

## THE KALI SALTS

A comparison of Kali iod., Kali carb., Kali phos., Kali sulph. and Kali brom.\*

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The Kali salts are so useful that I think it is worth while familiarizing oneself with the whole group. You all know the characteristics of Kali bic., but some of the other potassium salts are equally useful. I shall discuss Kali iod., Kali carb., Kali phos., Kali sulph., and Kali brom.

Very good descriptions of these remedies are given in Clarke's *Dictionary of The Materia Medica*, and in Allen's *Encyclopaedia of Drug Pathogenesis*.

### KALI IOD

The patients who need this remedy are always restless, and if they are agitated they are more so. If you make any attempt to control them they are apt to burst into tears. They are the Kali that weeps easily. If they are trying to tell you what they feel, to express it in an acute attack, they are very bad at it. They forget what they are going to say, they get a bit annoyed, find they cannot do it, and then burst into tears.

They have a slightly later time aggravation, more 2-5 a.m., than the 2-3 a.m. of Kali bic.

They wake with a headache, a dry throat, and strangely enough although they feel the heat so much they are definitely upset and worse for cold food. They cannot take cold milk, cold food, or ice cream.

They get a skin irritation that is more likely to be an urticaria than acne or any other type of skin problem. This is very much worse at the seaside, and they get slight asthma which is also worse at the seaside. Although you think of Natrum mur. as always being worse at the sea, it is useful to think of another remedy that has that symptom. Sometimes the patient does not fit Natrum mur. and Kali iod. is a remedy that is well worth keeping at the back of your mind.

They are *all* hungry patients.

Now I think this is the greatest remedy there is for sciatica. One of the symptoms that I have found constant, through the years, is that there is one spot on the sciatic nerve which is exquisitely painful to touch. There is nearly always an inflamed joint. The hip joint or the knee joint is inflamed as well and you get tenderness above and below the joint, rather than in the joint itself.

They want the affected part uncovered and may even ask for cold applications. They are a real mixture with their dislike of cold food, upset

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by cold food, and their reaction to heat. They are definitely better for continued movement, and the sciatica can be frightful in the night, especially lying on the affected side; they do not. It is worse sitting, it is worse standing, but it is *definitely better* moving about. It is a great sciatic remedy.

I think of Kali iod. as one of the remedies for the worst type of inflammatory eye condition. I always remember Dr. Borland clearing up one of the worst eyes I have ever seen. It was under the top lid. He took the lid back: it was absolutely like a bag of pus, and quite revolting, and he said, "Now that is a typical Kali iod." I have found it extremely useful through the years. A very bad, acute purulent inflammation of the eye.

The eyelids are swollen, they are red inside and out, and as a rule it is worse under the upper lid. They are frightfully painful and tender, and when you try to examine them you may get a gush of tears, but this is always followed by a purulent discharge. A bulging mucous membrane looking as if it was going to burst at any minute is typical of it.

Kali iod. is very useful for eyes. They are tender, strangely enough, all around the bones; even under the eyes the bones are tender, and they get acute photophobia.

They also get rheumatic conditions, heart affections and sometimes hyper-thyroid tendencies. They are hot-blooded, worse for heat, they cannot bear to sit in a closed atmosphere and they are definitely better for open air.

In chronic cases of rheumatism, or of hearts or of headaches or of whatever it is, they are pale and delicate looking with a rather unstable constitution and they nearly always flush up very easily. As a matter of fact, the Kali iod. I have seen have always had one of two things—some kind of sciatica, or eye symptoms or eye inflammation.

They get colds from every kind of exposure. In acute conditions they have a sort of venous appearance. They look heavy-lipped, congested, and they are particularly upset by damp or from damp cold. They get a nasal voice. People who have to speak on television and elsewhere ask one to help their voice because it sounds so awful, and this is one of the remedies that has that.

I like to give Kali iod. 10M if I think it absolutely fits the patient, but I do keep Kali iod. 3 because I find it extremely useful for patients who get sciatic pains that do not quite clear and really worry them very much. For acute eye inflammations with pus and purulent discharge I would certainly give it high. And do not forget their dry throat and headache on waking in the morning because that is very constantly met with and is one of the things they complain of constantly.

