



# Revisiting the 'Acute' Remedies through differential world of MM

The study of remedies through comparison can not be underestimated. 'Similimum' has to be fished out through discrimination. Apparently many remedies appear similar and they need to be differentiated at large. This is true not only in acute cases but also in chronic cases. Acute cases demand a quick action of right order and the comparative study becomes imperative to unlock a case.

Three frequently indicated 'acute' remedies- *Aconite*, *Belladonna* and *Arsenic-alb* with their distinct energy patterns are discussed through a differential world of Materia Medica.

## **Aconite: THE STORM**

We begin with *Aconite*, a storm remedy indicated in the first stage, first few hours, first stage of inflammation. The episode occurs suddenly, becomes fierce and goes to the peak where certain characters are thrown on the screen. The mind: with fear – fright – anxiety state accompanied with restlessness and a high degree of panic comes into the play very strongly and quickly. The mind is almost paralyzed with fear. *Bell* and *Ars* need to be differentiated from *Aco* as they share the 'storm' but there are distinct differences.

## **Aconite and Bell: THE STORMY COGNATES**

*Aco* is like *Bell* but without its raving, grizzling, grumpiness, violent temper and excitability. Retrospectively, *Bell* is like *Aco* but without its anxiety, restlessness and fear of death. Both represent the overwhelming state where the patient may become critically ill in a few hours but they differ at the level of

presentation.

Both act on circulatory system. *Aco* acts here through two ways.

1. Congestive erethism manifested in flushing of face, hard and rapid pulse etc.
2. Febrile erethism preceding a general inflammatory stage without specific localization.

Few more characteristics of *Aco* are:

1. Sudden hyperthermia, which often starts off with bouts of shivering.
2. Red, dry skin without perspiration.
3. Intense thirst for large quantities of cold water.
4. One cheek red, the other pale.

In *Bell* too we get a congestive erethism. It is due to two alkaloids – hyoscyamine and atropine. In *Aco* it is due to a toxic alkaloid Aconitine. Both have redness and dryness, but *Bell* has them more intense than *Aco*. Hot perspiration accompanies the condition in *Bell* while absence of perspiration typifies *Aco*. Onset of perspiration relieves *Aco* but not *Bell*. *Bell*'s redness is brighter than *Aco* in view of dilatation/hyperemia caused by Atropine. *Aco* has heat of the whole body, while *Bell* may be hot centrally, but cold peripherally. Hyperpyrexia states are often accompanied by offensive foot sweat in *Aco* too but not a feature of *Bell*. Thirstlessness is a strong feature of *Bell*, though *Bell* desires lemon drinks while *Aco* desires bitter drinks. *Aco* is worse at 11pm, *Bell* at 3 pm.

## **SENSITIVITY PATTERN**

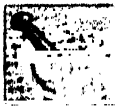
All senses are heightened and easily aggravated in *Bell* and *Aco*. *Bell* has acute senses; he is hyperesthetic, hypersensitive to sensory stimuli like light, noise, touch, jolts, sun, cold air etc and > rest, *Aco* not > with rest and is restless even while resting, all food, even drink tastes bitter except water while *Bell* has a bad taste and offensive breath.

Sensitivity pattern in *Bell* is more at CNS level, disrupted



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nervous system accompanied by mental disturbances, delirious state which is different from *Aco*. It is the tubercular miasmatic activity which develops heightened sensitivity and susceptibility bringing all sense organs into play. Hence ample stimuli and expressions!

#### **FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS**

*Bell* comes from the Solanaceae family which also includes *Hyos*, *Stram*, *Dulc*, *Capsicum*, *Tabacum* etc. Central theme of Solanaceae family is affinity for head / brain which becomes the target. Headache accompanies *Bell* symptoms most frequently. This can be functional or organic. *Bell* pathogenesis ranges from simple headache to migraine, from a mere congestion to violent inflammatory pathology viz meningitis, encephalitis etc. The erethistic action on brain induces commotion, spasms, tremors and convulsions.

*Aco* is a member of the Ranunculaceae family which also includes *Hell*, *Ran-bulb*, *Puls*, *Cimicifuga*, and *Staph* etc. Core features of this family are shock, excitement, distress, suddenness, panic and painfulness. Qualitative difference between the two families will make the indications clear.

#### **PAINS**

*Aco* has acute, sudden, unbearable pains that alternate with feelings of either numbness or 'pins and needles.' *Bell* has throbbing, pulsating, burning and bursting type of pains. Both have abruptly beginning and abruptly ending pains. A strong feel of heat and redness accompany pains in both, but *Bell* is more intense.

