



# Medical Astrology: Health, Disease & Healing in the Birth Chart

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*A Western & Vedic Textbook of the Body, Diagnosis, Timing, and  
Remedies*

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*Free sample — opening chapter. The complete edition is available on AstroAsk.net.*

Medical Astrology: Health, Disease & Healing in the Birth Chart — A Western & Vedic Textbook of the Body, Diagnosis, Timing, and Remedies

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# Contents

## **Chapter 1 — What Medical Astrology Is (and Is Not)**

What this chapter covers

A working definition

The one idea underneath everything

Why this book carries two traditions

Where the line is drawn

Common misconceptions

Frequently asked questions

Key takeaways

# Chapter 1 — What Medical Astrology Is (and Is Not)

*"A physician without a knowledge of astrology has no right to call himself a physician." — attributed to Hippocrates, and repeated for two thousand years by people who wanted astrology to sound official.*

I want to start with that quotation because it is the perfect trap. It is genuinely old, genuinely famous, and almost certainly not something Hippocrates ever wrote in those words. Medical astrology is full of lines like it — grand, quotable, and shakier than they look. If you are going to study this subject seriously, and this book assumes you are, then the first skill is not chart reading. It is knowing the difference between what the tradition *claims*, what it can *actually do*, and what it must *never pretend to do*. Get that straight on page one and everything after it becomes safer and more useful.

So let me be blunt about what you are holding. This is a complete, modern textbook of medical astrology written for a reader in Chicago and a reader in Chennai at the same time. It treats the body as the old astrologers did — as a map of twelve zones, seven classical planets, and twelve houses — and it does so in **both** the Western and the Indian traditions, side by side, because the two grew from the same root and disagree in fascinating, instructive ways. What it is *not* is a way to diagnose yourself, replace your doctor, or predict when anyone will fall ill or die.

## What this chapter covers

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The honest definition of medical astrology; the single idea underneath the whole system (the body is written into the chart); why this book carries two traditions instead of one; and the boundary — drawn early and drawn hard — between astrological insight and medical care.

## A working definition

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Medical astrology is the branch of astrology that studies the connection between the sky at your birth and the constitution, vulnerabilities, and rhythms of your body. Its central premise is old and simple: the same twelve-fold pattern that organises the zodiac also maps onto the human body, so a birth chart can be read as a kind of temperament and vulnerability sketch — where a person runs hot or cold, which systems tend to strain first, when the body's weather is likely to turn rough.

Notice what that premise is careful *not* to say. It does not say the planets reach down and give you an ulcer. It says the chart and the body seem to rhyme, and the tradition has spent centuries cataloguing the rhymes. Whether that rhyme is real signal or human pattern-making is a question modern science answers in the negative, and we will not pretend otherwise. What the tradition offers is not proof; it is a **language for the body** — a way of talking about constitution and resilience that patients often find meaningful, and that sits alongside medicine rather than above it.

**SAFETY NOTE**

Read this once and carry it through every page: astrology cannot diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Nothing in this book is medical advice. If something here seems to describe what you feel in your body, treat that as a nudge to see a licensed clinician — never as a diagnosis, and never as a reason to delay care. In an emergency, contact your local emergency services immediately.

## The one idea underneath everything

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If you remember a single concept from this book, make it this one: **the zodiac is a body**. The old texts of both hemispheres imagined the whole circle of signs laid over a human figure — Aries at the head, Pisces at the feet, everything else in between. The West called this figure the *Zodiacal Man* or the doctrine of *melothesia*; India called it the *Kālapuruṣa*, the "person of time," the cosmic body whose limbs are the signs. We will meet both in Chapter 6, drawn together so you can see how astonishingly they agree.

Every technique in medical astrology is a variation on that one image. The signs give the body its zones. The **planets** act on those zones as functions — Mars as heat and inflammation, Saturn as cold and chronicity, the Moon as fluid and rhythm. The **houses** re-map the same body onto the practical arenas of a life, and hand three of those houses — the 6th, 8th, and 12th — the specific business of illness. Learn the body, the planets, and the houses, and you can read anything the tradition throws at you.

