

NITRIC ACID

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Nitric acid is a tissue remedy of wide application, but with a particular affinity for the skin and mucous membranes, and especially where the skin and mucous membranes join, with a general tendency to destructive ulcerations, foul odour to all discharges, and with sharp splinter-like pains.

Hahnemann, under whose direction *Nitric acid* was first proved, says that it acts more beneficially in those of dark complexion and hair than in blondes. "It is also," he says, "more appropriate to chronic patients who are inclined to soft stools, while it is seldom applicable to patients inclined to constipation."

Nitric acid presents many points of resemblance to the lesions of syphilis and, as Hering says, it is useful in "diseases depending upon the presence of syphilitic, scrofulous or mercurial poison; broken down, cachectic constitutions."

In many particulars *Nitric acid* resembles *Mercury*, and in general it is indicated for the bad effects produced by an excess of *Mercury* (*Asaf.*, *Aurum*, and *Lach.*).

We find in *Nitric acid* a general aggravation from water on washing or bathing (*Phos.*, *Ars. iod.*, and *Sulph.*); there is general emaciation and great weakness, even to trembling, with necessity to lie down almost constantly.

The epilepsy calling for *Nitric acid* has the attacks coming on at night or after midnight, beginning like a mouse moving up and down the left side. I have cured epileptics with *Lachesis* when *Nitric acid* failed.

The *Nitric acid* patient is easily irritated by trifling occurrences, is inclined to be peevish, despondent and anxious about himself.

"Externally the head is sensitive, as if confused, either all over in certain spots, as, for example, on the spots pressed when lying, or by the pressure of a hat." (Dunham)

The headache of *Nitric acid* is as if in the bones, is "worse in the morning on waking or after rising," or at night, "better on lying down or from driving in a carriage." (Hering)

There is falling out of the hair, "particularly on the top of the head."

On the scalp, there are moist, burning, offensive eruptions, itching more at night and "bleeding easily when scratched" (Lilienthal), with crusts and scabs and burning or splinter-like pains, as at the angles of the eyes, nose, mouth or anus.

In the eyes, it is of value for gonorrhœal ophthalmia, with burning pains, and for ulcers on the cornea; and it is of great value in chronic syphilitic iritis.

It is useful in caries of the mastoid, either syphilitic or mercurial.

Nitric acid is useful in acute coryza, with soreness of the nose, dryness and stoppage, and a too little used remedy in nasal catarrhs, with a sensation of dryness and obstruction anteriorly, the discharge mostly passing into the pharynx.

The nasal discharges are fœtid, and, in syphilis or diphtheria involving the nose, the discharges are excoriating also. The angles of the wings of the nose and corners of the mouth become sore and ulcerated, with soreness, sticking pains and bleeding on touch.

I cured in a few weeks an old case of necrosis of the nasal bones with the most foul, excoriating nasal discharge by high potencies ranging from .10M to CM.

We can think of this remedy in caries of the bones of the face, especially of the malar bones, with soreness and

pain on touch as from splinters; and for cracking in the jaws when chewing.

In *Nitric acid*, and especially in a mercurial cachexia, the gums are unhealthy and bleed easily, the teeth turn yellow and become very loose, there is salivation, sometimes even a bloody saliva, and a putrid odour from the mouth.

It is a valuable remedy in ulceration of the mouth and inside of the cheeks, with great fetor. The ulcers are shallow and spread rapidly, like the ulcers caused by, or calling for, *Mercury*, but when touched they have sharp, splinter-like pains.

It is one of the remedies to be thought of where the mucous membrane of the cheek gets between the teeth, so that he bites it when chewing, with tough, stringy mucus and sharp, sticking pains.

Stitches in the rectum; sticking as from a splinter for a long time after stool, associated during and after stool with spasmodic constriction of the anus.

It is of great value for fissures of the anus, with oozing of foetid moisture, frequent burning stools, followed by raw smarting, as if cut with a knife.

In diarrhoea and dysentery the discharges are usually offensive and putrid, dark green or watery, and blood-streaked, with pieces of membrane looking like scrapings of the intestines.

The urine contains more or less blood and is strong-smelling, like that of horse's urine, and *Nitric acid* is one of the remedies spoken of in the *Handbook* as useful in oxaluria.

There is frequent urging to urinate, with scanty discharge and intense smarting and burning, which Hering describes in this way: "Burning in urethra and desire to urinate, with hope of relieving burning, which, however, is increased."

It is of value for condylomata on the prepuce, with offensive oozings and bleeding when touched; and it is to be thought of in orchitis, with pain in the spermatic cord running up to the abdomen.

In the female there is a yellow, acrid, offensive leucorrhœa, that follows the menses; and ulcerations of the cervix having a watery, offensive, excoriating discharge. From these erosions and excrescences we may have persistent hæmorrhage, or hæmorrhage from the uterus.

Nitric acid has a cough caused by laughing or crying, with great weakness; or fatiguing cough worse the forepart of the night, with suffocation, or with pain in the chest as if bound with an iron band.

Nitric acid is a remedy to be thought of in bleeding warts.

Lachesis is incompatible with *Nitric acid*.

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