

## REMEDIES USEFUL IN SORE THROAT

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For most of us winter brings cold to us as inevitably as "April showers bring May flowers". The turning to antibiotics for every cold has been likened by a segment of the medical profession to firing a cannon to dispatch a mouse, an energy waste at least, if not a cause of more serious disease as an increasing number of my enlightened colleagues agree even without considering the dangers of 'suppression'.

Previous communications have given a few indications about grippe and colds. Here Aconite, Arsenicum album, Belladonna and Gelsemium are most frequently used while Kent has three quarters of a column under "Coryza" (p. 325) in which *Allium cepa*, *Carbo veg.*, *Eupatorium per.*, *Ferrum phos.*, *Hepar sulph.*, *Nux vomica*, *Silica* and *Sulfur* are among the 22 listed in bold type while *Natrum mur.*, which is only in italics, in my experience, should be in bold type, also with several others.

With so many, how does one make a choice? In the same way as in every other case, by finding at least three clear symptoms which can differentiate. It is frequent that more symptoms and characteristics of the patient must be used. The more definite, clear symptoms and signs one can see in a case, and use, the surer you are that the remedy picked is indeed the *similimum*.

But let us discuss today *sore throat* rendered "Throat, pain" in Kent (p. 458), a rubric of only 1/3 column with 8 in bold type, 33 in italics. There again one can quibble for Arsenic alb. is in second place where it is frequently first for those cases where the 'head cold' goes to the throat and then extends to the chest—especially if the onset is after being overheated and then chilled or when one has 'overdone' or 'spent oneself'. As you know, *Apis mel.* has soft or oedematous swellings. Thus, this second place remedy jumps to mind when the uvula is oedematously swollen on examining the throat. This is the place to point out that the word 'symptoms' in homoeopathic literature refers to objective as well as subjective symptoms, which today we speak of as signs (objective) and symptoms (subjective). Thus, Homoeopathy takes the whole man into view; the homoeopathic physician using all his senses, his questions and the laboratory to get the 'symptoms' for his repertorial analysis of a case!

One remedy is only in the lowest place under the general rubric and does not even appear under "Pain, left" and that is the red iodide of mercury *Merc. i. f.* which is frequently used. Like *Merc.*, it has a night aggravation and is worse swallowing (like *Merc.*). The type of pain is burning or sore or stitching. The rubric for "sore throat" (p. 463) is probably better than the general rubric which is part of the axiom that *the*

*more detailed and specific the symptoms the better!* In general, mercury is a hot remedy, for people who, like mercury in the thermometer, increase symptoms when the temperature rises. But they don't like cold either. The mercury mouth is a dirty one, the dirtiest it is said. (Kent p. 403, Mouth, discoloration, dirty). The tongue is irregularly coated frequently with red edges (triangular red tip suggests Rhus tox.). The breath (and all excretions) are frequently foul. Clinically there is little difference between Merc., Merc. sol. Hahnemann, and Merc. cor. The Merc. sol seems to work best when the general prostration is greatest; Merc. cor. when the physical symptoms predominate with rawness of the throat, bleeding, etc.

When there is stitching or needle-like pains Nitric acid must be considered. When there is the complaint of pains extending to the ears on swallowing, then Phytolacca is suggested.

The swelling of the lymph nodes in the neck is another help in choosing the right remedy in cases of sore throat. If this objective symptom or sign is present and especially if the patient is a chubby child, Calcarea carb. or its acute Belladonna must be considered. The strawberry tongue (a white coated tongue with prominent red papilli) and a flushed face with a paleness about the mouth strongly suggest Belladonna. If the glands are not acutely swollen and tender, but hard and have lasted longer, one thinks more of Calc. carb., Baryta mur., Calc. fluor. or Tuberculinum. There are 14 remedies in the highest type, 99 in the second place, in "External throat, swelling, glands" (p. 474, Kent) so there are, as usual, many possibilities depending upon other symptoms being present.

One of these is thirst when changes in this are associated with the illness. Bryonia for instance, likes cold drinks, in large quantity but infrequently while Arsenic also likes cold drinks, in spite of its general amelioration by warmth, but in large or smaller quantities. Eupatorium perf., or bone set, on the other hand, wants water at room temperature during the fever. The thirstless fevers are more unusual and Pulsatilla may be called for. Apis, Gelsemium, Antimony, Cina, Phosphoric acid, Sabadilla and Sepia are among those listed along with Causticum, Kali carb., Nitric acid and Sulphur which I have used more frequently (Kent p. 530).

The side of the throat is frequently a help if marked. Lycopodium is the only remedy in the highest place for right side but Belladonna, Merc., are in second place. For the left side Lachesis is the only one in bold type but Croc. hor., Form., Naja, Secale cor. and Sulphuric acid are in italics. Lac caninum is in italics for both and must be considered when the soreness shifts from side to side. Lycopodium may shift from right to left, Lachesis from left to right but Lac caninum shifts back and forth.

Argentum met. has the characteristic of a sore throat only on coughing or aggravated by cough. Lachesis also has this along with Capsicum, Phosphorus, Sepia and Spongia.

Two rubrics frequently referred to but hard for some to find are

'Postnasal drip' rendered in Kent: "Throat, mucus, drawn from posterior nares" (p. 456) and 'clearing the throat, disposition to' rendered as "Hawk, disposition to" (p. 452) and "Scraping" (p. 466). All in all, if one will take time to be with the patient a while and clarify what he means by 'sore throat' in the ways suggested one ought to be able to be of material help to most of the patients that come to one. It is a matter of not taking time to get details, specifics, ameliorations, aggravations, causes and time relations that makes one feel lost and unsuccessful. When sore throats don't clear or frequently recur, one must look deeper. Irritation from cosmetics or hair spray, reaction to atmospheric contamination (e.g. smoke), allergy or low grade liver disfunction may be the cause alone or in contamination. Here the beneficial effects of a change of environment or changes of blood levels of protein, LDH or bilirubin may give us a lead. Then we understand why Chelidonium and other 'liver remedies' may come into the treatment of sore throats.

—*The Layman Speaks, April 1974*

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#### REACTIVE REMEDIES OF ORGANIC NERVOUS COMPLAINTS

(*Contd. from page 260*)

drinks, but on the other hand prefers milk when it is very hot! He loves everything which is salty or sour. It is a very good remedy if, in addition to these general characteristics, the patient suffers from polyps or exostoses.

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