

A Core Concept of Health in Mongolian Traditional Medicine

Damdinsuren Natsagdorj, Alгаа Altangerel, Nyamjav Munkhjargal, Khalzaibaast Tuul*

School of Mongolian Traditional Medicine, Otoch Manramba University, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
Email: lama@manbadatsan.mn, altaifas@gmail.com, munkhvera2@gmail.com, *khtuul2017@gmail.com

How to cite this paper: Natsagdorj, D., Altangerel, A., Munkhjargal, N. and Tuul, K. (2025) A Core Concept of Health in Mongolian Traditional Medicine. *Open Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 15, 31-43.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojpm.2025.153003>

Received: January 19, 2025

Accepted: March 28, 2025

Published: March 31, 2025

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.
This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

Historically, Mongolians emphasized the importance of diet and lifestyle, aligning their habits with their land, climate, nomadic culture, and traditional work practices to prevent illness and maintain health. This study reviewed the customs and traditions Mongolians followed to prevent disease. According to ancient sutras, lifestyle falls into two categories: those for maintaining health and those for managing illness. A virtuous mindset is considered essential to maintain in both cases. Mongolian traditional medicine identifies desire, greed, anger, and ignorance as distant causes of illness. The sutras emphasize that harboring excessive desires, envy, or anger can lead to illness, even if one follows a healthy diet and exercise routine. In conclusion, by following the principles of Mongolian traditional medicine, including seasonally adjusted diet and lifestyle, Mongolians effectively prevent diseases and maintain health. These teachings remain relevant for addressing modern health challenges.

Keywords

Mongolian Traditional Medicine, Seasonal Diet, Seasonal Lifestyle, Health

1. Introduction

Scientific studies categorize global medical systems into two primary branches: Western medicine and Eastern medicine. Among these, Eastern medicine, with a history spanning approximately 2000 years, holds significant prominence due to its distinct philosophical foundations, diagnostic approaches, and treatment principles. Eastern medicine is generally classified into two main traditions:

- 1) Indian-Xizang medicine.
- 2) Traditional Chinese medicine, which is further divided into two subcategories.

The Indian system of medicine encompasses traditional healing practices from Xizang region, Mongolia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Pakistan [1].

This system conceptualizes the human body through the framework of five fundamental elements—earth, water, fire, air, and space—alongside the three principal energies: Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. The transmission of Indian medical knowledge to Xizang during the 11th and 12th centuries facilitated the integration of Indian, Greco-Arab, and Chinese medical traditions into Xizang medicine. A significant outcome of this synthesis was the development of the Four Medical Tantras (rGyud-bZhi, རྩུང་བཞི་), a foundational Xizang medical text that emphasizes maintaining equilibrium among the three principal energies: rlung (wind)¹, mkhris (bile)², and bad-kan (phlegm)³ [2].

The exchange of medical knowledge and medicinal substances between civilizations was a hallmark of historical medical development. The ancient Mongols contributed significantly to this exchange, disseminating their medicinal practices and therapeutic techniques throughout India and Xizang region. Concurrently, Mongolian scholars and healers studied and integrated medical methodologies from these neighboring regions. Historical records, including the ancient Chinese medical text Huangdi Neijing, written in the 2nd century BCE, provide evidence of Mongolian medical practices [3]. Mongolian traditional medicine incorporates the philosophical doctrine of the five elements, which serves as a framework for understanding natural phenomena, including human physiology and pathology. Similar to the natural world, the human body is believed to be composed of five elements: earth, water, fire, wind, and space. Ancient Indian Ayurvedic texts, along with subsequent Xizang and Mongolian medical treatises, extensively document these concepts, demonstrating the early integration of philosophical thought into medical science.

The theory of Yin-Yang and the Five Elements constitutes a comprehensive and intricate system that seeks to elucidate the interrelationships among various internal and external factors. In Mongolian traditional medicine, the functions of the five elements are consolidated into three fundamental principles, mirroring Xizang medical theory: rLung (wind), mKhris (bile), and Bad-Kan (phlegm). The earth and water elements correspond to Bad-Kan, the fire element to mKhris, and the wind element to rLung. These three principles, commonly referred to as the “three principal energies”, play an essential role in health and disease. They interact dynamically through processes of mutual reinforcement, balance, and conflict, ultimately shaping an individual’s physiological state [1].

