

# THE ECLECTIC TRIPHASIC MEDICAL SYSTEM

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The Eclectic Triphasic Medical System (ETMS) is an innovative, integrative, wholistic approach to significantly improving a person's quality of life and extending life span. The ETMS model allows the practitioner to develop personalized, patient-centered treatment regimens for persons with chronic illnesses, as well as to formulate an individualized, scientifically based herbal and nutritional program that allows any person to master stress, improve energy, prevent degenerative disease, and age gracefully.

The ETMS model is based on a series of discoveries, most of them a result of clinical work, scientific data, and deep introspection. The emergence of this model is the culmination of more than twenty-five years of clinical practice, which I consider to be my healing quest. Throughout this pilgrimage, I have learned the importance of embracing the mystery in healing as well as applying scientific, evidence-based medicine. This is the underlying truth of ETMS. Thus there are no sharp distinctions made between mystical or philosophical contributions and the applicable discoveries of modern medicine; rather, they are seamlessly united in the wholism of ETMS. The system is truly integrative in that it acknowledges that all levels and dimensions are of necessity involved in healing.

Approaching ETMS requires that one frees one's mind from acquired perceptions and all other natural limitations due to differences of understanding and culture, as well as fear and ego, all of which cloud the truth and the pursuit of healing. The ETMS practitioner and the physician must be willing to forge ahead, respectful of each other's viewpoints, in order to succeed in getting to know each other so as to create a unified approach that can bring about a successful outcome.

Physiology, pathology, and treatment are inseparable from consciousness, mind, and spirit; these penetrate all aspects of life, from the molecular to the mystical. Within ETMS, knowledge stemming from modern scientific contributions to the challenges of chronic disease joins with the wisdom and experience of ancient traditional energetic medical systems. Even though you cannot explain every aspect of herbal medicine in the same way you can the action of a single pharmaceutical drug, nevertheless these two approaches can work side-by-side within the ETMS model, supporting and complementing each other.

In ETMS, inner prayer is applied in quietude to the interior being, while the synergism of the integrative treatment plan is applied outwardly to the exterior

manifestation of disease. Such an approach is a reflection of the ultimate union, that which is between heaven and earth, all the way to the vital end: union with the divine. To believe in, experience, and benefit from such a system, a person must be transformed at the level of human nature itself. This change is both spiritual and physical, hence it is cosmic—or as the ancient alchemists asserted, “as above, so below.”

## THE WHOLISM OF ETMS

In looking at the whole person, we come to understand that the manifestation of a chronic illness is a part of the whole person rather than an isolated entity. Take cancer as an example: it invariably involves a cascade of highly complex contributing factors that are, in part, genetic predispositions. However, these factors vary widely from person to person. For instance, there are hundreds of different types of breast cancer, which are constantly undergoing changes and mutations; yet underlying each type is the unique makeup of the person. It is our commitment to understanding and positively affecting what is endogenous to the person, while at the same time understanding what is exogenous and can be positively changed.

ETMS integrates principles from both traditional and modern medical systems and employs herbal medicine as its primary treatment modality in treating chronic disease. This immensely rich herbal foundation stems from the American Eclectic and Physiomedical herbal traditions popular in the latter half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. ETMS also incorporates knowledge from Eastern (traditional Chinese or East Asian) medicine, which is regarded as the world’s most extensive traditional medical system. Thus the methodology behind ETMS is a complex interweaving of modern science with the constitutional energetic principles and spiritual philosophies of these varied traditional medical systems. The theoretical basis of such an approach provides a framework for developing novel therapeutic strategies while incorporating the best of wholistic and conventional medicine as supported by modern science.

The ETMS approach represents a diversity of ethical

and cultural medical traditions and factors, as well as the specific herbal medicines that have been successfully used in healing for countless generations around the world. Modern nutrition, including orthomolecular nutrition, and modern conventional medicine also contribute to this model. These various systems are not separate or practiced in their traditional way, but rather homogenously secured by a common quest: to provide the utmost benefit to those in need of healing through the embodiment of love.

The evolutionary development of ETMS is the result of six contributing themes or elements: the traditional-classical; the modern-scientific; the analytical; the intellectual; the intuitive-musical; and the contemplative-spiritual. These elements must not be seen merely as superimposed layers, but rather as dynamic streams rising one after another; they diverge, cross, meet, continue with one another, and ultimately harmonize and support one another.

