NMDE211 Energetics of Food

Session 4

Four Humours Part II

Nutritional Medicine Department
Tutorial – Start of Class

Food presentations:

Food presentations by students at start of class:
• Sanguine temperament
• Phlegmatic temperament
Session Summary

• Melancholic temperament
  – Imbalance patterns, signs and symptoms of imbalance
  – Foods to address melancholic temperament imbalance

• Choleric temperament
  – Imbalance patterns, signs and symptoms of imbalance
  – Foods to address choleric temperament imbalance

• Synthesis of the four humours/temperaments
A note on Fire and Digestion

- The Fire element is behind the digestion of food (also relates to the metabolic fire), which Greek Medicine calls *pepsis*; digestion is the process in which the body uses some of its own metabolic heat and energy to "cook" or concoct the raw nutrient juices of food and drink and transform them into the Four Humours, which then feed the whole organism.

- In the following personality types we need to consider the effect of Fire not only in the HOT of the Choleric type but in the dry of Melancholic and Choleric types. For example, heating foods can cause more dryness and unbalance the humour.
Melancholic Temperament

• **Humour:** Black Bile
• **Basic Qualities:** Cold and dry
• **Face:** Squarish or rectangular head and face. Prominent cheekbones, sunken hollow cheeks common. Small, beady eyes. Teeth can be prominent, crooked or loose. Thin lips.
• **Physique:** Tends to be thin, lean. Knobby, prominent bones and joints common. Prominent veins, sinews, tendons. Muscle tone good, but tends to be stiff, tight. Rib cage long and narrow, with ribs often prominent. Can gain weight in later years, mainly around midriff.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic Temperament

- **Hair**: Colour dark, brunette. Thick and straight. Facial and body hair in men tends to be sparse.
- **Skin**: A dull yellow or darkish, swarthy complexion. Feels coarse, dry, leathery, cool. Callouses common.
- **Appetite**: Variable to poor. Varies, fluctuates according to mental/nervous/emotional state (consider Sympathetic dominance)
- **Digestion**: Variable to poor; irregular. Digestion also varies according to mental/nervous/emotional state. Colic, gas, distension, bloating common.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic Temperament

Overall Metabolism:

• Nervous system consumes many nutrients, minerals.
• Nutritional deficiencies can cause a craving for sweets, starches.
• Thyroid tends to be challenged, stressed (contrast phlegmatic) Metabolism often slow and variable, dependant on NS
• Prone to dehydration, poor water consumers due to nervous state and digestive secretions
• GI function variable, erratic; digestive secretions tend to be deficient.
• Blood tends to be thick, poor hydration.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic Temperament

Predispositions:

- Anorexia; Nervous, colicky digestive disorders. Constipation.
- Spleen disorders; nutritional and mineral deficiencies, anaemia; Blood sugar problems, hypoglycemia; wasting, emaciation, dehydration.
- Poor circulation and immunity; arthritis, rheumatism, neuromuscular disorders; (Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic Temperament

- **Urine**: Tends to be clear and thin.
- **Stool**: Typical Irritable Bowel picture, Can either be hard, dry, compact; or irregular, porous, club shaped. Constipation.
- **Sweat**: Generally scanty. Can be subtle, thin, indicating poor immunity (decreased ability due to the deficiency to throw a good fever or sweat). Nervous stress can increase sweating in small areas.
- **Sleep**: Sleep onset insomnia. Stress and overwork worsen sleep, activities that drive stress and are a result of stress like staying up late aggravate insomnia. Generally a light sleeper who doesn’t always feel rested

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic Temperament

- **Dreams**: Generally dark, moody, sombre, disturbing. Themes of grief, loss common.
- **Mind**: Overall an intelligent person with an analytical intellect; detail oriented. Reflective, studious, philosophical (at times religious). Retentive faculty of memory well-developed. Thinking can be too rigid, dogmatic. A prudent, cautious, pessimistic mental outlook which can appear dark or negative. Efficient, realistic, pragmatic.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic Temperament

• **Personality:** Practical, pragmatic, realistic. Efficient, reliable, dependable. A reflective, stoic, philosophical bent. Can be nervous, high strung. Frugal; they can also be too attached to material possessions. Overall serious, generally they are averse to gambling, risk taking behaviours. Can be moody, depressed, withdrawn. Can easily get stuck in a rut. Excessive attachment to status quo, therefore reactive to change in a resistant and negative way. Moody, pessimistic

  (Greek Medicine.net, 2015; Stelmack & Stalikas 1991, p 255)
PERFECT MELANCHOLY PERSONALITY
THE INTROVERT . THE THINKER . THE PESSIMIST