#### KALI CARB

There is a bit of disagreement over the description of Kali carb., but it is such an invaluable remedy that I will tell you what I think the Kali carbs. look like. They are pale, soft, sweating, flabby-looking people. They sweat

on the slightest exertion and because of the sweating they are very easily tired out. They have a general weakness which is one of the things they complain of. They are usually sallow. They get backache, a tired, weary back, and they very often tend to be flat-footed. Tiredness is the thing they complain of. They say the joints feel as if they are giving way. They want to sit down, they may have to ease their back, they cannot keep up.

They have a very interesting mental picture. They very easily get into a state of mental confusion. It is the Kali carb. patient who starts on one job, then thinks of something else she has got to do, so she starts on the next job. It is not uncommon to find the Kali carb. who has started on six jobs and feels quite incapable of finishing any of them. They forget where they have put things. They get very confused and they do not know how to straighten things out. And they get so exasperated that they quite often fear they are going mental and that their brain is giving way. They tell you there is an inability to get things done.

Then they begin to talk more quickly, they use wrong words and they say the wrong things. And one very characteristic thing about them is that they can get very jealous of the people they work with in their office because they are doing things better and get everything done, and the patient cannot get things done and gets very annoyed. And then these patients are worn out and say they have no physical energy and no mental energy and they do not know what to do.

I had a very interesting patient who showed exactly those symptoms. Because she had once mentioned my name as her doctor to her manager, I suddenly got a letter from him to say, "Can you do anything? This woman is a very good worker and when she is well nobody can work better. But just lately she has started at least six jobs at once, she does not finish any of them, she does not feel capable of finishing them, and the worst of it is that she becomes extremely unpleasant to the other people in the office. So much so that at a Board Meeting last week it was suggested that I should give her the sack. But I do not want to do that, because she has done years of very good work in this office and I should be very sorry to have to push her out."

I gave her some Kali carb. because nothing has ever been a better description of Kali carb. than that, and it put her right. This was ten or twelve years ago. I see her once a year when she feels that she is getting a little muddled and confused and she is beginning again to do several jobs at once. I have never given her anything but Kali carb. since then, because it just puts her right.

They get full of fears during this state of confusion. They are terrified that they are going to lose their job, terrified of poverty, of the future; they are afraid they are going to die; because of this fear of poverty it is a very common thing to find them hoarding things.

If they are mistaken, or accused unjustly in any way they are very apt

just to sit down under it and make no effort at all.

Of all remedies, Kali carb. and Nux vomica have the greatest possible dislike of being touched.

Often this is accompanied by a history of a lot of catarrh.

There is one other thing about Kali carb. and I wouldn't give Kali carb. unless they have it, and that is, they are intensely chilly. I call Kali carb. one of the most chilly of all the remedies there are. When they are ill, especially if it is a chest condition of any kind, they complain of coldness of the chest. All the Kalis are apt to do so, but the one that complains most of coldness and is most susceptible, is Kali carb.

They have a queer, peculiar symptom, that they get an aggravation from warm foods and drink. When you are thinking "Could this fit into a Kali?" you must give them Kali carb. if instead of being cheered up by a hot meal and drink they feel much worse for it.

They get hot and they sweat and then they go out and get very chilled and feel awful. On the whole they are worse for eating. As a matter of fact that is a Kali symptom. They are more drowsy; they get distension after food and especially in the night they are wakened up by a 2-5 a.m. aggravation. A little later than some of the others.

If they get pains anywhere they are nearly always sharp, cutting, burning pains that flit from place to place, and in Kali carb. are definitely better for heat. What they like to do is to move round very quietly and have a nice hot place in which to sit. They do not want pressure on the painful part.

