supplementing Life).
- Red and white leucorrhoea: Qugu REN-2 [7 cones of moxa], Taichong LIV-3, Guanyuan REN-4, Fuliu KID-7, Sanyinjiao SP-6, Tianshu ST-25 [one hundred cones of moxa] (Compilation).
- Fright epilepsy, mad walking and madness: Qugu REN-2, Xingjian LIV-2, Jinsuo DU-8 and Yingu KID-10 (Thousand Ducat Formulas).

CV-3 (zhōng jí)

中 zhōng: center, central

極 jí: pole (as in polar opposites), extreme

中極

Central Pole

Location: On the anterior midline of the lower abdomen, one cun superior to REN-2 (Qu Gu). The proportional distance between the middle of the umbilicus (REN-8, Shen Que) and the superior border of the pubic symphysis (REN-2, Qu Gu) is 5 cun. REN-3 (Zhong Ji) is located one fifth of the distance between these landmarks. KID-12 (Da He) is located 5 fen lateral to REN-3 (Zhong Ji), ST-29 (Gui Lai) is 2 cun lateral.

Features & Categories: Front Alarm-Mu, Collecting point of the Urinary Bladder Fu.

Intersection point of the Kidney Channel of foot Shao Yin, Spleen Channel of foot Tai Yin and Liver Channel of foot Jue Yin on Ren Mai.

Functions: Regulates the Uterus; warms the palace of Jing; frees the Urinary Bladder; rectifies the lower Jiao; resolves Damp Heat; clears Heat; supports the transforming functions of Qi in the lower Jiao.

Indications: Nocturnal seminal emission; impotence; premature ejaculation; enuresis; urinary retention; urinary frequency; urethritis; interrupted urinary flow; all urinary problems (especially acute); lower abdominal pain; irregular menstruation; metrorrhagia; dysmenorrhoea; vaginal discharge; leukorrhoea; prolapse of the uterus; infertility; genital pain; genital itch; vaginitis; gonorrhoea; nephritis; peritonitis; sciatica.

Supplementary Indications: Amenorrhoea; profuse uterine bleeding; red and white vaginal discharge; persistent flow of lochia; retention of afterbirth; hernia; edema; upsurging Kidney Qi or Liver Fire rushing up to the heart (if severe, causing respiratory difficulty); exhaustion of Yang Qi; white turbid urethral discharge; pain and burning on urination; Heat and pain in the abdomen; fainting; pain and vexation in the Heart; hunger with inability to eat; swelling and pain of the cervical canal (child gate); lower Yuan Deficiency and Cold; infertility.

DEADMAN'S COMMENTARY

Zhongji REN-3 is the front-mu point of the Bladder and a meeting point of the Conception vessel with the Spleen, Liver and Kidney channels. The term 'mu' means to gather or to collect, and the front-mu points are where the qi of the zangfu gathers and concentrates on the anterior surface of the body. Zhongji REN-3 therefore has a direct action on the Bladder fu. Urinary disorders characterised by retention, pain, frequency and urgency of urination may be excess or deficient in nature. Excess patterns include accumulation of dampness or damp-heat and stagnation of qi, and may be complicated by the presence of stones or bleeding. Deficiency patterns primarily involve deficiency of qi and yang. Due to its ability to regulate the qi transformation function of the Bladder, drain dampness and heat, and strengthen the Kidneys, Zhongji REN-3 is a primary point in the treatment of a variety of urinary disorders involving any of these disharmonies. In clinical practice however, Zhongji REN-3 is favoured for excess patterns, whilst Guanyuan REN-4 is favoured for deficiency patterns. By virtue of its ability to promote smooth urination, Zhongji REN-3 is also indicated for oedema.

The ability of Zhongji REN-3 to drain dampness and heat extends to the genital region where it is an important point for itching, swelling and pain as well as leucorrhoea and seminal emission. The Great Compendium of Acupuncture and Moxibustion specifically recommends Zhongji REN-3 for pain and swelling of the cervix.

The Spleen controls blood, the Liver stores blood, and the Kidneys and the Conception vessel dominate the uterus and conception. Zhongji REN-3, as a meeting point of all these channels, is able to regulate the uterus and menstruation and is primarily indicated for excess patterns giving rise to abdominal (zheng jia) masses, irregular or absent menstruation, infertility, and especially retention of the placenta or lochia.

The three leg yin channels of Spleen, Liver and Kidney all pass through and dominate the lower abdomen. As a meeting point of the Conception vessel with these three channels, Zhongji REN-3 therefore has a strong action on the lower abdomen as a whole, predominantly in excess patterns involving stagnation and accumulation of cold or heat. It is indicated for masses, shan disorder and severe twisting pain, and both hot and cold sensations in the abdomen.

Zhongji REN-3 is also used for the condition known as running piglet qi, particularly when due to Kidney yang deficiency with invasion of cold. According to the Essentials From the Golden Cabinet "Running piglet disorder arises from the lower abdomen; it rushes up to the throat with such ferocity that the patient feels he is close to death. It attacks and then remits. It is brought about by fear and fright".

Finally, Zhongji REN-3 is indicated for deficiency of yang qi and lower origin (yuan) deficiency. However, so great are the tonifying properties of Guanyuan REN-4 that in clinical practice this latter point is almost invariably used for this purpose. Like Guanyuan REN-4 also, Zhongji REN-3 is indicated for lumbar pain, reflecting the principle of selecting points from the front of the body to treat the back.

CLASSICAL COMBINATIONS

- Inability to urinate: Zhongji REN-3, Qugu REN-2, Shimen REN-5, Guanyuan REN-4 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Supplementing Life).
- Difficult urination and seminal emission: Zhongji REN-3, Ligou LIV-5, Lougu SP-7, Chengfu BL-36 and Zhiyin BL-67 (Supplementing Life).
- Seminal emission: Zhongji REN-3, Zhiyin BL-67 and Ququan LIV-8 (Supplementing Life).
- Pain of the penis: Zhongji REN-3, Taixi KID-3, Yuji LU-10 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Great Compendium).
- Sudden swelling, redness and pain of the vagina: Zhongji REN-3, Huiyin REN-1 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Great Compendium).
- Infertility: Zhongji REN-3 and Zigong (M-CA-18) (Great Compendium).
- Uterine bleeding: Zhongji REN-3 and Zigong (M-CA-18) (Great Compendium).
- Ceaseless uterine bleeding: Zhongji REN-3, Shimen REN-5, Zigong (M-CA-18) and Shenshu BL-23 (Great Compendium).
- Irregular menstruation: Zhongji REN-3, Sanyinjiao SP-6, Daimai GB-26, Qihai REN-6 and Shenshu BL-23 (Great Compendium).

- Inhibited menstruation: Zhongji REN-3, Sanyinjiao SP-6 and Zulinqi GB-41 (Great Compendium).
- Infertility: Zhongji REN-3 and Shangqiu SP-5 (Great Compendium).
- Retention of the placenta: reduce Zhongji REN-3 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Great Compendium).
- Retention of the placenta: Zhongji REN-3 and Jianjing GB-21 (Great Compendium).
- Retention of the placenta: Zhongji REN-3, Jianjing GB-21 and Sanyinjiao SP-6 (Meeting the Source).
- Ceaseless diarrhoea: Zhongji REN-3, Tianshu ST-25 and Zhongwan REN-12 (Great Compendium).