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## The Homœopathic Treatment of Metastases Of Rheumatic Fever in Relation To the Heart

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Last year I prepared a paper on acute rheumatic fever and its homœopathic treatment. I said then that it would be desirable to have a sequel to that paper in the homœopathic treatment of metastases of rheumatic fever in relation to the heart.

The frequency of this complication, as shown by the records of five large hospitals, under the salicylate treatment, has a percentage varying from thirty-three to fifty-eight. The frequency was noted in a large hospital where strict homœopathy was utilized, and the records showed 15.3%.

In a diseased condition showing such tremendous impairment of a vital organ like the heart, as does the metastasis of rheumatism, we need to give most careful observation and care. Especially do we feel that homœopathy lends itself as the only hope we have of avoiding these complications, and eradicating their damaging effects. Even though some impairment may be left, homœopathy will help these patients back into the way of becoming useful citizens.

Let us consider some of the remedies that will aid us very remarkably in the treatment of these serious conditions.

In *Abrotanum* we have a valuable remedy. The metastasis follows in the wake of a rheumatism associated with a great deal of gastric disturbance. The rheumatic condition is very apt to follow checked diarrhoea; and following the acute rheumatic condition, just before the metastasis shows itself, there is marked emaciation of the lower limbs.

The gastric disturbances are associated with a peculiar sensation as if the stomach were hanging or swimming in water. Then there is a sudden, sharp aching pain that starts in the back. There is also sharp pain across the chest and in the region of the heart. The pulse is weak and small. The pains are relieved by motion and are aggravated at night and in cool air.

In *Anacardium* we have a remedy having marked action on the connective tissue of the different parts of the body; therefore we look for its usefulness in cases of damaged heart from rheumatic origin. Being a member of the great *Rhus* family, it is full of rheumatic disturbances. In general, in cases calling for this remedy, we look for pain with the characteristic sensation of a plug, and this time the symptom shows itself in the præcordial region. In general, too, we find relief after eating; and in these damaged heart conditions we find it equally true, that all conditions are very much relieved for two hours after eating.

The patient is markedly worse from walking, so that he wants to sit or lie down all the time. There is faintness on attempting to go upstairs. There are stitches in the præcordial region when breathing, in the effort of breathing or when attempting to walk. These stitching pains extend from the præcordial region to the small of the back. This is a peculiar double stitch in

the cardiac region—one stitch is quickly followed by another, and then a long interval.

We find this remedy is particularly called for in conditions of rheumatic pericarditis rather than in endocarditis.

Among the remedies having a predilection toward pericardial involvement following acute rheumatic troubles, and more especially following the exanthematous diseases, is *Apis mellifica*.

It has attacks of marked dyspnoea; breathing heavy and difficult, even to gasping; markedly worse by lying on the left side. There is a peculiar sensation about the heart as if something would break away; a sudden acute pain just below the heart extending diagonally toward the right chest. The heart action is very violent; every heart beat shakes the body. There is sensitiveness to slight pressure about the chest.

There is a blowing sound at the diastole. This is one of the remedies having a marked mitral insufficiency. The systolic sounds are not well defined, but there is an increase in the diastolic pulmonary sounds.

With all these conditions locally there is the marked bruised soreness as if beaten throughout the whole body; the tendency to œdema of appendant parts; scarcity of urine; intense burning and sharp, piercing pains here and there throughout the body, that we always find as the marked characteristics of *Apis*.

The well-known action of *Apis* on serous membranes makes it particularly well suited in these cases of pericardium and endocardium involvement, as well as its inflammatory action on connective tissue.

In *Fagopyrum* we have a remedy of value, little thought of by the majority of prescribers, having a predilection for inflammatory rheumatism that leaves in

its trail a damaged heart. This remedy is particularly applicable in conditions arising in pericarditis.

There is pain about the heart, relieved from lying on the back. The pain extends to the left shoulder and arm ; or again it may extend throughout the whole chest. The pains may be bruised, heavy, dull aching, or sharp, and aggravated on inspiration. Sharp sticking pains in the left side, that come suddenly and go suddenly—a kind of "kink" in the side, not affected by respiration. The pains are aggravated by stooping, as in writing and by sitting.

There is much throbbing of the arteries. These pulsations may be seen in the neck, the face and the lips, and may even be heard through the room. This is particularly so after retiring, when the patient will break out into a sour perspiration.

