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## Tabiat and homeostasis: Exploring the self-healing concept of Unani medicine through the lens of modern physiology

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### Abstract

This paper examines the traditional Unani concept of Tabiat (vital force)—the intrinsic self-healing capacity of the human body—and compares it with the modern physiological framework of homeostasis and autonomic regulation. It aims to bridge traditional and scientific perspectives on the body's internal harmony, regulatory mechanisms, and innate healing capabilities, offering insights for integrative medicine.

**Keywords:** Tabiat, Unani medicine, homeostasis, autonomic nervous system, self-healing, humoral theory

### 1. Introduction

Unani medicine emphasizes the role of Tabiat, the body's internal regulatory intelligence responsible for maintaining health and restoring balance. In contrast, modern physiology defines homeostasis as the body's ability to sustain a stable internal environment through feedback mechanisms governed by neural and endocrine pathways. Despite differing terminologies and philosophies, both concepts recognize the body's intrinsic capacity for healing and balance. <sup>[1, 4]</sup>

### 2. Tabiat in Unani Medicine

Tabiat is regarded as the body's vital force, a subtle and intelligent agent responsible for governing physiological processes, harmonizing the four humors (Akhlāt), and initiating repair in response to disease. It is considered the internal physician (Tabīb-e-Dakhilī), orchestrating responses like fever, inflammation, and tissue regeneration to restore equilibrium <sup>[1, 2, 9, 10]</sup>.

### 3. Homeostasis in Modern Physiology

Modern physiology explains internal regulation via homeostasis, a concept formalized by Claude Bernard and Walter Cannon. It involves the autonomic nervous system, endocrine feedback loops, and cellular repair mechanisms. These maintain critical physiological parameters like temperature, pH, and glucose levels. <sup>[4, 5, 6, 7, 8]</sup>

### 4. Comparative Analysis: Tabiat and Homeostasis

The following table compares key characteristics of Tabiat in Unani medicine and the modern concept of homeostasis in physiology.

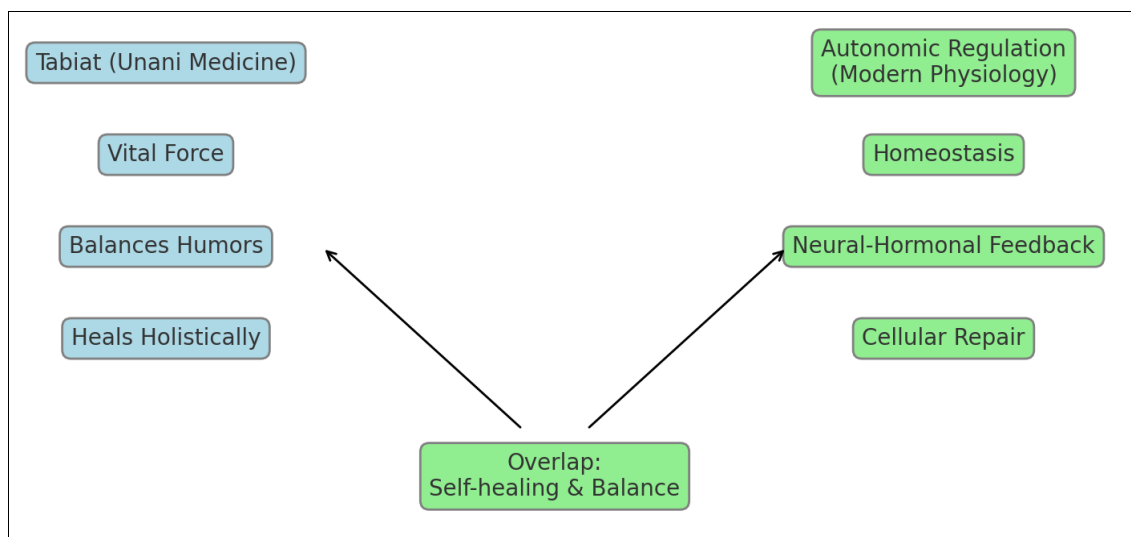
**Table 1:** Comparative Features of Tabiat and Homeostasis

Feature	Tabiat (Unani)	Homeostasis (Modern Physiology)
Nature	Vital force, intrinsic wisdom	Biochemical and neural regulation
Governing Mechanism	Holistic, humoral	Autonomic and endocrine systems
Primary Focus	Restoration and equilibrium	Maintenance of internal environment
Response to Disease	Activates healing (fever, repair)	Inflammatory and immune responses
Conscious Control	Involuntary	Involuntary

### 5. Diagram: Conceptual Visualization

The diagram below illustrates the conceptual overlap between Tabiat in Unani medicine and Homeostasis in modern physiology <sup>[1, 4, 6]</sup>.

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**Fig 1:** Conceptual diagram showing overlap between the regulatory roles of Tabiat and homeostasis.

## 6. Integrative Implications

The Unani principle of strengthening Tabiat through Ilaj bil Tadbeer (regimenal therapy) aligns with lifestyle and preventive medicine in modern practice. Approaches such as nutritional support, stress reduction, and sleep regulation enhance both homeostasis and Tabiat. Recognizing overlaps can enhance personalized and holistic patient care. <sup>[11, 12, 13, 19]</sup>

## 7. Conclusion

Despite originating from distinct philosophical systems, Tabiat and homeostasis share a fundamental belief in the body's innate ability to heal and maintain balance. Bridging these paradigms fosters a deeper understanding of health and supports the development of integrative, evidence-informed healthcare models.

## Conflict of Interest

Not available

## Financial Support

Not available

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