

EDITORIAL FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2007

MONSOON SHOWERS IN MY PRACTICE

The month of August is very important in my practice for two reasons. The first is that it rains heavily in August and hence all monsoon related illnesses comes like a storm in the city of Bombay where I live, there by giving me a chance to show my skills in prescribing successfully the right remedy, secondly the number of patients who seek my consultation doubles in this month after the slack season of May-June vacation.

I am sure all the homoeopathic practitioners throughout India will be busy in monsoon because monsoon invites many illnesses. I would like to share with you some reflections regarding my monsoon practice and how best we can use the knowledge of Materia Medica and repertory to sharpen our skills to treat such patients. Unfortunately the word monsoon is missing in repertory; in fact you will hardly find the word monsoon in materia medica also. The word that we are accustomed is the rains, the damp and the wet weather.

- The people who are most uncomfortable in rains are two according to me, **Elaps corallinus and Calcarea carb.**
- The Elaps person develops a very strong anxiety with excessive fears, the word rain produces shivers in their body,
- The patient may become anxious, nervous, or even start trembling,
- They also develop cold perspiration, with cold sensation in the stomach,
- The appetite decreases
- He does not want to move out of the house.

Where in Calcarea carb the anxiety regarding the rain is purely due to the storm or the wind or the lightening that usually accompanies the rain. Calcarea person can tolerate a little mild drizzle, Elaps can never. But the moment it starts thundering, the moment it starts lightening, the moment the weather becomes rough and stormy, Calcarea just can not bear that. This is exactly very close to Lycopodium and Rhododendron who also have lots of problems emotionally related in a stormy weather. Here one should compare Carcinosinum and Sepia who loves stormy weather.

Then comes a very important thing and that is the headaches. Many people get headache during the rainy weather and the remedy is Phytolacca decandra whereas there are people who feel lot of amelioration from rain for their headaches and they need Chamomilla.

But what remedy should we give to a person who is going to be exposed to damp weather or suppose somebody is going to travel in a place where humidity is more than 80 percent?

I would suggest

- Aranea diadema
- Arsenic album
- Dulcamara
- Elaps
- Glonoine
- Lachesis
- Lemna minor
- Merc. Sol.
- Natrum sulph
- Phytolacca
- Rhus tox
- Silicea and
- Sulphur

These are the remedies which I feel can help in most of the disease that attack people during the rainy weather. Now let us study these remedies so that we identify correctly the symptoms of the same. We shall begin our study with Dulcamara.

As you know Dulcamara comes from the Solanaceae family, in Dulcamara two things that come up in the rainy weather, first is the rheumatic problem and the second is the catarrhal problem. Whenever a person is exposed, even slightest, to a cold wet weather, esp. when it rains with strong cold winds, many people wrongly feel that Dulcamara is very good for wet weather but no, it has to be a cold wet weather or where a person get wet in the rains and then suddenly he has exposed to a cold atmosphere like sitting or working in an air conditioned room, this is the remedy where you will see that immediately after the exposure the person gets

- Headache
- Cough
- Earache
- Coryza with profuse discharge
- Conjunctivitis
- Occipital headache

- Nose becomes obstructed; the person constantly wants to cover up the nose to make it warm because slightest exposure brings lot of sufferings to the person.
 - Saliva can be profuse (like Merc.sol.)
 - Sore throat (very important concomitant)
 - Great thirst for cold drinks (like Phosphorus).
 - Dulcamara is always better by warmth and in dry weather so the moment the weather changes to dry weather the person feels much better.
- So this is in short clinical confirmations of Dulcamara.

Now another remedy which is worth studying during the monsoon will be Mercury because Mercury patients develop

- Lots of respiratory problems during the monsoon weather.
- They sweat a lot after being exposed to the wet weather.
- They have a severe running nose with a copious discharge, after a few hours the discharge turns into a greenish colour.
- The person keeps on sneezing quite a lot; sneezing can only be ameliorated if the person lies down.
- There will be a profuse saliva
- Person is extremely thirsty for cold drinks (like Dulcamara)
- There is a metallic taste in the mouth which is a very important key note symptom.
- Cough is always worse in the night and warmth of bed.

Another important monsoon remedy which I feel one should know about is Natrum sulph.

