



The School of
Evolutionary Herbalism

LESSON 3:
UNLOCKING THE CHART
The Houses of Health

THE ASTRO-HERBALISM MINI-COURSE



UNLOCKING THE CHART

The Houses of Health

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The 12 Houses of Astrology describe different areas of life of the individual, encompassing the wholeness of human experience. From the development of the self, our values and material possessions, our ego, work, relationships, career, and spiritual development, the 12 Houses show the specific areas of our lives that the Planet-Sign combination operates through. It is where everything hits the ground and manifests physically.

This is because the 12 Houses are created by spinning of the Earth on it's axis throughout a single day, whereas the 12 Signs are more associated with the orbit of the Earth around the Sun. Naturally, the orbit of the Earth around the Sun is much more a celestial quality and takes longer (365 days), whereas the orbit of the Earth is strictly "earthly" in it's quality and occurs in 24 hours, thus it is more of a concrete pattern.

In regards to the medical chart, there are 4 primary houses that are extremely important to observe, called the Houses of Health. These are the 1st, 6th, 8th, and 12 Houses, which relate to Aries, Virgo, Scorpio, and Pisces, respectively. Here we'll take a look at each of these areas of the chart and their importance in regards to health.

The First House

As we have seen, the 1st House is the area of the chart associated with the Ascendent and is the primary part of the chart to observe in regards to determining the physical constitution and the overall form and structure of someone's physical nature. We can think of it as the specific language of the overall body in general, indicating the specific energetic architecture that underlies its organs, systems and tissues, as well as where the vital force may become restricted, stimulated, in excess or deficiency. These factors determine the outward expressions of the self on a psychological and physiological level. The 1st House determines how our bodies respond to various stressors; some may generate a lot of mucous production, others may get hot, inflamed and feverish, others may can tight, constricted and be prone to spasm. It is wise to observe any Planets tenanting the 1st House, especially those that are close to the Ascendent, which we have seen become primary strong Planetary influences. If there are no Planets in the 1st House, simply observe the overall energetic architecture of the Sign ruling that House an make note of it's Mode, Element and Planet.

LESSON 3: UNLOCKING THE BIRTH CHART

After doing this, observe the placement of that ruling Planet in the chart, the Sign it is resting in, and any relationships it has to other Planets in the chart- which we will cover in a later lesson. Though for now, it's important to note if the Planet ruling the Ascending Sign is placed in one of the Houses of Health (6th, 8th, or 12th).

This ruling Planet is going to describe the general nature of that person's body, physical constitution, and how they handle various stressors, as well as their survival tendencies and how the body responds to stress or shock. The 1st House and the Ascendent describe the quality of energy rising at the moment one takes their first breath of life and in this way often describes one's birth experience. As that first energy one is introduced to, it is a primary response of our physiological organism. This is important to keep in mind when looking at someone's health.

The Sixth House

The 6th House rests directly below the Descendent line, which is naturally directly opposite the Ascendent location. The 6th House is variously called the House of Health, and is a fundamental area to observe for medical purposes. This area of the chart may indicate certain organs, systems or tissues of the body which predisposed to symptomology, pathology, deficiencies, or general health difficulties.

Along with our general health, the 6th House also represents the rhythm and energy of our daily life, and also corresponds to our work, the quality of work that is suitable to us, etc. This is an interesting relationship to note, as we spend a majority of our daily lives working, and this work often has a profound impact upon our physical and psychological health.

To quote Isabel Hickey, "The busy person has no time to get sick. [The 6th House represents] Mental or physical conflicts resulting from the expression of the Ego. As such it depicts any enmity between the dweller in the body and the physical body, out of which mental, nervous, or organic disease may develop." That quote really sums up this house quite beautifully.

Here we want to observe any Planets that are in the 6th House. These indicate areas of the body, or specific pathological patterns the individual is predisposed to. Thus, Venus in the 6th House may lend someone to having a sweet tooth, insulin resistance, weak or lax tissues (prolapse etc.), poor kidney function, venous return of circulation, or pancreatic weakness. Mars in the 6th may indicate excess stress, poor adrenal function, blood toxicity, or heat/excitation tissue states.

Interestingly enough, according to Vedic Astrology, the primary "malefics" of Saturn and Mars tend to strengthen the overall health when placed natively within this house.

This is a bit of a contradiction when you think about it, but Judith Hill has confirmed this after observing thousands of charts. Of course, they may still cause disease... it all depends on the specificities. She also mentions that Jupiter, the great benefic, is oftentimes not so well placed here. While not classically considered the Sign of detriment, Jupiter does indeed rule Pisces, and Virgo being it's opposite would indicate a difficult placement for Jupiter.

You also want to make note of the ruling Sign of 6th House, and it's corresponding parts of the body and organ systems. If there are no Planets in the 6th, then this Sign ruler becomes of paramount importance, along with it's Planetary ruler. So if you have Virgo in the 6th House, we want to look to where Mercury is resting in the chart and note it's Sign, House, and aspectual relations to other Planets. Make note if that Planet is particular strong or weak in it's placement based on the framework given in the previous lesson.