*Fagopyrum* has much oppression and palpitation. The pulse is irregular and intermittent. The oppression is made worse by pressure, even the pressure of the hand over the chest ; yet the pain around the heart may be ameliorated by the support of the hand over the region of the heart.

These patients are usually worse from 3-6 p.m. and after retiring. They are worse from warmth and from motion, but there is relief from gentle motion.

In rheumatism that has superficial pains in the spring and summer, and very deep metastasis coming on in the winter or from exposure, where the heart has been damaged by repeated attacks, we find *Colchicum* of great benefit. We find the damaged condition affecting the pericardium, but having sympathetic extension to the endocardium.

The mental states of *Colchicum* manifest themselves in the expression of intolerable suffering ; and external

impressions of light and noise, and especially the odor of food, are exceedingly distasteful and distressing to these patients.

There is dyspnoea, with irregular respiration, which is short and rapid. The pulse slows up irregularly, to come on again more rapidly, with a sensation about the heart as if it were being squeezed by a hand, like *Cactus*. There is much infusion into the pericardium, with an irritation of the endocardial membrane. There is a sense of pressure and anxiety in the præcordial region; fullness and oppression, as if the blood stagnated at night, when lying on the left side, compelling him to lie on the right.

The pains of *Colchicum* go from left to right. *Colchicum* has a special affinity for fibrous tissue, especially tendinous aponeuroses, which makes it especially applicable in chronic cases of valvular troubles.

In metastases of rheumatism where the heart is involved, and where *Arsenicum* is indicated, there is burning pain in the region of the heart, a great deal of dyspnoea and oppression, especially on lying down at night and about one o'clock a. m. With this dyspnoea the face is desperately pale and white, and there is a look of anxiety and oppression. The patient is covered with a cold, sticky sweat. The pulse is out of all proportion with the rapidity and feebleness. With the intense, tumultuous palpitation in these paroxysms syncope is often noted.

The most pronounced symptoms of the *Arsenicum* patient are the great restlessness, the burning pains, and the very marked prostration, all out of proportion to the apparent difficulty; the oppression from exertion, together with the palpitation and feebleness of the pulse.

*Aurum*, due to its destructive action on connective

tissue, is one of the remedies that may be thought of in rheumatic endocarditis.

There is a peculiar mental nervousness always present with these conditions, an appearance as if the patient were in a hurry about everything. They do things in haste; they work in haste; even their motions are hurried. There is uneasiness and hurried desire for bodily and mental activity. He cannot do anything rapidly enough to satisfy himself. He is constantly impelled to be in motion, and mourns that he cannot move quickly enough.

There is great oppression of the heart, with weak pulse and great depression of spirits, blue lips and anxious expression of the face. The pulse is very rapid, soft and intermittent, and the heart flounders. There are large endocardial bruits. There are frequent attacks of anguish about the heart, with tremulous fearfulness; and a sensation as if the heart stopped at times. The patient complains of a heavy weight, which seems to rest on the sternum, and there is profuse perspiration. The symptoms are worse at night.

*Cactus grandiflora* has some symptoms that are very helpful in cases of the results of endocardial inflammation (in distinction from pericardial) where there is actual damage to the heart following rheumatic conditions.

The mental effects of *Cactus* are very marked. There is always depression; fear that they are not going to recover; a feeling that they are ready to die. They scream with pain when the heart is affected and show this great fear of death, which is as marked in these conditions as in *Aconite*. The pain is particularly at the apex of the heart. There is also constant pain in the heart, due to the binding down of the *chordae tendineae*.

In the chest there is great difficulty in breathing; a

continued oppression and a sense of great weight on the chest, as though it were bound down with a hoop of iron, or an iron hand were grasping the heart. These patients can breathe much easier bolstered up.

The sensation of constriction extends all through the remedy—constriction of the muscles, and constriction of the muscles of the heart, a sensation as if they were bound down. There is palpitation and faintness, with cold perspiration on the face.

*Kalmia latifolia* is a very valuable remedy in certain types of complications arising from metastasis of rheumatic troubles to the heart. There are some peculiar sensations that usually accompany these metastases. There is the sensation of stiffness in the muscles around the eyes, and particularly in the eyelids. There is a peculiar feeling in the præcordial region as if every heart beat were strumming, and as if it would burst, extending from the sternum to the throat.

With these complications we almost always find a very slow pulse and frequently a nausea accompanying, as concomitants.

There is difficult and oppressed breathing, and a peculiar quick breath comes involuntarily, almost a stutter in the act of respiration. There are periods of great anguish about the heart, with dyspnoea and a feeling of excitement. The heart action is greatly affected by exertion.

