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Pre-membership Course in Medical Homeopathy

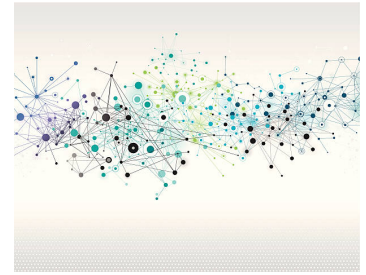
A Blended Open-Learning Course in Homeopathic Medicine for Healthcare Professionals

Unit 58

Therapeutic pointers

Neurological Conditions Dr Gabriela Rieberer

In Units 58-61 we will look at the homeopathic treatment of selected neurological and psychiatric illnesses which will be illustrated, as far as possible, with clinical case studies. We will explore a limited range of neurological illness



Traumatic

- Injuries to the CNS and peripheral nervous system
- Stroke

Inflammatory

- Meningitis
- Encephalitis

Degenerative

- Multiple sclerosis
- Motor neurone disease
- Alzheimer's
- Huntingdon's Chorea

Convulsive

- Epilepsy

Peripheral

- Facial neuralgia
- Sciatica
- Vertigo and Meniere's disease
- Headaches, Migraine

Traumatic neurological conditions

Unless the practitioner is present at the time of the injury, they will usually only be confronted with the treatment of the sequelae of trauma to the nervous system.

Head injuries

ACUTE

- **Arnica** - the trauma remedy par excellence to reduce bleeding and oedema
- **Hypericum** - trauma remedy for all tissues rich in nerve cells, pain is often stabbing or tearing; useful after Arnica

SEQUELAE

- **Arnica**
- **Hypericum**
- **Natrum sulphuricum** symptoms often < before change of weather or in cold and damp situations; depression, sensitive to music, introverted, irritable
- **Opium** (Poppy) drowsiness after head injuries
- **Helleborus niger** (Christmas rose) dullness, drowsiness; in the proving it has amelioration from urination = diuretic thus its beneficial effect on reduction of cerebral oedema can be deduced
- **Cicuta virosa** (Water hemlock) tendency to spasms and convulsions, vertigo; post-traumatic epilepsy; absences



Opium (Papaver somniferum)

REPERTORY

Head: injuries of the head, after
 Generals: injuries, concussion spinal
 Back: injuries

Again we will find *Arnica*, *Hypericum* and *Natrum sulphuricum* indicated.

Castor Equi (accessory nail of the horse) especially after injuries to the coccyx spine with damage to the cauda equina

Causticum spinal injury with urinary retention

Mezereum (Spurge olive) sharp, stabbing pains with numbness; sensitive to drafts and touch

Lachnantes (Spirit weed) indicated after trauma to the cervical spine, ie whiplash injury

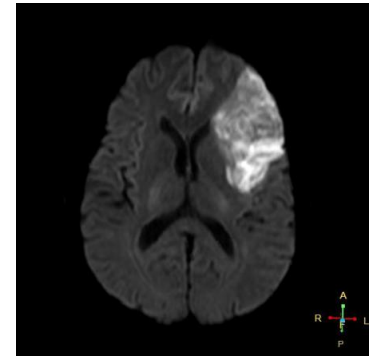
REPERTORY

Back: injuries of the spine

Stroke / Cerebrovascular Accident / 'Apoplexy'

Important

- *Aconite* - acute stage, intense fear
- *Arnica* - acute stage, potential of minimising oedema; also sequelae of stroke
- *Belladonna* - flushing, hypertension
- *Veratrum album* - collapse, hypotension
- *Tabacum* - collapse, arteriosclerotic aetiology



The remedies listed for head injuries are also useful for the sequelae of stroke and can be chosen according to their modalities.

Inflammatory conditions

Meningitis and Encephalitis

The homeopathic treatment of bacterial meningitis can only be seen as supportive. It is entirely secondary to what may be life-saving conventional intervention eg. antibiotics. Although homeopathic treatment may be administered in the acute state their use must not delay any aspect of the diagnosis or treatment and should only be administered adjunctively and as a second line intervention.

