

URINARY SYSTEM - THERAPEUTIC POINTERS

Introduction

As in all conditions a thorough history and diagnostic procedures should be carried out in urinary conditions. A clear diagnosis including a clinical examination, bacteriological samples, ultra-sound, X-rays and possible invasive measures such as cystoscopy will guide the homoeopath in finding the similimum and making prognostic judgement. Bacteriological findings open the doors of nosode treatment of infective organisms in treatment resistant chronic inflammatory processes. Homeopathic treatment can be commenced prior to receiving bacteriological results through pattern matching. It is important to treat the "morbid soil", the terrain that enables infection. Improvement of the individual's immune response often renders nosode treatment unnecessary.

We will discuss the diseases of the genito-urinary tract from above to below in sections. You will be introduced to the most common therapeutic remedies of this system.

RENAL DISEASE

Renal Calculi - Acute Colic

- Dioscorea (Wild yam) writhing cramping pains, must move
- Berberis vulgaris (Barberry)
violent pains extending from kidneys to urethra, urging to urinate
- Pareira brava (Virgin vine)
pain down thighs during urination; able to pass urine only when kneeling pressing head firmly against the floor; constant urging; great straining; black bloody, thick urine
- Colocynthis (Bitter cucumber)
intense cramping pain, > bending double, burning on urination, frequent desire to urinate, red urine, cramping of the bladder
- Tabacum (Tobacco)
pallor, cold sweat, collapse
- Cantharis (Spanish fly)
intense burning pain from the kidneys to the bladder, intolerable tenesmus, constant desire to urinate with bloody urine
- Coccus cacti (Cochineal)
stinging pulling pain, pain from the loin to the bladder, frequent desire to urinate, urine thick, cloudy, containing mucous with an ammoniacal smell
- Ocimum canum (Brazilian Alfavaca)
renal colic especially R side, red sand in urine, high acidity of urine, formation of spike crystals of uric acid, turbid, thick, purulent, bloody; brick-dust red or yellow sediment, odour of musk, pain in ureters, cramps in kidneys, heat and swelling of left testicle
- Arnica montana (Leopard's bane)
pain after passage of calculus, i.e. traumatic damage to ureter

Renal Calculi - Diathesis

Analysis of the calculi and urine sediment is of great value in determining the type of calculi. The syctic miasm is often prevalent in urinary calculi and that explains why many of the therapeutic remedies also have an affinity to the joints (see section on miasms). Auto-nosodes of the urine sediment or the triturated calculi can be administered homeopathically. Obviously a constitutional approach addressing the organisms tendency to formation of calculi ranks highly in the treatment. On a pathological level certain calculi are known to respond to the following remedies:

OXALATE CALCULI

- Asparagus (Common garden asparagus)
The phytotherapeutic properties of asparagus are used namely stimulation of urine production, drainage of the kidneys. Useful in conditions of high leukocyte count, purulent urine, pain in the left shoulder with palpitations.
- Nitric acid
Sparse, dark foul smelling urine like horse's urine. Splinter-like pain in the urethra with burning after urination. Urine contains lots of oxalate crystals.
- Oxalic acid
Pain in the loin, frequent profuse urination, as soon as thinking of urinating must pass urine KN thinking of complaint brings symptoms on.
- Terebinth (Turpentine)
pulling and burning pain in the loin, great sensitivity to pain in the renal area; urine cloudy, bloody, slimy.

PHOSPHATE CALCULI

Urine is usually alkaline

- Calcarea phosphorica
Often indicated constitutionally. Urine dark with penetrating odour, intense pain in the renal area especially when lifting or sneezing; frequent urination with prostration.
- Phosphoric acid
general weakness and prostration, frequent nocturia, especially indicated in diabetics with phosphate calculi
- Phosphorus
renal calculi with inflammation in the urinary tract, high content of sediment in the urine, mucous, protein and blood in urine
- Sarsaparilla (Smilax)
indicated in persons with calculi that have recurrent pyuria, cystitis and pyelonephritis with cramping and burning pains especially after urination, patients often thin, urination easier standing

URATE CALCULI

High incidence in patients with hyperuricaemia (check uric acid in serum) often with joint problems. Constitutionally *Calcarea carbonica* is often of value.

- Benzoic acid
dark foul smelling urine, like horse's urine, wandering rheumatic pains
- *Berberis vulgaris* (Barberry)
affinity to renal and hepatic metabolism
- *Ocimum canum* (Brazilian alfavaca)
s.a. under renal colic
- Lithium carbonicum (Lithium carbonate)
cramping pain in bladder and urethra radiating into testicles; urate crystals in joints
often cardiac pain
- *Lycopodium* (Club moss)
affinity to renal and hepatic metabolism, increased deposits in kidneys or joints
through insufficient detoxification, joint pain > as urine becomes red with sediment
- *Solidago* (Golden rod)
decreased urine production with red-brown sediment, mucous, protein, foul smell
of urine, pain from loin radiating into bladder, abdomen or legs, bitter taste in
mouth especially at night

