

# Homoeopathy in Dentistry

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In my introductory column in last year's final edition of Homoeopathy we talked about the British Homoeopathic Dental Association and the Homoeopathic Dentist in general. In this article, I would like to discuss some details of homoeopathic prescribing in dentistry.

## Constitutional Prescribing

Homoeopathic prescribing can be divided into constitutional or specific. This also applies to dental homoeopathy. However, constitutional prescribing, although used in medical practice, is not often used in dentistry.

The constitutional prescription relies on one remedy to match the patient's general condition and is often reserved for long term chronic conditions such as advanced periodontal disease. In this condition conventional dentistry often fails and the patients loose their teeth through gum recession and the loss of supporting bone.

Another condition that dentists treat which is often helped by constitutional prescribing is the chronic Myofacial Pain Dysfunction Syndrome. This Syndrome is associated with muscle and joint spasm around the jaws leading to pain and migraine headaches. It could also include joint and ear noises with dizziness and nausea.

## Periodontal Disease

The patient with unexplained advanced periodontal disease, who does not respond to conventional treatment, may often be suffering from a mild immune deficiency. A detailed history is taken to discover which remedy applies to their phenotype. The aim of this remedy is to give their whole body a 'kickstart' to revitalise their immune response.

In addition to conventional therapies of Oral Hygiene Instruction, scaling, root planning and gum surgery, different constitutional remedies may be used for different patients with the same advanced periodontal disease, e.g.:

1. The weak pale blonde with acne and catarrh -- *Hepar Sulph.*
2. The Intransigent Brunette -- *Thuja.*
3. The pale retiring, hard working waif -- *Silica.*
4. The pale blue eyed, shy blonde -- *Pulsatilla.*
5. The tall fiery, red head -- *Phosphorus.*
6. *The impulsive, irritable worriers Argent Nit.*

The use of nutrient supplements and general dietary advice would be another area that the homoeopathic dentist would be looking to support these patients.

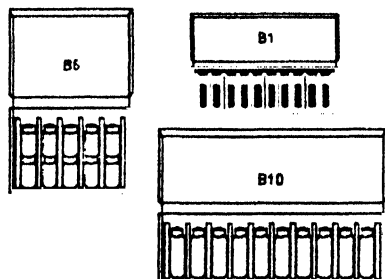
For those patients with less advanced periodontal disease and whose immune system is not severely compromised, then specific remedies may be used.

Specific remedies for "bleeding gums":

1. ***Calendula/Hypericum*** (Hypercal)  
*Hypericum* -- with pain  
*Calendula* -- with open wounds
2. ***Mercurius Corrosivus***  
for active infection with redness, pocketing and mobility
3. ***Merc Sol.***  
as above but more acute with lots of saliva and peculiar taste  
Abscess -- purulense? pain and bad breath

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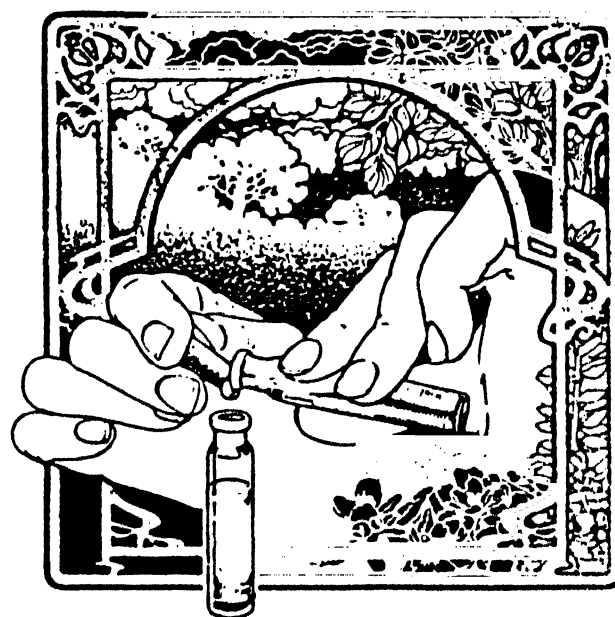


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A. Barker



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*Similia Similibus Curentur*

4. **Silica**  
long history of repeated abscesses  
patient feels cold and is sensitive to the cold  
many infrabony defects with long standing  
chronic destruction
5. **Cistua Canadensis**  
Scorbutic swollen gums  
pregnancy gingivitis, mouth feels cold, tends to  
protrude the tongue. Use as a mouthwash
6. **Staphysagria**  
bleeding with bone loss  
black stained teeth  
high caries rate with pain in caries-free teeth  
other skin conditions
7. **Calcarea Fluorica**  
dry indurated tongue  
swollen gingiva with pain and burning  
teeth loose in their sockets
8. **Nitric Acid**  
atrophic gingivitis around restorations and chrome  
dentures. Metal related -- response to mercurials
9. **Propolis**  
used as a mouthwash creates instant relief for all  
raw, painful lesions on the gums.

In addition to these remedies, conventional therapies as described earlier must also be prescribed.

#### Myofacial Pain Dysfunction Syndrome

Conventionally the dentist treats this syndrome by balancing the bite on a clear plastic splint worn over the teeth. He may in addition build up the bite with bridges or dentures. The syndrome occurs when there is a disharmony between the balance of the bite and an increased stress level in the individual as a whole expressed through the muscles of the jaw and face.

An intractable condition occurs when such a person may not respond to conventional treatment. The stress levels are so high that the patient will not relax. This results in constant aching in the muscles themselves or damage to the related jaw joints. Addressing the stress levels through constitutional prescribing will improve the patient's response to conventional treatment. The *Argentum Nitricum* patient who is impulsive, irritable and has fears, worries and hidden irrational motives, may well be a myofacia pain patient. Another constitutional type which may lend itself to this syndrome is *Arsenicum Album*.

However, any patient suffering acute stress or depression following a major life event such as bereavement of a close relative, divorce or redundancy may benefit from a constitutional assessment.

#### Specific Remedies for Myofacial Pain

If it is assessed that the general stress levels are low but there is local trauma or inflammation to the fascia around the muscles, or the periosteum and cartilage of the joints, then remedies such as *Bryonia* may be applicable especially when it is worse with motion and better with rest. One may think of *Ruta Graveolens* when it is more joint related and better with movement.

Most homoeopathic prescribing is specific and in future articles I will expand on some of the more common remedies for the conditions such as the dental abscess, bleeding and trauma following extraction.



*Calendula officinalis*



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