

HOW TO TREAT THE DISEASES OF THE LIVER

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The liver is the largest gland of the body. Its size varies greatly in accordance with the state of digestion. In fasting people it may be reduced to half its normal circumference.

The liver has three functions:

- (1) The formation of bile.
- (2) The formation of waste substances from the used-up tissues of the body especially urea and uric acid.
- (3) The so-called 'glycogenic function'. That means, when large quantities of starchy food or sugar are eaten, digested and absorbed, the sugar formed from these foods is carried by the portal vein to the liver; here it is deposited in the form of glycogen or animal starch.

The liver plays a vital part in the metabolism of carbohydrates, fat and protein. It is capable of manufacturing vitamin A from carotene. It stores the so-called pernicious-anaemia factor. This substance is indispensable for the normal condition of the red blood corpuscles. This vital substance is missing in all cases of pernicious anaemia. That is the reason why all patients suffering from pernicious anaemia should take fresh liver in one form or another. Finally the liver deals with poisonous slags, absorbed from the digestive organs, reducing them to harmless compounds.

The bile is the secretion of the liver. It flows continuously into the duodenum, its quantity increases immediately after each meal. The bile contains two bile salts, bile pigments, mucus, water and small quantities of fat, soaps and mineral salts. These salts are vital, they check the fermentation in the bowels. The bile is a yellowish, reddish-brown or green fluid; its colour depends upon the amount of its two chief pigments. It has a bitter-sweet taste and a musklike flavour. It is alkaline.

The bile, like the pancreatic juice, breaks up the fat of the food. It stimulates the action of the large intestines. Its purgative action was already known to the old Egyptians. Pig bile pills are still one of our most valuable drugs for constipation.

Congestion of the liver is a common symptom in all kinds of infectious diseases, in gout, diabetes mellitus and in acute inflammation of the digestive organs. It is especially frequent in the tropics amongst Europeans, who over-eat or indulge in condiments or spirits. All these patients complain about dull pains and the sensation of heaviness and tension in the right part of the abdomen, their appetite is greatly diminished, there may be jaundice, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and rise of temperature. A short fast cure, followed by a meagre diet, poor in albumins, will put the patient right in no time. It should be supplemented by daily enemas with lukewarm chamom-

mile. The following homoeopathic drugs should be considered:

Belladonna 3x. Congestion to the head, thirst, bilious vomiting.

Carduus marianus ϕ . Hypochondriacal mood, constipation, jaundice.

Nux vomica 4x. Patients with sedentary habits, drunkards, irritability, especially in the morning.

Quassia 2x. Diarrhoea, fever, headache in the frontal region.

Catarrhal jaundice is, on the whole, due to inflammation of the bile duct, which connects the gall bladder with the duodenum. Owing to the inflammatory process the normal flow of the bile into the duodenum gets stopped. The bile, thus retained in the gall bladder and liver is trying to find another outlet, i.e., diffuses through the walls of the liver into the blood and lymphatic vessels and through the tissues of the body and finally to the skin, colouring it yellowish or even dark brown. The urine has the same brown colour, while the stools become almost white or colourless, often resembling clay.

Jaundice is almost always coupled with itching of the skin, loss of appetite, biliousness, eructation, vomiting, headache, dizziness and especially with great weakness. As a rule the temperature is slightly raised.

The aim of our *treatment* should always be to remove the cause of the ailments, i.e. the catarrhal inflammation of the bowels or stomach. On the whole a short mild fast cure, followed by a diet, poor in fat, will be most beneficial. There are, however, cases where the large bile ducts are affected too; here other symptoms develop, such as sensitiveness and swelling of the gall bladder, colics, high temperature and enlargement of the spleen. These cases are often complicated by the formation of gallstones and organic diseases of the liver itself. In such serious cases abscess of the liver may develop, leading to general septic conditions, especially in cases due to the colon bacillus.

The treatment of these serious cases requires the most careful dietetic and homoeopathic consideration. Great quantities of freshly prepared juice of radish given, provided the patient can digest it.

Regarding homoeopathic remedies, the following drugs should be considered.

