

REGARDING THE TREATMENT OF HEART DISEASES

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We are not the masters of nature, but her servants. Hahnemann had the gift of intuition and divination, which remain unknown, and today even seem ridiculous to so many physicians, due to their scientific thinking and working. But I am certain that by proper development of these faculties, we could learn much of value, which the most exact scientific studies could give us. We should be physicians which have or develop the ability to feel and suffer with our patients. Science has absolutely nothing to do with this. The psyche of the patient can alone decide the choice of a remedy. When I have a heart-patient before me, I first select from the remedies (which have specific affinity for the heart) the one which corresponds to the totality of the picture, including all secondary conditions. But it may also happen, that all the symptoms and conditions indicate an agent, which has not specific affinity to the heart, as proved on the healthy body, e.g. Lycopodium, Pulsatilla, China, Thyroidin and Sulphur.

In characterizing a few remedies according to my personal experience, I shall not describe that which is characteristic for its totality, but just that which is characteristic in heart troubles. Digitalis I have hardly ever used in such cases, surely never in higher potencies.

Aconitum: In acute inflammation with accelerated, full and hard pulse; pains radiate into left arm; general fear, and of death; congestion to face; skin hot and dry; sensation as if boiling water were poured into chest; aggravation from lying on the painful side. But like all the following remedies, it can also be indicated in chronic diseases of the heart and chronic palpitation.

Arnica: Pulse very variable, generally hard and full with pulsation all through the body; in fatty heart with angina pectoris; also weak heart with intermittent pulse; pressure under sternum, sensation as if heart were squeezed; results of overexertion of heart.

Aurum: A very important remedy, both in organic and in functional heart conditions; attacks of fear and angina pectoris with purple face; small, accelerated pulse; heavy feeling of heart; hard apex beat; congestive waves.

Arsenicum album: As important as Aurum; pulse weak, small, at times imperceptible, but very fast; burning, or cold feeling in the blood vessels; distressing dyspnoea; great prostration; worse lying on back; after physical and mental exertion; after suppressed herpes or footsweat.

Belladonna: Pulse usually fast, hard, on tension; throbbing of carotids and temporal arteries; trembling of heart; hypersensitive to all influences, especially drafts.

Bryonia: Pulse very full, fast with tension; stitches worse from every motion; better from rest, cold, pressure; must lie on painful side; thirsty, drinks large quantities. *Apis* is similar, but thirstless.

Cactus grandiflorus: Pulse full and tense, or small and intermittent; sensation as if heart were squeezed by hand; however, this sensation is not confined to heart, but also felt in other parts of the body; constriction of chest with fluttering of heart; inclination to haemorrhage, always in connection with heart affection; aggravation from walking and lying on left side. In some respects resembling *Naja tripudians*.

Crataegus: An old popular remedy, used to give strength; great prostration with fear and insomnia; has been valuable in my practice in cases of severe weakness of heart following infectious diseases.

Carbo vegetabilis: Palpitation after eating, with flatulency; collapse with cold face and hands; Cheyne-Stokes's breathing in organic heart troubles; similarly *Veratrum album* is a collapse remedy, which desires to be uncovered in spite of being icy cold with cold perspiration. *Cuprum* is similar, but has more cramps with cyanosis.

Kalmia latifolia: The heart pains are crampy and severe, radiating into left shoulder and arm with numbness and formication; or sensation of enlargement. Pulse slow, to 48, and small. Heart rheuma.

Kali carbonicum: Pulse very changeable; characteristic is general weak feeling in chest and back with sharp stitches not altered by rest or motion; sometimes a sensation 'as if hanging on a string'.

Phosphorus: It is complementary to *Kali carbonicum*, but has irritable weakness; pulse usually fast; palpitation upon awakening; worse lying on left side. Both remedies are well indicated in chronic heart troubles and after loss of body fluids; here the totality picture is most important.

Spigelia: Pulse not synchronous with heart beat; sharp, shooting pains through heart and toward chest and back, usually stitching, radiating to neck and arm, worse from motion; hand placed over heart feels purring as from a cat.

Spongia: Rapid, hard pulse with blowing sound over one or the other valve; patient cannot lie flat on back; awakens from sleep as if he were suffocating, with red face expressing fear.

In *acute inflammations* I use *Aconitum*, *Bryonia*, *Kali carbonicum*, *Phosphorus*, *Spigelia*.

In *palpitation*: *Aconitum*, *Aurum*, *Belladonna*, *China*, *Ferrum*, *Natrum muriaticum*, *Pulsatilla*, *Arsenicum* and *Ignatia*.

In heart *hypertrophy*: *Arnica*, *Arsenicum*, *Calcarea carbonica*, *Kalmia*, *Lycopodium*, *Spigelia*.

In *valvular troubles*: *Cactus grandiflorus*, *Spigelia*, *Kalmia*, *Spongia*.

In *aneurysm*: *Arsenicum*, *Carbo vegetabilis*, *Spigelia*, *Spongia*.

In *weakness of heart*: *Cactus*, *Cuprum*, *Veratrum*; after acute infectious disease *Crataegus* tincture or first or second decimal potency.

I wish to call attention to the importance of treating heart diseases in the first stage not with remedies better suited for a later stage, but to begin the treatment with Aconitum, if at all indicated. In chronic heart troubles better results are achieved by using higher potencies; the closer to the simillimum, the quicker and nicer the results. For us homoeopathic physicians the mastery of the homoeopathic materia medica is the alpha and omega of all therapeutic action. It does not do to say: we can look it up in our books, no, the remedy picture must be learned by many repetitions and become living *in us*, as with the artist the mastery of his medium of expression. The artistic creation then becomes the intuitive action from the subconsciousness.

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