

# What Your Lips Reveal

An Excerpt from [Read Your Face](#)

by **Rebecca Wood**, Julia Child Award-Winning Author

The face is like a canvas. On it all the complex systems of the body make their mark. The area below the eyes and relate to our kidneys; our lips tell us about our digestion. The Asian art of face reading, or facial diagnosis as it's also known, is a method of analyzing the appearance of the face to reveal the condition of our organs. Popular face reading takes this information to posit personality, relationship, and wealth tendencies or potential.

The face reading that I do—and which I've been doing since 1969—takes this analysis and correlates it with diet and health. It's like connecting the dots: When you enjoy meals that are right for you, your face radiates your well-being; likewise, when your diet is off, your face shows it. In my consulting and e-Courses, I help people learn to adjust their diet according to what their face tells them. It's a powerful tool, and I'm delighted to share it.

This holistic and natural approach enables you to balance your physical, emotional, and mental well-being. Whoever thought that simply looking in the mirror could be a window into a healthier life!

## Five Elements and Your Health

In *Read Your Face*, we'll use the 5-element system from Chinese medicine to view the body. You'll find this easy-to-grasp method an invaluable tool in helping you make lifestyle and health choices to gain desired results. The elements are: earth, metal, water, wood and fire. Each element corresponds to certain organ groups and bodily functions as well numerous other factors including season, sound, flavor and specific foods. Each element and its functions are inter-dependent with the other four elements.

For example, the earth element's associated organs are the stomach and pancreas. According to Chinese medicine, this element goes well beyond your literal, physiological stomach and pancreas. Rather the earth element includes energy channels (meridians) that travel throughout your body and is seen as the ability to efficiently transform your food and enjoy: energy, immunity, warmth and creativity.

In my *Read Your Face* ebook, I color code this 5-element “road map” making it an easy to follow guide. You’ll find face reading a potent way to build your health.

Additionally it provides insight into other people. It helps you make informed food choices for your young children. Of course, we don’t use this art invasively and we know how to diplomatically—or not at all—make suggestions to other family members. Typically the most efficient way to influence another is by *first* gaining your own desired results. When others find inspiration in your glowing face and renewed energy, they’re more apt to self-explore.



**Lilly, Age 72**

Next, I’ll introduce how the quality and characteristics of our lifestyle and food choices affect our organs, bodily systems, and mental and physical well-being, as well as the tone and radiance of our face. Armed with that knowledge, I then present the basic interpretations of our health that face reading reveals when we know how to look. Altogether, you’ll then be able to better understand the foundation of your health, and with some dietary adjustments take steps on the road to enhanced vitality. Whoever thought that simply looking in the mirror could be a window into a healthier life!

## **Reading Faces**

Here’s a little sample of face reading. We always start by delighting in the beauty of the face. In this photo of Lily, gaze into her eyes and bask in their depth and the

kindness emanating from them. You can sense that she enjoys a rich life of service and inner exploration. Yes, she does have a few marks and blemishes—as we all do—but she is so much more than mere appearance, as are you. This is something the eyes so clearly reveal. At any age, may our eyes also sparkle like hers.

In just a bit, we'll read Lilly's lips from a 5-element vantage. Then comparing her lips to the following examples we can deduce that overall her element and its associated organs, the stomach and pancreas, are functioning well. When you have this "earth" balance, you efficiently transform your meals and you more easily take in all that life offers you. You are nurtured and you nurture others in return. You are sympathetic, strong, hard-working, helpful, diplomatic, tolerant, practical, responsible, and creative. Kind-hearted earth types have family and friends as their focus.