Ammonium muriaticum 2x. Aversion to meat, biliousness, flatulence, pains in the stomach, vomiting.

Berberis vulgaris 2x. Cramps in the region of the liver, aversion to all beverages, colics in the kidneys, aggravated by concussion, disorders of the urine, due to stones in the kidneys or the ureters.

Bryonia 3x. Great thirst, loss of appetite alternating with voracious appetite, pressure in the stomach, diarrhoea alternating with constipation, stitching pains in the right upper part of the abdomen.

Chamomilla 3x. Colics, diarrhoea, flatulence, bilious vomiting, great restlessness.

China 2x. Anaemic, weakened patients, increased perspiration, flatulency, periodicity of the symptoms.

Lycopodium 10x. Sensation of a rope around the abdomen, emaciation, flatulency, some vomiting, aggravation late in the afternoon, uric acidity.

Mercurius corrosivus 6x. Violent burning pains in the stomach coupled with vomiting, bloody diarrhoea, burning in the anus, profuse perspiration.

Natrum sulphuricum 2x. Diarrhoea, and flatulency, aggravated during humid weather.

Podophyllum 2x. Grey-white diarrhoea with great noise, prolapsus of the bowels, pains in the *right* upper part of the abdomen, relieved by pressure and rubbing of the liver with the hand.

Sulphur 6x. Burning pains, piles, local congestion, all openings of the body reddened, congested; morning diarrhoea, slim vivacious patients, keeping themselves badly. Craving fat, aversion to bathing.

Taraxaeum 2x. Hypersensibility of the whole nervous system, constipation, obesity, tongue irregularly coated.

Cirrhosis of the liver is almost always due to overindulgence in spirits. In some cases, however, other ailments are responsible such as syphilis, tuberculosis, malaria, serious disorders of the circulatory organs, chronic inflammation of the liver's capsule, poisons, toxins, endocrine diseases or even injuries of the liver.

As a rule the disease begins with an *enlargement* followed very soon by shrinking of the organ. On the whole the disease progresses very slowly. It starts with pressure in the stomach, flatulence, constipation alternating with diarrhoea, loss of appetite and bad taste in the mouth. Almost all patients complain about pricking pains in the liver. Jaundice develops in the majority of cases; it is very often associated with more or less profuse bleeding in the digestive canal. Owing to the congestion in the portal vein *ascites* develops. In many cases the enlarged veins in the anterior abdominal wall form the so-called 'Medusahead'.

Infectious inflammation of the bile ducts leads to attacks of colics, resembling gallstone colics. The urine becomes reddish as soon as it contains urobilin. With the progress of the disease the liver shrinks rapidly, generally fatal emaciation develops or the patients die from heart disease or pneumonia.

Early diagnosis and early treatment may possibly eliminate the causative factors and thus cure the patient or at least check the progress of the disease. The diet should always be adapted to the liver's function, that means the diet should on the whole consist of more carbohydrates than of fat and of even less albuminous substances such as eggs, fresh fruits, vegetables, milk, butter, the yolk of eggs. All-bran should be the principal food. No condiments should be taken. Daily enemas with lukewarm solution of 2 per cent Glauber's salt will cleanse the bowels thoroughly.

Barley water and other mineral waters such as Droitwich, Harrogate, Vichy or herbal teas, such as Adinolan tea should be given freely.

Itching of the skin can best be relieved by lotion of 1 per cent Hyper-

cum or 3 per cent Menthol-spirit or by *Orka skin ointment*.

Regarding homoeopathic treatment the following drugs should be considered.

Aurum iodatum 6x in syphilitic cases.

Cardus marianus ϕ in the first period of the disease; its internal use should always be supplemented by two Orka suppositories, where Cardus is combined with *Æsculus* and *China*.

Chelidonium 4x. Craving for hot drinks and condiments. Key symptom: typical pain under the right shoulder blade.

Conium 4x. Hard nodules in the liver.

Digitalis 4x in cases with ascites.

Hedera helix 4x. Loss of appetite, general weakness, aggravated in the morning, better by movement.

Coccus cacti 2x. Rademacher's favourite remedy in cases characterized by great amount of ascites.

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