## Why this book carries two traditions

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Most medical-astrology books pick a side. American and European books work in the **tropical** zodiac, inherited from Ptolemy, Galen's four humours, and the great English herbalist Nicholas Culpeper, whose 1652 *English Physician* tied every plant to a planet. Indian books work in the **sidereal** zodiac of *Jyotiṣa*, braided together with *Āyurveda* and its three *doṣas* — Vāta, Pitta, Kapha. Readers are usually taught one and left to assume the other is either identical or wrong.

Neither is true, and the gap between them is where the real learning lives. The two systems **agree** about the body far more than they disagree: the sign→body map is nearly the same in both, the house→body map lines up, and the basic cast of "difficult" planets and "difficult" houses is shared. Where they **part ways** is the zodiac itself — by 2026 the tropical and sidereal circles have drifted about twenty-four degrees apart — and the tools of timing: the West leans on transits and progressions, India on the *daśā* system of planetary periods. Holding both at once makes you a better reader of either, and it is the only honest way to write for an international audience. So every chapter here gives you the Western treatment and the Vedic treatment, and every chart is drawn in both the Western round wheel and the Indian North-Indian diamond.

## Where the line is drawn

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Here is the boundary, stated plainly so we never have to argue about it again. Medical astrology may describe **tendencies** — a constitution that runs anxious, a chart that emphasises the chest, a period when rest matters more than usual. It may **prompt** — pointing your attention somewhere so that you go and get it properly checked. It may **comfort and contextualise** — giving a frightening season a shape and a likely end.

It may not **diagnose**, name a disease, promise a cure, set a dose, or forecast death. When an astrologer crosses that line they stop being an astrologer and start impersonating a doctor, and people get hurt. The most valuable practitioners I have known treat the chart as a conversation-opener and the physician as the authority — "your chart has been emphasising the digestive theme lately; have you had that looked at?" That sentence is medical astrology at its best. "You have an ulcer and here is the gemstone to cure it" is medical astrology at its most dangerous, and this book will train you out of it.

### IN THE CLINIC

The single most useful thing a medical astrologer can do is *refer well*. A reading that ends with "and I think it's worth mentioning that to your GP" has helped someone. A reading that ends with a diagnosis has endangered them. Refer early, refer often, and never compete with medicine.

## Common misconceptions

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- **"Medical astrology can tell me what's wrong with me."** It cannot. It can, at most, tell you which themes the tradition would watch — a starting point for a real medical conversation, not a conclusion.
- **"If it's ancient, it must work."** Age is not evidence. Bloodletting is ancient too. We keep the tradition for its *language and meaning*, not because it passes a clinical trial.
- **"Western and Vedic astrology are basically the same."** They share a body-map but use different zodiacs and different timing systems. Confusing them produces nonsense.
- **"The planets cause disease."** The tradition maps a correspondence; it does not demonstrate a cause. Keep the verb honest: *associated with*, not *causes*.

## Frequently asked questions

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**Is medical astrology scientifically proven?** No. There is no accepted clinical evidence that astrology can diagnose or treat illness. This book presents it as cultural tradition and a language for the body, to be used alongside — never instead of — modern medicine.

**Can I use this book to avoid seeing a doctor?** Absolutely not, and please don't. Use it to become more curious about your body and more likely to seek proper care, not less.

**Do I need to believe in astrology to get something from this book?** No. Many readers approach it as history, symbolism, and a structured way to think about constitution and resilience. That is a perfectly good way to read it.

**Western or Vedic — which should I learn?** Both, which is why this book teaches both. If you must start with one, use the tradition of the charts you already read; the other will deepen it.

## Key takeaways

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- Medical astrology reads the body from the birth chart; its core image is that **the zodiac is a body**, Aries at the head to Pisces at the feet.
- This book teaches the **Western and Vedic** traditions together, with every chart in both the round and North-Indian styles.
- It is **not** diagnostic or prescriptive. It describes tendencies, prompts real medical attention, and refers to clinicians — nothing more.
- The first skill is the boundary: insight and language on one side, medicine on the other, and a clear line between them.

Next, we trace where all of this came from — from a Greek island and a bottle of black bile to a Sanskrit clinic and an English herb garden — because the history explains the ideas.