## THE THREE BRANCHES OF ETMS

**Branch 1** examines the personal energetic processes and core constitution of the person (spirit, mind, and body) evaluated from an individual perspective, taking into account aspects such as the efficiency of the secreting endocrine organs and detoxification systems, dietary habits, and lifestyle factors such as sleep patterns, stress, and the inner spirit. When assessing the constitutional energetics and physiology of the person in branch 1, ETMS draws from traditional medical systems while adapting them to contemporary conditions. Thus the ETMS approach is always based on the two essential and universal opposing but interpenetrating energetic forces: the inward/anabolic/yin and the outward/catabolic/yang.

The fundamental physical and psychic substances or dimensions of a person are called *vital force*, *vital essence*, and *vital spirit*. These dimensions in turn emanate through the organ network systems, which, much like their counterparts in traditional Chinese medicine do not correspond directly to their biomedical or anatomic namesakes. These three vital energetic influences, or “treasures,” also represent different states on a continuum, from the physical to the most subtle and nonmaterial.

*Vital force* relates to metabolism, cellular energy transfer, mitochondrial efficiency, and the use of proteins, fats, sugars, and oxygen. It involves the digestive system and lungs, immune system, blood, and bone marrow, and emanates primarily through the digestive/Spleen organ network. *Vital essence* relates to the neuroendocrine (or psychoneuroendocrine) system and emanates through the Kidney organ network. It involves the hypothalamic-pituitary endocrine systems and their hormones, which contribute to adaptation, growth, reproduction, circadian rhythm, and development and underlie many aspects of the mind and the emotions. *Vital spirit* relates to the spiritual, everlasting energy, God living and dwelling within. It emanates primarily through the Heart organ network. *Vital essence* and *vital force* thus both contribute to *vital spirit*, but in clinical practice each component of this vital triad must always be assessed in terms of its relative contribution to the state of health of the person.

**Branch 2** examines the human relationship with the external environment, which can be positive, negative, or indifferent. This includes factors such as the space a person occupies and in which he or she interacts, and his or her perceptions and influences, including the cultural, social, psychic, and physical levels that inhibit or promote disease.

Branch 2 investigates how environmental factors (i.e., stressors), including chemicals, drugs, diet, geographical location, emotions, and socioeconomic relationships affect gene expression. These exogenous stressors impact directly and indirectly on the intricate network of molecular interactions that are associated with the genesis, development, and progression of disease. By systematically identifying these exogenous factors, we can both reduce exposure to damaging influences while simultaneously implementing a treatment plan (dietary, nutritional, and botanical) that provides specific and nonspecific disease protection and prevention. Exogenous factors, such as being with and relating to nature, eating a meal of super-medicinal food, listening to healing music, and getting modest sun exposure can contribute to healthy gene expression in positive ways.

**Branch 3** examines the intracellular and extracellular terrain, involving the energetic, physiological, and molecular biology and genetics of the person's disease.

Some diseases, such as cancer, both respond to yet at the same time alter the molecular, metabolic, and genomic terrain of the host; branch 3 investigates not only the molecular and genetic profile of the tumor itself, but also its interaction with individual host factors (those that comprise branch 1 and might have been induced from aspects within branch 2). Thus, in ETMS, a thorough oncological investigation would involve not only a complete molecular characterization of the tumor, but also a detailed interpretation of the blood chemistry and laboratory values and parameters of the patient not typically included in conventional assessments.

In this post-genomic era, modern medicine has begun to recognize the importance of identifying the molecular and genetic characteristics of cancer cells in each patient. Understanding these individual characteristics has opened many possibilities, including earlier detection of and more effective screening for cancer, as well as identifying the aggressiveness and metastatic potential of a diagnosed tumor, thereby improving prognostic assessment and appropriate treatment selection in terms of type and duration, and even enabling prediction of response to treatment. The emerging concept and practice of "targeted therapy" flows from the fact that many tumor mutations and polymorphisms provide specific targets for a new generation of drugs that are genetically engineered to uniquely attack, antagonize, or inhibit such factors. However, the promise of targeted therapy has yet to be realized; the modern targeted drugs are few, prohibitively expensive, offer minimal benefits for survival, and have many, often serious, adverse effects.

