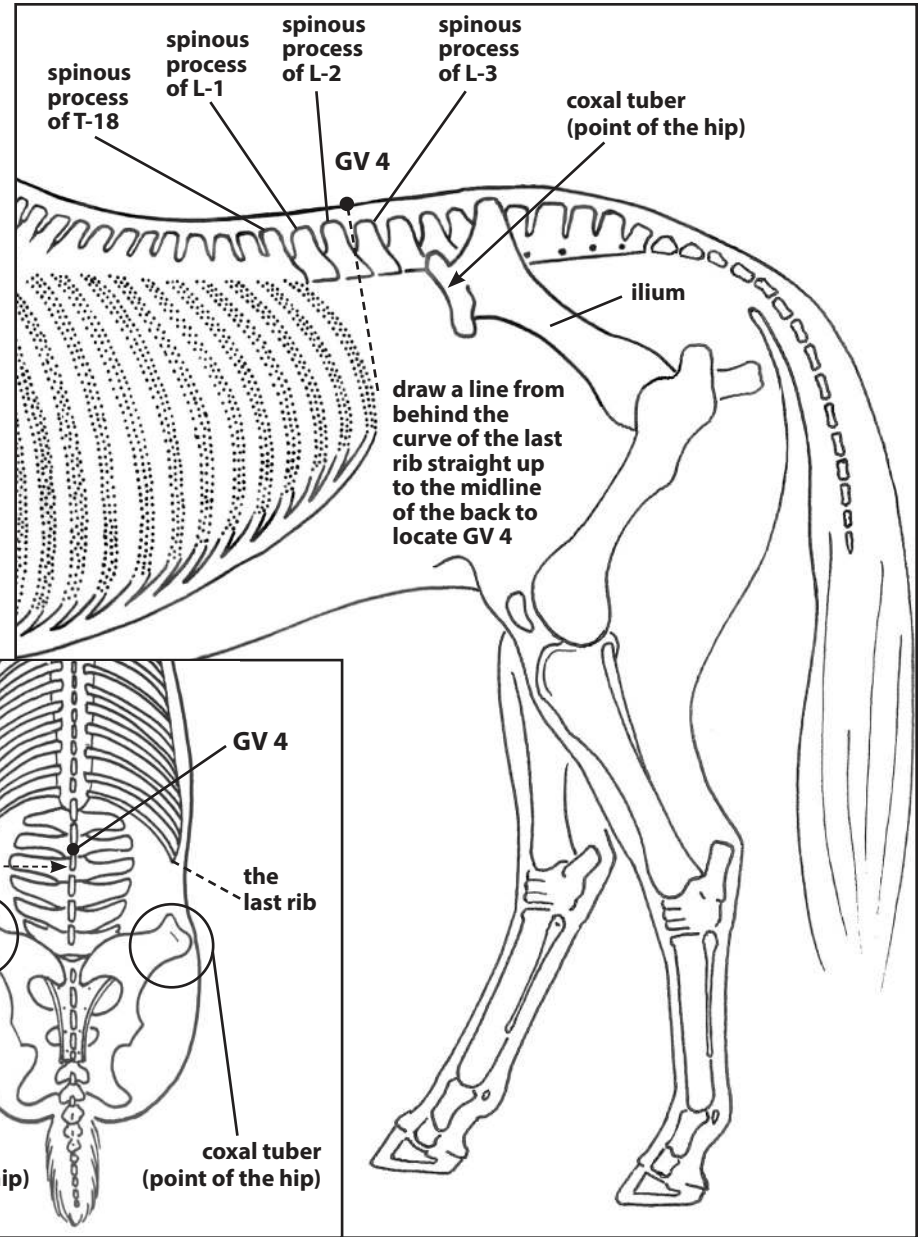
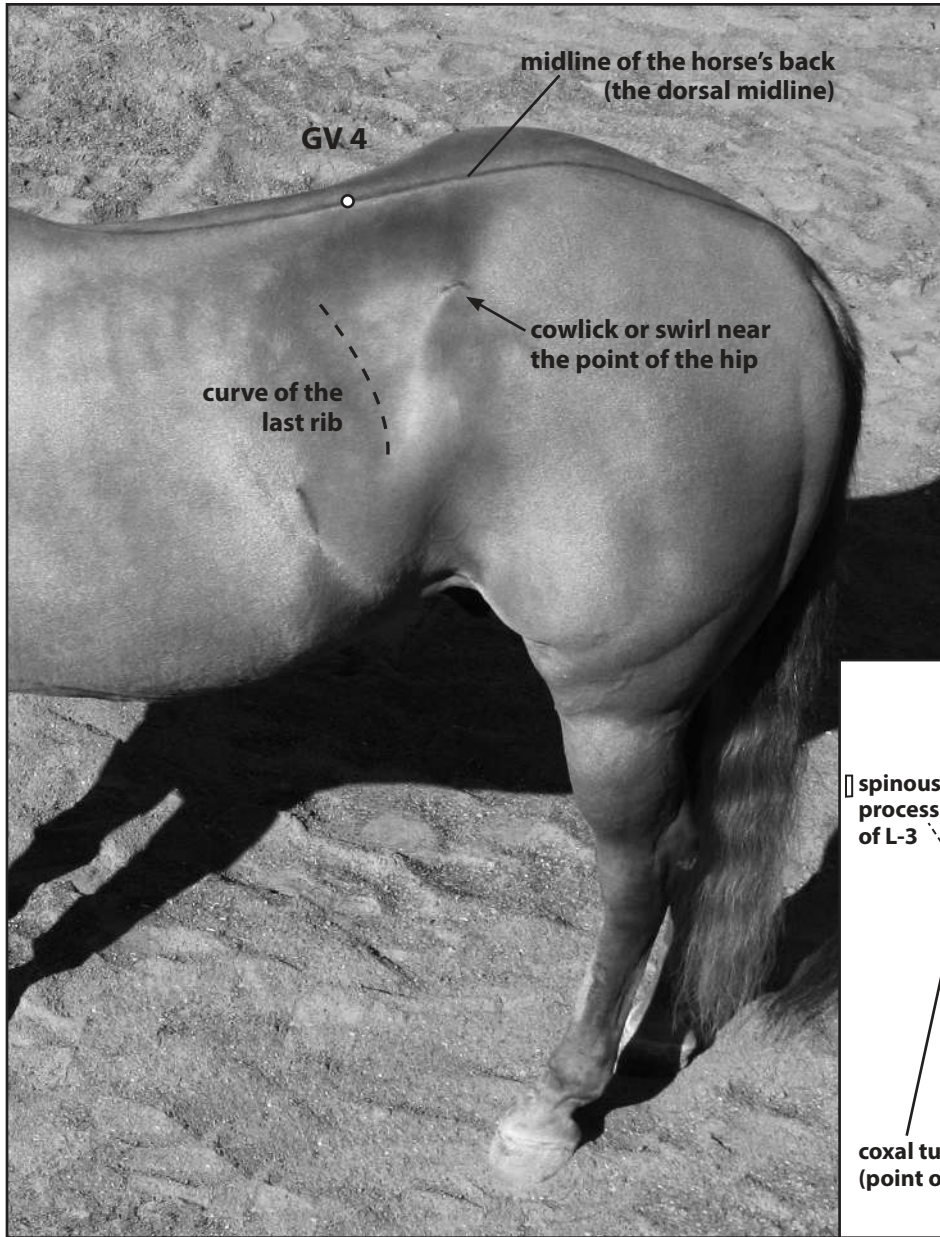
