

WHICH REMEDY :

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Calcareo Carbonica

Carbo Vegetabilis

White chalk from the sea bed, black charcoal from the forest, are both when potentized important anti-psoric remedies. Although apparently most dissimilar they nevertheless share many characteristics, such as debility, timidity, pallor, puffiness, lack of vital heat, severe sweats, respiratory, alimentary and cutaneous affections.

ORIGIN

CALCIUM is widely distributed in nature, constantly in circulation, and chiefly in the form of Calcium carbonate. Carried into the oceans it is utilised there by innumerable marine plants and animals which abstract the lime from solution to form their shells. Among these is the oyster, and the remedy is prepared from the chalky material of the middle layer of the shell of that flabby inert mollusc.

Calcium is also the most important inorganic element in the body and occurs in the highest amount, but it must be present in the right metabolic relation to three other elements: Sodium, Potassium and Magnesium. For this active equilibrium to be maintained, the absorption, assimilation and excretion of Calcium must be adequately balanced.

A preponderance of Calcium makes the exchange between cells and fluids more difficult and metabolism is slowed down. This reduction of combustion and booking of tissue activity tends to produce a sluggish, cold, flabby, pale, pasty, turgid, obese, phlegmatic type of organism—a picture that is seen in extreme degree in the condition known as myxœdema.

If, however, Calcium is in short supply, the absence of its damping-down effect produces undue excitability of nerves and the tendency to muscle cramps spoken of as tetany.

Although 99 per cent. of the Calcium in the body is in the skeleton and teeth, it is important to realise that the remaining

1 per cent. plays a most important role in a great variety of bodily activities. Calcium exerts a protective action against the toxic effects of other ions, especially Sodium and Potassium; it governs cell permeability; it is essential for clotting reactions both in blood and milk; in fact it is stated that there is hardly any physiological action which does not involve the intervention of Calcium.

It can be readily understood, therefore, that disturbance of the proper Calcium balance in the body may be productive of a wide range of symptoms. Such imbalance of Calcium equilibrium can often be restored to normal by the dynamic stimulus of the potentized drug acting in the radio-physical sphere.

Carbon is a medicinally inert substance in the crude state although it has its uses as a deodorant and a preservative. It is obtained from any kind of wood which has been heated thoroughly to a red heat to drive off the gases. Hahnemann used birch wood; more recently beech wood has been employed and carefully carbonized in a closed mortar.

It is not, of course, pure carbon and contains traces of Potassium carbonate. Carbon is widely distributed in the body in various combinations, both organic and inorganic. Carbon when activated by trituration shows an affinity for various tissues—for the venous system, tending to loss of tone in the vessel walls and circulatory stasis; for the blood, causing oxygen lack, impaired resistance to infection, and a tendency to hæmorrhages of dark blood which does not readily clot; for mucous membranes, encouraging catarrh; for the digestive organs, producing much flatulence; for glands, resulting in enlargement and hardening.

DEBILITY

This is a marked feature of both these remedies. The debility of Calc. carb. is constitutional and chronic, the result of impaired nutrition due to the general slowing down of active metabolism. The weakness and exhaustion associated with Carbo veg. is an acquired state of lowered vitality, even to the degree of collapse; this may result from loss of fluids, from

debilitating illness, from poisoning with bad food, or from other causes such as opium poisoning.

APPEARANCE

The Calc. carb. baby is soft, pasty-faced and sweating about the head; children show signs of inhibited growth with delayed dentition, delayed closure of fontanelles in the skull, delayed walking, from weakness of limbs, even signs of rickets. Owing to poor nutrition there may be emaciation of neck and limbs associated with a large taut tummy.

The child is lethargic, inclined to sit down and apt to fiddle with small objects or pick at its fingers. Teenagers show a tendency to obesity—fatness without fitness.

Older subjects look pale about the lips, ears, fingers and are often blue-eyed blondes. The body odour is sour, as is also that of other discharges, vomit, stools and so on.

Carbo. veg. shows pallor of face with blue lips or the colour may be dusky and purplish, owing to stasis in the circulation. There is a tendency to easy flushing, especially after eating spicy food or taking even a small amount of wine. Eyes lack lustre and brightness, veins sag and bulge, there is general puffiness, and movements may be clumsy as the result of muscle weakness. Discharges have a putrid odour.

In actual collapse the appearance is Hippocratic with pinched cheeks, livid lips, surface covered with cold sweat, cold tongue, cold breath and gasping air-craving respiration.

