

## Editorial for Month Of December 2008

### Homoeopathic Management Of Thyroiditis

Thyroiditis is an inflammation (not an infection) of the thyroid gland. Several types of thyroiditis exist namely: -

**Hashimoto's Thyroiditis** (also called autoimmune or chronic lymphocytic thyroiditis) is the most common type of thyroiditis. It is named after the Japanese physician, Hakaru Hashimoto that first described it in 1912. The thyroid gland is always enlarged, although only one side may be enlarged enough to feel. During the course of this disease, the cells of the thyroid becomes inefficient in converting iodine into thyroid hormone and "compensates" by enlarging (for a review of this process see our function page). The radioactive iodine uptake may be paradoxically high while the patient is hypothyroid because the gland retains the ability to take-up or "trap" iodine even after it has lost its ability to **produce**

**thyroid hormone.** As the disease progresses, the TSH increases since the pituitary is trying to induce the thyroid to make more hormone, the T4 falls since the thyroid can't make it, and the patient becomes hypothyroid. The sequence of events can occur over a relatively short span of a few weeks or may take several years.

Thyroid antibodies are present in 95% of patients with Hashimoto's Thyroiditis and serve as a useful "marker" in identifying the disease without thyroid biopsy or surgery.

Thyroid antibodies may remain for years after the disease has been adequately treated and the patient is on thyroid hormone replacement.

**De Quervain's Thyroiditis** (also called subacute or granulomatous thyroiditis) was first described in 1904 and is much less common than Hashimoto's Thyroiditis. The thyroid gland generally swells rapidly and is very painful and tender. The gland discharges thyroid

hormone into the blood and the patients become hyperthyroid; however the gland quits taking up iodine (radioactive iodine uptake is very low) and the hyperthyroidism generally resolves over the next several weeks.

Patients frequently become ill with fever and prefer to be in bed.

Thyroid antibodies are not present in the blood, but the sedimentation rate, which measures inflammation, is very high.

Although this type of thyroiditis resembles an infection within the thyroid gland, no infectious agent has ever been identified and antibiotics are of no use.

Treatment is usually bed rest. Nearly all patients recover and the thyroid gland returns to normal after several weeks or months.

A few patients will become hypothyroid once the inflammation settles down.

Homoeopathic Management: - As usual the homoeopathic management is always by constitutional homoeopathic remedies, lets begin with cases

## Case 1

Case 1 is of a lady 35 years old who complains of a swelling in the neck. On palpation the swelling was firm, 2.5" X 2" X 2.5". There was pain in the throat while swallowing, there was a bad taste in the mouth in when she wakes up. Another complaint was indigestion where she would have empty and sour eructations and occasionally

she would vomit bile also. All the symptoms were worse after the meals. Also she had frequent stomach upsets where she would have pressing pain with lots of flatulence. She perspires more on the scap. She suffers from recurrent tendency to cough and cold, the coryza is usually thick, greenish yellow with an offensive smell. The gums bleed when she brushes the teeth. Her menses are a little early and profuse.

On examination there was excessive mucous in the throat. mild cervical enlargement, tongue was dry morning . She was working in a computer company as a trainee. She had a past history of migraine when she was a schoolgirl. She also has a past history of conjunctivitis. When she was 3 yrs old she had a lot of suppurating eruptions on the body which were treated by a lot of anti-biotics. When I checked the reports of this lady, I found out that her TSH, T4 has increased, and the patient was diagnosed as