#### **OVERLAPPING AND RECOGNITION**

*Aco* and *Bell* are similar to a great extent, making the choice difficult. Study of body language will help to differentiate. *Aco* patient will approach a physician with anxious and panicky face; agitated and restless; impatient and tossing. *Bell* will approach with anger and irritability; the eyes will be fierce and dilated. Language used by *Bell* may be abusive, because all senses are heightened, they cannot tolerate sensory inputs and are intolerable to others.

*Bell* follows *Aco* when the shift has occurred from

anxiety → fear → panic → restlessness to anger → irritability → violence. Physically once the sweating has begun after *Aco*, it is better to switch over to *Bell*. *Aco* goes for more general / systemic reaction while *Bell* accentuates on early localization.

#### **LOOK FOR DIFFERENT REMEDY IF ...**

##### ***Aconite***

- The symptoms are not sudden
- The symptoms are not intense
- There is a lingering state
- The patient is quiet and relaxed
- Not averse to touch

##### ***Belladonna***

- Slow onset
- The symptoms are not intense
- Ongoing, chronic condition
- Fear of death
- Calm with quiet mental state

**ACONITE AND ARSENIC-ALB: THE TOSSING COGNATES**  
*Ars* shares suddenness, fear-fright-anxiety-restlessness and acuity with *Aco*. Both have a strong fear of death but *Ars* does not predict the time of death. *Aco* predicts the time of death as he views the situation as that of shock. The overwhelming state produces a severe panicky reaction -convinced that he is going to die at a certain time. This may be due to panic. It is a short but intense reaction of the mind. *Ars* does have fear of death but it comprehends the seriousness of the disease. Once the 'storm' is over, *Aco* may assume the 'peace' baseline. *Ars* anxiety is much deeper coupled with restlessness and prostration. Restlessness of *Ars* comes in later stages when the patient loses strength out of prostration while restlessness of *Aco* comes in early stages. *Ars* is insecure which he tries to seek outside. In comparison to *Aco*, *Ars* is dictatorial, has controlling nature, is more critical and fretful, drives everyone crazy making them dance to his orders.

#### **PHYSICAL DIFFERENTIATION**

##### **PROSTRATION**

Physically *Ars* has much more prostration than *Aco* and this is definitely out of proportion to the morbid



condition. This is due to the fact that *Ars* is prepared from Arsenious-acid. Acid element is reflected through more damage, deeper layers affection, more destruction, more acidity, more burning, more fetidness, hemorrhagic diathesis and the system in the grip of overwhelming state. Obviously *Ars* pathology is deeper due to strong miasmatic activity. With prostration there is desire to move or be moved constantly. Exhausted from slightest exertion which is not felt while lying still.

**THIRST**

*Aco* has intense thirst for large quantities of cold water while *Ars* for frequently repeated small amounts of water. *Ars* is also listed three marks in the Rep for 'thirst for large quantities of water. However it longs for hot water that gives relief.

**TYOLOGY**

*Ars* is lean, weak and cachectic due to acid element. *Aco* is robust, plethoric and of sedentary habits. *Ars* is listed under plethoric subjects too. *Ars* appears pale and as if suffering horribly.

**LOOK FOR DIFFERENT REMEDY IF....**

***Arsenic-alb***

- Calm, quiet and relaxed patient
- Suffering without complaints
- Thirstlessness
- Passive picture of illness
- Desire and tolerance for cold drinks

**EXCLUSIVENESS**

It is only *Ars* which is fastidious, which has dreams of sadness, of dead people and of embarrassment. It is only *Aco*, which has clairvoyant dreams and sustains shock due to fright as a cause. Biting in children is exclusive to *Bell* while avarice is exclusive to *Ars* and worse from music is exclusive to *Aco*.

**CONCLUSION**

An attempt has been made to differentiate between frequently indicated acute remedies like *Aco*, *Bell* and *Ars* from Clinico-pathological, miasmatic, non-verbal communication and conceptual angles than merely symptom based.

Chart demonstrating characters of *Aconite*, *Belladonna* and *Arsenic*. #

No.	Component	<i>Aconite</i>	<i>Belladonna</i>	<i>Arsenic</i>
1	Onset	Sudden	Sudden	Sudden
2	Sensitivity	+	+	+
3	Susceptibility	↑	↑	↑
4	Tissue susceptibility	Less	More	More
5	Miasm	Psora	Tubercular	Syphilis
6	Zone of illness	Functional	Structural	Structural
7	Affinity	Mind	Brain	Mind
8	Pathology	Inflammation +	Inflammation ++	Destruction
9	Pattern of response	Erratic	Erratic	Periodical
10	Pace of disease	Rapid	Rapid	Rapid
11	Phase of disease	Developing	Fully developed	Fully developed
12	Body language	Panicky	Angry	Panicky
13	Discharges	Non-offensive	Non-offensive	Offensive
14	Thirst	Large quantities	Thirstless	Small quantities

# This is a general chart from differentiating point of view. Individual remedy response may vary. □