MENTALITY

The CALC. CARB. mentality mirrors the general state of retardation. The subject is slow, dull, uninterested, lazy, and shuns any sort of mental effort. Fretfulness, obstinacy, indecisiveness, inability for consecutive thinking, are associated with fearfulness.

The CALC. CARB. subject is full of fears, fear of people, fear of being watched, fear of losing the reason, indefinite fear of "scarcely knows what". There is also dread of disease and of suffering.

The CARBO. VEG. subject is also sluggish, lazy, torpid and indifferent. But this is due to the asthenic condition, the individual being too weary to make any effort or be interested in anything. Or, short of utter weariness, there may be a feeling of frustration with coincident irritability and excitability.

There is fear of the dark and fear of ghosts, and anxiety in a dark room may be so intense that the sufferer is scared to lie down. The weak state may produce difficulty in thought, with a confused feeling in the head.

COLDNESS

Both these remedies are very chilly. The CALC. CARB. state of retarded combustion impairs heat production, and the subject is quite miserable with the cold, wants to be well wrapped up and to stay indoors to keep warm. Coldness of the surface may be associated with internal burning, or the sensation of cold may be in patches; the feet may burn at night.

The CARBO VEG. subject is essentially chilly, a veritable block of ice, with icy-cold hands, feet, nose, ears, tongue, breath, and especially knees and legs.

This results from the general loss of vitality, poor circulation and consequent poverty of oxygen-supply to the tissues.

The CALC. CARB. subject shuns cold air, cold water, feels worse in cold or wet weather, and is helped by warm dry weather.

The CARBO VEG. subject doesn't like cold but is most distressed in a hot stuffy airless atmosphere, as this increases the oxygen-lack. Feels worse also in humid weather for the same reason. Wide open windows and energetic fanning afford relief.

APPETITE

CALC. CARB. shows several peculiarities in the matter of appetite and food likes and dislikes. There is often a hungry, faint and sinking sensation, felt at any hour, not especially in mid-morning as with PHOSPHORUS, SEPIA, SULPHUR and some other remedies. There is a desire for eggs, sweets and ice-cream, but aversion from meat, milk, coffee and tobacco.

In addition CALC. CARB. shows a variety of odd perversions

of appetite with a craving for dirt, lime, coal or other unusual comestibles.

CARBO VEG. on the other hand shows a desire for coffee, salt and rich foods. It shares a liking for sweets and a dislike of meat, milk and digestible foods.

SWEATS

A tendency to sweat is a marked feature of CALC. CARB., the sweat being specially profuse on head and feet and most evident at night. It may even soak the pillow. Quite moderate exercise or nervous distress may also produce heavy sweats in the daytime.

Profuse cold sweats are common with CARB. VEG. and in fever these may be followed by shivering. They do not afford relief. They may be located especially on the limbs and on the face.

SLEEP

Disturbed sleep is a feature of CALC. CARB., with terrifying dreams. The child may wake screaming and can only be pacified with difficulty. Sleep-walking may be noted. Sleep may be of short duration with a tendency to wake early. Wakes feeling tired and unrefreshed, as if had not slept at all.

CARBO VEG. shows a strong inclination to sleep in the daytime, but insomnia at night owing to bodily unease. Sleep may be haunted by anxieties and horrors and accompanied by twitching and jerking. May wake in a state of fear, covered with cold sweat, and is afraid to go to sleep again.

HEADACHE

With CALC. CARB. the scalp feels cold and there is a desire to keep the head warmly wrapped up. A tearing headache above the eyes, extending downwards to the nose. There may be periodic headache occurring every seven to fourteen days and associated with nausea and vomiting; it may be described as stupefying and splitting, is worse in daylight and calls for relief by warmth and by lying down in darkened room.

The CARBO VEG. subject may complain of a whirling, confused feeling in the head; frontal or occipital headache, bursting in type, accompanied by a sensation as if "scalp too tight", "head heavy as lead", "feels like the morning after". There may be throbbing headache in the temples with a feeling of a "tight band" round the head and some relief by firm pressure. There may be tearing pains also in the ears and jaws.

As with CALC. CARB. there is a desire to have the head warmly wrapped up, but the CARBO VEG. headache is made worse by the pressure of a hat, by movements of the head, and by exertion. The scalp tends to be sore and itchy, and alopecia is common.