If a diagnosis of viral meningitis is secured, homeopathic treatment is a safe and legitimate adjunct if applied in tandem with close ongoing clinical assessment.

- *Apis* cerebral oedema, high pitched cry especially in children
- *Belladonna* hyperaemic stage, hot flushed, delirious, high fever, throbbing pain, photophobia, sensitive to noise, jar
- *Helliborus niger* delirious; apathetic; picks at clothes, covers, lips; involuntary sighing; rolls the head; bores head into pillow; strikes head; cold sweat
- *Hyoscyamus* (Henbane) mania; disinhibition; delirious; low grade agitation much less than Stramonium and Belladonna; muttering; picks at things; < touch, cold
- *Stramonium* (Jimson weed, Thornapple) hallucinations; intense fear of dark and solitude; aggressive volatile behaviour; sensitive to bright light, reflections from shiny objects; cold sweat
- *Zincum metallicum* cerebral depression; convulsions; restlessness especially of the feet which brings amelioration; lethargy; sensitive to noise; great weakness

REPERTORY

Head, inflammation, brain

Head, inflammation, meninges

Degenerative Diseases

The treatment of degenerative diseases often merits a deeper constitutional approach, due to their chronic nature. This entity of neurological conditions is rather different to the clear cut aetiological or acute approaches that are outlined above for traumatic and inflammatory illnesses.

There are several remedies with affinities for the nervous system leading to chronic progressive states, in particular the metals, a constitutional picture may often be found in these materials.

In some cases homeopathic treatment will palliate symptoms, lead to longer remissions or slow down disease progression. Improvement in degenerative diseases is usually only possible during early stages of the disease, when there is still healthy tissue that can be stimulated to assume the function of damaged structures.

The remedies for MS and MND disease are listed together because of similarities of the disease, even though the neurones are damaged differently. Both diseases are of a chronic progressive nature, leading to paralysis.

Multiple Sclerosis and Motor neurone disease

- *Gelsemium* (Yellow Jasmine) centre of action muscles and motor neurones; aching, tiredness, heaviness, weakness, soreness; tremors, twitching of single muscles; functional paralysis; incoordination of muscles; cramps; tottering gait; < emotions, bad news, humidity, spring (often aggravation time for MS patients), heat of sun; > urination, sweating, shaking, alcoholic drinks
- *Argentum metallicum* (Silver) affects nerves leading to convulsions and spasms; slow insidious development of symptoms; painless twitching electric-like shocks especially on falling asleep; muscle cramps; limbs feel powerless; also has affinity to bones and cartilages; < using voice, mental strain, touch
- *Cocculus indicus* (Indian Cockle) stupefying poison affecting the cerebro-spinal axis leading to paralytic muscular relaxation with heaviness; great weakness, too weak to stand or speak; sensation as if single parts had gone to sleep; cramps; tremors, intentional tremor; from overstrain, caring for others, finds it hard to delegate; slowness in responding; < loss of sleep, motion (travel sickness), thought and smell of food



