

A Rainbow Inside

By mapping the human body's energy fields, researchers are unravelling new ways to find and fight disease

Bathed in white, a tripod-mounted, computer-linked video camera in the middle, the corner room at Pune's World Peace Centre could pass off for a photo studio. Except that being here isn't about looking good on the outside, but about feeling better within. That's why thousands like Mahesh Doshi, 38, have faced this camera without make-up or put-on smile. To make sense of it all, peek at the monitor. On display is Doshi's picture, raided by a psychedelic sweep of colours. For the greenhorn, this would mean a camera gone awry. But in those green streaks and red daubs, experts at the Centre for Biofield Sciences (CBS) see physiological stories.



Like all of us, Doshi's body is suffused by an energy field, say CBS experts. Made of light and sound emanating from the body's centre, this biofield (call it aura, halo or corona) extends well beyond the skin and forms a protective sheath. Stress —spiritual, psychological or physical—distorts this sheath, causing health problems. "A diseased human body emits imbalanced signals...", explains Dr. Thornton Streeter, founder-CEO of CBS and the Centre for Human Energy Field Research, UK and India, and a special advisor to the UK-based Institute of Complementary Medicine. "Frequency distortions preceding an illness can be mapped," he adds.

What Doshi has just undergone - a Polycontrast Interference Photography (PIP) scan - turns the invisible alarms triggered by his biofield into visible signals, revealing which body areas have excess or deficient energy, and indicating where diseases are or could occur. This method of predictive healthcare, according to PIP inventor Harry Oldfield, is as safe and simple as "a supermarket check-out machine scanning a product's bar code".

It works like this. In a room illuminated by a full-spectrum fluorescent light - a look-alike of an ordinary tubelight but powerful enough to simulate daylight - the camera captures stills of Doshi in various positions and feeds them to the computer. Which, in turn, runs a complex software programme to capture light interference patterns caused when ambient light interacts with his energy field. These patterns are displayed as live images graded into 250 distinguishable colors. While dark, congested, distorted pools of low-energy colors like black, grey, brown, red and pink denote ailments; bright, harmonious patterns indicate good health. The walls are white and bear a matt finish so that ambient colors and reflections don't tint the findings.

In the case of an otherwise healthy-looking Doshi, the pink blotch around the navel, it transpires, holds cues to his niggling abdominal pain. "This is amazing," he confesses, "I hadn't told anyone about the pain." With doctors of both holistic and orthodox medicine in attendance at CBS, Doshi doesn't have to go far for treatment. He is advised some medication and dietary changes. A few weeks later, he faces the camera again. This time around, the pink blotch is nowhere to be seen. "The pain has disappeared," exults Doshi. "So has the blockage," adds Dr. Gauri Oak, director, medical research. Streeter isn't surprised. "This technique can help medical professionals get to the root cause of most

health problems," he says matter of factly. And like Doshi, one need not be a patient to qualify for PIP. As Doshi put it himself, "It's preventive action, and it's saved me expensive treatment."

PIP isn't curative by itself, clarify the experts, nor is it a substitute for CT or MRI scans. But it helps the likes of Doshi make lifestyle changes well in time. For others like Kaustubh Mahurkar, it's helped plan their recovery. The 35-year-old professional squash player, suffering from chronic back pain for long, had been advised surgery to clear a nerve block. But before taking the big step, he was looking at alternatives.

That's when someone suggested a PIP scan. A fiery red spread across his lower back helped pin down the seat of the pain. Post analysis, he opted for energy therapy and was advised specific posture corrections and yoga. He has since hit the courts again, and has also had another scan to corroborate his recuperation. "I shuddered at the thought of surgery," Mahurkar recalls. His sage advice: "Keep a receptive mind."



And that's what even die-hard skeptics have learnt. Take 59-year-old Praveen Jathar, who equated energy healing with "hocus-pocus". Looking at PIP to harden his reservations, he once availed of energy healing. To his surprise, not only did he come out feeling healthier, but his improved sense of well-being also showed up in his energy field's brightness and transparency. Which is also how PIP scans are found to reflect the feeling of freshness and vigour, like the one after undertaking rituals like 'agnihotra,' a fire ceremony supposed to purify homes and improve the inmates' health. Scoffers, aver experts, can no longer say it's all in the mind.

Trained under Oldfield, Streeter has investigated the human biofield for over 15 years and evaluated the efficacy of 160 therapy techniques. His own trust with aura and crystal healing came after a near-death accident that left him wheelchair-bound. Needless to say, it was a major catalyst in his recovery. "Ancient medicinal systems never resorted to dissection," he says. Adds Oak, "This technique provides a scientific approach to the 5,000-year-old principle of aura hygiene."

Interestingly, the seven parts scanned in PIP - the crown, brow, throat, chest, abdomen, back and solar plexus - correspond to the seven chakras enunciated in Ayurveda. These are energy centers from where life energy (prana) is believed to flow into and out of our aura and among the chakras along nadis. Traditional Chinese medicine also subscribes to a comparable energy model. These systems struck a rare accord with modern science when the chakras were found to correspond with glands in the endocrine system. Now, by lending itself to the analysis of chakras, nadis and meridians, energy mapping is helping validate these systems, ridding them of their occultish image. A willing suspension of cynicism is a prerequisite for the scan, much like the placebo effect for drugs to work. "The scan captures even the slightest negative emotion," says Oak. "Counselling helps the subjects attain the right frame of mind."

Apart from training over 350 energy practitioners (not essentially doctors), the center has established several branches in India and abroad. These co-affiliated clinics, including those at Delhi's Sir Ganga Ram hospital and Pune's Lokmanya Hospital, have obtained biofield imaging systems and the necessary training from CBS. The latest addition to CBS is the Gas Discharge Visualisation technique, which photographs the corona of the fingertips. This provides miniature maps of the individual's energy field.

The center is also conducting its own research. Still, Streeter laments that although their array of biofield visualization is well tested, medical researchers haven't invested enough to probe the advantages. Perhaps, as science beavers away at the ultimate mystery of life, CBS and their ilk will be able to convince more people that energy mapping can aid a more scientific understanding of disease and healing.