RESPIRATORY TROUBLES

The CALC. CARB. subject is liable to constant colds, associated with sore throat and a tendency to spread downwards to the chest.

Nasal catarrh, which is stubborn and long-standing, with a sore nose, possibly ulcerated within, and much thick yellow discharge containing crusts. Hoarseness, worse in the morning, but without pain. A persistent, tickling cough, especially at night and accompanied by, much thick, yellow, sweetish phlegm.

With CARBO VEG. there is a tendency to acute coryza, with a great deal of sneezing, and often nose-bleed with thin, dark, almost black blood which does not clot readily. The bleeding may be brought on by blowing the nose or by a sudden jar or exertion such as straining at stool.

The nasal catarrh may be associated with crawling and tickling sensations in the nose and accompanied by general malaise, with a tendency to sweating in a warm room, or shivering and feeling miserable in a cold room. The nose feels cold and is red at the top.

The "cold" spreads to the throat with rawness and burning and hoarseness, which is aggravated by talking, coughing or clearing the throat; worse also in damp humid air and in the evening. There is a crawling, tickling sensation in the throat or a feeling as if breathing sulphur fumes.

Further spread downwards may result in a teasing cough with foul-tasting phlegm, thin at first but becoming thick and yellowish-green. There may be difficult breathing with a feeling of suffocation and inability to lie down, a weak feeling in the chest and great desire for air. In more serious illness there may be a rattle in the chest with tough sticky sputum, only raised with difficulty, and a cyanotic facies.

DIGESTIVE TROUBLES

With CALC. CARB. the digestive troubles are associated with sour, bitter taste in mouth, with acid risings, sour vomit, sour-smelling diarrhoeic stools which contain curds and undigested food particles.

The CALC. CARB. subject may suffer from stubborn constipation with light-coloured or very pale stools and a good deal of ineffectual urging to stool. Curiously enough the patient feels better when constipated.

CARBO VEG. is closely related to alimentary disorders. Quivering and swelling of the upper lip; rapid dental decay; separation of gums from teeth, with sponginess and tendency to bleed; much salivation and bad odour of breath; toothache which is aggravated by both heat and cold (teeth feel too long); multiple small ulcers in mouth and throat which cause intense pain on attempting to swallow: these are all characteristics of this remedy.

Indigestion as the result of over-indulgence in food or drink; water-brash and queasy nausea in the morning, burnings in stomach; much flatulence with constant belching, and also passage of offensive flatus. These symptoms are worse when lying down and about half an hour after a meal, and are relieved *pro tem.* by belchings. The eructations tend to be rancid.

MUSCULAR SYMPTOMS

With CALC. CARB. the muscles are weak and there is consequent difficulty in lifting any heavy weight and a fear lest may "sprain a muscle"; cannot sit erect and spinal curvature

easily develops; ankles easily turn over. Cramps may occur, especially in bed as result of sluggish blood-flow.

With CARBO VEG. there may be much restless unease due to pains in nape, dorsum, deep to the coccyx, forearms, wrists, and fingers. The coccygeal pain is worse when sitting. The limbs feel bruised and the part which is lain on easily "goes to sleep" with numbness and tingling.

USE

CALC. CARB. is largely a constitutional remedy called for in chronic disorders of metabolism. CARBO VEG. may be needed in emergency, especially in grave collapse when the prompt administration of the remedy in 30 c. or 200 c. potency may avert death. It is also of value in states of low vitality after serious illness, or in the debility of old age.

PROMINENT CHARACTERISTICS

To sum up, the CALC. CARB. subject tends to be *fair, fat, flabby, fearful, phlegmatic, chilly, sweaty, subject to "colds"*.

CARBO VEG. is characterized by *icy coldness, venous, stasis, excessive, flatulence, craving for air burning sensations*.

—*Homœopathy, Oct. '58.*

HOMŒOPATHY INSTEAD OF SURGERY ETC.

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also returned to her former condition. Even the constipation had disappeared. At long last even the facial eczema reappeared, wholly in accordance with the descriptions of Hahnemann's Psora-teaching.

I dare not claim that this patient was definitely cured. Only after years of further observation and at the end of more homœopathic treatment, if required, could this be conclusively proved.

But it seems to me that for this woman it was a singular stroke of fortune that she was, on the one hand, found to be inoperable by the surgeons, and at the same time she had decided to entrust herself to the great and beneficent power of the homœopathic art of healing.

—*Journal of Homœo. Medicine, Oct.-Dec., '59.*