Cocculus indicus

- *Plumbum metallicum* (Lead) leads to sclerotic conditions with an affinity to the spinal cord, nerves and muscles; slow insidious appearance of symptoms; progressive deep conditions; retraction, the sense of a string pulling in; anaesthesia and hyperaesthesia; slow perception, difficult comprehension; < clear weather, exertion, company, upper limbs; > hard pressure, bending double
- *Thallium metallicum* closely related to Plumbum; locomotor ataxia mainly affecting lower limbs; intense pains shooting up legs; polyneuropathy; person can be very irritable; this is rat poison which in toxic doses leads to alopecia
- *Lathyrus sativus* (Chick-pea) affinity to the anterior and lateral columns of the cord, paralytic conditions of the lower limbs; painless paralysis; increased reflexes; wasting and exhaustive diseases; slow recovery of nerve power; < touch, movement
- *Causticum* affinity to motor and sensory neurones as well as voluntary and involuntary muscles; progressive weakness, leading to loss of control over muscles; contraction of tendons; trembling, convulsions; ailments from grief; suffer from injustice; suffer with others; < dry cold winds; > damp weather, warmth
- *Phosphorus* inflammation of the spinal cord, nerves leading to paralysis; destructive processes (phossy-jaw of match makers); nervous delicate person; ascending sensory and motor paralysis; < emotions, thunderstorms, twilight; > sleep, eating
- *Conium maculatum* (Poison Hemlock) slowing down and hardening; affinity to nerves, muscles, glands; ascending paralysis (Landry paralysis); this was the poison given to Socrates; difficult gait, trembling, painful stiffness of legs; shutting down on a mental level self-limitation; remedy of old-age or premature ageing; < seeing moving objects, alcohol; > continued motion
- *Alumina* (Aluminum oxide) affinity to the spinal cord leading inco-ordination and paralysis; degeneration of spinal cord; difficulty walking with closed eyes; heaviness of limbs; internal hastiness but executes things slowly; cannot be hurried; dryness; cannot digest potatoes; constipation; < warmth, dryness; > wet weather, moderate temperatures
- *Kali phosphoricum* (Potassium phosphate) one of the tissue salts; affinity to brain, spinal cord; great weakness and fatigue through slight causes; < excitement; worry; > eating, company
- *Mercurius* deep acting destructive remedy affecting all tissues of the body; convulsions; paralysis agitans; weakness and trembling of the limbs; offensive discharges; < night, sweating, extremes of temperature; > moderate temperatures

*Conium maculatum*

- *Syphilinum* strong affinity to the nervous system, bones and mucous membranes; painful sole of feet; used as a nosode in conditions that correspond to the reaction pattern of the syphilitic miasm; progressive destructive processes; obsessional tendencies; <night, damp
- *Autonosode* a nosode made up of the patient's blood, usually blood:alcohol 1:9; given as a nosode or intercurrent (see section on application of nosodes) in a low to medium potency (6c-30c); useful in chronic progressive diseases, malignancies, auto-immune diseases (theory of possible auto-immune aetiology in MS and MND)

REPERTORY

Generals: sclerosis, multiple

Parkinson's Disease

- *Cocculus indicus* s.a.
- *Secale cornutum* (Ergot of Rye) twitchings, spasms; numbness; intolerable tingling; sensation of burning in the whole body; convulsive jerking; paralysis after spasms; restlessness; < warmth, covered; > cold bathing
- *Magnesia phosphorica* tissue salt; cramps, convulsions, neuralgic pains; twitching, tics; erratic symptoms; < cold, draft, milk, night; > warmth, pressure, rubbing, doubling up
- *Manganum* motoric paralysis, paralysis agitans; diagonal pains; < change of weather, damp, night; > lying down, sad music
- *Nux vomica* hypersensitivity; violent twisting and jerkings; trembling; < slight touch, stimulants (yet craves them), cold, early morning; > warmth, free discharges
- *Rhus toxicodendron* restlessness; twitching often associated with numbness; paralytic effects; < cold, damp, beginning of motion; > continued motion, warmth
- *Zincum metallicum* spasms, restless feet and legs; convulsive twitching or jerking < night; descending paralysis; < exhaustion, suppressed eruptions; > motion, free discharges
- *Mercurius vivus* s.a.
- *Agaricus muscarinus* (Toadstool) spasms, jerking, trembling; sensitive to cold; neurological symptoms before thunderstorms; chilblains; often risky dare-devil behaviour also tremendous anxiety about health; sensation of icy needles



Secale cornutum

REPERTORY

Generals: paralysis, agitans

Alzheimer's Disease

- *Ambra grisea* (Ambergris, secretion of the whale) premature ageing; worn out patients, yet over-impressionable; ailments from loss of relatives, domestic shock; suspicious; dreamy state, very forgetful; jumps from one topic to another, asking questions but never waiting for an answer; symptoms worse in the presence of others.
- *Baryta carbonica* premature ageing, childlike behaviour; memory loss, poor concentration; shy of strangers, mistrustful; arteriosclerosis; < company, cold, damp
- *Conium maculatum* progressive weakness of memory, general slowing down, self-limitation, also s.a.