I once had an old lady with trigeminal neuralgia. I tried her with all sorts of remedies, including China sulph. which I thought was going to do it, but it did not. However, she came in and described how frightfully sensitive she was to draughts of air. She said, "I can literally feel the air moving. I get very cold and this pain in my face gets worse and worse when I feel that." I gave her some Kali carb. which completely cured the trigeminal neuralgia and as far as I know she never had it again. She had complained that it was like red hot wires in her face and yet strangely enough she felt the movement of the air which was chilly and which made it much worse. She never could wash her face. When she had to eat or move her jaw, it was terribly bad, so she got very thin. I always remember how ill and thin and wizened she looked, and how terribly sensitive it was to touch.

Kali carb. is as catarrhal as any remedy. It is quite as catarrhal as Kali bic. and it comes on in cold weather and is worse after weather changes and they nearly always have some kind of nasal discharge. They get overheated in a stuffy room and then they go out into the cold air and get chilled and this is so often the history of your Kali carb. patient. Then they have pouring nasal catarrh, and they often get a temporal headache with it. The catarrhal condition also spreads fairly rapidly to the throat and they get a dry, painful, hot throat; the tonsils are enlarged and if you look at the throat there is a lot of tenacious white or yellow mucus that has collected at the

back. They sometimes tell you—any of the *Kalis* may do—that there is a lump in the throat that has to be swallowed. They get very early enlargement of tonsillar glands, and cervical glands which are painful and tender and they also are worse for cold. They may go on to bronchitis with a dry, hacking, spasmodic cough, which is typical of it. They do not get very much sputum with their cough. As a rule the phlegm is swallowed. On the other hand their paroxysms of coughing can be very, very violent, and may go on to vomiting. And with their bronchitis the worst time is usually 2-4 a.m.

I have seen certain cases through the years where Kali carb. has cleared up pneumonia. Never in the early stages. It is well established, they have all sorts of symptoms, they have a lot of cough, and then they need Kali carb., and always, as with all their symptoms, they are worse for cold.

They like to be propped up in bed, but even more constantly they like to lean forward and if they have a bed table you will find them leaning forward propped up on the bed table, because that is the favourite position of the Kali carb. respiratory condition and if it is a lobar pneumonia they never lie on the affected side. They can often be confused with Hepar sulph. because they are so cold and they get a paroxysmal cough which is very like a Hepar sulph. They have got sore throat, glands in the neck, enlarged tonsils; the thing that distinguishes the Kali carb. is that they have a lot of flatulence and distension and are nearly always blown out, in their respiratory troubles, and they have a great deal of difficulty in getting rid of their flatulence.

When they get a cough they complain of a sort of broken feeling in the back and it is rather improved on sitting propped up.

They have a great tendency, if they are ill, to get decaying teeth. A lot of dental trouble, early decay, inflamed gums, and a very unhealthy mouth, and they have a pale, flabby, fattish tongue. A patient will tell you, "My tongue feels too large, it feels larger than it used to feel." I find that a very useful Kali carb. symptom.

If they are very ill they complain of internal coldness a great deal and are just as bad as Hepar sulph. about being uncovered.

Occasionally it is a frightfully useful remedy in cholecystitis.

They are nearly all constipated and they get very painful piles with a tendency to thrombose, and sometimes that is a very useful symptom.

They are mostly thirsty—they desire sour fluids, they love sweets or sugar and, a funny thing, they complain of a great physical weakness but with it their sweet hunger.

They have an aversion to meat and like all the *Kalis* they are inclined to take too much starch. I always think that is why the *Kalis*, on the whole, are so fat.

Girls get far too frequent and profuse periods and there is a great

tendency running all through the remedy for polyps and fibroids. Kali carb. can be a very useful remedy.

Don't forget its coldness, its resemblance to Hepar, but with a different time aggravation, which is important.

#### KALI PHOS

This is the only *Kali* which is absolutely different from all the others. All tend to be fat, except Kali phos. which is usually thin, very pale, mostly dark, looks tired out and usually is in rather a curious state. I always think the Kali phos. patients who respond so well are rather curious people. They are extremely exhausted, nervously and physically, and at the same time they could not be more irritable, or easily inclined to flare up. They sometimes have a great tendency to stagger because they are so tired they cannot walk straight, usually they cannot be bothered to try. They are sometimes giddy, but more often it is because of the weakness of their legs.