For the ETMS practitioner, however, the value of comprehensive tumor profiling and good laboratory testing in branch 3 provides important clues that enable the preparation and selection of herbal medicines in ways that extend, refine, and deepen the original herbal and dietary approaches to cancer treatment that evolved within traditional medical systems. In the last decade, enormous

research interest and effort is creating an expanding knowledge base of scientific data about the interaction of botanical and natural compounds with cancer biology at the cellular, molecular, and biochemical levels. When these insights are integrated with the branch 3 assessments of the intracellular and extracellular terrain, individualized botanical and nutritional protocols can be designed to address the molecular targets and pathways revealed by the tumor profiling; this approach provides unprecedented therapeutic specificity and effectiveness, as well as freedom from side effects.

ETMS practitioners necessarily stay abreast of the most up-to-date scientific research, not only in oncology and other disease specialties within conventional medicine, but also in botanical medicine and the molecular biology of natural compounds. This approach includes science at the molecular, cellular, and genomic levels, as well as a wholistic view of the human being as a higher order generated through the unified functioning of the integrated human organ systems. The ETMS practitioner recognizes the innate intelligence of the human system and its ability to adapt and respond accordingly through allostasis in the face of challenges and disturbances, using all available means to regulate itself by appropriately adaptive biological, cellular, immunological, and hormonal responses. This adaptive capability is compromised in people with chronic illness and is the constant platform from which the ETMS practitioner seeks to build on by offering foundational support through the use of botanical medicine in the form of tonics such as herbal adaptogens, nutritives\*, and organ-system enhancers, as well as nutritional and dietary therapeutics. The goal of the ETMS practitioner is to apply all of these therapies to enhance the health of the internal terrain and improve the ability to resist disease. To enhance response rather than dictate functionality is a fundamental core concept of ETMS.

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\* *Nutritives* is a term used in botanical medicine to describe plants such as nettles that both have a tonic effect and provide concentrated amounts of various nutritional elements such as vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients.

## ETMS Treatment Toolboxes

1. Botanical medicine
2. Nutritional medicine
3. Dietary medicine
4. Lifestyle medicine
5. Pharmaceutical medicine (if necessary and/or specifically indicated)

Because psychological and spiritual balance are integral to the healing process, an ETMS practitioner will also offer psychological and spiritual guidance as part of each individualized healing protocol.

## THE PRACTICE OF HEALTHY MEDICINE

ETMS emphasizes the practice of “healthy medicine,” which is aimed at the root source of illness, with the primary focus being to bring about harmony and balance throughout the body with the possible support, if necessary, of target-specific, nontoxic, or low-toxicity disease-suppressing pharmaceutical agents. This goal is achieved through the application of synergistic, multitargeting herbal and nutritional formulations, dietary therapeutics, and any specific disease-targeting therapies as indicated.

In the case of cancer, for instance, while targeted chemotherapy may be needed, low doses and metronomic administration are often more effective than “standard-of-care” guidelines. When approaching a disease such as cancer, it is important to formulate a balanced protocol that addresses both the characteristics of the disease as well as the energetic weaknesses of the person (host), because it is when the energy of cancer overrides the internal healing ability of the person that it causes serious damage. These two dynamic aspects—namely, the disease’s energy (“cancer energy” in the case of cancer) and the internal healing energy of the person—should be addressed with an understanding of the relationship dynamics and interplay between the two.

ETMS provides a framework for mapping out a strategic plan that is adaptable to each person and his or her unique circumstances. This plan acknowledges the multitude of disease-contributing factors, both internal and external environmental influences, as well as the internal

environmental factors that have been altered by the disease condition. It addresses the molecular and cellular characteristics as well as important energetic factors, while simultaneously encouraging the innate human capacity to heal—a concept foundational to traditional herbal medical models but largely ignored by conventional medicine.

For example, in the case of cancer, specific agents, natural and/or pharmaceutical, may conduct targeted activity against tumor angiogenesis and metastatic progression, while ETMS therapies also work to build resistance and protect the person’s vital energy and immune system from the damaging effects of conventional cytotoxic treatments. The fundamental objective of ETMS is to support the strength and vitality of the person, thereby providing the energy necessary to maintain the essential processes of cellular reproduction that enable the person to thrive while gaining control over the “cancer energy,” so that it becomes weak to the point that it can no longer invade and manipulate the internal environment for its own survival. ETMS cancer protocols are designed to work synergistically with standard conventional treatment plans but often may involve making changes to the standard-of-care treatments generally prescribed by oncologists. Again, within the ETMS model the practitioner aims to employ the most appropriate treatment for the person, as opposed to the generally accepted treatments based solely on statistical analyses (clinical trials) of heterogeneous patient groups bearing the same diagnosis. At times, herbal and nutritional therapies alone can effectively target multiple disease pathways and are preferred when there is greater risk than benefit in using strong drug therapies, surgery, radiation, or chemotherapy. A coordinated team effort on the part of the patient, the ETMS practitioner, and the oncologist is essential to ensure that the options, timing, and type of treatment are all taken into account at each stage to optimize outcomes.