Early in the metastasis we find the sudden shooting stabbing pains, extending to the left scapula; an expression of anxiousness to the countenance; sometimes a very weak rapid pulse, with difficult breathing.

In the chronic conditions there is great hypertrophy and valvular insufficiency attending these states. The patient must be propped up in bed; there is a livid hue

to the countenance. The action of the heart is tumultuous and can be seen as well as felt. Usually these conditions are due to involvement of the endocardium with shortening of the *chordæ tendineæ*, producing stenosis of the mitral valves.

The power of *Iodin* to absorb serous and endocardial affections makes it a prominent remedy in conditions of the heart following rheumatism. The great characteristic of the remedy in rheumatic conditions is the pain without swelling in the different parts, where the pain suddenly leaves those parts and through metastasis attacks the heart.

There is a great deal of palpitation on the least exertion, and with the palpitation, inclination to faint; great præcordial anxiety, so much so that it compels the patient to change position frequently. There is constant pressive pain in the region of the heart, and a sensation as if the heart were being squeezed by an iron hand.

In the mental sphere, always bear in mind the great anxiety and fear that always run through the remedy.

In these conditions it is usually a mitral insufficiency due to the inflammation and thickening of the cords, and it is here that the action of *Iodin* will often serve in a very beneficial way. This is not a remedy that is very frequently used, but it is of inestimable value when it is indicated.

In hearts which show marked valvular murmurs, deathly pallor of the face and anguish; where the patient complains of suffocation and insists upon the hands about the neck being loosened, complaining of a sensation of constriction all through the chest; with sticking, stitching pains, we may well think of *Lachesis*.

These patients are much worse in the spring of the year, and after sleep. They will often have a surcharge

of blood to the head when in a close room. These valvular conditions will be greatly helped and the patients be made fit to do their share in the work of the world by the proper administration of *Lachesis*.

In *Spigelia* we have a remedy that is very applicable in acute conditions of rheumatic fever, as well as in the metastasis after it has done serious damage to the heart.

In the acute manifestations there is marked dyspnoea, a shortness of breath when moving in bed, especially when raising the arms; frequent suffocative spells, with a distinct bruit in the valve sounds. There is the characteristic stitching pain, aggravated by the least movement, even the movement of breathing.

In the chronic conditions we find the stitching pains, which synchronize with the pulse; anxiety and oppression, in endocardial troubles. The violent action of the heart throb is noticeable even through the clothing of the patient. There is a peculiar purring sound which does not occur in relation to the pulse beat. Usually the sounds of the heart are blowing and heard at the systole.

The palpitation is very violent, often when bending forward. This palpitation comes in waves. There is a sensation of weight on the chest. Almost all the heart symptoms occur in the day time, when the sun is bright, and toward night the patient begins to feel easier.

A peculiar thing in these chronic *Spigelia* conditions is that they are almost always associated with constipation.

Many serious valvular troubles will greatly improve and the patient will become a useful member of society, under the administration of *Spigelia*.

These are but a few of the more prominent remedies to be thought of. Other remedies that may be mentioned by name only in this paper, among the numerous reme-

dies we may require, are such as the various members of the *Rhus* family, *Fluoric acid*, *Lycopodium*, *Sanguinaria* and *Spongia*. While these few remedies are those that I have found in my work to be the most frequently indicated in these conditions, I cannot but stress the fact that almost any remedy in our materia medica, *if it be indicated*, will serve you well. The great trouble in pointing out remedies for certain disease conditions is the tendency to confine ourselves to these remedies only, whereas the indications presenting themselves will call unmistakably for the remedy that will accomplish the most for these children; therefore let us keep our minds open to the possibilities of finding the *simillimum* for each individual case.

Many of these chronic conditions have been very greatly mitigated under our care, and these children have been able to go on in life with a freedom and buoyancy that is almost beyond our fondest expectations.

—*Homœopathic Recorder*.

In chronic cases there is no danger in waiting on a single dose, and it frequently requires days, or even weeks, before a change may be noticed, but, when undisturbed, always followed by a happy action of the true remedy. In chronic cases the skill of the physician is gauged to a very large extent by his ability to intelligently wait on the action of the remedy. He must know the nature of the disease and the indications of the favorable action of his remedy. If the disease goes from within outward, from above downward, from the more important to the less important organs, he may rest assured that his remedy is favorably acting and that a repetition of the dose is not called for.—W. A. YINGLING, M. D., 1895.