Emotions
• Deep and thoughtful
• Analytical
• Serious and purposeful
• Genius prone
• Talented and creative
• Artistic or musical
• Philosophical and poetic
• Appreciative of beauty
• Sensitive to others
• Self-sacrificing
• Conscientious
• Idealistic

At work
• Schedule oriented
• Perfectionist, high standards
• Detail conscious
• Persistent and thorough
• Orderly and organized
• Neat and tidy
• Economical
• Sees the problem
• Finds creative solutions
• Needs to finish what is started
• Likes charts, graphs, and figures

As a parent
• Sets high standards
• Wants everything done right
• Keeps home in good order
• Picks up after children
• Sacrifices own will for others
• Encourages scholarship and talent

As a friend
• Makes friends cautiously
• Content to stay in background
• Avoids causing attention
• Faithful and devoted
• Will listen to complaints
• Can solve others’ problems
• Deep concern for other people
• Moved to tears to compassion
• Seeks ideal mate
Melancholic - Diet

• The delicate, colicky Melancholic digestion and *pepsis* are notoriously difficult to treat and manage, and Melancholic individuals tend to have more food sensitivities, and are less tolerant of dietary abuses, than any of the other Four Temperaments (IBS/SIBO/dysbiosis).

• Foods that are unduly drying, astringent, acrid or sour all have a tendency to aggravate pathologies of Black Bile, and condiments that are excessively hot and spicy can, through their hot, irritating nature, also aggravate the Dry quality in Melancholics, aggravating colic, constipation and irritable bowel.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Melancholic-Diet

- **AVOID:**
  - Drying/Astringent/acid/sour: tannins (tea), lentil, apples, quinces, plums, lemons, citrus,
  - Hot/Spicy: coffee, chilli, garlic, horseradish, Tobacco and narcotics (lifestyle)

- **Eat More:**
  - Light and nourishing: traditional breads, soft cheese, root vegetables, fennel, sweet potato, chicory, celery, eggs, animal proteins like lamb (not in excess due to heat, no added spices)
Melancholic - Diet

• Overeating overloads the Melancholic intestines and GI tract, increasing the possibility of colic and dysfunction; nervous binge eating and eating on the run, or at odd hours, is also to be avoided.

• The dietary regimen for Melancholics needs to be well balanced and regulated in every respect, with regards to food composition, quality and quantity, as well as eating in a calm, relaxed environment, at regular eating hours.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Specific Questions

- From the information you have just covered about the Melancholic type brainstorm some specific questions related to the Melancholic Humour.

- Remember Specific Questions will help you to exclude or include a constitutional diagnosis by confirming or negating a particular aspects specific to that constitutional type. These questions are used after general questioning and will often reveal a yes or no answer.

- Keep these questions in a safe place to be referred to over the coming weeks.
Choleric Temperament
Choleric Temperament

- **Humour:** Yellow Bile
- **Basic Qualities:** Hot and Dry
- **Face:** Broad jaw. Sharp nose, high cheekbones. Sharp, angular facial features. Sharp, fiery, brilliant, penetrating eyes.
- **Physique:** Compact, lean, wiry. Good muscle tone, definition. Prominent veins and tendons. Broad chest common. An active, sportive type. Weight gain usually in chest, arms, belly, upper body (especially later years).
- **Hair:** Often curly. Can also be thin, fine. Balding common in men. Blonde or reddish hair common.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Choleric Temperament

- **Skin:** Ruddy or reddish colour if heat predominates; sallow or bright yellow if bile predominates. Rough and dry, quite warm.

- **Appetite:** Sharp and quick. Soon overcome by ravenous hunger. Fond of meat, fried foods, salty or spicy foods, alcohol, intense or stimulating taste sensations.

- **Digestion:** Sharp and quick. Tendency towards gastritis, hyperacidity, acid reflux. When balanced and healthy, can have a "cast iron stomach", able to digest anything.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Choleric Temperament

- **Metabolism:** Strong, fast, active; catabolic dominant (especially in health). Liver and bile metabolism can be problematic. Digestive secretions strong, bowel transit time short. Adrenals, sympathetic nervous system dominant (beneficial in health, negative in ill health). Strong inflammatory reactions.


  (Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Choleric Temperament

• **Urine:** Tends to be scanty, dark, thin. Can be hot or burning.
• **Stool:** Tends towards diarrhoea, loose stools. Can have a yellowish colour, foul odour.
• **Sweat:** Profuse from all body parts (dripping), especially in summer, or with vigorous physical activity. Strong body odour. Sensitive to hot weather, suffers greatly in summer.
• **Sleep:** Often fitful, restless, disturbed, especially with stress, indigestion. Often tends to wake up early, or in the middle of the night with covers off or rumpled.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Choleric Temperament

• **Dreams:** Often of a military or violent nature. Dreams of fire, red things common. Fight or flight, confrontation.

