



Poison Hemlock- A Poison or Boon for our Uncle Sam?

Dr SAMIR A CHAUKKAR MD (HOM)

Prof, Dept of Hom Materia Medica and Pediatrics

YMT Hom Medical College and P G Institute, Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.

Practicing Classical Homoeopathy specializing in Addictions Treatment since last 15 years.

Email: drsamirac69@gmail.com, Mobile: 9892166616

WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

Dementia is a problem in the brain that makes it hard for a person to remember, learn and communicate. After a while, this makes it hard for him to take care of himself.

Dementia may also change a person's mood and personality. At first, memory loss and trouble thinking clearly may bother the patient. Later, disruptive behavior and other problems may start.

The person who has dementia may not be aware of these problems.

WHAT CAUSES DEMENTIA?

Dementia is caused by the destruction of brain cells. A head injury, a stroke, a brain tumor or a problem like Alzheimer's disease can damage brain cells. Some people have a family history.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON SIGNS OF DEMENTIA?

Dementia causes many problems to patient as well as patient's family. Many of the problems are caused by memory loss. Some common signs of dementia are listed below. Not everyone who has dementia will have all of these signs.

➤ **RECENT MEMORY LOSS:** All of us forget things for a while and then remember them later. People with dementia often forget things, but they



never remember them. They might ask you the same question over and over, each time forgetting that you've already answered. They won't even remember that they already asked the question.

➤ **DIFFICULTY PERFORMING FAMILIAR TASKS:** People who have dementia might cook a meal but forget to serve it or may even forget that they cooked it.

➤ **PROBLEMS WITH LANGUAGE:** They may forget simple words or use the wrong words. This makes

it hard to understand what they want.

➤ **TIME AND PLACE DISORIENTATION:** The patients may get lost on their own street. They may forget how they got to a certain place and how to get back home.

➤ **POOR JUDGMENT:** Even a person who doesn't have dementia might get distracted. But people who have dementia can forget simple things, like forgetting to put on a coat before going out in cold weather.

➤ **PROBLEMS WITH ABSTRACT THINKING:** Anybody might have trouble balancing a cheque book, but dementia patient may forget what the numbers are and what has to be done with them.

➤ **MISPLACING THINGS:** They may put things in the wrong places. They might put an iron in the freezer or a wristwatch in the sugar bowl. Then

they can't find these things later.

- **CHANGES IN MOOD:** Everyone is moody at times, but people with dementia have fast mood swings, going from calm to tears to anger in few minutes.
- **PERSONALITY CHANGES:** They may have drastic changes in personality. They might become irritable, suspicious or fearful.
- **LOSS OF INITIATIVE:** They become passive, does not want to go places or see other people.

HOW CAN OUR POISON HEMLOCK HELP OUR ELDERS?

Conium-maculatum



Spotted or Poison Hemlock, Umbelliferae.

(Conium-kwvelov, koneion, hemlock; Maculatum-macula, spot, stain)

While studying *Conium*, we see that most of its mental symptoms correspond to those of Dementia, which encouraged me to go ahead and look into the source books and study the symptoms which came up in the proving of this invaluable remedy, which can come handy to all of us in treating this intractable disorder which ails most of our senior citizens.

Dr SAMUEL HAHNEMANN
CHRONIC DISEASES VOLUME I

Lack of memory.

Loss of memory, W ROWLEY, 74 cases, London, 1779.

Unable to recollect, on awaking from noon siesta. Extraordinary inability to recollect.

He cannot express himself well in talking, nor can he rightly remember. He often utters the wrong words.

Dullness, difficult comprehension of what is read; obtuseness of the head.

Dullness, like stupefaction, it is hard for him to understand what he reads.

Dullness of the head, after drinking.

Obtuseness of all the senses.

Insensibility and laziness.

**GUIDING SYMPTOMS OF OUR MATERIA MEDICA:
Dr HERING**

Obtuseness of all the senses; unconsciousness; wandering about as if half asleep.

Extremely insensible.

Weak memory. Memory enfeebled, likewise the power of correctly expressing one's self; difficult comprehension.

Forgetfulness; excessive difficulty in understanding what he reads.

Dullness, like stupefaction.

Inability to sustain any mental effort. Tired, weary sensation in brain, with physical as well as nervous prostration.

Sensation in forehead or front part of brain like an inability to fix the mind on any subject; loses hold of the idea and gets confused.

Buried in thought; apprehensive respecting the present or future.

Dislike for society, and yet a dread to be alone. Hysteria. He is averse to being near people and to the talk of those passing him; is inclined to seize hold of and abuse them.

Patient averse to talking, dressing himself, taking food or seeing her children. Spleen enlarged. Melancholia.