They are sometimes quite a neurotic type, very despondent and very anxious, and they get this irritability which also comes in spasms, leaving them very weak afterwards. They are exasperated with their feeling that they are going to break down, and they cry and get into a state of excitement and then into a state of fear and often want to scream. It is not uncommon to find the Kali phos. patient who tells you that they have had to hold on to somebody or they feel that they will lose control and perhaps lose their reason.

They are shy, they are nervous of friends, they are nervous of strangers and they cannot bear going away to stay. They are often called homesick but are not homesick, really they are frightened of people, scared of meeting strangers, inclined to be very suspicious of strangers and therefore they do not want to go away. They feel awful in the early morning. They get also the usual aggravation time of the *Kalis*, I think a little earlier or else sometimes a little later, between 2 and 5 a.m., but they wake up in the morning feeling awful. If they have breakfast they are not better for it; they are usually worse for food.

It is a weak-looking, trembly-looking patient who comes to see you. They are worse talking to people and yet they cannot bear to be left alone because they are afraid. They are awful in a crowd and faint, and they do get a lot of nervous prostration.

Occasionally it is a very, very good remedy for the beginning of a disseminated sclerosis. They get numbness, tremor, weakness, a sort of fleeting general pains, and the tremor is often the thing they come about. All their disturbances are nearly always in the extremities. Whatever is wrong they are better for warmth, better for moving gently, and worse for any strenuous exertion.

They have one queer symptom—they are better at once if they eat, but

they fill up very quickly and then feel very uncomfortable. They often crave ice-cold water.

They like sweet things and sour things and they sometimes crave vinegar. They are the only *Kali* that does not take too much starch.

Another thing for which I find it very useful is for students who are over-working, have got examinations ahead and need to work late, and get very headachy when they work too late. Their headache comes on during the night at their usual aggravation time and then they wake with it again in the morning, but it is usually better on getting up and moving about gently, and definitely worse for cold.

I think of all the remedies, it has the headache most sensitive to noise. With their headaches, their heads are quite tender to touch, the scalp is tender. They are among the people, especially the students; who wrap up their heads to keep them warm. You think of Silica for them and they don't quite fit Silica and you think then that perhaps they will respond to some *Kali phos*.

On the whole they have very low blood pressure, and rather a toneless heart, but not necessarily so. Occasionally the remedy is needed in old age, for urinary disturbances. For old people who get burning during micturition which goes on for quite some time after the flow ceases and which the patient complains of very much.

It is occasionally a wonderful remedy for diabetes. I think it was Hering or Dudgeon who examined the urine of provers who were proving *Kali phos*. and found that most of them got a glycosuria and that is why it has been used ever since as one of the diabetic remedies, especially if it fits the patient.

They tend to sweat if they are frightened or from excitement, or even after eating. Otherwise, for a *Kali*, the skin of a *Kali phos*. is rather inactive.

They tend to get nightmares and get very disturbed sleep because of them.

The other thing about them is if they are getting on in age you feel that they must have a carcinoma somewhere. You get them thoroughly investigated and they have not got a carcinoma and pick up wonderfully on *Kali phos*.

#### KALI SULPH

This is another extremely useful remedy. I always think that it is a cross between Sulphur and Pulsatilla. It is nothing to do with what is said in the books and I doubt if they would agree, but this is what I have always found it. There is a typical appearance of heaviness, sluggishness, tiredness, as if they could not be bothered to move. They nearly always have a coarse skin and a high colour. And you do, when you see them first, quite often think of Sulphur. They are rather fat and they are definitely slow. They complain very much of feeling tired, but it is more that they are lazy and do not

want to move. They are lazy, the Kali sulph. They do not really get the exhaustion of some of the other *Kalis*, they just have an aversion to work of any kind, whether it is mental or physical. They honestly do not like work. They can be extremely sorry for themselves. They are rather depressed as a rule and they do lack confidence. They tell you that they are frightfully tired and that they cannot help it and that it is awful because they have got a lot to do and their brain just will not work. They are rather timid and they can be extremely impatient and are liable to be very changeable in mood. They are cheerful one minute, and right down the next minute. If you try to help them they very often cheer up. They are as a rule very anxious about themselves, quite often for no reason, and they are worse in the evening and also in the early morning when they take a very gloomy view of life. If you attempt to jolly them out of their rather dull mood they can be frightfully angry. They are one of the very obstinate patients.