REPERTORY

Generals: old age, premature

Generals: old age, senile

Huntingdon's Chorea

- *Agaricus muscarius* (Fly-agaric) affinity to the spinal axis; irregular, angular, uncertain and exaggerated movements; twitching, jerking, fibrillar spasms; chorea > during sleep; < cold air, mental exhaustion, coition, alcohol
- *Artemisia vulgaris* (Mugwort) chorea with inability to swallow; attacks followed by strong smelling perspiration of an unpleasant garlic-like odour
- *Cina* (Wormseed) hemiconvulsions beginning on one side of the face with mydriasis; twitching spasms unilateral; often associated with worm infections; < touch, during sleep, being looked at
- *Mygale* (Black Cuban Spider) chorea especially of upper limbs; twitchings and contractions of facial muscles; head is jerked to one side; mouth and eyes open in rapid succession; words come out in a jerk; limbs drag while walking; convulsive uncontrollable movements of arms and legs
- *Tarentula hispanica* (Spanish Spider) hysteria, chorea; symptoms appear suddenly with violence; restlessness, hurried, in constant motion; can run better than walk; sensitive to music with a compulsion to dance



Agaricus muscarius

REPERTORY

Generals, chorea

Convulsive Illnesses

We are again dealing with chronic conditions, unless any of these disorders can be related to a trauma or previous inflammation. In the first instance we should look for a constitutional prescription addressing the totality of that person and not just focus on the expression of the pathology.

- *Artemisia vulgaris* s.a
- *Bufo* (Toad Poison) epileptic seizures occurring during the night associated with the sexual sphere, menses; attacks followed by a headache
- *Cicuta virosa* (Water Hemlock) violent spasmodic effects; convulsions, trismus, jerks; spasms move downwards with violence with sudden shocks; frightful facial distortions; bloody foam from the mouth; spasms renewed by touch, noise, loud talking; epilepsy following brain injury
- *Cuprum metallicum* attack starts in the fingers then radiate over the whole body; in epilepsy the patient falls with a shriek, passing urine and faeces; convulsions in children during dentition; general hypersensitivity
- *Hydrocyanic acid* rapidly acting poison producing convulsions, paralysis; sudden effects; lightning like jerks from head to feet; epileptic attacks preceded by nausea and vomiting or waterbrash
- *Oenanthe crocata* (Water Dropwort) puerperal and uraemic convulsions; epilepsy with priapism; falls backwards uttering a loud cry; convulsive twitching of facial muscles; foaming at the mouth; epilepsy worse during menses and pregnancy
- *Stramonium* gyratory graceful movements; convulsions < night; s.a.
- *Hyoscyamus* convulsions ending in deep stupor; vertigo before epileptic attack; s.a.
- *Nux vomica* epileptic attacks < after stimulants, in the morning; s.a.

REPERTORY

Generals, convulsions, epileptic

Disorders of the Peripheral Nervous System

Here we have a combination of acute and chronic conditions, meriting both a pathological/aetiological approach or a more constitutional form of treatment.

Facial Neuralgia

Aconite (Monk's Hood) sudden onset after exposure to cold air; affinity to R side; restlessness, fear

Kalmia (Mountain Laurel) neuralgic pains shoot downward with numbness; tingling, numbness; post-herpetic neuralgia; < R side; rheumatic remedy joint and heart complaints

Spigelia (Pinkroot) trigeminal neuralgia; very sensitive to touch; parts feel chilly; violet burning pains like hot needles; ciliary neuralgia; pains come and go with the sun; combined heart and eye symptoms; < slightest draft, touch; > rest, warmth, steady firm pressure

Plantago major (Plantain) facial neuralgia with sharp shifting pains; play between ear and teeth; < night, warm room

Verbascum (Mullein Oil) affinity to inferior maxillary branch of the trigeminus; tearing, stitching, cramping, paralytic pain; < drafts, change of temperature, sneezing, touch, with every cold

Mezerum (Spurge Olive) sudden pains, burning, smarting; affected parts become cold; post-herpetic neuralgia; < night, suppression, warmth of bed, cold air, drafts

Herpes zoster nosode nosode for post-herpetic neuralgia, especially when indicated remedy fails

REPERTORY

Face: pain

Bell's Palsy

- *Causticum* R-sided paralysis, < opening mouth; cramps in lips; < dry cold; > damp
- *Cadmium sulphate* distortion of mouth from facial paralysis; L-sided; < cold air, cannot close eyes; difficult talking and swallowing
- *Curare* paralysis without impairing sensations; tongue and mouth drawn

REPERTORY

Face, paralysis

Sciatica

Acute and chronic back pain often benefit from manual therapies (osteopathy, Alexander technique, acupuncture) in conjunction with homoeopathic remedies.

