

Review Article

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## CLASSIFICATION OF CONSTITUTIONAL TYPES IN HOMEOPATHY: HISTORICAL INSIGHTS, BIOCHEMICAL TYPOLOGIES, AND PRACTICAL RELEVANCE

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### Abstract

Constitutional prescribing remains central to homeopathic practice, emphasizing the treatment of the person as a whole—physical, mental, and emotional. This review provides a comprehensive study of different constitutional types in homeopathic practice, linking specific mental dispositions with physical expressions, adaptability, miasmatic tendencies, and PQRS (peculiar, queer, rare, and strange) symptoms. Historically, Hippocrates, Aristotle, Galen, and Hahnemann contributed significantly to understanding constitutional types. Further classifications, including Grauvogl's biochemical types—Carbo-nitrogenoid, Oxygenoid, and Hydrogenoid—provide practical frameworks for remedy selection. Diagnosis of constitution aids in individualized totality, remedy essence understanding, and potency selection. This

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article emphasizes the role of constitution in selecting precise remedies for effective treatment. Homeopathic constitutional classification reaffirms the value of totality in prescribing and offers insights into both inherited and acquired traits.

Beyond the classical understanding, recent scholarly discussions within homeopathic literature continue to highlight constitution as an indispensable tool for deep-level prescribing. The integration of psychological patterns, environmental adaptability, and inherited predispositions provides an advanced framework that enables practitioners to approach chronic cases with greater precision. Moreover, constitutional prescribing helps differentiate between superficial symptomatic improvement and genuine curative response. Emerging academic efforts also attempt to correlate constitutional traits with lifestyle, psychosocial stressors, and even epigenetic discussions within integrative medicine. Though these correlations remain theoretical within homeopathy, they contribute to a broader understanding of why individuals manifest chronic disorders differently.

**Keywords:** Constitution; Individualization; Homoeopathy; Prescription

## **Introduction**

The concept of constitution in homeopathy relates to understanding an individual's physical and mental makeup, aiding in remedy selection. Rooted in historical perspectives of Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Galen, the understanding of constitution evolved further through Samuel Hahnemann, who emphasized the role of congenital characteristics, miasmatic influences, and environmental factors in forming chronic

diseases. This paper aims to elucidate the various constitutional classifications, their clinical relevance, and their role in precise remedy selection.

In homeopathic philosophy, constitution is more than a physical phenotype—it is a composite of mental tendencies, emotional patterns, habitual reactions, inherited susceptibilities, and environmental influences. Understanding constitution enables the practitioner to see the patient beyond disease manifestations, aligning with Hahnemann’s insistence on perceiving the “totality of the patient” as the basis of successful prescribing.

Today's focus on personalized medicine parallels homeopathy’s centuries-old emphasis on individualized care. As chronic diseases continue to dominate healthcare concerns globally, constitutional analysis offers deeper insights into predispositions, susceptibility, and long-term prognosis—areas where conventional clinical markers may fail to provide comprehensive explanations.

## **Methods**

This narrative review was based on a qualitative evaluation of classical homeopathic literature including Hahnemann’s *Organon of Medicine*, *Chronic Diseases*, Clarke’s *Constitutional Medicine*, and Kent’s *Lectures*. Supplementary references included contemporary journals such as the *Indian Journal of Research in Homoeopathy (IJRH)*, *Homeopathy Journal*, and other online sources. As this is a narrative review, PRISMA guidelines were not applicable.

The review also incorporated interpretive thematic analysis to extract major theoretical constructs from classical texts. No attempt was made to quantify data, as

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constitutional concepts within homeopathy are inherently qualitative and philosophical in nature. The selection of sources intentionally prioritized classical authors to maintain doctrinal purity, while contemporary journals were used to highlight evolving interpretations and clinical applications. The methodological approach emphasizes synthesis, contextual comparison, and conceptual mapping rather than empirical verification, which aligns with the narrative traditions commonly adopted in homeopathic scholarship.

## **Results**

### **Definitions and Historical Classifications**

- Constitution derives from Latin "Constituere" meaning to set up or establish.
- Defined as the physical and mental makeup influenced by heredity and environment.