• **Mind:** Bold, daring, original, imaginative, visionary. Ideation faculty well-developed. Brilliant intellect, sharp penetrating insight. The idea person who prefers to leave the details to others.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Choleric Temperament

- **Personality:** Prone to anger, impatience, irritability; short temper. Bold, courageous, audacious; loud, antagonistic, contentious. Dramatic, bombastic manner; high powered personality. The rugged individualist and pioneer; thrives on challenge. The fearless leader. Seeks exhilaration, intense experiences. Prone to extremism, fanaticism. Driven, "Type A" personality.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
POWERFUL Choleric PERSONALITY

THE EXTROVERT . THE DOER . THE OPTIMIST

Emotions
• Born leader
• Dynamic and active
• Compulsive need for change
• Must correct wrongs
• Strong willed and decisive
• Unemotional
• Not easily discouraged
• Independent and self-sufficient
• Exudes confidence
• Can run anything

At work
• Goal oriented
• Sees the whole picture
• Organizes well
• Seeks practical solutions
• Moves quickly to action
• Delegates work
• Insists on production
• Makes the goal
• Stimulates activity
• Thrives on opposition

As a parent
• Exerts sound leadership
• Establishes goals
• Motivates family to action
• Knows the right answer
• Organizes household

As a friend
• Has little need for friends
• Will work for group activity
• Will lead and organize
• Is usually right
• Excels in emergencies
Choleric - Diet

• The Choleric Temperament has the nature of its associated element, Fire, and is Hot and Dry in its basic qualities.

• The dominant humour of the Choleric Temperament is the Choleric or Bilious humour, or Yellow Bile because of this any foods that will aggravate these qualities will aggravate the Choleric condition.

• Foods that are too hot or too dry will disturb the pepsis and will cause in the Choleric symptoms an uprising of heat symptoms.
Choleric - Diet

• Avoid foods that aggravate the choleric temperament – e.g. unhealthy fats and oils, like hydrogenated trans fats and oxidized, rancid oils, including various foods, like old, stale nuts and seeds, in which they might be found; heavy meats, especially red meat, and greasy or fried foods are also major culprits.

• Choleric individuals need to eat a diet rich in cooling, cleansing, alkalising and anti-inflammatory fresh fruits and vegetables; especially valuable are fresh fruit, as well as green, leafy vegetables, especially cooling, bitter greens like lettuce, endive, artichoke and dandelion.

(Greek Medicine.net, 2015)
Specific Questions

- From the information you have just covered about the Choleric type brainstorm some specific questions related to the Choleric Humour.

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Synthesis of the Four Humours
## Four Humours/Temperaments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Melancholic</th>
<th>Phlegmatic</th>
<th>Choleric</th>
<th>Sanguine</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black bile</td>
<td>Phlegm</td>
<td>Yellow bile</td>
<td>Blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Fire</td>
<td>Air</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Autumn</td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old age</td>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>Childhood</td>
<td>Adolescence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold &amp; dry</td>
<td>Cold &amp; moist</td>
<td>Hot &amp; dry</td>
<td>Hot &amp; moist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spleen</td>
<td>Brain</td>
<td>Gallbladder</td>
<td>Heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturn</td>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>Jupiter</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Jackson, 2001)
Four Humours - Synthesis

• Conducting a consultation based on the humoral system requires astute observation of physical characteristics and in depth questioning to understand the patient’s emotional state and personality traits.

• A systematic approach to determining the patient’s basic constitution and current state of imbalance should be adopted.
Four Humours - Synthesis

- Face
- Physique
- Hair
- Skin
- Appetite
- Digestion
- Metabolism
- Predispositions

- Urine
- Stool
- Sweat
- Sleep
- Dreams
- Mind
- Personality
Four Humours - Synthesis

- Once all of the information has been collected through observation and questioning the excesses and deficiencies of the various humours and the constitutional temperament can then be determined.
- In the Greek humoural system diet would have formed a significant part of the treatment regime but patients would have also been given lifestyle recommendations as well as other therapies such as bloodletting and purging to help balance the humours.
Session Summary

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  – Foods to address melancholic temperament imbalance
• Choleric temperament
  – Imbalance patterns, signs and symptoms of imbalance
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• Synthesis of the four humours/temperaments
Tutorial

Case focused on identifying imbalances in the humours:

• Small group case analysis
• Large group case synthesis and discussion
References


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