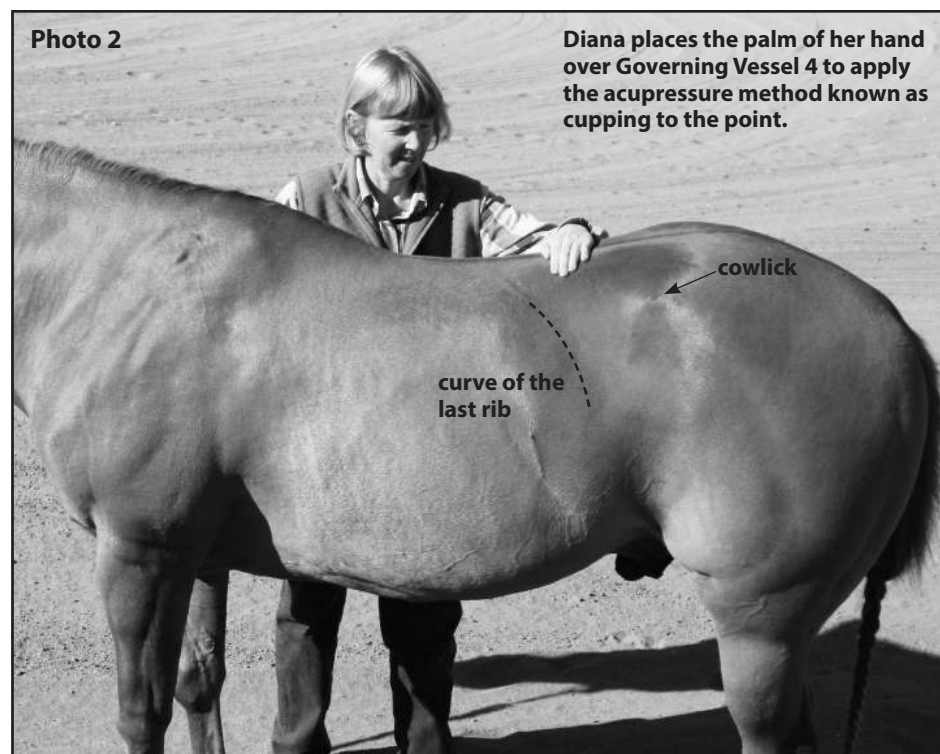
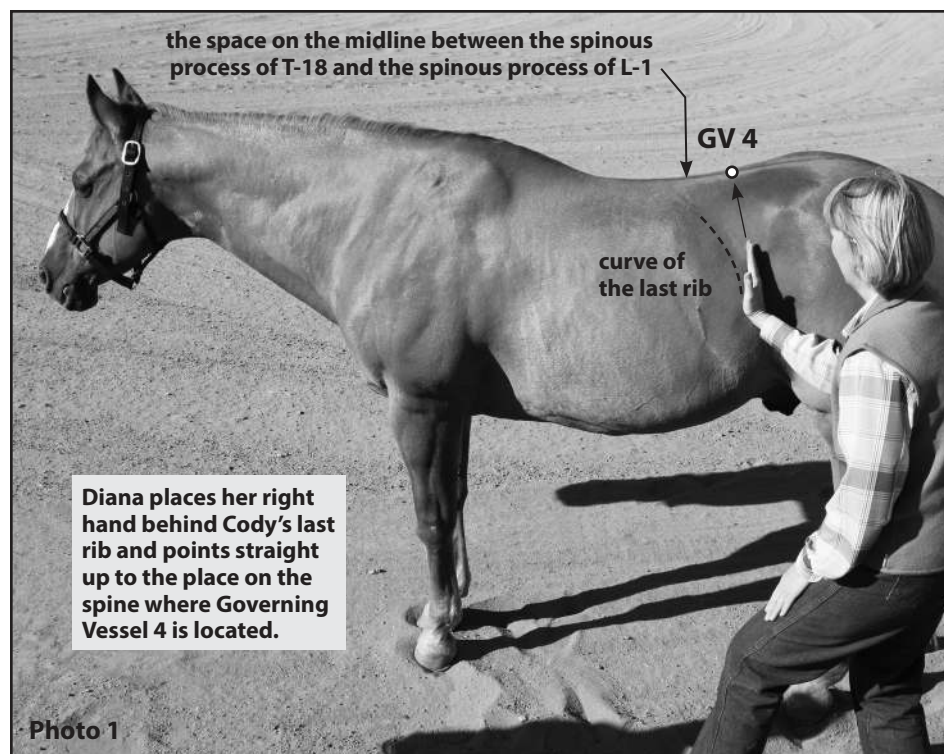