But first, as our emphasis in face reading is on how diet affects health, let's take a survey of Lilly's diet. Her lips, as we will soon see, reveal her excellent food choices. The following sums up her way of eating since the 1960s:

- **Organic foods** (*No additives, preservatives, or other chemicals*)
- **Varied: a wide variety of whole grains, produce, and animal foods** (*Not limited choices*)
- **Whole: unrefined grains like brown rice** (*Not white rice, rice cakes, or white flour*)
- **Freshly prepared** (*Not packaged, canned, frozen, or from the deli*)
- **From scratch: hot oatmeal, homemade baked goods** (*Not granola or cold breakfast cereal; not bakery goods or packaged snacks*)
- **Predominantly cooked foods, supplemented with salads and raw fruit** (*Not a raw food diet*)
- **Unrefined oils** (*No refined oils or butter substitutes*)
- **Natural sweeteners: moderate use of honey, maple syrup, and cane sugar** (*No white sugar, fructose, agave, or noncaloric or artificial sweeteners*)
- **Nutritionally balanced with adequate protein, fats, and carbohydrates** (*Not a low-fat or low-protein diet*)

## Reading Your Face

Now it's your turn. Look in the mirror and softly gaze into your eyes. Relax in your unique beauty and tender heart.

In face reading, we first take in the eyes to enjoy a person's basic nature. Then we look for three things: past, present, and future tendencies. Please note that I qualify the term "future" below; I am *not* a fortuneteller!

**Past: Your constitutional, inherited traits form your past,** or the innate ground you're coming from. This overall energy, or *chi*, is revealed by multiple factors, including the hairline; bone structure; the distance between the nose and the mouth; and the size, shape, and placement of the eyes, eyebrows, forehead, chin, cheeks, nose, and ears. For example, large ears with detached lobes (like you see in Lilly's photo) indicate resilience, courage, and potential for a long and active life. Your past is largely determined by your genes and your mother's diet when you were in utero.

**Present: Next we look at your condition today.** We read this in any irregularities of color, texture, puffiness, lines, wrinkles, blemishes, spots, or sunken features. These signs show how, over the years, your life circumstances and choices have shaped your inherited potential into your current health.

**Future: I don't pretend to see the future in any face, but face reading does reveal tendencies or proclivities.** If a small stone blocks a sapling's upward growth, it bends accordingly and will mature with a crook in its trunk. Or you can remove the stone and the sapling will adapt and straighten. We're like the sapling; removing health obstacles enables our system to self-correct.

Here's just one example of a facial tendency: a pale, greenish skin tone in the temple region typically is a precursor to gall bladder problems. If you see green here, make appropriate dietary and lifestyle changes according to the 5-element system. Then as your gall bladder regains its balance, your skin will correspondingly regain its normal color. On the other hand, if the organ is further stressed, then the hue may progress from green to gray or black, which may indicate proclivity to cancer if appropriate actions aren't taken.

**Note:** In facial diagnosis we don't make assumptions from reading one feature; the overall *chi* of a particular system reveals itself in numerous physical, emotional, and mental characteristics.

## Lips

Our lips mark the beginning of the gastrointestinal tract. This obvious statement clues us that reading their features reveal important information about the condition of your digestive function.

Looking again at Lilly's photo, focus on her lips. They're the same color and size and they have a precisely defined edge. Can you see this? Her lips are like those of people in photos or drawings of people from the old days, before the introduction of the modern Western diet. Look around you and today you'll see that such lips are the exception rather than the norm.

In this excerpt, we'll examine just the upper lip. And of over a dozen features the upper lip potentially can display, this excerpt illustrates only one.

### Upper lip color

Now look in the mirror, or better yet, at a close-up photo of your face, and compare the color of your lips with Lilly's and with those below.

In the following photos note that the upper lips are whitish or sometimes even blue in comparison to the lower lip. This suggests that the person's digestive fire (a 5-element term), or *chi*, is lacking. Their diet invariably consists of an overabundance of raw or chilled foods and beverages and/or too many packaged and processed foods. To examine their photos from an earlier period we would see that as their upper lip color progressively faded, their corresponding digestive issues increased.







As all 5-elements are interrelated, here's just one example of how a pale upper lip may also reveal an imbalance in another element. In Chinese medicine, the adrenals (water element) are regarded as the “spark plug” which ignites the stomach's digestive fire. An overabundance of cold food creates a damp environment; this challenges the adrenal “spark plug” and causes them to “burn out.” Thus a whitish lip is one indicator of adrenal exhaustion.

