

Chapter 4

Meridians

“You must let the psyche move through the meridians. Whether you are tired or not, whether you have energy or you do not, whether you are sick or healthy—these things are like the rain and the clouds, hot weather and cold, winter, fall—a part of life. But if you let your own energy flow through you, you will be all right.”

—Yogi Bhajan

Meridians are like an invisible network of rivers or channels throughout the body that facilitate the flow of qi. Qi typically flows continuously from one meridian to another. Any break in the flow is an indication of imbalance or blockage, which can cause disharmony in the body.

There are 12 main meridians on the body connected to the body’s various organs, and two extra channels (ren and du). Meridians are named for the life function with which they seem to associate. In most cases, this name is similar to the name of an organ with which we’re familiar. Meridians are classified yin or yang on the basis of the direction in which they flow on the surface of the body. Yang energy flows from the sun, so the meridians run from the fingers to the face or from the face to the feet. Yin energy flows from the earth, so the meridians flow from the feet

For more information on acupuncture, see chapter 11, *Acupuncture*.

to the torso and from the torso along the inside of the arms to the fingertips.

When this energy flow is unrestricted, the body functions optimally. Sometimes, though, the abuses we heap upon our bodies cause stress that is so severe and unrelenting that the flow is disrupted or blocked and needs to be treated before energy can flow properly.

Meridian name/organ	Yin/Yang	Element
Liver	Yin	Wood
Lung	Yin	Metal
Large Intestine	Yan	Metal
Stomach	Yang	Earth
Spleen	Yin	Earth
Heart	Yin	Fire
Small Intestine	Yang	Fire
Bladder	Yang	Water
Kidney	Yin	Water
Triple Warmer	Yang	Fire
Gallbladder	Yang	Wood
Ren	Yin	
Du	Yang	

We will look at ways to treat these blockages in later chapters, but



first, let's take an indepth look at each of the meridians. They are detailed in the table and discussed in the following sections.

Liver Meridian

The liver meridian begins at the top of the big toe, extends up the top of the foot to the ankle, and up the inside of the leg to the abdomen where it ends right below the chest.