

FERRUM PHOSPHATE

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Ferrum phosphate is the common name for this drug although it is also known as Ferrum phosphoricum. This is one of the drugs or organ tissue salts introduced by Schuessler. About the year 1875, Schuessler introduced his twelve tissue remedies. Two of the twelve, Silica and Natrum mur., were old homoeopathic remedies, previously proved many years earlier by Hahnemann. The remainder of the twelve have since been proven on the healthy.

Schuessler considered them as tissue foods and used the lower potencies (6X) usually. However, time has proven that these drugs act very well in the higher potencies or in the highest potencies. For instance, his Mag. phos. acts like a charm in the highest, even the CM (Tyler). We are told that it is due to the Mag. phos. content that such remedies as Colocynthis, Viburnum and Belladonna owe their griping pains, yet one may not be substituted for the other.

Schuessler did not include all of the tissue salts. He later discarded Calc. sulph. and even Calc. carb., one of our most important remedies, especially in the treatment of the young. He substituted Calc. phos. which has an entirely different set of indications. Continuous study of the several remedies established the group of drugs which are now known as the Schuessler Tissue Remedies and which our beloved Dr. William Boericke did much to popularize.

This introduction was indulged in, in order to show the class of medications in which Ferrum phos. is found. The tissue salts best known at that time (besides the previously mentioned Nat. mur. and Silica) are four in number and all of them phosphates, including Calc. phos. and Ferrum phos. for nondescript inflammations in their first stages—colds, pneumonias which lacked the well defined indications for Aconite and Bryonia, Mag. phos. was well defined and used where formerly only such remedies as Colocynth, Spigelia, etc. were used.

Schuessler's theory in regard to the action of Ferrum phos. was: "Iron and its salts possess the property of attracting oxygen. The iron contained in the blood corpuscles is spread to the tissues, add to this the addition of sulphur in the form of sulfate of potash." This was extensively elaborated before he finally concluded that Ferrum phos. would be useful in inflammations and that mainly.

The general picture of Ferrum phos. is quite different from the one given by Schuessler. At the time Tyler wrote her inimitable book on *Materia Medica*, this remedy and many of those that were used had not had a regular proving. Experience, however, was very useful in determining the value of a

medicament and while the finer indications were not given, there was enough to suggest its use in practice.

The picture of Ferrum phos. in the mentals is rather characteristic. Talkative, hilarious and excited. It has been found useful in the treatment of delirium tremens. Drowsiness, especially in the first stages of either inflammation or a cold.

Speaking of colds and inflammation, Ferrum phos. is one of our most useful remedies. There is a chilliness that may be the introduction of a cold. Many textbooks mention the coughing up of blood in the course of the cold. This symptom would suggest the seriousness of the case. For instance, I recall a patient, 65 years old, who coughed up blood and the x-rays showed that he had a growth in the upper portion of the left lung. It is permissible to mention here that growth in the lung may progress to an inoperable stage without any perceptible symptoms. There seems to be an increase of cancer and I am sure that much of it is due to lack of consideration of apparently minor symptoms.

The respiratory system produces many uses for our drugs. Laryngitis with hoarseness, especially after excessive use of the voice. Much greenish mucus in large lumps. Acute, short, spasmodic and painful cough. This may be accompanied by minor pleuritic pains. In the first stage of a cold with the nasal discharge, minor soreness of the throat, flushed face, slight cough and practically no change in the temperature, give Ferrum phos.

The bowel presents ample opportunity for the action of our medication. Chronic diarrhoea, with pneumonia. Summer diarrhoea with green stools, mainly in childhood. "Stools of pure blood" (Clarke). Here again may I call your attention to the necessity for x-ray examination. The writer has seen two cases of carcinomatous involvement within the past three months. These cases, like those in the lung, may be entirely without symptoms until obstruction of the bowel threatens.

Extremities: Rheumatism attacking various joints (Puls.) in succession, joints are red and puffy. The upper and lower extremities are involved. This is really a remedy that has a very wide use, but perhaps one should write that the involvement is in the early stages and not in the chronic cases.

The writer desires to apologize for the reference to the x-ray but many years ago he read in the book on Surgical Diagnosis by A. Pierce Gould that "more things are missed by not looking than by not knowing." *Please look.*

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