The evolution of constitutional thinking reveals a recurring theme across medical traditions: the recognition that individuals display unique biological and psychological patterns that influence disease presentation. This recognition forms the basis of personalized approaches to treatment in various traditional medical systems, such as Ayurveda's doshas and Unani medicine's temperaments (mizaj). Homeopathy's constitutional system—drawing from both ancient and modern classifications—presents a refined model that integrates hereditary predispositions, emotional tendencies, environmental influences, and structural morphology.

Early physicians observed that people with similar body structures often displayed similar disease trends. These correlations led to the emergence of typologies intended not merely for categorization, but for understanding the internal ecology of the individual. Homeopathy adopts this anthropological and physiological insight to tailor remedies that resonate with the totality of the person rather than isolated symptoms.

### **Historical Insights**

- Hippocrates: Short and Thick, Long and Thin types.
- Aristotle: Size, Built, Nature classifications.
- Galen: Sanguine, Bilious, Phlegmatic, and Nervous.
- Hahnemann: Psoric, Sycotic, Syphilitic constitutions integrated with miasmatic understanding.

Modern anthropological studies have reaffirmed that physical constitution often correlates with sociobehavioral tendencies, stress adaptability, and lifestyle predispositions. While homeopathy interprets these correlations through remedy profiles and miasmatic influences, broader medical sciences also recognize constitution as central to understanding chronic disease risk factors. Such cross-disciplinary parallels underline the enduring relevance of constitutional analysis.

### **Other Classifications**

- Mattei: Sanguine, Lymphatic, Mixed.
- Vannier: Carbonic, Phosphoric, Fluoric.

- Kretschmer: Asthenic, Athletic, Pyknic.
- Sheldon: Ectomorph, Endomorph, Mesomorph.
- Bazin: Scrofulous, Gouty, Syphilitic.
- Grauvogl: Carbo-nitrogenoid, Oxygenoid, Hydrogenoid.

These classifications offer nuanced ways to interpret human variation. For example, Sheldon's somatotypes have been used in psychology to study personality correlates, while Kretschmer's body types have influenced psychiatric diagnostic frameworks. Homeopathy integrates these models not for diagnostic purposes but for remedy matching, observing how structural tendencies reflect internal functional patterns. Constitutional assessment becomes both a diagnostic and therapeutic process, guiding the practitioner toward remedies that match the individual's inherent nature.

## **Grauvogl's Biochemical Constitutions**

### **1. Carbo-nitrogenoid Constitution.**

These individuals often display metabolic sluggishness, lower oxygen assimilation, and heightened sensitivity to environmental stagnation. Emotional profile may include anxiety regarding financial security, fear of poverty, or irritability tied to metabolic dysfunction. Remedies suited for this constitution often exhibit corresponding tendencies such as sluggish circulation, digestive torpor, and emotional hypersensitivity.

### **2. Oxygenoid Constitution**

Oxygenoid individuals may display remarkable mental energy, quick comprehension, and intense emotional expression. These traits, while beneficial, also predispose them to rapid exhaustion or burn-out under stress. Their physical system often reacts forcefully, producing acute, intense symptoms. Remedies such as Mercurius mirror this intensity, rapid progression, and destructive tendencies.

### **3. Hydrogenoid Constitution**

Hydrogenoid types tend to show weather-sensitivity, particularly to dampness, fog, and cold-humid conditions. Emotional expressions may include mood fluctuations, dependency, or gentle, yielding dispositions. Corresponding remedies like Pulsatilla and Thuja capture these watery, changeable, and soft characteristics.

### **Clinical Application**

Beyond remedy selection, constitutional diagnosis enhances long-term case management by clarifying prognosis and relapse tendencies. For instance, a Hydrogenoid patient may require lifestyle adjustments to reduce damp exposure, whereas a Phosphoric constitution may need emotional grounding and nutritional reinforcement. Constitutional prescribing assists practitioners in differentiating between acute flare-ups and chronic layers, allowing more structured and sequential case treatment.

Practitioners also use constitution to evaluate remedy reaction—whether an aggravation is anticipated, whether the vitality is strong enough for high potencies, and how quickly the patient may respond. Consequently, constitutional understanding

supports individualized scheduling of follow-up consultations and long-term patient education.