They complain sometimes of being giddy and if so it is always associated with congestion in the head. The head feels full and the face is very hot.

The Kali sulph. patient has a particular skin trouble. They are apt to be troubled with an itching skin, possibly all over the body, anywhere or everywhere and that is sometimes a very, very useful point about it.

They are always catarrhal. They tend to get a catarrhal conjunctivitis and their eyelids are crusted up, itch violently, and are worse in a warm room. The crusts round their eyes are always yellowish and any discharge is yellowish. All the Kali sulph. discharges are thick, yellow or greenish-yellow. The nasal discharges which are thick and yellow cause intense itching of the nose and this sometimes is a very good tip that the patient is needing Kali sulph.

It used to be one of the great medicines for otitis media after scarlet fever, but of course you very seldom see that today. It has haemorrhoids like some of the other *Kalis*, but also intense perianal itching as part of it.

All the symptoms are apt to be worse indoors, especially when it is warm. They do not like warmth, are worse in the evening and worse on exertion. The patients will tell you (or the parents will tell you, because often I have found this extremely useful in children) that they get sluggish and hot after any exertion, then sweat profusely and catch cold.

They look sort of stagnant when they are at rest and they are better, and say they are better, and know it—even when they are quite small children—from moving about.

They are very heavy in the evenings and often worse after food. Like the other *Kalis* they are sensitive to noise. I think the Kali sulph. is the most irritable at noise.

They are very apt to catch cold after a bath, whether hot or cold. They do get a characteristic headache: full, congestive and an intense feeling of heat and heaviness in the head.



Like all the *Kalis* it has a lot of catarrh. It is very useful in catarrhal coughs. They get very flushed (one child used to go bright red with her chest complaints) and they get a copious amount of mucus. Usually it is worse on the right side and the chest just bubbles when you listen to it. The cough is worse when they eat, it is better for cold drinks and cold air, and they complain that there is an irritation low down in the trachea and they cough up this greeny-yellow sputum which is typical.

They have a yellow coating on the tongue. Like *Kali bic.*, they have an insipid taste in the mouth, even water tastes insipid.

With rheumatism, they suffer very severe pains for which they are better moving about and again better in the open air.

Their skin is apt to be very dry and often scales, with a lot of irritation.

If they complain of rheumatism, they have extremely cold hands and feet and you want to give them Sulphur because of their red cheeks and rather coarse skin, but you cannot because of these intensely cold hands and feet.

They get also appalling dreams of ghosts, or robbers, and they are always struggling or fighting in their sleep, or doing something so that they wake up in a terror. It is very seldom that the *Kali sulph.* sleeps restfully. The *Kali sulph.* children who sometimes get acute chests do get very disturbed by their dreams at night.

They all tend to sweat, especially in their rheumatism. Generally their rheumatic pains are worse in the summer. They like gentle motion, and mostly are better for warmth.

It is a funny thing, *Kali bic.* gets a wandering rheumatism in the summer, but if you find *Kali bic.* patients in bed with their rheumatism, which is awfully bad, their covers are tucked up round their necks. I have often noticed they complain that they have got a summer rheumatism, that probably they feel a bit worse from the heat, but I have found dozens of times that *Kali bic.* patients, whatever is wrong with them, whether it's cough, or catarrh, rheumatism, or gastric symptoms, lie in bed with their clothes well up, and tucked in round their necks. The *Kali bic.* has its coughs, its respiratory symptoms, mostly in spring and autumn. It is one of the seasonal remedies.