The theories and methodologies of traditional and modern medicine were formed and matured at two different times. The concept of traditional medicine is ancient and based on a systematic theory and methodology that abstractly encodes the structures and functions of the actual body. Modern biomedicine has made remarkable progress in dissecting the body, but it has not been able to develop a systematic theoretical methodology that considers the relationship

¹Symbolic code name of the one of the three principal energies of the body and mind, which is associated with nature of the air or wind element.

²Symbolic code name of the one of the three principal energies present in the body. It is associated with the fire elements.

³Symbolic code name of the one of the three principle energies present in the body. “Bad” means water and “kan” means earth.

between the external environment and the internal environment in a holistic, “organism-centered” manner [4].

Recent research has explored the correlation between cellular membrane-redox potentials and the three principal energies of traditional medicine. Findings suggest a close relationship between adenosine triphosphatase production (ATP) synthesis, which operates via a nine-step proton conductance cycle, and the Xizang medical concept of rLung, mKhris, and Bad-Kan [4] [5]. This biochemical perspective aligns with the traditional understanding that maintaining equilibrium among these three metabolic energies is crucial for sustaining health and preventing disease.

Mongolian traditional medicine (MTM), deeply rooted in dietary and lifestyle practices, emphasizes the dynamic fluctuations of “rLung” (wind), “mKhris” (bile), and Bad-Kan (phlegm) which are constantly shifting within the human body metabolism in response to seasonal changes. By adjusting diet and daily routines in accordance with these shifting energies, individuals can achieve a balanced metabolism, thereby fostering overall well-being⁴. Over centuries, this medical system has evolved into a sophisticated body of knowledge—MTM—that integrates Ayurvedic, Xizang, and indigenous Mongolian medical principles while reflecting Mongolia’s unique cultural and environmental context.

Ultimately, MTM underscores the importance of early diagnosis and preventive care. By identifying imbalances in the three principal metabolic energies (rLung, mKhris, and Bad-Kan) this system offers proactive interventions to restore equilibrium and maintain health. Its holistic approach continues to contribute valuable insights to contemporary medical and wellness practices [6].

Objective and Outline: This paper explores how Mongolians’ traditional diet and lifestyle, adapted to the seasonal conditions of Mongolia, contribute to healthy living, based on the MTM.

2. Dietary Management for Healthy Living

MTM classifies food and drink into two categories: those suitable for maintaining health and those intended for treating illness. This classification is primarily based on three attributes—“taste”⁵, “quality”⁶, and “potency”⁷. According to MTM theory, the three principal energies of the body “rLung”, “mKhris”, and “Bad-Kan” which serve as symbolic codes for metabolism, are composed of five fundamental elements. To maintain equilibrium among these energies, food and drink should provide nourishment derived from these elements. By appropriately adjusting the “quality” and “potency” of food and drink, and by consuming them in proper amounts at suitable times, individuals can nourish their bodies, enhance strength, and extend longevity.

⁴The three principal energies’ code names are “rLung, mKhris, and Bad-Kan”.

⁵The expression “taste” in ancient traditional medical literature is equivalent to the concept of “chemical structure” in modern science.

⁶The expression “quality” in ancient traditional medical literature is equivalent to the concept of “chemical properties” in modern science.

⁷The concept of “potency” refers to the properties of the chemical compounds formed after food enters the body and undergoes chemical reactions or metabolism.

2.1. Food and Drink Suitable for Body Constitution Types

For individuals with a rLung constitution, which corresponds to rLung symbolic code metabolism, consuming oily and nourishing foods is recommended. In contrast, individuals with a Bad-Kan constitution should limit their intake of fatty foods and soups, instead favoring lighter and warmer foods. Those with a mKhris constitution should prioritize lighter and drier foods while increasing their intake of liquids to maintain balance.

