

HYDRASTIS CANADENSIS*

HENRY DUPRAT, M.D.

I. General Action

Hydrastis affects all the *mucous membranes*, causing a *catarrh* with *thick secretions*.

It brings about a functional *depression* of the entire *digestive tract*, including the liver.

In the *circulatory system* it brings about a slowing down and arrhythmia of the heart and a diminution of the blood pressure with venous stases; in more toxic action it *paralyzes the medulla oblongata* and stops the respiration.

In the sphere of *nutrition* it brings about *emaciation* which can go as far as a *complete breakdown*.

Finally, in the *skin*, its local action brings about pustular varioloid eruptions, fissures, and ulcerations.

Clinical observation has revealed its preference for cancerous tissue.

It also has an elective action on the *mammary gland*.

Its action is acute and chronic.

II. Individual Characteristics

(A) Typology

PSYCHE: Patients with bad memory of recent events; *morally depressed*, disgusted by their work, professional occupations, everything is an effort; it can reach the stage of *melancholic depression with desire for death, which seems then to be a real threat*.

PHYSICAL: *Weak* subjects, *muscular atony*, *emaciated*, *poor digestion*, *cachectic*; skin adheres to muscles; *face sallow, muddy*.

(B) Modalities and Characteristic Reactions

AGGRAVATION: Cold air, dry wind; open air (except headache); night time.

AMELIORATION: Rest; often by pressure.

CAUSALITY: Abuse of alcohol, and laxatives (constipation), and potassium chlorate used for the throat.

SENSATIONS: *Burning* pains: ulcers, eruptions.

EXCRETIONS: *Thick, yellowish, greenish, viscous, thready catarrh*.

(C) Guiding Symptoms

Headache with heaviness in the forehead (*sinusitis*); left-sided sub-orbital pain; better open air, pressure of the hand, aggravation in warm room.

* From *Traite de Matière Medicale Homeopathique*.

Neuralgia of the scalp and the back of the neck.

Herpes of the lower lip, especially of the right corner of the lip.

Stomatitis of child-nurses and of babies.

Tongue *flattened out, flabby, viscous, keeping the imprint of the teeth*; wide yellowish stripe down middle of tongue; alternatively tongue dry, red, as if burnt.

Bitter pepperish taste.

No appetite, intolerance of bread and vegetables.

Sour and putrid eructations.

Feeling as if mucous membranes were raw in throat and stomach.

Empty all-gone feeling in pit of stomach, as if after a long diarrhea.

Colic pains 9 to 10 a.m., relieved by emission of fetid flatus.

Cutting pains in hypogastrium extending to testicles; after stool.

Pale stools.

Constipation: *hard stools, broken into pieces, with thick mucus; constipation without urging.*

Diarrhea towards 7 a.m. forcing him out of bed.

Cutting pains extending from liver to right shoulder, aggravated lying on right side.

Watery coryza, excoriating, burning and excoriation in nostrils, sensation of a hair in the nostrils; increased flow in open air; secondary stage, *thick viscous post-nasal drip*; stuffy nose in warm room.

Dry hacking cough from pressing on the supra-sternal notch.

Pain in the groins, as if sprained, aggravated by the clothing.

Grubby sallow skin, excoriated and easily suppurating.

Frontal eczema along the hairline; skin on the ears thick and scaly.

Perspiration on the genitals, the fold of the elbows, axillae.

Fissures between toes.

III. Clinical Correspondences

GENERAL: Chronic alcoholism; *cachexia; ulcers and cancer; hemorrhage; membranous diphtheria; goitre (puberty, pregnancy).*

NERVOUS SYSTEM: Cephalitis (*sinusitis, constipation*).

EYES AND EARS: *Blepharo-conjunctivitis, acute and chronic, keratitis; corneal opacity.*

Catarrh of the eustachian tube; otorrhca; erythema, crusty eruptions in the ears; fissures behind the ears.

DIGESTIVE SYSTEM: *Cancer of the lips and of the tongue; leucoplakia; mercurial saliva: aphthae; ulcerous stomatitis; ulcers of the mouth and pharynx from mercury and potassium chlorate; chronic granular pharyngitis; maxillary sinusitis.*

Atonic dyspepsia; chronic gastritis; gastralgia; ulcer and cancer of the stomach; hepatic insufficiency; chronic hepatitis; catarrhal jaundice; hepatic



Hydrastis canadensis

cholic (acute crisis); atonic constipation; hemorrhoids; prolapsus ani; anal fissure.*

RESPIRATORY SYSTEM: *Chronic and acute coryza; hypertrophic rhinitis; post-nasal rhinitis; ozena; sinusitis; adenoid growths; folliculitis of the*

* Ten drops of mother tincture in hot water every half hour (Burnett).

*nostrils**.*

Hoarseness; laryngitis and tracheo-bronchitis.

HEART: Palpitations; chronic myocarditis; ataxic slow pulse; arterial hypotension.

UROGENITAL SYSTEM: Chronic catarrhal cystitis.

Chronic urethritis; *chronic gonorrhoea; hypertrophy of the prostate.*

Metrorrhagia; chronic metritis; *leucorrhoea; ulceration of the cervix;* uterine cancer; uterine myoma; vulvar pruritus.

Adhering of placenta; uterine subinvolution; *scirrhous of the breast; fissures of the nipples.*

LOCOMOTOR SYSTEM: Rheumatic affections; *lumbago; muscular asthenia.*

SKIN: *Herpes; impetigo; eczema; dry seborrhea; pustular eruptions; ulcers; lupus; erysipelas; intertrigo; cutaneous fissures; acne punctata; epithelioma; corns; affections of the nails.*

Doses: Mother tincture and dilutions.

IV. The Essential in Prescribing *Hydrastis canadensis*

1. DOMINANT SYNDROMES: (a) Catarrhal and *ulcerous* syndrome: nose; throat; genital, gastro-intestinal, and biliary mucous membranes; *sinusitis.* (b) *Skin syndrome:* atony of the skin, fissures, suppurating eczema, ulcers. (c) Syndrome of *digestive atony:* stomach, liver, intestine. (d) *Neoplastic syndrome:* epithelial growths, scirrhous. (e) Hyponutritional syndrome: emaciation, cachexia.

2. THE PATIENT: *Weak emaciated patients, weak muscles, weak digestion; sallow, muddy, atonic skin; depressed, disgusted with his work and with life; having abused laxatives and potassium chlorate (throat).*

3. GUIDING SYMPTOMS: *Yellowish, catarrhal secretions; thick, viscous, thready. Burning pains in eruptions and ulcers. Flattened, flabby tongue which retains the imprint of the teeth; bitter taste. Empty all-gone sensation in pit of stomach. No appetite and intolerance of bread and vegetables. Constipated stools, in pieces, accompanied by thick mucus. Thick, viscous post-nasal drip.*

V. Relationships

COMPARE: Ars., Ars. i., Aster., *Chel., China, Condur., Con., Corall. r., Kali bi., Puls., Sep., Sulph.*

—*Honeotherapy, Oct. 1976*

** *Hydrastis*, locally applied, is considered by Dr. Chavanon to be a specific for this condition.