#### KALI BROM

*Kali brom.* is a less common remedy, but it can be most useful. They tend to be fat and fair and of a lethargic type, usually rather depressed. In fact I think of them as heavy, dull, adolescents. That is the kind I have met most. They have one characteristic: I always remember a boy who came on his own, because of his awful acne, and he had a *Kali brom.* symptom which I find quite constant, he never once stopped moving his foot. It moved up and down and up and down. If he was not moving his foot he was moving a hand. They always have this restlessness of their feet. They may at times

have a degree of twitching with it. If they are not exerting themselves they are apt to fall asleep, wherever they are. Their hands, legs and feet are apt to go numb, and they say they are uncomfortable. I always think this is why they move their feet.

I think the acne is always on top of a coarse skin; it is apt to be the worst acne I ever see. Possibly a *Natrum mur.* can be as bad, but I think *Kali brom.* is one of the very worst of the acnes. There are no other indications. You go through their history carefully. They tell you nothing else at all. They have come about their spots.

It is a premenstrual symptom with girls and women that before the period their acne gets absolutely terrible. They are very selfconscious about it and it worries them a lot. They are apt to feel that they are going off their heads if something cannot be done about it. If you give them *Kali brom.* on these few symptoms for their terrible acne, it works like a charm.

They are hot-blooded: one of the hot-blooded *Kalis*; they are worse from heat, worse in the summer and worse in a hot room. Every now and then they get generally chilly. This schoolboy used to come in and say, "Oh, isn't it a chilly day." Well, I knew perfectly well that he felt the heat intensely, so this would always surprise me. But he did extraordinarily well. He was one of the ones for whom it worked like a charm.

It is a remedy I think of for acne when you cannot get anything else out of the patient.

There are four other pathological conditions for which *Kali brom.* can be wonderful.

The first is people who get choreic symptoms after an awful shock. *Kali brom.* will clear them up.

Secondly, it can be very useful for the convulsive conditions in kidney disease.

Thirdly, in infantile diarrhoea with meningeal irritation, a sort of non-descript fluid diarrhoea that is very difficult to describe, *Kali brom.* can be absolutely wonderful.

Fourthly, it can be a very useful drug in epilepsy. I was very tempted to give it yesterday for a case of epilepsy, because the parents told me that he was always worse at the new moon and as a rule this is one of the characteristic things with these patients. Their fits are very much more frequent just before or during a period, and they are followed by an extremely severe headache.

They have one other funny symptom: I have a girl of about 17 who says that always before a fit she feels as if she was swelling up and cannot stop it. And she gets the most peculiar symptoms. I have given her *Kali brom.* last time, to see if it would help, because she has a certain amount of acne—though not very bad—and she has an awful dearth of symptoms on which to prescribe.

(Continued on page 384)

Books of the late top-ranking homoeopathic practitioner, teacher and writer Dr. P. Sankaran. Published by The Homoeopathic Medical Publishers, 20, Station Road, Santa Cruz (West), Bombay 400 054.

(1) *Some Recent Research and Advances in Homoeopathy*, 4th edition (much enlarged), 82 pages, price Rs. 6.50.

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The necessity of rapid editions of these two books speaks of their popularity and utility value.

J.K.

### THE KALI SALTS

*(Continued from page 377)*

Through the years, I have found those four special things useful guides to think around. When nothing has helped, think of Kali brom.

These are some of the salient features of the Kali salts. Enough, I hope, to show you how they resemble each other—in their tiredness, weariness and fatigue, which they all share, but also how they differ from one another, differences which should help you to select the remedy of choice when a patient's symptom picture shows some of the *Kali* characteristics.

—*The British Homoeopathic Journal*, January 1977

### DEFECTIVE ILLNESSES

*(Continued from page 347)*

One of the remedies that have the sensation of 'internal trembling.'

These patients are prone to hiccups and nearly always have the postnasal passage blocked.

Constant hiccup while eating or after lactation.

Musty taste in the mouth.

*(To be continued)*

—*Homeotherapy*, February 1976