2.2. Adjusting Meal Times

Meal intervals should be appropriately adjusted based on factors such as age, workload intensity, digestive capacity, and nutritional needs. If the interval between meals is too long, it may lead to fatigue and rLung-related disorders. Conversely, if meals are too frequent, digestion may weaken, leading to diminished appetite. For young children with limited digestive capacity, meals should be provided in smaller portions at more frequent intervals.

Khusekhui's True Compendium of Food and Drink, written in 1330, is the earliest comprehensive Mongolian text detailing the proper consumption of food. This text discusses the dietary restrictions for pregnant women and elaborates on the importance of appropriate food consumption for overall well-being [7].

3. The Impact of Nature and Climate on Health (Chronobiology)

The body's strength and the balance of the three principal metabolic energies fluctuate throughout the seasons and times of the day, directly affecting digestive capacity. During early and late summer, when physical strength is relatively lower, easily digestible and nutrient-rich foods should be prioritized. On cloudy and humid days in spring, consuming foods with warm and spicy flavors can help prevent joint-related issues. In addition to selecting and consuming food and drinks in a balanced manner, maintaining proper hygiene and identifying potentially toxic or incompatible foods are crucial aspects of health management [8] [9].

With increasing urbanization, changes in lifestyle and dietary habits have contributed to a rise in metabolic disorders such as obesity, high blood pressure, and coronary artery disease. These health issues often result from an imbalanced diet, improper selection of food quality and flavors, and disruptions to the body's metabolic equilibrium. Therefore, it is essential to regulate food and drink intake by adjusting portion sizes, meal timing, and seasonal variations accordingly.

3.1. The Concept of Biorhythm in Medical Astrology

MTM classifies the year into two temporal frameworks: six periods and four seasons. This dual classification system offers a comprehensive perspective on the interrelationship between time, health, and the interaction between body metabolism and natural cycles on daily, monthly, and yearly bases. Understanding these patterns enables optimized dietary and lifestyle modifications to maintain meta-

bolic equilibrium and overall well-being (as illustrated in **Figure 1**).

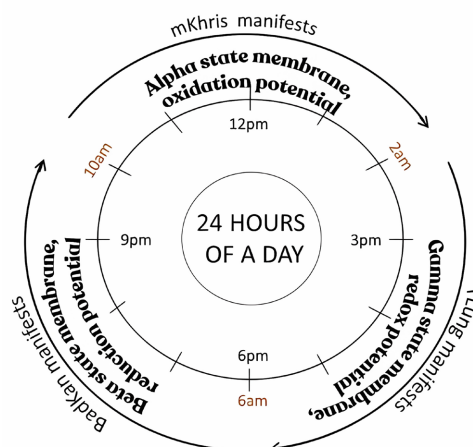


Figure 1. Daily biorhythms of the three principal human energies.

The Xizang medical classic rGyud-bZhi delineates the circadian rhythm of the day, stating that “the two ends of the day and night give rise to rLung, the two middles give rise to mKhris, and the two beginnings give rise to Bad-Kan.” According to this classification: [8]-[10].

2:00 AM-6:00 AM (Dawn) and 2:00 PM-6:00 PM (Afternoon): These periods are recognized as “rLung manifesting time,” “mKhris pacifying time,” and “Bad-Kan accumulating time,” as noted in the text. From a traditional medical perspective, the circadian rhythm is explained in relation to modern physiological processes. During these periods, the interaction between external natural solar and lunar energies and human metabolic activities—such as ATP production, nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate (NADPH) levels, and thermogenesis—is relatively reduced. Consequently, ATP-dependent cellular ion exchange, information transmission, and electrochemical stability are compromised, preventing cells from maintaining their resting potential.

Furthermore, the concentration of electron donor and acceptor molecules diminishes following the activation of the alpha state of membrane redox potential. This phenomenon, referred to as “rLung is manifested” in Xizang-Mongolian medicine, aligns with the notion that “mKhris is pacified,” signifying a decrease in oxidation potential or alpha-state activity in the cell membrane. Conversely, “Bad-Kan is accumulated” denotes an increase in reduction potential or beta-state activity within the membrane following this period. These interpretations align traditional Xizang-Mongolian medical principles with modern biomedical understandings of cellular energy metabolism and bioelectrical regulation [5] [11].