Typical physical symptoms for cold in the earth element include bloating, candida-type yeast infections, overweight, chronic fatigue, diabetes, weak immunity, food intolerances, indigestion, and bowel irregularity.

Corresponding emotional clues of digestive *chi* deficiency may include a tendency to worry, nag, or feel needy, or to be compulsive, obsessive, or distrustful.

Again, we're all unique individuals and we all have differing tolerances for salads, raw foods, snack foods, cold breakfast cereals, and chilled beverages. But if your upper lip looks cold, I invite you to experiment with the Rx below.

As you rebuild digestive *chi*, your top lip will “pink up” and your corresponding symptoms will decrease. How long will this take? That depends upon your age,

how long your digestive *chi* had been chilled and dampened, and how skillfully your new diet supports rebuilding. Most people will see a shift within ten days and significant improvement in twenty-one days.

Track your progress with photos and a diet log to compare your lip color as well as corresponding emotional and physical symptoms. You'll be surprised. While some changes will be subtle, others may be positively dramatic!

## **Rx for people with Earth Element imbalances**

### **Foods that support Earth Element *chi***

As a useful guideline for a healthy diet, review Lilly's food choices; also see my ebook, [Clean and Free](#). Favor easy-to-digest and freshly prepared foods. Enjoy nutritionally balanced meals with moderate carbohydrates and adequate protein and fats. Many people with earth element issues find that that meat, poultry, and fish are easier to digest, and therefore more medicinal, than is the protein from eggs, dairy or legumes. Foods with a round shape (like cabbage and squash) and those with a naturally sweet flavor (like carrots and whole grains) especially benefit your digestive function, as do pungent vegetables. (Unless, that is, you are overly hot, then minimize your use of chilies, onions and garlic.) As culinary herbs and spices typically aid digestion, enjoy them. Occasional use of natural sweeteners is fine. Favor warm or room temperature foods and beverages. Pass on ice cubes. If you are served a cold drink, before you swallow, swish it in your mouth to take off the chill.

### **Food and environmental concerns for the Element:**

Avoid excess carbohydrates, sweets, and cold and raw foods, as well as artificial sweeteners. If possible, avoid a humid climate. Or if you live in a damp environment, balance it with drying foods and herbs. My [New Whole Foods Encyclopedia](#) includes a comprehensive listing of the energetic properties of foods and their 5-Element designations.

### **Lifestyle support:**

Delight in the beauty in your life. Find and indulge in more relaxing moments. Activities specifically balancing to the earth element include gardening, flower arranging, singing, dancing, and luxuriating in the color yellow. (If you don't like wearing yellow, enjoy it in your environment or consider yellow sheets, place mats or a pot of buttery-yellow chrysanthemums).

## Summary

Exciting! Just by taking the time to read the symptoms your own body presents to you, you can take tremendous charge of your own health.

Click for more details or to purchase your copy of [Read Your Face](#). If you'd like to take your research and healing routine further, I offer: [Face Reading Consultations](#), and [Diet Consultations](#) with or without a Face Reading.

May you be nourished.  
Rebecca Wood  
[www.RebeccaWood.com](http://www.RebeccaWood.com)  
Copyright © 2012

## Acknowledgements

I offer sincere thanks to Michio Kushi and the late Aveline Kushi for introducing me to the study of the medicinal and energetic properties of foods and of how diet impacts our health. Thank you Jack Worsley, L.Ac, College of Chinese Acupuncture who taught me 5-element medicine. Thanks to Bob Flaws, L.Ac. and Marybeth Kreigher, L.Ac. two Chinese medicine mentors. Also to macrobiotic teacher, counselor and acupuncturist, [Michael Rossoff, L.Ac.](#), Asheville, NC, for his suggestions to this text. Lastly I extend deep appreciation to my students and clients from whom I'm always learning.