Disinclination for business.



Complete indifference; takes no interest in anything, particularly walking in open air. Hypochondriasis.

Sad and gloomy for days, then excited.

Discouraged, despondent, and dissatisfied with herself and her surroundings.

Timid, cannot be persuaded to work; want of proper will.

Morose mood; everything about him impresses him unpleasantly.

She feels peevish, vexed and easily put out about trifles.

Ailments from grief.

W BURT says that this is a special irritant to the cerebro-spinal system, more especially affecting the motor tract of the spinal cord, and glandular system.

Upon the brain according to **Dr HARLEY**, it acts especially upon the motor centre within the cranium and of these the corpora striata are the parts chiefly affected; its chief action is to paralyse the cranial motor centres in the first place, and secondly the spinal centres, and not the periphery of the motor nerves. **Dr HUGHES** says, it directly paralyzes the spinal cord from below upwards, killing at last by gradual asphyxia. The feet and legs become paralyzed first, and it gradually passes upwards until it reaches the chest and paralyzes the pectoral muscles, when death ensues.

W PIERCE PLAIN TALKS ON MATERIA MEDICA

It is of value for scrofulous constitutions, for the bad effects following sexual excesses, for weakness following exhausting disease, for paralysis after diphtheria and for general physical and mental debility and tremulous weakness with sudden attacks of faintness with vertigo.

It is a remedy that is more frequently indicated for old people than for the young,

There is a general weakness in *Conium*, perhaps senile dementia, a forgetfulness, especially of dates,

inability to get his mind fixed on his business and a tired, weary sensation in brain and body on every attempt to concentrate his thoughts.

It is of value in melancholia; the patient is quiet and sad, picks his nose, which bleeds easily and becomes sore, or he picks his fingers until they bleed. It is to be thought of for melancholia in those who suffer from ungratified sexual desire, as well as for hypochondriasis resulting from excessive gratification. There is depression of spirits preceding menstruation and melancholia resulting from suppression of the menses, with aversion even to the members of her own family. Here we find the mental condition of aversion to people, yet dislike of being alone.

TARKAS AND KULKARNI: A SELECT HOMOEOPATHIC MATERIA MEDICA

OLD AGE ABERRATIONS: Foolish extravagance, makes useless collections or purchases (and perhaps forgets to collect them), wears best or raggy clothes, cares very little for big things, or much for trifles, wastes or ruins them; dementia. Senile breakdown, depression, withdrawal (*Carb-s*). Unbalanced behaviour of the aged living under constraints in an unfriendly set-up.

BRAIN FAG: Inability for sustained mental effort (*Hell*); cannot think, after straining eyes (eg students, after night study; or, thinks but slowly; memory somewhat impaired (*Calc-p, Anac*); a gradually developing dementia, imbecility or a passive insanity; parietic dementia; after grief. Broken down, tired of life, discouraged; women feel as if they must cry and swallow the lump, they feel choking the throat. Apathy; loss of interest in life; no inclination for business or study; avoids any serious work or enterprise, prefers play or platitudes. Fascination for rags. Takes everything in bad part. Childish, free only with her children.

SUGGESTED IN ATROPHY OF BRAIN; ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE: *Calc-p, Alu, Bar-c, Lyc, Plb* etc In schizophrenia, *Hell*.

PSYCHOGENIC CAUSES: Unresolved grief, sexual abstinence or excesses, being isolated, suppressed love, mortification, business failure etc.

CLARKE'S DICTIONARY OF MATERIA MEDICA: Want of mental energy. Inaptitude for labour. Irritability, and disposition to be angry. Derangement of ideas and mania. Confusion of ideas, as from drowsiness. Slowness of conception. Weakness of the intellectual faculties, and of the memory. Ready forgetfulness, excessive difficulty of recollecting things.

T F ALLEN- ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MATERIA MEDICA Vol III
Disinclination for business. Inability to sustain any mental effort. Dulness, like stupefaction; difficulty in understanding what he is reading. Dulness; difficulty in understanding what he is reading, with confusion of the head. Confused thoughts. Frequently makes mistakes in speaking. Unable to express himself properly while talking or to think correctly. Memory weak. Want of memory. Loss of memory (in seventy four cases).

KENT'S LECTURES ON MATERIA MEDICA

Conium is a deep, long acting antipsoric, establishing a state of disorder in the economy that is so far reaching and so long lasting that it disturbs almost all the tissues of the body.