6 am-10 am before noon is beginning of noon, 6 pm-10 pm evening is of night, these beginning times are “rLung pacifying time”, “mKhris accumulating time”, and “Bad-Kan arising time” noted in that book. At this time, there is a relatively low metabolic intensity and heat generation when the tone of cholinergic receptors increases due to the increase in the beta state, which is rich in saturated acid

in the cell membrane of the living body. It is reasonable to understand that the word “Bad-Kan is arised” means the reduction potential or beta state increases in the cell membrane at this moment, while the word “mKhris is accumulated” means the oxidation potential or alpha state decreases in the cell membrane. Also at this moment, the electro-chemical potential of the cell membrane is stable, it is represented by “rLung is pacified” [5] [11].

10 am-2 pm noon is middle of noon, 10 pm-2 am midnight is middle of night, these times are “mKhris arising time”, “rLung accumulating time”, and “Bad-Kan pacifying time” noted in that book [8]-[10]. At this time, there is a relatively high metabolic intensity and heat generation when the tone of adrenergic receptors increases due to the increase in the alpha state, which is rich in unsaturated acid in the cell membrane of the living body. It is reasonable to understand that the word “mKhris arising time” means the oxidation potential or alpha state increases in the cell membrane at this moment, while the word “Bad-Kan pacifying time” means the reduction potential or beta state decreases in the cell membrane at this moment. Also the electro-chemical potential of the cell membrane is high during depolarization, which is represented by “rLung is accumulated” [5] [11].

The Human Three Principal Energies’ Biorhythms (Main Three-Coded Energy Metabolism) and Alternating Over Four Seasons and Six Periods of the Year are shown in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**.

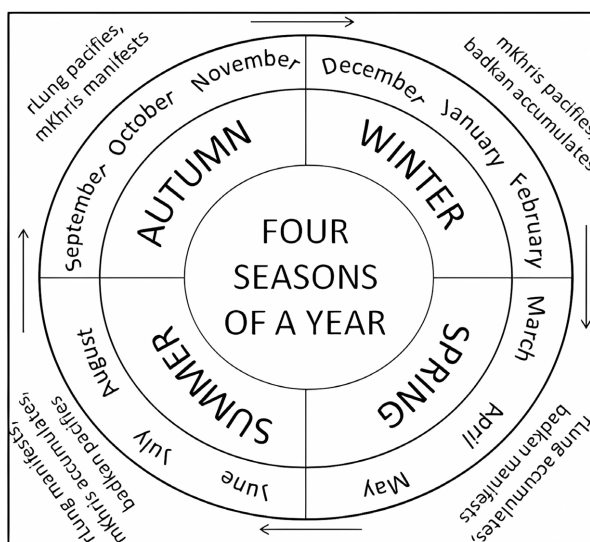


Figure 2. Human three principal energies’ biorhythms (main three-coded energy metabolism).

The traditional concept of seasonal biorhythms is closely linked to the body’s adaptive response to natural and climatic changes. According to traditional medical theory, “mKhris” accumulates in summer, manifests in autumn, and pacifies in winter [8]-[10]. This indicates that the body’s adaptation to the cold of the winter season occurs gradually from summer through autumn. For example, in autumn, it is said that “mKhris manifests,” meaning that the liquid alpha state pre-

vails in the cell membrane. At the metabolic level, the withdrawal, storage, and accumulation of electron and proton donors decrease, while their consumption increases [5] [11].