hyperthyroidism. The antibodies to thyroid gland was positive and the doctor had advised thyroid gland biopsy. It was at that time the patient refused biopsy and came for homoeopathic treatment. I studied the symptoms and I selected Calcarea iodatum. on examination. I gave her Calcarea iodatum 30C, thrice a day, for 15 days, ( I usually repeat frequently and in low potency in cases of thyroiditis). I asked her to do a report of TSH levels after fifteen days, and what I found out was the TSH levels which was 15 came down to 12 in fifteen days. I continued the medicine twice a day for one month and the TSH level came back to normal. However the swelling of the thyroid gland persisted. I increased the potency upto 1M repeating thrice a week for one month. But the swelling did not reduce. Instead she started getting runny nose which was frequent complaint in the past, and this runny nose was better in open air. Also she developed headache with runny nose, her sinuses were tender o touch, her throat was inflamed and red she became

constipated, and suddenly the menses which were profuse became scanty. The cold became so severe that it extended down into the chest and she developed wheezing. It was at that time that I decide to review the case as Calcarea iodatum helped the patient to reduce the biochemical level. Symptomatically the patient was also better as the pain in the thyroid gland was also better, but the size of the gland was not getting better. She also complained to me that she was becoming more and more weak and this weakness was better in open air. I analysed all her problems once again, and I decided to give her a remedy called Hedra helix. Now, hedra helix is common ivy. It belongs to the family Araliaceae, and this particular medicine was introduced by Dr Cooper in homoeopathy. Also in 1932, Mezger published a detailed proving on 17 people thereby giving a beautiful proving of this remedy. I gave Hedra helix in 6C potency, one pill twice a day. I continued it for 45 days. Slowly her swelling reduced, her weakness reduced and the menstrual cycle came back to

normal, and her running nose was completely better. It took me totally five months to cure the case.

Hedra helix is not a new remedy in my practice. I have been using it for the last 20-25 years in my clinic. I use it specially in people who have a strong tubercular miasm and those that resemble a phosphorus patient from a distant. These are the people who feel weak very easily and feel better in open fresh air. In fact go into fresh open air increases their physical energies. Psychologically also they feel much better in open air. Another important aspect is the cough which I have verified very frequently, where the cough is aggravated in the morning and when on entering a warm room. Also in cases of obstinate thyroid disease which refuse to respond to constitutional medicine it is the best medicine.

The second case is of a Muslim girl. She comes from Uttar Pradesh. She comes with large swelling of the neck which is a large goitre. It was firm to hard consistency. She had reports indicative of thyroidism. She had confirmed antibodies to the thyroid. She was diagnosed as Hashimoto's thyroiditis. She was 26 years old and she comes from an orthodox muslim background. She was treated with a lot of homeopathy in the without any relief.

Her father was very dominating and her mother was very mild and submissive. She had 1 brother and 3 sisters. Her father had a small business of printing press. But he was a dictator. Many times the father would get angry on the patient and this produces a lot of hatred for the father in her mind. She was quite a nervous person, she gets excited by trifles, she is more nervous when the train passes through tunnel or she is crossing a bridge, any narrow closed spaces the anxiety becomes more worse. Even when she is in

a train that goes very fast, she gets nervous. Her self confidence is low, she is average in studies, but if she has to study a lot and exert her mind, it aggravates her. She is quite obstinate, sometimes because of anxiety there is restlessness. She becomes very sad and gloomy when she is alone. She does not have many hobbies. She would rather sit at home, so people would call her gloomy and serious. She weeps very easily. As a child she would get recurrent Epistaxis. She perspires on the scalp especially the occipital area. She looks pale to me. The tongue was white coated. She suffers from a lot of eructations which are sour especially after eating. Her urine is pale. Her menses are quite irregular and painful. As a child she had allergic asthma. She sleeps on her sides and many times she dreams of falling. She craves for bread. She sometimes has a habit of eating chalk. She cannot digest milk and she loves sweets. On this indication I gave her Ferrum Metallicum 30, thrice a day, and for the very first time after 2 and a half months when she came

