

# MEDICATION AND THE INHERENT CONSTITUTIONS.

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The object of dealing with the constitutions, is to provide an understanding of the principles upon which the prescribing of remedies and the determination of treatments are to be adapted for each individual case. The good physician will, in prescribing and treating a patient, always keep the inherent constitution in mind.

### 2.i. Constitution, Disease and Medication.

1. Persons of a ***Mental Primary Constitution*** cannot tolerate powerful remedies, particularly drastic laxatives or purges. Their fine, delicate and sensitive constitution would be severely damaged by doses that would hardly be sufficient in a fully developed Muscular or Osseous constitution. This should always be borne in mind in prescribing for persons of this type. In this primary constitution, there is often an underlying deficiency in the power to resist disease, through depletion of the vitality by nervous over-activity. Therefore there is a tendency for fevers to take on the nature of the low typhoid type, rather than running a high and fiery course; the patient thus becomes pale and shows a constant tendency to deteriorate. Because of their heightened nervous sensibility, powerful treatments such as purging, cupping, sweating and fasting would present the gravest danger to them when they are in the throes of a feverish disease. They need instead the gentler approaches, such as tonics, stimulants and any other kind of support which the case will permit.
2. Those of an ***Osseous Primary Constitution***, are most liable to wear and tear of the joints and to the effects of both recent and past injuries because of their involvement in much hard physical activity. They are generally robust in health, but their diseases are like their movements, slow and progressive, and they may have a disease like arthritis, for many years, but otherwise be in excellent health. Sometimes these people have numerous health problems, but will suffer in silence for many years, and thus add mental stress to their condition by their withdrawal from their complaint. The diet of these people should be high in minerals, and as they often tend to produce much acidity and metabolic ash, tissue cleansing and pain relieving remedies will assist them greatly. Local applications of heat and massage will also be beneficial to them. Individuals of this primary constitution can often take large doses of a medicine without much effect, and yet respond remarkably to the minutest dose

of another.

3. Persons of a ***Vital Primary Constitution*** have a rapid circulation, and a high production of energy and heat, and therefore are most liable to inflammatory diseases. When fever attacks them, they get a high fever. If they get rheumatism, it comes in its acute form. Disease takes hold of them suddenly and quickly. Just as they do everything with emphasis and energy when they are well, when they are ill they are sick with all their might. This type needs sedatives, diaphoretics and cold or tepid baths.

If, however, they become indolent, as is often the case, their energy will turn against themselves. They then become prone to affections of the alimentary canal and the liver. As these persons have now become slow in all their habits, their diseases will also run a slow course, and they become more prone to chronic and degenerative conditions, and can only be cured with difficulty. To externalise their energies once more, they need exercise, restricted diets, hot baths and steam baths, stimulants and blood and tissue cleansers.

4. The interests of those of a ***Muscular Primary Constitution***, are mainly focused on an active lifestyle, and thus they often overstress their systems. Though they are usually strong and healthy, they can be broken down by personal neglect and by continually overstressing their constitution. Therefore, when any kind of condition does get a hold of them, it may cause serious problems due to their system having been worn by the stresses of their lifestyle, and may affect them very badly. These persons can bear strong doses of medicine, and when sick, need to be treated with an energy appropriate to the strength of their constitution. They often suffer severely from rheumatism.

## 2.ii. Consideration of the Acquired Temperament.

In determining your treatment for any condition, it is of course of utmost importance to also consider the acquired temperament. This is clearly a different matter than the inherent constitutions: persons of the same constitution are often quite unlike in the quality and strength of their vital force (Thymos). And those having strong inherent constitutions, frequently abuse them by a poor lifestyle and diet, and eventually end up with broken and very feeble health. The tissues of some individuals are put together as though they were never intended to come apart. Like the wood of the Oak tree they are fine grained and tough, and do not easily acquire a poor temperament. Others, even though they may appear to be equally strong and well proportioned, have very little endurance, and readily acquire a poor temperament from hard work and illness, and may thus readily lose their vital resistance through apparently trifling causes.

The acquired temperament therefore, should always be ascertained prior to commencing any treatment, and before giving any medicine, for what is necessary to restore the health of a person of a strong temperament, may be adverse to the life force of a feeble person, even though they may both belong to a strong inherent constitutional type.