ACUTE

Antimonium tartaricum pallor, nausea, weakness; trembling; icy coldness of legs; feet go to sleep sitting

Bryonia < slightest movement, > firm pressure, more R-sided

Colocynthis intense shooting pain, neuralgia, often following anger; cramp-like pain; > pressure and heat

CHRONIC

Rhus toxicodendron < initial movement, > constant motion, > warmth, sensitive to damp and electrical storms; restlessness; causation often after lifting and catching cold

Gnaphalium polycephalum (Cud-weed) numbness along the thigh, > drawing legs up; numbness in lower back and weight in pelvis

Causticum sensation of constriction or actual constriction of ham-strings; weakness/paralysis; > damp

REPERTORY

Extremities: pain, lower limbs, sciatica

Meniere' Disease

We are dealing with a chronic condition that merits a constitutional approach as well as looking at local remedies that may address the component of sclerosis or congestion.

- ***Chininum sulphuricum*** vertigo with tinnitus, twitching of the eyelids, throbbing headache; deafness; exact periodicity
- ***Phosphorus*** sensation of floating; < hunger; sensation of whirling; sensitive to external impressions, thunderstorms; thirsty for cold drinks which can aggravate
- ***Cocculus indicus*** vertigo with nausea; < raising head, smell of food, motion; > bending backwards; s.a. for more modalities
- ***Secale cornutum*** in cases of poor circulation; head feels light
- ***Tabacum*** poor circulation, low blood pressure; nausea; excessive vertigo with copious sweat on opening eyes
- ***Lolium temulentum*** (Darnel) with noises; must close eyes with vertigo
- ***Theridion currasavicum*** (Orange spider) vertigo with nausea and vomiting on least motion < closing eyes; faints after washing clothes
- ***Gelsemium*** trembling; congestive states; as if drunk; dizziness, blurred vision; giddiness with loss of sight; double vision
- ***Glonoine*** congestive states; confusion with dizziness; vertigo on assuming upright position; < stooping, moving head in open air
- ***Digitalis*** general congestion; vertigo with trembling worse rising; from cardiac or hepatic disorders
- ***Argentum nitricum*** vertigo with buzzing in ears and with nervous disorders; warm-blooded, hurried, fear heights; digestive disturbances
- ***Veratrum album*** collapse, sensation of turning around oneself
- ***Borax*** sensation of going down in a lift; fits of vertigo with fainting; fullness in the head; vertigo < ascending stairs

REPERTORY

Vertigo

Migraine

Migraine headaches are often closely linked to a person's constitutional type. The rubric on headaches is large in the repertory and there is virtually no polycrest remedy that does not have headaches of one type or another. We will look at some of the most common remedies with their keynote symptom, including smaller remedies with a specific affinity to migraine headaches.

Listed below are remedies more suitable for treatment of the acute headache.

ACUTE

- ***Iris versicolor*** often R-sided with visual disturbances; vomiting at the height of the attack; frequently during periods of rest hence the name "Sunday migraine"; often over tired several days before a headache; boring pain in pancreatic area with the headache; very sensitive to sugar, but desire for it
- ***Spigelia*** mainly L-sided over the eyes, along the temple; gradual onset and ending; very sensitive to noise and jarring, has to lie down on, turns to lie on the side without pain
- ***Sanguinaria*** more R-sided; rising hot flushes, often during menopause; nausea, vertigo, tinnitus, perspiration
- ***Cyclamen*** migraine with visual disturbances, nausea, vertigo, tendency to faint; often in delicate anaemic persons; during puberty
- ***Nux vomica*** in the early morning hours, often following over indulgence in stimulants; poor eating habits; person usually chilly and ill-tempered
- ***Gelsemium*** dark red face; great weakness and prostration; very sensitive to weather; trembling; pain from the occiput extending to the forehead with visual disturbances; better passing urine
- ***Belladonna*** throbbing pain, < stooping, jarring, noise; flushed face, dilated pupils; after exposure to sun
- ***Bryonia*** often R-sided; < movement of head or eyes; > pressure; often together with respiratory tract infection; irritable, wants to be left alone