My hope is that the ETMS will become the future of medicine, that which removes ego and fear, replacing it with compassion, humility, love, and wisdom. ETMS is a unique synthesis of the spiritual and physical perspectives, being uncompromising in its quest for truth in both realms.

My personal practice of ETMS, like the improvisations of a jazz musician, is infused by a spiritual force that harmonizes rhythm, melody, and the artful expression of human science into the whole it is meant to be. Through analysis of objective experiences recorded by millions of doctors and billions of patients over the last five thousand years, combined with modern scientific facts, theories, and statistical findings used as the basis of our modern biomedical system, ETMS represents the culmination of the human potential for achieving a truly integrated medical system. I firmly believe that applying this model in a specific, patient-centered format provides the best means to significantly improve our quality of life and greatly contribute to our longevity.

## ETMS Categories of Botanical Medicine

- 1. Herbal adaptogens** may be either primary or secondary, or adaptogen companions.
- 2. Tonics** enhance and harmonize the vital essence, vital force (or qi, in TCM), and/or vital spirit, as well as the five organ networks. For example, there are blood tonics that nourish and invigorate the blood for conditions such as anemia, and organ system tonics that address the Liver, Kidney, Spleen, Lung, and Heart networks. Herbal medicines with tonic effects are used to treat deficiency syndromes, or to nourish, enhance functionality, and direct energy to the organ network, the blood, and the yin (inward) or yang (outward) needs. Tonics are used when there is insufficiency of vital energy or blood or a yin or yang imbalance. Because debility and deficiency of healthy energy is one of the main causes of ill health and chronic disease (including even cancer), the use of tonics is at the forefront of ETMS therapeutic strategy. In the case of cancer, many herbal medicines with tonic effects can promote the immunologic, hemopoietic, and digestive functions of the body and fortify overall energy; some of them even serve to inhibit tumor cells and reverse the multidrug resistance that frequently occurs with conventional cytotoxic therapies.
- 3. Endocrine/immune system activators and modulators** and other pathway regulators are herbs that improve the functionality of a specific organ as well as generally enhance immunologic response.
- 4. Organ system protectors/detoxifiers** protect us from toxin accumulation and/or enhance detoxification, which is vital for optimal health. Within each cell is an exchange of nutrients, oxygen, glucose, and fats that enter the cell, as well as waste, which is removed by the cell. There are several pathways of detoxification: the liver, the gastrointestinal system, the respiratory system, the urinary system (mainly the kidneys), the skin, and the lymphatic system. It is only when too many toxins are encountered or when the body's normal pathways of detoxification are overloaded that problems arise. Herbal detoxifiers can be general or specific to the blood, lymph, liver, kidneys, bowels, lungs, and skin. Improving the cell's energy efficiency, oxygen utilization, and ability to quench free radicals (redox/antioxidants) is the chief value of this group of herbs.
- 5. Alteratives** improve cellular nutrition and lymphatic drainage. This is an old term used by the Eclectic physicians to describe herbs that specifically improve the interplay of cellular electrolyte exchange and the diffusion of chemical ions across the cell membrane. These herbs improve cellular and lymphatic drainage and were the main herbs used by the Eclectics to treat cancer and other conditions that energetically manifest as an excess of lymph congestion and/or "heat toxins."
- 6. Cytotoxics** (antimetabolites, apoptosis inducers) are herbal extracts and/or specific herbal compounds that have a direct cancer-killing effect, often by inhibiting various enzymes such as topoisomerase I and II, needed for DNA replication, or telomerase, which aids in uncontrolled cell proliferation. Cytotoxics also work by activating apoptosis, the process of programmed cell death, or by inducing selective oxidative damage. For example, in the case of artemisinin, from *Artemisa annua* (i.e., sweet wormwood, or sweet annie), the anticancer mechanism, although diverse in its actions, is mainly related to the cleavage of the iron- or heme-mediated peroxide bridge, followed by the generation of reactive oxygen species.
- 7. Specific herbs** may be recommended based on presenting symptoms and/or constitutional evaluation. These herbs might include nervines to improve the health of the nervous system, mood, and sleep, or herbs that assist in digestion, appetite, and/or pain.