Governing Vessel 4 (GV 4)



How to find Governing Vessel 4



Governing Vessel 4 is on the *midline of the horse's back (the dorsal midline)*. It's in the space between the *spinous process of the second lumbar vertebra (L-2)* and the *spinous process of the third lumbar vertebra (L-3)*.

Find the Spinous Processes: Each bone of the spine is called a vertebra. The spinous process of a vertebra is the top part (the dorsal portion) that sticks up. When you touch the midline of the horse's back you can feel small bony bumps just below the surface. Each bump is the top of a spinous process. If the horse is thin or poorly muscled along the spine you can see these bumps.

Feel the Different Shapes: On the average-size adult horse, the top part of the spinous process of a lumbar vertebra that you can feel is three-quarters to one inch long (from front to back). In contrast, the top part of the

spinous process of a thoracic vertebra that you can feel is shorter, approximately one-third of an inch long (the size of the tip of your little finger). The exceptions are the tops of the spinous processes of the seventeenth and the eighteenth thoracic vertebrae (T-17 and T-18) which are the last vertebrae in the thoracic section. The bump you feel at the top of these processes is a bit larger than the spinous processes of the other thoracic vertebrae.

To practice, follow the *curve of the last rib* forward and up to the spine. This is where the last thoracic vertebra connects to the first lumbar vertebra. Feel for the tops of the thoracic spinous processes which are smaller than the lumbar spinous processes. See if you can find *the space on the midline between the spinous process of (T-18) and the spinous process of the first lumbar vertebra (L-1)*.

Governing Vessel 4 Finding Tip: On the horse's flank, find the place where the last rib curves the farthest back toward the tail. Place your fingers just behind the rib at this curve (see Diana's position in Photo 1). From here, slide your fingers straight up to the midline of the back. Don't follow the rib as it curves forward up to the spine. Keep your hand in front of the *cowlick* or swirl that's in the hair near the *point of the horse's hip (the coxal tuber)*.

Once you reach the midline of the back your fingers should be close to the space where Governing Vessel 4 is located if not directly on it. Feel for the tops of the spinous processes of the lumbar vertebrae and count them to check the location of the point. Governing Vessel 4 is on the midline of the back in the space between the bony bumps of the spinous processes of L-2 and L-3.