

CONTRA-INDICATIONS

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Contra is a prefix meaning *against, contrary, in opposition*. The word *indication* means any sign or symptom, cause, or occurrence in a disease which points out its course of treatment. So *contra-indication* means any sign or symptom or condition or any other affair in a particular case, which definitely opposes the use of any particular remedy or particular measure (surgical, physiological etc.) in the respective case.

It is important for us to know the indications of the remedies that we prescribe for the restoration of the health of the sick. It is also well for us to be acquainted with the contra-indications, if any, of a drug.

Of course, it is not an easy task to know the contra-indications of a remedy. A positive indication of a drug does not necessarily contra-indicate a reverse indication of the same drug. Though *Opium* is indicated in certain types of watery stools, or cholera infantum, or Asiatic cholera, yet we cannot say that *Opium* is contra-indicated in constipation or retention of stool.

Dr. Carroll Dunham in his illuminating lectures on *Materia Medica* states under the rubric—*Fever* of PULSATILLA, "When heat follows the chilliness, if it be only a sensation of heat with no objective warmth, there is no thirst; but if the heat be, as it sometimes is, both objective and subjective, it is then attended by thirst. Remember this, because absence of thirst is said to be a characteristic of Pulsatilla, and presence of thirst, therefore, to contra-indicate. This is true, with the limitation stated."

Dr. William Boericke in his famous *Pocket Manual of Materia Medica* writes under the drug *Chamomilla*, "A disposition that is mild, calm and gentle; sluggish and *constipated* bowels contra-indicate Chamomilla." Dr. T. F. Allen in his *Encyclopaedia of Pure Materia* (Vol. III) under the rubric *Mind* in the pathogenesis of Chamomilla records the following symptoms: "The disposition, which was formerly very much affected by every depressing or exciting circumstance, was soothed by Chamomilla at the beginning of every proving, so that he became equable and insensible to every provocation; after a while, however, a certain exhaustion, indolence, and inactivity of mind appeared, which ceased on stopping the remedy, and the former irritability returned. Earnest and taciturn mood; reconciled to his fate, about which he is deeply affected.....Constipation. Constipation (third and fourth days). Constipation from inactivity of the rectum, so that the faeces could only be evacuated by pressure of the abdominal muscles (after one and four hours)." We also find in Dr. T. F. Allen's *A Handbook of Materia Medica and Homœopathic Therapeutics* the following symptoms of Chamomilla under the rubric "*Stool*.—Hard; and sluggish."

Now it is left to the judgment of the learned readers as to what extent

they will accept the above-mentioned statement of Dr. William Boericke after comparing the same with the symptoms quoted above from Dr. T. F. Allen's two books.

Here is a case of a lady named Mrs. Faizia Khatun. She was about thirty. During her period of gestation one day she was suffering from severe toothache. She was mentally calm and quiet. She was hot-blooded and thirsty. She held cold water in her mouth and threw the same into a tub as soon as it became warm. By the time I went to her bedside, the tumbler was almost full to the brim. On enquiry I learnt that her toothache was better holding cold water in her mouth. As I had no *Coffea cruda* with me at that time, I gave her a dose of *Chamomilla* 12. The result was astounding. Within a few minutes her toothache was gone.*

If we know definitely the contra-indication of a drug, we can reject the same in a case where the contra-indication of that drug is present.

Some of the well-known contra-indications of a few most frequently used drugs are as follows:—

Aconite is contra-indicated in fever (of patients having chronic pulmonary tuberculosis) because of the liability to contract cold after its use.—*Paige*.

Much pain (due to appendicitis) contra-indicates *Aconite*.—*Dewey*.

Amylenum nitrosum is contra-indicated in accidents from Chloroform poisoning, in anaesthesia, and whenever there is degeneration of cardiac muscle.—*Neatby & Stonham*.

Hyperinosis (increase of fibrin in blood) is rather a contra-indication for *Arnica*.—*Hering*.

If bronchitis or any inflammatory complication is a marked feature of the case (influenza) *Arsenic* is contra-indicated.—*Goodno*.

Belladonna is contra-indicated in great depression of the cerebral and nervous energy.—*Marcy & Hunt*.

Perspiration is said to contra-indicate *Camphor*.—*Neatby & Stonham*.

Chininum sulph. is contra-indicated where there is no thirst during hot or cold stages. Perspiration must succeed the heat or will be contra-indicated.—*H. C. Allen*.

Its (of *Chloroformum*) use is contra-indicated where there is brain softening; fatty heart; alcoholism; or albuminuria.—*Clarke*.

Perspiration is always profuse, or *Cinchona* is contra-indicated—*H. C. Allen*.

Intense thirst during chill and especially during heat positively contra-indicates *Cinchona*.—*H. C. Allen*.

Marked pleurisy contra-indicates *Ferrum phosphoricum* in pneumonic fever.—*Goodno*.

* In this case *Chamomilla* seems to have been more squarely indicated than *Coffea*—which fortunately was absent in the bag of the doctor. Toothache during pregnancy indicates *Chamomilla* far more strongly than *Coffea*. Although *Chamomilla* toothache is sometimes caused by cold, it is always and definitely aggravated by warmth and warm drinks and ameliorated by cold and cold drinks. [Ed.]

A contra-indication for the use of *Magnesia phos.* is amelioration by cold.—*B. N. Mitra.*

Mercurius is contra-indicated in typhoid fever, except for marked icteroid or scorbutic symptoms.—*Hering.*

Absence of all desire for defecation is a contra-indication for Nux vomica.—*Boericke.*

Absence of desire for defecation contra-indicates *Nux.* Inflammatory symptoms or pain generally contra-indicates.—*Dewey.*

Sluggishness contra-indicates *Silicea.*—*Pulford.*

A blood-streaked expectoration is a contra-indication for *Stannum metallicum.*—*Dewey.*

If the stools are colorless and much jaundice or ascites be present *Sulphur* is contra-indicated.—*Dewey.*

Dr. Robert Gibson Miller in his memorable dissertation on *Comparative value of symptoms* in *The Selection Of The Remedy* states, "There is little need to call attention to the general effect of the various weathers, but many a valuable hint is obtainable from them, not only in a positive but also in a negative way. In many conditions such as rheumatism, where we expect as a rule to have an aggravation from weather changes, the absence of such an aggravation becomes peculiar and characteristic, and enables us to throw out of consideration whole groups of remedies.

For example, where change of weather does not influence a rheumatism, we can safely exclude *Dulcamara, Nux moschata, Phos., Ranunculus bulbosus, Rhododendron, Rhus., Sil., Tuberc.*; if wet weather does not affect, we can eliminate *Calc., Merc., Natrum carb., Natrum sulph., and Ruta.* Such negative conditions are not sufficiently used. . . ."

There are more contra-indications or negative conditions for these and other drugs. It will be useful if experienced Homœopaths will be kind enough to throw a flood of light on the contra-indications or negative conditions of the different Homœopathic drugs.