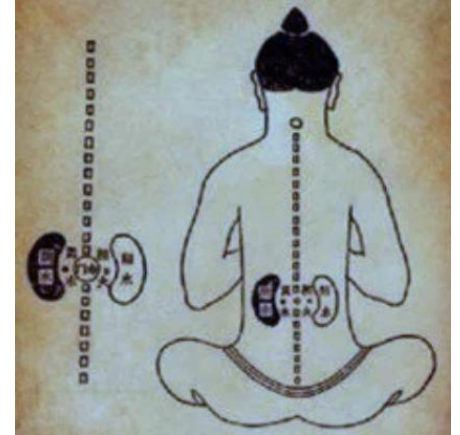


The Mingmen - The Gate of Power & Vitality

The Mingmen - Further your practice by learning about the “Centre of Vitality”

The middle of the lumbar region of your back plays an important role in traditional Chinese medicine and is called the “Gate of Life” or “Centre of Vitality”. Martial artists also call this point the “Gate of Power” because it is an important marker for movement and essential for internal power development and execution.

The probably most common name for it is the Mingmen. Located between your L2 and L3 vertebrae, the Mingmen is not only important for providing Qi to maintain and correct organ function, but it's also the spot in which your kidneys blend the Yin and Yang (Water & Fire) energy. In fact, it is the essence that originates from the kidneys, which is transformed in the most pure kind of Qi. The kidneys are responsible for filtering and cleansing blood. This fresh and clean blood will then be redistributed into the veins. This high quality Qi, which is accompanied by the blood is important to balance your bodies energy properties and supplies our entire body with energy for its vital functions. The Mingmen sits right behind your lower Dan Tian, in fact the 2 are closely related. Although the Mingmen and the Dan Tian have different purposes, collectively, they form what we know as the sea of Qi, our lower energy centre in the body.



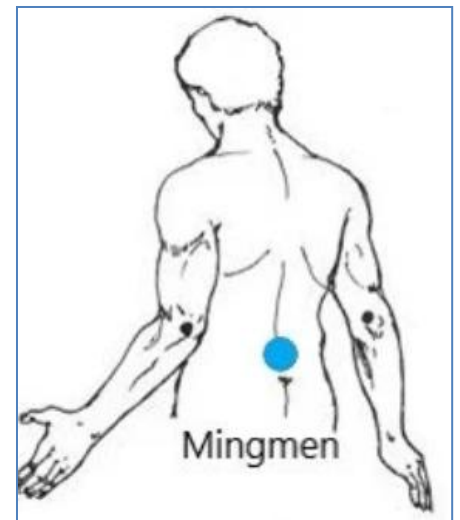
Called “Gate of Life” or “Point of Origin” it is also the area in the body in which a human embryo begins to develop. A Qigong practitioner can utilize this point to assess ones general health. By focusing on it while doing a variety of different stretches, we can assess the condition of our connective tissues and spine. If we feel tightness or discomfort, it could indicate that a certain habit or lifestyle change has a negative impact on our state of health.

Stimulating the Mingmen can leave you feel less stressed, more refreshed and energetic and it can calm us down. It's particularly good to cool down our mind and body during emotional disturbances. One method to activate it is by breathing deeply into your abdomen. With each inhale try to expand the breath towards the lower back. To maximize this effect you can slightly engage the abdominal muscles to help pushing the air towards the Mingmen.

The Mingmen is a nexus for tissues and important to transform internal power.

When we look at this point closely, we can see that it's like a junction where all the different sheets of tissues, muscles and tendons in the back join together. It is the area in the centre of the lumbar fascia where all these tissues link together the entire body.

The skilled internal martial artist is able to feel this network of interlinked tissues and can utilize it to transform the power from the ground up into the area of expression, without any power dissipating due to an isolated part in the chain of power.



Through Qigong we cultivate the energy in the Mingmen. This is usually done indirectly, unlike the cultivation in the lower Dan Tian. However, whenever you cultivate energy in your real lower Dan Tian you are simultaneously strengthening the Mingmen. Once you have abundant energy in the lower Dan Tian it will naturally flow back to the Mingmen and nourish it.

You can see that abundant energy in the Mingmen is essential for good health, longevity and a strong internal martial arts practice. By cultivating it you can facilitate healing in a harmonious and well-balanced way. You can strengthen your whole body and balance the mind.