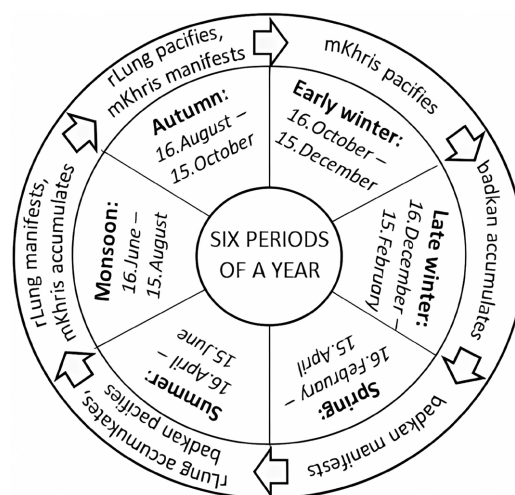


Figure 3. Alternating over four seasons and six periods of the year.

During the winter season, the cold “water element” dominates in nature and climate. At the onset of winter, “mKhris pacifies,” and by the end of winter, “Bad-Kan accumulates” [8]-[10]. This corresponds to a decrease in oxidation potential and a gradual increase in reduction potential at the cellular level.

In spring, “Bad-Kan manifests,” indicating the body’s transition from winter to spring and eventually to summer. As spring progresses, the “wood element” strengthens in nature [8]-[10]. In both humans and animals, this transition facilitates an adaptive response to summer heat, characterized by the release of redox potential across membranous structures. Consequently, beta-state activity increases in cellular membranes. This concept reflects the regularity of increased storage and accumulation of electron and proton donors—such as carbohydrates, fatty acids, and amino acids—when free forms of NADH, flavin adenine dinucleotide (FADH), and oxygen acceptors rise in metabolism [5] [11].

When the spring season ends and the summer season begins, the elements of “fire and wind” in nature will increase day by day. It is said that in the human body, “Bad-Kan pacifies and rLung manifests”. This leads to an increase in the gamma state of low levels of saturated and unsaturated fatty acids in the cell membrane of the living body, as a result of which the redox potential decreases, the generation of ATP, NADPH and heat from the proton gradient decreases, and the electro-chemical potential of the cell becomes unstable [5] [11].

Understanding the seasonal and daily fluctuations of these metabolic codes enables individuals to regulate their diet, activities, and lifestyle to maintain balance, promoting overall health and well-being. Various eastern cultures have a long-standing tradition of aligning their lives with natural cycles, following the sun’s movement, including its rising, setting, and its proximity to the Earth—marking

the progression of the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

Seasonal dietary practices play a central role in this approach. In spring, foods with bitter, hot, and astringent tastes are recommended. In autumn, when “mKhris manifests,” the body is suddenly exposed to intense heat; during this time, sweet, bitter, and astringent tastes are beneficial. During summer and winter, sweet, sour, and salty foods are primarily preferred. As “rLung manifests” in summer, light and oily foods are recommended. Transitional periods—the weeks between the beginning and end of two seasons—require individuals to abandon previous dietary habits and adopt new ones. Failure to adapt to these seasonal changes may result in illness [8]-[10].

3.2. Food and Drink Suitable for the Four Seasons and Six Time Periods

The division of the year into six periods originates from an ancient Indian system of time and seasonal categorization. However, in Mongolia, where winters are long and summers are short, this system has been adapted to reflect Mongolian medicine and lifestyle.

In Chapter 14 of *The Seasonal Behavioral Regimen* from the Golden Subtitle, a commentary on the Explanatory Tantra of the Four Medical Tantras, states that at the beginning of winter, the months of the pig⁸ and rat are dominated by the water element. During this period, the water element is prevalent both externally (in the natural environment) and internally (within living beings), exerting a significant influence on physiological processes.

Accordingly, the last month of winter is governed by the water element, spring months by the wood element, summer months by the fire element, and autumn months by the metal element. Additionally, during the last fifteen days of each season, the earth element becomes dominant. The two solstices—winter and summer—are represented by the months of the horse and the rat⁹, respectively. Following the winter solstice, the sun moves westward for six months, whereas after the summer solstice, it shifts eastward for the subsequent six months. In the third month, day and night become equal, marking the equinox. During both equinoxes, eight significant days are observed—four during each equinox—when the sound of thunder is first heard and then ceases. Furthermore, an additional month occurs approximately once every three years [10].