back from UP, her thyroid levels were much better. I continued twice a day Ferrum met 30 for two more months and slowly her TSH came down. The thyroid antibodies practically disappeared. But again the same problem was that the size of the thyroid gland was only less by few millimeters. This is the time when I again reviewed the case. The information that I got from the parents is that she sighs very frequently. She becomes dull during menses and because of the swelling in the thyroid gland she feels there is an equal size of lump in the throat. The eructations which were sour had reduced, but occasionally when she eructates it is a very loud eructation. The stools are hard, and she complains to me that whenever she is in a cold air or cold wind she starts coughing. The hands and feet are cold. This is the time when I changed the prescription to Lycopus virginicus 6C. Lycopus virginicus belongs to the Labiateae family and is one of the best remedy for thyroid disorders, but it has specific symptoms. I gave thrice a day for a period of 2 months and slowly

the size of thyroid reduced and ultimately it was only half a centimeter swelling which refused to heal, but otherwise all her problems were better.

It is one of the remedies with eminent action on circulation, thyroid gland. It is a left sided remedy. Even though Mezger who proved this remedy advised that it be used for thyroid problems in menopausal women, but I have used it equally frequently in younger people. They have a tendency to haemorrhages. In this case there was a tendency to epistaxis in the childhood, but otherwise Lycopodium is a good remedy for hemorrhage from the rectum in the form of haemorrhoids. These people are thirsty for cold drinks and desire it in large quantities. However Margaret Blackie observed that there is a great desire for food particularly for the smell of food. However I have not confirmed this symptom in my practice till so far. It has a wandering, muscular and rheumatic kind of pain worse in cold air

and by motion. It is a good heart remedy where dyspnoea is worse by exertion and lying on right side. There is a strong palpitation of heart worse in the morning and by thinking of it. It is one of the best remedy in homoeopathy where the patient craves for oysters.

### Case 3

Another case is of DeQuervain's thyroiditis. Where a girl comes with a painful tender swelling on the thyroid gland and she was advised pain killers complete bed rest. Along with this there was fever and the ESR was pretty high and the patient had a lot of faith in homoeopathy and hence the parents did not want to put the child on anti-inflammatory and allopathic medication. I knew the boy since childhood. He was very ambitious, always needed a stimulus and

always was engaged in some activity. He was smart, occasionally he would get angry. Otherwise he was a nice decent boy, very responsible, takes good care of his parents, sister and friends. He has good self confidence, strong family feelings, very fastidious and very conscientious regarding his studies. He loves sports and music. He will not mix with many people and is selective about his friends. He had dandruff and his face was greasy. His tongue was red. He occasionally suffered from cough whenever he was in a dusty atmosphere. He desires bread and meat. On this indication I put him on Aurum metallicum 30 C twice a day for fifteen days. After fifteen days he felt much better symptomatically, but the swelling just refused to come down. This happens many times with constitutional medicine where the symptoms. So I try to increase the potency to 200 and 1M. Subsequently for the next two and a half months with a high potency of Aurum met the swelling did not respond at all. This time we again looked into the case and collected

some extra symptoms. The swelling of thyroid which was not reducing made the patient more nervous. The perspiration was more on the forehead and suddenly he complained of difficulty in reading, where the vision became dim and dull. He also complained of a sore feeling in the thyroid gland. He was very thirsty, and because of his nervousness he developed palpitation. Now having palpitation with nervousness or palpitation with goitre was difficult for me to assess. He was feeling weak when he wakes in the morning. With these symptoms I prescribed to him Jaborandi 6C, thrice a day and I observed him for a period of 2 months where all his symptoms including his perspiration , nervousness, anxiety and palpitation gradually became better and better. Pilocarpus jaborandi comes from Rutaceae family. This plant comes from Brazil and has a marked action on glands and eyes. Nervous excitement due to any disease is a very leading symptom of this remedy. I also use this remedy for flushing during menopause. They are extremely chilly

patients, and they are very thirsty. Defective accommodation with lacchrymation, with vertigo and straining of the eyes has been mentioned very nicely by Allen. In the complaints of eyes it comes next to only Ruta in my practice.