

INHERENT CONSTITUTIONS

In Traditional Chinese Medicine, individuals can be categorized to fit into one or two particular Elements. The state of an individual's health can be influenced by their "inherent" elemental status. An individual's inherent constitution influences the animal's body structure, health, emotions, and when exposed to the same stress factors, individuals of different constitutions will react in a different way, whether it is positively or negatively. When a constitution is in balance, there is harmony and health in the system. When unbalanced, there is disease.



FIRE

(HEART AND SMALL INTESTINE)
(PERICARDIUM AND TRIPLE HEATER)

An individual with a Fire constitution is like a good Emperor who is persuasive and skilled at inspiring others. Fire types are very social and enjoy being the class clown and demand to be the center of attention. Any breed of dog can have a Fire constitution, but Toy Breed dogs are the poster children for Fire. They are very social creatures and most happy when people are around them. They respond intensely to any warmth extended to them, wanting to prolong the interaction. They are self-centered and their thoughts revolve around "What can YOU do for ME?" One reference refers to them as "Wizards" because they are very charismatic and capable of influencing others around them with little effort. Their guiding principle involves fusing with others and sharing warmth and love because it makes THEM feel good.

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

- Easily Excited
- Extroverted
- Friendly and Playful
- Sensitive
- Difficult to calm down
- Noisy and talkative (barkers)
- Enjoy attention and physical contact

IF THEY WERE PEOPLE

- Natural performers
- Successful salespeople
- Politicians
- Actors
- Comedians
- Optimistic, always looking on the "bright side"

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Strong body
- Small head
- Small but bright eyes
- Prominent blood vessels
- Pulses are fast or full
- Runs very fast but easily fatigued
- Short distance sprinter

EXCESSIVE FIRE ELEMENTALS

- Hyperactive
- High strung
- Over-excitabile
- Attention seeking
- Manic behavior
- Inappropriate social behaviors

DEFICIENT FIRE ELEMENTALS

- Lonely but want to be alone
- Lacking interest in life
- Unwilling to engage
- Lack confidence to socialize
- Depressed

PREDISPOSED TO DISEASES

- Heart disease
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Sores in the mouth
- Insomnia
- Irritable bowel disease (IBD)
- Anxiety / Behavior disorders



EMOTION: Joy is the emotion that resonates with fire. The sound of Joy is Laughter. Fire imbalance exists when an individual shows no joy, no laughter, while those surrounding them are happy, joyful and laughing. Imbalanced Fire elementals often vacillate from extreme highs and lows in short periods of time.

SPIRIT: The Heart houses the *Shen*, which can be translated as “mind,” “spirit,” or “consciousness.” The *Shen* plays a major role in all mental activities since it is our self-awareness. It allows us to think clearly, to be able to concentrate. The *Shen* reflects the inner vitality (the Classics say that you can measure the status of one’s *Shen* by noting the “sparkle in the eyes”). If the *Shen* is imbalanced, all other spirits are affected and are impaired. In severe cases, one can exhibit excessive volatile emotions, panic, and anxiety. Not only does the *Shen* influence the level of consciousness, it also impacts the ability to sleep restfully. During the day, the *Shen* is engaging with the world around it but at night it must retreat to the Heart to rest. If the Heart is not healthy, the *Shen* becomes “unrooted” and agitated – this can be seen in the dog that circles the bed time and time again, unable to settle down. The pet may have difficulty getting to sleep. Once asleep, they frequently have a dream disturbed rest.

SEASON: Summer, the season of growth and climate Heat, are both associated with Fire. Balanced Fire personalities typically seek out and enjoy the light and warmth of the sun.

TIME OF DAY: Traditional Chinese Medicine recognized the need for a circadian rhythm of organ functions. It wouldn’t be healthy for your Heart to be fully functioning all the time: Being fully engaged with the environment is important when you are focused on a task, however it doesn’t help when you are trying to fall asleep. This circadian rhythm recognizes that having times when organs aren’t functioning at full force is just as important as the times they are.

11 AM to 1PM = Heart high tide

1 PM to 3 PM = Small Intestine high tide

7 PM to 9 PM = Pericardium high tide

9 PM to 11 PM = Triple Heater high tide

11 PM to 1 AM = Heart low tide

1 AM to 3 PM = Small Intestine low tide

7 AM to 9 PM = Pericardium low tide

9 AM to 11 AM = Triple Heart low tide

Note: Most problems with heart disease and congestive heart failure (Deficiency) occur at the low tide, while most heart attacks (Excess) occur at high tide.

TISSUES: The Heart is said to “govern the Blood and Blood vessels”. The function of the Heart is to control the Blood vessels and warm the body by propelling Qi and Blood.

IDEAL DEVELOPMENTAL ENVIRONMENT: If your puppy has a Fire constitution, it is crucial for them to learn how to temper their excitement, exuberance and joy and to conserve their energy. Providing moments of quiet and solitude and teaching them to gain enjoyment in these moments of inactivity will help give them balance as they grow. The ideal trainer should be focused, calm, quiet, and attentive.

PREVENTION AND THERAPY: Because the Heart belongs to the Fire element, YANG is often Excessive. The Excess Fire can damage YIN which is considered the “lubrication and fluid” of the body, and by burning off the fluid, this type is prone to dry conditions (YIN Deficiency). These dogs may have flaky skin and dandruff, dry, cracked pads and hyperkeratosis on the leather of the nose. Diet recommendations include white fish, brown rice, wheat, and vegetables such as spinach, broccoli, celery and mushrooms.