

PAIN AND HOMOEOPATHY*

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Pain! Pain! Oh what a terrible thing it is and how much there is of it in the world. We have all felt it ourselves and no one realizes more than physicians how much pain and suffering there is. We have always had it and always will as long as this world shall last. The relief of pain is one of the important duties of the physician. It is a necessary sense, providing us with the means of knowing that an injury has been received, or that an illness is present. A diagnosis can be made by its location, character, duration, aggravation and amelioration; and the proper remedies chosen. In our endeavour to bring about the relief so much desired by the patient we must guard against the masking of symptoms as is done by the use of opiates and sedatives. When you listen to certain radio programs as Alka Seltzer, Bayers' Aspirin, etc., or read the billboard advertisements of Hexin, etc., you will naturally ask why anyone should suffer. It seems so simple to relieve these pains and from their broadcast, the use of them is harmless. It is no wonder that so many people are using these preparations even though we as physicians know that they are not harmless but are really very dangerous drugs. I have never been able to understand why the government will allow such preparations to be advertised as they are at present.

Has Homoeopathy anything to offer for the relief of pain? It has everything to offer as it is the only method which relieves the pain by removing the cause, by curing the condition. It is swift, gentle, safe and sure; and it accomplishes its work without harmful drugging of the patient. It will be impossible to give very much of the materia medica of the remedies for pain in a ten-minute paper. I can only mention some of the more commonly used homoeopathic remedies with a few of the leading symptoms. Any remedy in the materia medica may be indicated and it must cover the particular case or it will not accomplish its purpose. There are few cases of pain that cannot be relieved by it if we know our materia medica well enough. Some cases of advanced cancer and other incurable conditions may need opiates but even these patients may often be palliated better by homoeopathic remedies than by strong sedatives. The better knowledge that we have of the homoeopathic materia medica, the less often will we need to resort to sedatives, opiates, etc. In some cases the action of the homoeopathic remedy is slower and in others it is faster than sedatives. An acute case with one of the more acute remedies indicated will often give relief quicker than a hypodermic of morphine, and certainly more permanent. Even the deeper

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acting remedies will often give relief in an unbelievably short time.

Nash says that the three leading pain remedies are Aconite, Chamomilla and Coffea.

Aconite: The pain of Aconite comes on suddenly and with great violence. It is accompanied with *intense fear, anxiety and great restlessness*. It is often indicated in complaints that come on suddenly from the very cold weather of winter or from the intensely hot weather of summer. Sudden inflammation from taking cold, from exposure to dry, cold winds. It is a short acting remedy and will either cure the condition in a very short time or some other remedy will be needed to complete the cure. It will relieve the pain and distress of foreign bodies in the eye.

Chamomilla is probably the leading acute pain remedy in children but is often indicated in adults as well. It is one of the most frequently indicated teething remedies and is also one of the leading earache remedies. It is characterized by great sensitiveness, especially sensitive to pain. Chamomilla feels pain with such intensity that it gives way to violent frenzy, irritability, and outbursts of anger. It is never indicated without this irritability. The child whines and cries. It wants something new every minute. It refuses what has been asked for or throws it away. Strikes at the mother or nurse. It is absolutely impossible to please the child who needs Chamomilla. Numbness with the pain.

Coffea: Pains are increased by noise. Aggravated by wine. Pains in mouth and jaws, toothache, better from holding ice-cold water in the mouth. Warm drinks aggravates the pain in the mouth—otherwise the pain is aggravated by cold, cold air. All of the senses are more acute; smell, taste and touch. Unusual activity of the mind and body. Full of ideas, quick to act, no sleep on this account. Pains unbearable, drive to despair. Sensation as though a nail were driven into the head.

Bryonia: Conditions calling for this remedy come on slowly. It is often indicated in acute rheumatic conditions and in acute chest affections. The pain of Bryonia is markedly aggravated by motion and is ameliorated by pressure. Stitching pains, especially in serous membranes and joints. Joints red, swelling, stiff, with stitching pain from slightest motion.

Magnesia phosphorica is our leading neuralgic remedy. The pains are ameliorated by heat and pressure. It is frequently indicated in the colic of small babies. Cramping pains come and go quickly. All kinds of pains, but cramping pains are most characteristic.

Hepar sulphur is frequently indicated with pain in suppurative conditions. The patient is oversensitive to impressions, to surroundings and to pain. He is so sensitive to pain that he becomes unconscious; faints with the pain. Hepar is a very good cold remedy. Pains are often sharp; described as a sticking and jagging, like sharp stick.

Indium: (One of the rare metals, receiving its name from the indigo blue line in the spectrum). Often indicated in sciatica with all of the moda-

lities of *Rhus tox* which does no good. Aggravation when sitting; aggravation beginning motion; aggravation 3 to 4 a.m., aggravation from cold.

Ledum: This remedy has various kinds of pain but there is only one that I wish to mention. *Ledum* will relieve the pain from getting a foreign body under the finger nail almost instantly. I have always used the 10M and have never tried a low potency for this condition.

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