- In Natrum sulph the problem usually starts when the humidity level in the air becomes more than 80% but the person craves for the cold air, this is very important,
- He craves for cold air, cold drinks, frozen food.
- Running nose has got a very typical symptom in Natrum sulph, the coryza is mostly worse in the night, and with lots of crust which can be greenish or offensive thick yellow discharge from the nose.
- The person can have a profuse salivation,
- There is pain in the throat worse swallowing or talking.
- Cough is worse after midnight and better in open air, the coughing is so painful that sometimes the person has to hold the chest while coughing. Most of the coughs of Natrum sulph are extremely painful.

There are certain groups of people who are extremely dull and lazy when it rains. The most important people who come under this category are Calcarea carb, Carbo veg, Dulcamara, Natrum sulph and Rhus tox.

Now I would like to tell you my experience with Carbo veg.

- People who need Carbo veg are basically alcoholic,
- They develop lot of anxiety in the night,
- They are confused from slightest mental exertion,
- Their dullness and laziness is more when they make an attempt to read or make an attempt to concentrate.
- Dullness is usually accompanied by sleepiness. This is very similar to Gelsemium where the dullness is accompanied by sleepiness.

Then comes to a very important aspect that is there are some people who develop pneumonias or chest infections every time there is monsoon season. They start with common cold but within few days they develop chest infection which ultimately develops into pneumonia. Now how will you identify a Natrum sulph person who is heading for such a problem?

what you will see over here that in most of the respiratory problems there is an involvement of the liver, Emotionally they are extremely depressed, dull, gloomy, flat, they do not want to be disturbed, they do not want to be interfered with, they are quite liable to turn their back on you, they do not want to be questioned, they do not want to think, they are quite liable to say 'for heaven sake leave me alone', very often they display a certain amount of irritability. They are extremely sensitive to heat and they can not bear the stuffy room at all and they always have a sticky skin surface. Such people who need Natrum sulph can be identified by looking at the tongue which looks like greyish greenish or sometimes with the brown base or a white tongue with the yellow base. They usually have an acute pain in the chest and the pain is quite stabbing which is worse by coughing, these patients support their side of the chest by holding their chest because the cough will be extremely painful, they do not want to change the position because the slightest change in position brings lot of problems, most of the coughs or respiratory complaints are worse early in the morning at 3 am, 4 am, 5 am. The sputum which they bring out will be little bile stain or can be greenish in colour and most of the pneumonias in Natrum sulph you will get on the left side and in my experience is the left lower lobe not the left upper lobe.

Another problem which you will commonly see in your practice is the rheumatism and the complaints of arthritis which crops up during the damp

weather. The most important remedies will be Rhus tox, Rhododendron, Calcarea phos, Dulcamara, Mercurius solubilis, Phytolacca, and Ruta.

Now I would like to describe to you Rhododendron. Rhododendron has rheumatism where you see a typical wandering, shifting pain. The pain is usually worse in the night, worse during the rest and worse during the cold windy weather or cold in the wet weather. The pains could be drawing, tearing, shooting. The joints can be swollen and they are usually more affected on the right side, most common joints that are affected will be shoulder, elbow, and wrist. The most important thing to remember is the rest aggravates.

Another remedy which I would like to discuss is Calcarea phos which has also got rheumatism in a damp weather. As soon as the hot weather starts or as soon as the autumn starts they feel much better. But as soon as the cold wet weather comes there will be severe joint pains. Usually the pain can be in the cervical region and it can extend to the different parts of the body or they can have a severe lumbar pain which is worse in the morning hours and the motion ameliorates. Another important area where I have seen the Calcarea phos rheumatism cropping up is the ankle, they have a typical pain in the ankle when they get up in the morning especially when they wake up with a severe tearing pain as if the ankle is sprained and in the history of Calcarea phos you will usually see a history of a chronic diarrhoea. Sometimes I have also seen that the feet of Calcarea phos is extremely sensitive and highly prone to rheumatism and they love their heels to be rubbed with this rheumatism, they will ask the servant to rub the heel which gives them a very long lasting relief.

I am sure with this information you can easily sharpen your skill to have lot of success in your practice during the monsoon season especially in the month of August.