- ***China sulphurica*** aching pain in occiput; > cold applications; < turning head or eyes, open air; nauseated but wants to eat, eating brings no relief; flatulence but cannot break wind
- ***Glonoinum*** typical picture of sunstroke or heat stroke; like Belladonna but much more severe; skin is moist, head feels as if it was going to burst; disturbances of vision; . ice-cold applications and keeping still
- ***Melilotus*** all the symptoms of Glonoinum but without any response; Melilotus will usually have some more excitement; there is a sensitivity to weather, especially electrical storms
- ***Theridion*** start around puberty or in women during the menopause; pain at the back of the eyes spreading backwards through the head; giddiness when closing eyes with nausea; very sensitive to noise, touch and jarring

Migraine continued

CHRONIC

If a person suffers from persistent headache, or recurring headaches the totality of symptoms will lead to a broader acting remedy. The following remedies are for more chronic headaches usually tied in with a person's constitutional make-up.

- ***Argentum nitricum*** for people who over work, travel allot; gradual onset with sudden cessation; people often have anticipatory fears; gastro-intestinal problems; warm-blooded; desire sweets and salt
- ***Calcarea carbonica*** headaches associated with exposure to extremes of temperature, overeating or drinking too much; head cold and sweaty; pain often R-sided; people like structure, can be very fearful, plodders
- ***Cimicifuga*** headaches associated with rheumatism, menstrual period; person depressed, deep dark gloom; chilly but prefers cool open air for headache
- ***Kali bichromicum*** pain at the root of the nose spreading to the rest of the head; associated with sinus problems, thick sticky catarrh; pain < motion, stooping; > open air; pain in spots; people are very structured, rigid, their home and family are of great importance
- ***Lachesis*** congestive hammering headache; purplish discoloration; often L-sided; associated with menstrual cycle, menopause; intense people, jealous, passionate, spiteful, loquacious
- ***Lycopodium*** periodic headaches associated with abdominal bloating, empty sensation of the stomach; R-sided; desire warm drinks, sweets; < 16:00 - 18:00; anxious people with low confidence, cowardly, mask this behind very dictatorial behaviour especially around people they know
- ***Natrum muriaticum*** hammering headache accompanied by visual disturbances; < midday to evening (comes and goes with the sun); < sea; either desire or aversion to salt; greasy skin; introverted people; brooding; harbour resentment; dislike sympathy

- ***Nux vomica*** we looked at this remedy for acute headaches; it is also useful for the stressed manager type suffering from recurring headaches; desire stimulants; explosive temper; workaholic; efficient; hypersensitive
- ***Pulsatilla*** throbbing congestive headaches often triggered by rich food; > open air, cool applications; headaches related to menstrual period; thirstless; desires attention, weepy, mild but also manipulative, touchy
- ***Sepia*** headaches with nausea related to the menses, pregnancy, menopause; > violent exertion; sallow patients, feel the cold but < stuffy rooms; indifference
- ***Silica*** occipital headaches; very sensitive to drafts; < mental or physical exertion; slender, chilly people with a delicate build; sweaty feet with strong odour; conscientious people
- ***Sulphur*** periodic sick headaches, often at the weekend when the person rests or lies in; > activity; congestion; redness of the face; issue around tidiness and clothes; lively active people full of ideas and theories

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Self-assessment Questions

Name 3 useful remedies for the sequels of head injury and describe their modalities.

Compare the indications for the following remedies for headaches: Natrum muriaticum, Pulsatilla, Sepia, Nux vomica, Belladonna, Bryonia.

Which remedies for convulsions do you remember? List some of their keynote features.

What are some useful remedies for hyperactivity (name at least 4) and how would you differentiate between them?

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