During the later phase of winter, as the sun moves northward, cosmic energy becomes increasingly sharp, hot, and rough. Consequently, the dominant forces of wind and the sun intensify, while the attributes associated with the moon and the earth diminish [8]-[10].

The influence of hot, astringent, and bitter tastes increases during this period, leading to a decline in physical strength across all living beings. In late winter, the elements of water and wind become dominant, while in spring, wind prevails.

⁸In the lunar calendar, November is called the pig month.

⁹In the lunar calendar, June is called the horse month and December is called the rat month.

During early summer, both fire and wind take precedence. Consequently, human strength reaches its peak at the end of winter. However, following this peak, physical vitality gradually declines—becoming significantly lower in spring, moderate in early summer, and at its lowest at the beginning of summer. Overall human strength is highest at the beginning of winter and lowest during the early summer. Considering the dual aspects of solar movement, it is essential to adopt an appropriate lifestyle tailored to each of the six seasonal periods [8]-[10].

3.3. Food and Lifestyle Suitable for the Early Winter

During early winter, the body's vitality is at its peak. Due to the severe cold, the body's pores contract, effectively retaining internal heat and moisture while preventing their dissipation. Consequently, the digestive fire remains strong, and both the fire and wind elements increase significantly. If food intake is insufficient during this period, vital bodily functions, including blood circulation, may become impaired, leading to stagnation and depletion of energy.

Therefore, it is essential to consume foods with sweet, sour, and salty tastes in adequate quantities to maintain bodily strength. During this time, when the nights are long and the days are short, individuals may experience increased hunger at dawn, further contributing to bodily weakness if dietary needs are not met. To counteract this, it is recommended to massage the body with sesame oil or other seed-based oils, consume meat broth (meat is considered as a sweet taste [8]) and oily foods as primary dietary components, and include nutrient-rich foods such as brown sugar, alcohol, and milk. Additionally, wearing warm clothing, protecting the feet from cold exposure, occasionally applying warm compresses, and sitting near a source of heat—without excessive exposure—are beneficial for maintaining health during this season [8]-[10].

3.4. Foods and Lifestyle Suitable for the Late Winter

The last two months of winter are extremely cold; the above activities are highly recommended [8]-[10].

3.5. Foods and Lifestyles Suitable for Spring

During winter, Bad-Kan accumulates within the body and begins to break down in spring due to the increasing warmth of the season. This process weakens digestive fire and contributes to metabolic imbalances associated with Bad-kan-related disorders [5]. To counteract this, it is recommended to consume foods with bitter, hot, and astringent tastes, which help pacify Bad-kan. Preference should be given to light and easily digestible foods, such as aged barley, the meat of animals that inhabit dry regions, apple juice, honey (diluted with a quarter portion of water), and ginger.

Maintaining a positive and cheerful mindset is crucial during this seasonal transition. Engaging in physical activity can also help mitigate the discomfort caused by metabolic imbalances and prevent Bad-kan from exceeding its normal levels in spring [5]. It is advised to avoid cold, heavy, and sour-tasting foods and beverages,

as well as daytime sleeping, which may further contribute to metabolic disturbances [9] [10].

3.6. Foods and Lifestyles Suitable for Summer

During early summer, the external environment becomes intensely hot due to prolonged exposure to strong sunlight, which can lead to exhaustion and a reduction in bodily vitality. To counteract these effects, a diet rich in sweet-tasting, light, oily, and cooling foods is recommended, while foods with salty, hot, and sour tastes should be avoided [9]. This dietary approach helps protect the lipid bilayer of cell membranes, which is essential for maintaining cellular integrity and function, thereby allowing the body to adapt to the summer climate [5] [11]. In terms of lifestyle, it is important to minimize excessive physical exertion and prolonged exposure to the sun. Cold water should be used for bathing to help regulate body temperature. Additionally, the consumption of white flour and alcohol should be avoided. If alcohol is consumed, it should be in very small amounts or diluted with water, otherwise, it may damage organs such as the liver, gallbladder, and pancreas [5] [11]. In the evening, dairy products, particularly cow's milk, are recommended for nourishment. For overall well-being, maintaining a calm, comfortable, and peaceful environment is advisable to support mental and emotional balance [9].