**Table 1. Comparison of Major Constitutional Models**

Classification System	Types		Key Features
Hippocrates	Short & Thick; Long & Thin		Structural & strength-based typology
Galen	Sanguine, Phlegmatic, Nervous	Bilious,	Humoral balance; emotional tendencies
Vannier	Carbonic, Fluoric	Phosphoric,	Morphology, vitality, metabolic patterns
Sheldon	Ectomorph, Endomorph	Mesomorph,	Physique-personality correlation
Grauvogl	Carbo-nitrogenoid, Oxygenoid, Hydrogenoid		Biochemical reactivity & disease tendency

**Table 2. Key Differences Between Grauvogl's Constitutions**

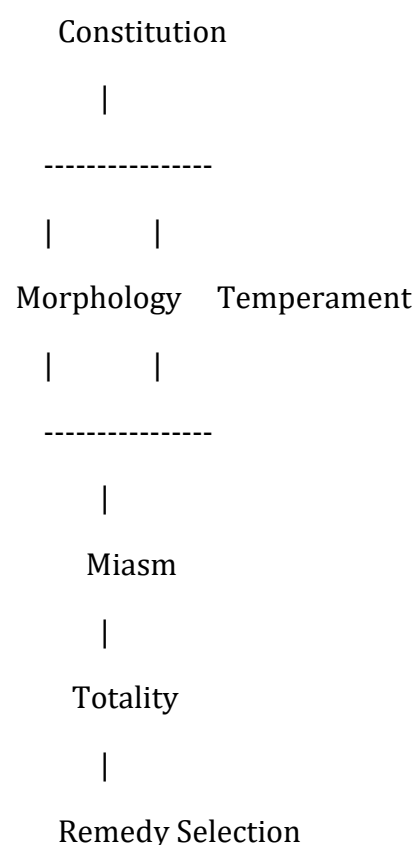
Feature	Carbo-nitrogenoid	Oxygenoid	Hydrogenoid
Dominant Element	Carbon & nitrogen	Oxygen	Hydrogen
Physical Build	Obese, sluggish	Lean, wiry	Edematous, soft



Feature	Carbo-nitrogenoid	Oxygenoid	Hydrogenoid
Aggravations	Cold, rich food	Heat, exertion	Dampness, humidity
Emotional Pattern	Low vitality, irritability	Intense, reactive	Mild, changeable
Remedy Examples	Sulphur, Carbo veg	Mercurius, Kali iod	Pulsatilla, Natrum sulph

### Text-Based Figure

**Figure 1. Relationship Between Constitution, Miasm, and Remedy Selection**



## **Case Examples / Clinical Vignettes**

### **Case 1: Carbo-nitrogenoid Constitution**

A 42-year-old male with obesity, chronic constipation, and pessimistic mood presents with intolerance to cold food and bloating after meals. Constitutionally sluggish with sedentary habits. Sulphur 200C administered based on constitutional features led to improvement in energy and digestion over six weeks.

### **Case 2: Oxygenoid Constitution**

A 25-year-old female with recurrent ulcers, anxiety before exams, and rapid emotional response shows aggravation from heat and exertion. Lean with sharp features. Mercurius solubilis selected constitutionally resulted in reduced ulcer frequency.

### **Case 3: Hydrogenoid Constitution**

A 30-year-old woman experiences mood swings, amenorrhea, and aggravation in monsoon. Soft tissues, water retention, and mild temperament noted. Pulsatilla prescribed constitutionally improved hormonal regularity and emotional stability.

## **Discussion**

Constitutional analysis provides predictive insights into which diseases a patient may be prone to, how they may react to stress, and what remedy pattern best aligns with their inner structure. Grauvogl's model in particular bridges physiological tendencies with remedy group characteristics, creating a biochemical rationale for prescribing.

The incorporation of multiple classification models allows practitioners to perceive different layers of a patient's individuality—physical, emotional, hereditary,

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miasmatic, and biochemical. This layered understanding supports long-term chronic case management and enhances remedy precision. Constitutional analysis also improves practitioner-patient rapport, promoting adherence and patient insight.

## **Conclusion**

Constitutional homeopathy aligns with global trends toward personalized medicine. By integrating morphology, temperament, biochemistry, and miasmatic predispositions, practitioners develop a more holistic and accurate representation of the patient. Future research may further explore correlations between constitutional types and lifestyle, psychosocial stress, and genetic expression within integrative health paradigms.

## **Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

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