Conium has such a deep action that it gradually brings about a state of imbecility. The mind gives out. The mind at first becomes tired like the muscles of the body. Unable to sustain any mental effort. The memory is weak. The mind will not concentrate, it will not force itself to attention; it cannot meditate, and then finally comes imbecility- Inability to stand any mental effort or to rivet the attention upon anything are some of the most important symptoms in this medicine. It is a slow-forming weakness of mind; He thinks slowly, and he continues in this stage for weeks and months, if he recovers at all. This state of the mind has come on so gradually that the family has not observed it. The mind is full of strange things that have come

little by little, and when the family look over the many things that he has done and said, they begin to wonder if he is not becoming insane, but he is travelling toward a state of imbecility.

Conium is of a slow, passive character. Complete indifference; takes no interest in anything, particularly when walking in the open air. "He is averse to being near people and to talking of those passing him; is inclined to seize hold of and abuse them." That, of course, is an insane act. "Sad and gloomy". Great unhappiness of mind, recurring every fourteen days," showing a two- weeks' periodicity. The *Conium* patient will sit and mope in the corner in a state of sadness and depression, giving no reason only that he is so sad. A hypochondriacal subject going around with whims and notions that people attempt to reason him out of, and the more they attempt to reason with him, the more sad he is. Morose, peevish, vexed. Everything vexes and disturbs him. Cannot endure any kind of excitement, it brings on physical and mental distress, brings on weakness and sadness.

Sometimes *Conium* symptoms will be found in persons who have suffered from grief; they become broken in memory. This is likely to come first. They forget, never can recall things just as they want them. And so they grow weaker and weaker until they become imbeciles. If it is decidedly mental, imbecility results; if it is taking a physical course the ending is paralysis, and it is not uncommon for a general paralytic weakness to come on, so that body and mind progress toward weakness together until some decided manifestation is made, and then it will be seen to be going toward paralysis, or some decided manifestation is made which will send it toward imbecility, and then the body will seem to remain stationary. There comes a time in these cases where there is a sort of division between the body and the mind.

Whenever under homoeopathic treatment the physical improves and the mental grows worse, that patient will never be cured. There are such



cases I never like to see the physical grow better and the mental grow worse in any degree. That does not mean the aggravation is caused by the remedy. If the mental does not improve it means that the patient is growing worse. There is no better evidence of the good action of a remedy than mental improvement.

RUBRICS OF DEMENTIA COVERED BY *CONIUM-MACULATUM*, COMPLETE REPERTORY

- 1) Absent mindedness, Old people in
- 2) Confusion of mind, Old people in
- 3) Dementia, Old people in
- 4) Dullness, sluggishness, difficulty of thinking and comprehending; Old people
- 5) Forgetfulness; Old people, of
- 6) Slowness; Old people, of
- 7) Memory, weakness, loss of
- 8) Memory, weakness, loss of, dates for
- 9) Memory, weakness, loss of, grief after
- 10) Memory, weakness, loss of, labor, for mental
- 11) Memory, weakness, loss of, places for
- 12) Memory, weakness, loss of, vertigo with
- 13) Memory, weakness, loss of, words for
- 14) Forgetfulness, words while speaking of, word hunting
- 15) Confusion of mind
- 16) Confusion of mind, sleep, after siesta
- 17) Mood, changeable, variable
- 18) Mood, repulsive
- 19) Mind, Fear
- 20) Mind, Suspicious, mistrustful
- 21) Mistakes makes
- 22) Mistakes makes, Talking, Misplacing words
- 23) Mistakes makes, in calculating
- 24) Mistakes makes, Talking
- 25) Mistakes makes, Talking, misplacing words
- 26) Mistakes makes, Talking, wrong words using
- 27) Mistakes makes, Time in
- 28) Mistakes makes, Writing in

The similarity is really much and it can be a very useful remedy for Dementia.

Old expressions - Historic knowledge or myths

As incredible as it sounds, men and women took baths only twice a year (May and October)!

Women kept their hair covered, while men shaved their heads (because of lice and bugs) and wore wigs.

Wealthy men could afford good wigs made from wool.

They couldn't wash the wigs, so to clean them they would carve out a loaf of bread, put the wig in the shell, and bake it for 30 minutes.

The heat would make the wig big and fluffy, hence the term "big wig."

Today we often use the term "here comes the Big Wig" because someone appears to be or is powerful and wealthy.



In the late 1700s, many houses consisted of a large room with only one chair.

Commonly, a long wide board folded down from the wall, and was used for dining.

The "head of the household" always sat in the chair while everyone else ate sitting on the floor.

Occasionally a guest, who was usually a man, would be invited to sit in this chair during a meal.

To sit in the chair meant you were important and in charge.

They called the one sitting in the chair the "chair man."

Today in business, we use the expression or title "Chairman" or "Chairman of the Board."