3.7. Food and Lifestyle Suitable for Monsoon

During late summer, the sky becomes overcast with clouds, and rainfall increases, leading to damp and moist conditions. This period is characterized by an increase in the elements of fire and wind, along with a more widespread influence of cold rain [9]. As a result, the skin pores open, and despite the seemingly mild cool breeze, exposure to wind can be particularly harmful, especially for individuals with a rLung (wind) constitution. Therefore, it is crucial to prevent excessive cooling of the body [8]. The humidity rises, and water becomes muddied, which reduces the digestive heat in the body, decreasing digestive capacity. To counteract these effects, a diet consisting of foods with sweet, sour, and salty tastes, as well as those with light, warm, and oily qualities, is recommended [9]. Consuming alcohol derived from naturally harvested dry-land seeds in moderation can help suppress excessive wind energy; however, it is important to note that alcohol produced through chemical methods is less compatible with the human body [12] [13]. Appropriate dietary choices during this period include meat broths from animals that inhabit dry regions, water infused with aged honey, and fermented mare's milk with black salt. Additionally, it is advisable to avoid prolonged sun exposure, daytime sleeping, and excessive physical exertion, as these may further exacerbate imbalances in the body [9].

3.8. Food and Lifestyle Suitable in Autumn

The "mKhris" coded metabolism that accumulates during the late summer manifests when the body is suddenly exposed to the intense heat of autumn. In the

cellular membranes of the human body, fluid circulation dominates during this period, meaning that oxidative metabolic processes prevail. Consequently, consuming inappropriate foods and beverages or engaging in activities misaligned with seasonal changes can easily trigger conditions associated with excessive oxidative stress. Furthermore, diseases primarily linked to bile metabolism, such as chronic liver and gallbladder disorders, are more likely to worsen during this time [5] [12] [13]. To regulate excessive mKhris-coded metabolism, it is advisable to consume foods with sweet, bitter, and astringent tastes, along with light meals such as boiled rice and freshly harvested fruits and vegetables. Hydration is essential, and cool, boiled, or warm water is recommended. However, it is crucial to avoid excessive sun exposure, alcohol consumption, daytime napping, and prolonged exposure to cold, as these factors may further aggravate metabolic imbalances [9] [10].

4. Discussion

The fundamental theory of traditional Xizang and Mongolian medicine is based on three principal energies, which originate from the five elemental forces. Each individual is born with a dominant element that determines their unique metabolic constitution. The prevalence of “rLung”, “mKhris”, and “Bad-Kan” in an individual’s metabolism defines their specific temperament. By identifying one’s constitution, it becomes possible to regulate and balance these three metabolic energies, which naturally fluctuate in response to the four seasons and six time periods of the year, reflecting the cyclical transformation of the five elements in nature.

Understanding the seasonal and daily variations of these metabolic energies allows individuals to adjust their diet, activities, and overall lifestyle to maintain physiological balance, thereby promoting health and well-being. Mongolian tradition emphasizes living in harmony with nature, following the sun’s cycles—its rising and setting, as well as its proximity to the Earth—and governing the transitions between the four seasons: spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Traditional Xizang and Mongolian medicine, which shares its origins with Ayurvedic medicine, posits that the human body consists of both a visible physical form and an invisible mental component. It is believed that all diseases have psychological effects; for example, negative thoughts are considered precursors to future physical illnesses. Conversely, bodily diseases are also thought to negatively impact the mind. This philosophy aligns with the ancient Indian Ayurvedic concept of karma, which Caraka Samhita describes as a determinant of an individual’s qualities, personality, lifespan, and susceptibility to disease [14]. Karma is also invoked to explain seemingly inexplicable epidemics and the overall nature of illness. These philosophical speculations serve as a foundation for practical medical solutions, thereby enriching the broader medical doctrine. In Mongolian, the concept of karma is referred to as *niswanis*, which translates to the “unconscious mind.” *Niswanis* represents emotional disturbances that disrupt mental peace and self-

control. Xizang and Mongolian medical tradition emphasizes the interconnectedness of body, speech, and mind. According to this philosophy, the root cause of disease originates from an uncontrolled mind, while the proximate causes of illness include greed, anger, and ignorance. These psychological factors are believed to manifest as imbalances in “rLung”, “mKhris”, and “Bad-Kan” in the human body. In Xizang and Mongolian traditional medicine, the occurrence of diseases is explained by this law of Karma [15].

