

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.



METAL

(LUNG AND LARGE INTESTINE)

An individual with a Metal constitution is like a perfectionist or an athlete – they are driven, methodical and hard working dogs. Any breed of dog can have a Metal constitution, but Northern breeds like Huskies and Herding dogs like Border Collies are the poster children for Metal. They seek perfection and recognition and can manifest as the "stubborn" dog that "resists" training - they know the command, but are unwilling to follow it. They are methodical, preferring definition, structure and system, projecting a calm and neat persona. They approach the tasks in their lives with discipline and efficiency and can take things in and let things go, using what is necessary. They live according to reason and principles, holding everyone to the highest standards, respecting authority. Metal's mantra can be described as *"What is my job and how can I be more efficient?"* These are the breeds that need to have a job to thrive – they don't do well with sedentary lifestyles.

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

- Reserved
- Disciplined
- Methodical
- Confident
- Aloof
- Independent
- Organized

IF THEY WERE PEOPLE

- Perfectionist
- Prime minister
- Olympic athlete
- Overachiever
- Accountant
- Auditor

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Broad forehead
- Wide nose
- Broad chest
- Good hair coat
- Long life spans

EXCESSIVE METAL ELEMENTALS

- Workaholic
- Obsessive
- Compulsive
- Cannot let go
- Robotic / non-emotional
- Rigid

DEFICIENT METAL ELEMENTALS

- Unmotivated
- Overly emotional (fragile)
- Vocal
- Isolated / Lonely
- Clingy
- Separation anxiety

PREDISPOSED TO DISEASES

- Upper respiratory infections
- Asthma and bronchitis
- Skin issues
- Chronic constipation
- Chronic diarrhea
- Immune related disease



EMOTION: Grief is the emotion that resonates with Metal. The Metal within an individual allows them to move on and let go after a loss. If Metal is out of balance, the individual can become stuck, unable to let go, resulting in anxiety, anger, emptiness, abandonment, and pain.

FUNCTION: The Lungs control the breathing and regulates the respiratory system. It is the only Yin organ that has any direct connection with the outside world. The Lung is responsible for extracting Qi from the air to combine with Qi from food and provide the body with post-natal Essence. The Large Intestine (The Yang organ counterpart in Metal) is responsible for absorbing the last remaining pure fluids and excreting the turbid remains from the body. It is also responsible for draining the mind and spirit of the dregs that bring them down.

SEASON: Metal correlates with the time of harvest, Autumn. The time of decreasing light, increasing cold, and shorter days. The innate quality of Metal is to descend and become “clearer.” The direction of Metal is inward. During Autumn, trees and plants are letting go of their leaves, pulling their reserves inward. In China, Dryness is predominant in Autumn – it can invade the body causing a dry nose, dry throat, dry skin and a dry cough.

TIME OF DAY: Traditional Chinese Medicine recognized the need for a circadian rhythm of organ functions. It wouldn't be healthy for your Large Intestine to be fully functioning all the time: Being fully engaged with defecation is important when you need to evacuate the bowels, 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.

3 AM to 5 AM = Lung high tide

3 PM to 5 PM = Lung low tide

5 AM to 7 AM = Large Intestine high tide

5 PM to 7 PM = Large Intestine low tide

Note: Impaired breathing episodes in the early morning often indicates a weakness of the Lung; also, most animals will have a bowel movement first thing in the morning.

TISSUES: A responsibility of the Lung is to disperse the *Wei Qi* – or defensive Qi – to the skin; hence the skin is associated with the Lungs. The skin is the first defensive barrier the body has against external pathogens and it is the *Wei Qi* that protects the body from these potential invading pathogenic factors. A weakness in the Lungs results in a deficiency of the *Wei Qi* and an increased susceptibility to colds, flu and allergies. Poor quality skin, dry skin, clogged pores are all manifestations of problems involving the Lung.

IDEAL DEVELOPMENTAL ENVIRONMENT: It is crucial for young Metal Elementals to learn to balance their need for control and routine with spontaneity and social interaction. Owners and trainers should introduce fun with play, and maintain a level of high energy into their training regimen. Training should be inventive, not rigidly controlled.

PREVENTION AND THERAPY: Metal individuals are predisposed to respiratory issues (asthma, upper respiratory infections, bronchitis), skin issues (rashes, eczema), problems with sweating, bowel issues, chronic constipation and diarrhea.