

Prostate Problems and Homoeopathy

Abstract: Dr Suvarna has effeciently dealt wuth another common problem in old age occuring in men viz prostate enlargement; which is a very embarassing problem, as it dictates frequent and unaccomadative visits to the toilet. She has very clearly demarcated the do's and don't's for the prevention as well as treatment of prostate problems.

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The prostate is a small, walnut-shaped gland weighing 15 to 20 gms that lies at the neck of a man's bladder encircling the urethra (the tube through which the urine flows to at the base of the penis). It produces a lubricating fluid in which the sperms are carried during ejaculation. The prostate can become infected (prostatitis) usually as a result of a sexually transmitted disease, or it can enlarge, usually after the age of 50, causing disturbances in passing urine. The enlargement of the prostate is fairly common and can lead to cancer of the prostate, which is the third most common cancer afflicting man.

CAUSES: The cause of over growth of the prostate gland is unknown but approximately 80% will develop it. It is considered to be caused by a hormonal change, although more recently a dietary factor has been identified.

SYMPTOMS: Infection of the prostate gland will lead to pain in the lower abdomen or on sitting down. There may be a temperature and a general feeling of fatigue and unwell feeling; in severe cases it will cause difficulty in passing urine together with a urethral discharge. An enlarged prostate gland will initially not produce any symptoms other than a mild reduction in the flow of urine. Most troublesome symptoms include high frequency of urination (having to get up at night) dribbling and incontinence often

accompanied by urine infections.

PREVENTION AND SELF HELP: Recently, research has shown that the prostate contains ten times more of Zinc than any other organ in the body and regular Zinc is now prescribed (one tablet a day). Eating more of Zinc -containing foods (such as brewer's yeast, wheat germ, pumpkin seeds, powdered mustard) is also recommended. Herbalists may prescribe a diuretic such as chamomile or couch grass. Traditional remedies include a course of propolis and pollen (one table spoon a day)

NATUROPATHY: Suggests a regime of hot and cold compresses applied on the perineum, or alternate hot and cold baths with salt powder, reduction of tea, coffee and alcohol will also be recommended.

Prostatitis is inflammation of the prostate gland due to an infection. The walnut-sized prostate gland lies, immediately below the bladder and is involved in the manufacture of semen. Prostatitis is the natural enlargement of the gland with age (especially over 50 yrs) which restricts the working of the bladder. Symptoms of prostatitis are similar to those of flu, with pain, particularly in the lower back, shivering and fever.

WARNING: Untreated prostatitis can lead to inflammation of other parts of the genito-urinary system, including the testes, medical advise is essential. For prostatitis, drink plenty

of water, avoid dehydration, which places stress on the prostate and encourages frequent urination, relieving congestion. Drink plenty of fluids, preferably water (but not tea, coffee or alcohol) and urinate frequently, making sure the bladder is as empty as possible, sit in waist deep hot water for about 10 minutes, with your knees bent and a cold flannel on your forehead, afterward rub your lower half down with a cold towel and hold it between your legs for a few seconds to cool the area. Some therapists recommend regular ejaculation and massage of the prostate to relieve pressure. Seek specialist advice from your doctor if you wish to self massage. Regular exercise, particularly walking and cycling also helps.

Dietary and Nutritional Therapies:

Avoid spicy and fatty foods. Take daily supplements of vitamins C, E and B-complex as well as Zinc and Magnesium, regular supplementation with fish oils, olive oil and evening primrose oil can also help. Try juices of carrot, cucumber, beetroot, radish, garlic and pumpkin, massage a point midway between the ankle bone and the heel on the inside of the foot.

Homoeopathic Medicines:

1. *Sabal serrulata* : Recommended for various prostatic troubles, but its homoeopathic use seems confined to acute cases of enlarged and inflamed prostate; the gland is hot, swollen and painful, here also regular inflammation polychrests , such as "Aconite " and "Belladonna" will help. *Sabal* is not altogether useless in senile hypertrophy, the writer has seen a marked palliative action in several cases and avoidance of surgical interference .
2. *Lycopodium* : Pressure in the perineum near anus while urinating.
3. *Chima philla* : Gives occasional good results in relieving the tenesmus, frequent urination and general discomfort due to prostatic hypertrophy, *Spongia* is also a

remedy for this condition.

4. *Thuja*: Frequent pressing to urinate with small discharge, patient strains much, stitches from rectum into bladder, discharge of prostatic juice in the morning on awaking.
5. *Ferrum-picratum*: Is one of the best medicines for prostatic enlargements in the aged.
6. *Conium-maculatum* : Is the stereotype of the elderly man who instead of growing wise, becomes obsessed with sex, he has problems with his prostate, which is enlarged and may even become cancerous. This remedy is useful in chronic hypertrophy of the prostate with difficulty in voiding urine, it stops and starts and there is an accompanying catarrh of the bladder.

TIPS FOR A HEALTHY PROSTATE :

1. Limit consumption of high fat foods particularly red meat and dairy products.
2. Eat a lot of fruits and vegetables, especially tomato, and cruciferous vegetables like sprouts, cauliflower and others in the cabbage family
3. Eat fish with a high omega-3 fatty acid content such as salmon
4. Avoid alcohol
5. Be physically active and maintain a healthy weight

DIET AND BOWEL PREPARATION : The patient is given a laxative to clear the bowels for the procedure, a little vaseline around the back passage will prevent soreness, the patient should commence a liquid diet after taking the bowel laxative.

The following clear liquids are allowed: fruit juices, apple, cranberry, grape, strained orange juice, desserts- jellies fruit ices, beverages – coffee, tea, lemon/orange drinks soups; any strained soups, no alcohol strictly. Remember to drink as much fluid as possible prior to your examination, the nursing staff will administer an enema.