5. Conclusion

Seasonal dietary practices play a fundamental role in maintaining physiological balance within the framework of traditional Xizang and Mongolian medicine. During spring, foods with bitter, hot, and astringent tastes are recommended to counteract metabolic imbalances. In autumn, as mKhris accumulates and the body is exposed to intense heat, consuming foods with sweet, bitter, and astringent tastes is advised. During summer and winter, a diet rich in sweet, sour, and salty flavors is preferred. Additionally, as rLung becomes more prominent in summer, light and oily foods are particularly beneficial.

Transitional periods—the weeks marking the transition between two seasons—necessitate adjustments in dietary and lifestyle practices. Individuals must gradually abandon previous seasonal habits and adopt new ones in accordance with the changing environment. Failure to align with these seasonal adaptations may lead to physiological imbalances and an increased risk of illness.

The Mongolian people have long adhered to the principles of traditional medicine, effectively preventing diseases and promoting long-term health. This medical tradition emphasizes the importance of adjusting diet and lifestyle based on seasonal changes and an individual’s overall physiological condition. The accumulated knowledge of MTM has played a crucial role in safeguarding public health for generations. Furthermore, these principles remain highly relevant in addressing modern health challenges. As a preventive medical system, MTM offers a holistic approach to health and well-being, emphasizing the proactive management of physical and mental balance.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- [1] Tumurbaatar, N. and Ya, G. (2003) A Basic Theory of Mongolian Traditional Medicine. Co-Operation with Xizang Foundation.
- [2] Augustyn, A. (2025) Britannica. <https://www.britannica.com/science/Ayurveda>
- [3] Bold, S. (2007) Insight into the Secrets of a Mongolian Healthy Lifestyle. “Munkhiin Useg” Printing House.
- [4] Davgatseren, B., Amarzaya, B. and Uuganbayar, D. (2022) A Review of Recent Research Trends and Methodologies in Traditional Medicine. **46**.

- [5] Ambaga, M. (2010) Newly Codified Medicine. Soyombo Printing.
- [6] Jigmed, B. (1984) The Fundamental Theory of Mongolian Medicine. Inner Mongolia People's Publishing House.
- [7] Khusekhui (1982) True Compendium of Food and Drink (Translated by Kohluu). Inner Mongolia People's Press Committee.
- [8] Zho, B. and Sui, B. (2003) Series of Mongolian Culture Writings. In: Mongolian Medicine, Inner Mongolia People's Publishing, 409-413.
- [9] Yondongombo, Y. (1978) The Four Tantras of Medicine. Inner Mongolia People's Publishing House.
- [10] Luvsanchoydog, D.M. (1988) Golden Subtitle (T.S. Gombo, *et al.* Translated into Mongolian Traditional Script). Inner Mongolia People's Publishing House.
- [11] Ambaga, M. (2021) The Membrane Redoxy Potential Three State Dependent 9 Stepped Full Cycle of Proton Conductance in the Human Body. Soyombo Printing LLC.
- [12] Munkhdelger, D., Sosorbaram, L., Lkhagvasuren, T. and Tuul, Kh. (2018) Providing Healthy Living Recommendations Based on the Body Constitution of Mongolian Traditional Medicine. *Journal of Mongolian Pharmacy and Pharmacology*, **2**, 14-17.
- [13] Tuul, Kh. (2018) Recommendations for Maintaining Health through Mongolian Traditional Medicine. MGL LLC.
- [14] Weiss, M.G. (1987) Karma and Ayurveda. *Ancient Science Life*, **6**, 129-134.
- [15] Sayadaw, V.M. (2025) The Theory of Karma.
<https://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/karma/>