**LIFESTYLE.** The lifestyle should also be considered. Those who use stimulants such as coffee, tea, tobacco, alcohol, etc., require more powerful treatments and larger doses of medicine than those of more temperate habits. Those that do much physical work or exercise, may also need larger doses than those who are primarily involved in mental pursuits. While those who take much Allopathic medicine may have an unpredictable response to a given dose.

**CLIMATE.** Medicines act differently on the same persons in summer than in winter. Sedatives and hypnotics act more powerfully in hot weather and warm climates than in cold weather and cooler climates, and must therefore be given in smaller doses in the first case. Treatments with heat lose most of their effectiveness in hot weather, as indeed do cold baths in cold weather. Electricity stimulates more in winter, and gentle massage sedates more in summer.

**IDIOSYNCRASY.** Some mild medicines or treatments, may act very powerfully, or even violently in some individuals. This is due to an individual peculiarity of the constitution, which is called idiosyncrasy. Another idiosyncrasy that may occur is where a person has the opposite response to the normal action of a medicine, i.e.: the person may sleep more soundly after drinking a strong stimulant such as coffee. Persons who react in this manner, are exceptions to the general rule. A physician can never predict beforehand if and when an idiosyncrasy will manifest. Most patients, however, already know of their own idiosyncrasies, and should be questioned about this before any treatment or remedy is given for the first time.

**THE GENDER.** The tendency for the different sexes to elicit a different response to a given treatment or remedy should never be overlooked. Males generally have a heavier frame than females, and the response of their nervous system is therefore not as sensitive as that of females; males therefore often require stronger treatments and remedies, especially for conditions that affect the nervous system. The treatment of females requires the observation of special care when they are being treated during menstruation and pregnancy, as during these times physiological sensitivity is much greater.

**INFLUENCE OF AGE.** We will in this section, for the purpose of classifying the administration of treatments, divide human life into infancy, childhood, youth, maturity and old age. Each of these periods has special and individual characteristics, which will modify the response to treatment, medicines and disease.

**CHILDHOOD.** The period is usually divided into two parts: i. Infancy and ii. Childhood proper.

**Infancy**, the first part, is considered to commence at birth and continue until the age of seven. Infancy is marked by impressionability, sensitivity and excitability; the child is therefore strongly affected by all things, including any irritation. During this time teething and other disturbances occur and require careful management as they may undermine the child's ability to fight off disease.

**Childhood** proper commences, at the conclusion of infancy, and lasts until the majority of growth has been completed and reproductive capacity has been established (usually between 12 and sixteen

years of age). The permanent teeth form during this time, while infections, parasites and other minor ailments are common. During these periods there is little sexual differentiation and considerable emotional sensitivity which requires constant and careful observation.

**YOUTH.** This period follows on from childhood; it marks the completion of physical development, including that of the secondary sexual characteristics. During this stage the frame acquires its mature form, proportion, and strength, while the mind completes its development of character. Any latent hereditary tendencies to disease will tend to manifest at this time and adherence to a proper diet, healthy lifestyle and high morals are essential in order to ensure that constitutional strength develops to its fullest extent and the foundations for a healthy life are properly established. This period concludes around 25 years of age, when physical development has been fully completed.

**ADULTHOOD.** This period follows youth and embraces the vigorous time of life, when the powers of body and mind are at their summit and the physical and mental functions have become fully established. It is during this period that the woman is most subject to any feminine ailments. Indeed these problems are so common, that the physician who is able to treat them with the greatest skill and appropriate sensitivity, may be said to be at the head of their profession.

**MATURITY.** This is the period when the functions begin to gradually decline, and the weight of the years starts to tally. The time of the commencement of maturity is different for everyone, and will depend much on the constitutional strength and the past lifestyle. Many ailments are common to this period, and these will require their particular and specific management, which must take into account the decreasing resilience of frame and constitution, and the slower physical response.

### **The Law of Frequency of Treatment and Dosage.**

Each succeeding treatment or dose of any remedy should be given before the effect of the previous one has gone. If this rule is not strictly followed, there will be no progress in the cure. What is gained by each dose is lost by the weakening of the constitution in the interval. Care must be taken, however, not to apply this rule too strictly with some powerful types of treatment, or to medicines capable of causing an accumulative effect, and to certain high potency Homeopathics.

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