This all gives you specific information about which organs or systems may be predisposed to having imbalances or illnesses. You especially want to notice if any of the constitutional Planets are here (Planet ruling the Ascendent, or if any Planets in the 6th are in their rulership, exaltation, detriment or fall), as they will be strong indicators for potential issues.

We will talk about aspects later on, but it is important to see what the relationships are these Planets are having to the other Planets. It is essentially seeing into someones body, and how their organs, systems and tissues are communicating with one another. And again, we deepen in our ability to see patterns and meaning through our perceptions of relationships.

There is an important relationship to consider when looking at the 1st and 6th Houses, which is called "inconjunct." This is a particular aspect where two energies are 150° apart from one another, which represents a stretch-growth type relationship between the 2 energies involved. As each Sign is 30°, the inconjunct aspect reflects in Planets which are 5 Signs apart from one another. Thus we see that whatever Sign is ruling the Ascendent, the 5th Sign away from that will be ruling the 5th House, or the Sign just before it's opposition.

This relationship provides some valuable information in regards to how the body is interconnected from our constitution to our specific health concerns. To outline these patterns, observe the chart below:

Ascendent Ruler	6th House Ruler	Ascendent Ruler	6th House Ruler
Aries	Virgo	Libra	Pisces
Taurus	Libra	Scorpio	Aries
Gemini	Scorpio	Sagittarius	Taurus
Cancer	Sagittarius	Capricorn	Gemini
Leo	Capricorn	Aquarius	Cancer
Virgo	Aquarius	Pisces	Leo

The above pattern stays consistent in whole house systems. Thus, whenever someone has Virgo rising, their 6th House will be ruled by Aquarius. Therefore, those with a primarily Virgo constitution may experience health issues related to Aquarius. Of course, this is a very general statement and requires further analysis of the chart- but we can draw some very interesting relationships about organ system connections and pathology by observing this pattern of relationship.

The Eighth House

The 8th House has variously been called the “House of sex, death and the occult,” which makes sense when we observe it’s relationship to the Sign of Scorpio. We can think of it as the processes of generation (sex), degeneration, and regeneration. In this way, I like to think of it as the House of Transformational Healing. To quote Isabel Hickey again, “Every eighth house operation is a celestial messenger in disguise and a challenge to penetrate this disguise and become the recipient of the blessing he bears. In the wake of an eighth house storm there is always a rainbow if we but lift our eyes to perceive it.”

For our purposes here, we see that the 8th House is deeply associated with death and dying, and the process of avoiding or overcoming death. Of course, illness comes to play here. So whereas the 1st House is the physical constitution and general nature of the body, and the 6th House indicates potential predispositions for organ system weaknesses and illness predispositions, the 8th House is more a sign of our potentials for chronic diseases that are fixed more deeply in the body. Chronic illness of course tends to be a deeper threat to our lives and overall comfort of life, and for the intense ones make us confront our innate mortality.

Here we also see the area of the chart associated with diagnosis and psychological analysis, for Scorpio and the 8th House show our repressed psychological functions, things buried in the subconscious mind, and the deeper layers of the self. As the Sign associated with transformation, the 8th House reveals to us parts of our health that can be radically transformed and be a point of illumination, or our ultimate end. The choice lies in our hands, hearts and minds. So you can look at any Planets resting in the 8th House and their relationships to other parts of the chart. Again it is also important to look at the Sign ruling the 8th, its Planetary ruler, and where it is placed in the chart. These correspondences may indicate points of chronic illness or potential causes of death, as well as ones capacities for healing and diagnostics. Also important to note is that the 8th House is associated with surgery.

The Twelfth House

The 12th House, also referred to as “the house of drawn shades,” is an important area of the chart for it is the most diffuse, spiritualized energy in the chart. It’s association with Neptune and Pisces reveals an energetic dynamic that lacks boundary, structure and tone, and in that way tends to be an area of energetic leakage. Planets in the 12th House, (or in Pisces), may have a generally diffused energy that lacks direction, focus, and clarity. So generally speaking, it’s helpful to think that any Planet in the 12th, especially if it is in it’s Sign of detriment or fall, will have an overall weakened nature. We can also think of the Planetary ruler of the Sign ruling the 12th and that it may indeed have a weakening influence upon Planets it is conjunct or aspecting.

As the ruler of the spiritual world, the 12 House deals with sleep, which is of course an extremely important factor in determining health, as well as invisible causes of disease, such as hexes, black magic, sorcery, subtle vibrational imbalances, and poisoning. A key phrase here with the 12 House is that it is hidden. Thus is something is highly difficult to figure out, challenging to diagnose, look to the 12th House, and any aspects to Neptune, or reflex energies to Pisces. It is common to see psychological issues in those that have poorly aspected or weakened Planets in the 12th.

Of course of vital importance to understanding this House is that it is directly opposed to the 6th House of Health. Therefore whoever is ruling the 6th, it’s opposite is ruling the 12th (depending on your house system). Because of our rule of reflexing actions of Planets, anything in the 6th House may have an impact upon the 12th, and it’s governing Sign or Planets there.