

I ran across the father accidentally on November 8th. He reported that the boy had recovered entirely both from the asthma and the cough the day after taking the *Arnica* and that he had felt an immediate and marked improvement after the first dose.

These cases reveal the wide scope of the remedy. The first case illustrates the effect on the mind, the second on the body, and the third and fourth mainly on the nerves.

—*Heal Thyself*, February, 1952

APOCYNUM CANNABINUM

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Common Name—Indian Hemp.

Tincture or Infusion—Made from whole fresh plant or root.

Active Alkaloid—Cymarin.

Sphere of Action—Urinary Organs, Heart, Digestive Tract, Uterus.

The general picture is one of insufficiency and depression of the action of kidneys, heart, skin and bowels, and resulting cardiac failure, uremia and all degrees of symptoms of these conditions.

Urinary Sphere: Renal insufficiency with ascites, anasarca, hydrothorax, etc. There is marked decrease in amount of urine eliminated. In case that continues long, all degrees of uremia exist with the mental dullness and confusion and uremic vomiting. The gastric irritability is marked and they cannot keep even water, as well as food, in the stomach long without vomiting it. With this vomiting they develop an increase of the thirst which had already been present.

Cardiac Sphere : It has been found that Apocynum has been most effective in cases where there are valvular lesions as mitral and tricuspid insufficiency or with arrhythmias of all kinds. A slow pulse is considered a prime indication for its use. Respiratory embarrassment, and general cardiac decompensation symptoms are to be found. Patients helped by Apocynum often give history of acute alcoholism.

Modalities : Marked. They are worse by cold weather or cold drinks and better by warmth ; worse in morning after sleep.

Dosage : Most books advise 10 drops of the tincture three times a day or a watery infusion containing enough alcohol to preserve it.

Comparison : Kent considers that the symptoms of apis and apocynum are so near alike that you could not tell them apart if it was not for their opposite modalities. Apocynum is worse by any form of cold while apis is better by cold. The similarity is not only in the G. U. sphere but of the skin and joints as well. Apis is thirstless, while apoc. has marked thirst.

Arsenicum album can be confused with apocynum for the arsenic patient is also cold and wants intense heat in the room, but the deathly prostration, deathly anxiety, terrible restlessness and marked odor to body help to differentiate the two.

The menorrhagia and uterine symptoms are similar to those of phos., ipecac, and secale.

China is often used for dropsy in people who have had repeated hemorrhage but apoc. is equally well indicated.

The respiratory symptoms are similar to those of ant., tart., strophanthus and apocynum when given in large doses both produce intense gastric disturbances, depress the heart action and control dropsical effusion and produce diuresis.

Digitalis homœopathically is indicated also in cases of dropsy with slow pulse.

Clinical Cases :

R. D.: Male: Aet. 45.

Had severe Rheumatic Fever as a child and was left with both mitral and aortic lesions, the severity of which I have been unable to determine as I did not see him until two years ago when he had been acutely ill for two months with sub-acute bacterial endo-carditis due to streptococcus viridins. At that time he had fever to 103 every day, had lost 20 pounds in weight and hemoglobin was 52 per cent and red blood count 2,600,000. Penicillin and blood transfusions cured his Strept. Viridins infection and his blood cultures have remained negative to date but the valve damage is so severe that repeated attacks of cardiac decompensation has followed. Prior to my care he had been a periodic heavy user of alcohol and in the past two years has been on sprees which have always been followed with edema of legs, ascites on several occasions and passive congestion of the liver. Mercurial diuretic (mercuhydrin) in conjunction with ammonium chloride or ascorbic acid have been used but frequently lose their effect and I have then found that apocynum in 10 drop doses, three times a day will carry on or will act on the kidneys so that mercuhydrin will act better in a few days. You no doubt wonder why I have not used apocynum alone here, but I have found that its action in these episodes are slower, and because of need of money he wants to go back to work much sooner than he should. So any medicines for quick relief. He doesn't adhere to his low salt diet and will go on alcoholic sprees which make him a poor patient, but with it all he is able to work more than half the time.

He has severe aortic, mitral and tricuspid insufficiency, blood pressure systolic 130 to 150, diastolic 40 to 60, urine examinations show from trace to 2 + albumen and varying number of casts depending on state of decompensation, and with it all apocynum on empirical basis has helped.

A. S. : Male : Aet. 78 : Wt. 208 lbs.

Has been semi invalid for years, 15 years ago he had a prostatectomy for Benign Hypertrophy. Ten years ago right sided hemiplegia from which he recovered to where he could get out and around. One year ago coronary occlusion followed by auricular fibrillation and cardiac decompensation. He has been overweight for years and heavy user of salt. During the last year he has had mental dullness and drowsiness. Laboratory analysis; urine shows trace albumen otherwise negative, N.P.N. 38 mgm per 100 cc. blood, blood counts slight secondary anemia. His blood pressure has averaged from 160 to 180 systolic and 100 to 120 diastolic. There is marked generalized arterio sclerosis. His fibrillation is controlled by 0.1 mg. Puridigin daily, and craetaegus tincture, has helped but frequently his Edema has been marked and for a while mercurhydrin relieved, but it lost its effect and then I tried one dram of apocynum 3x to 8 oz. water and 2 drams of this mixture every 4 hours. It relieved his edema and has kept him free of edema or if it returns has relieved him so that no more mercurhydrin has had to be used.

Summary : Here are two chronic, more or less terminal cases which have had help from apocynum. The first is primarily cardiac with aortic, mitral and tricuspid insufficiency complicated by alcoholic history with few symptoms upon which to prescribe and has had definite help by tincture and not potencies of apocynum. The second case presented both cardiac and uremia symptoms in an elderly, arteriosclerotic hypertensive individual and the apocynum 3x has controlled his edema. The use here has been empirical and not on symptom picture. I have reviewed here the symptomatology of apocynum to refreshen it in your mind and may apocynum help some future patient of yours.

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