Inflammation of Kidneys - Nephritis

(Old texts = Bright's Disease)

Inflammatory conditions of the kidney respond to homeopathic treatment as do inflammatory conditions of other organs. Remedy responses apply to in kidney inflammation as they do in other illnesses; i.e. acute short latent phase with the correct prescription, chronic condition latent phase of days, weeks or months. A thorough examination and indicated investigations are to be carried out and can be used to monitor the treatment. The less experienced prescriber will usually combine remedies with antibiotics and even the more experienced prescriber will use antibiotics and other conventional treatment if there is no improvement and the patient is at risk. Homeopathic treatment in acute, subacute and chronic urinary conditions can be very rewarding, especially during pregnancy where these conditions are common and challenging to treat due to limitations imposed by the side-effects of allopathic drugs with possible teratogenic effects. Homeopathy can also benefit in chronic renal failure. Depending on the extent of renal damage the renal function can be improved and possible the commencement of dialyses post-poned. In cases of irreversible pathology patients can still benefit with improvement of their general well-being. A constitutional approach will usually bring the most promising results. Listed are some polycryst and therapeutic remedies.

- Apis mellifica (honey bee)
oedema, thirstless, averse heat
- Cantharis (Spanish fly)
suppression of urine
- Arsenicum album
oedema, albuminuria, thirst for small sips of cold water, desire for warmth, restlessness, anxiety
- Mercurius corrosivus (Corrosive sublimate)
suppurative nephritis
- Ferrum metallicum (Iron)
pale bloated appearance, chilly, vomiting food or passing it undigested, fullness of the head, nose-bleeding, irritable
- Phosphorus
fever, headache, frequency
- Plumbum (Lead)
gouty kidney, pale, bloated, heavy expression, melancholy disposition
- Terebinthinae oleum (Turpentine)
inflammation of kidneys or bladder with bloody, black or smoky urine; urine with coffee grounds; strong odour like violets; violent burning in whole urinary tract, pain alternates between bladder and navel; > walking in open air, inflamed kidneys following any acute disease or after exanthema.
- Kali chloratum
destructive action on the kidneys, haemoglobinuria, parenchymatous nephritis; toxæmic urinary conditions during pregnancy, albuminous scanty urine

Diseases of the Bladder

Cystitis

Homeopathic treatment of acute cystitis can often save a prescription of antibiotics. The beginner may wish to supply a prescription of antibiotics together with the remedy. A urine sample for microbiology and sediment should always be taken. The results of the investigation are of value both for homeopathic and conventional treatment.

ACUTE

Two remedies you have encountered before for sudden onset of symptoms are valid to use in the genito-urinary tract:

- Aconite (Monk's hood)
very rapid onset with fever without perspiration, intense pain at the neck of the bladder with constant desire to urinate, urine feels hot, initially sparse and with a reddish taint; inability to pass urine with restlessness and screaming (very useful in cystitis in children since they often present with these symptoms and illnesses are of a more acute character)
- Belladonna (Deadly nightshade)
fever with perspiration, flushing, bladder tenesmus, inability to urinate or profuse urination, bladder region very sensitive to touch, sensitive to jarring

The following three remedies are characterised by *intense burning symptoms*.

- Cantharis (Spanish fly)
unbearable burning with constant desire to urinate; pain before, during and after urination; only drops of urine; urine contains mucous, bladder epithelia, protein and possibly blood; coffee intensifies symptoms; often thirst with aversion to drink
- Cannabis sativa (Hemp)
stinging and burning pains, pain at the end of micturition, has to stand with legs wide apart while urinating, constant desire to urinate, spastic closure of sphincter, in the past used for treatment of gonorrhoeal cystitis
- Sarsaparilla (Smilax)
severe pain end of micturition; pain > standing during micturition; chilly; < getting wet; renal colic; urine passes in a thin feeble stream

The next two remedies have the causation of *exposure to cold and damp*.

The urinary system can be particularly sensitive to cold and damp, i.e. sitting or lying on cold floors, after bathing.

- Pulsatilla (Wind flower)
symptoms after getting cold and wet feet; sensation of pressure or colicky pain prior to passing urine, desire to pass urine after micturition; also all other keynote symptoms apply that we know of Pulsatilla, i.e. changeability, thirstlessness, etc...
- Dulcamara (Bittersweet)
all symptoms better for warmth, dysuria with pain at orifice of urethra, urine turbid

The following remedies may be indicated with *cramping pains*.

- Colocynthis (Bitter cucumber)
pain in entire abdomen during micturition, urine smell strongly, possibly red sediment, frequent desire to urinate, small portions, sticky discharge from urethra; emotionally often angry, causation anger, vexation.
- Nux vomica (Poison nut)
spastic pains following overindulgence; very sensitive to cold; ineffectual urge to urinate with intense spasms
- Mercurius corrosivus (Corrosive sublimate)
constant tenesmus with slimy purulent urine, cloudy urine with leukocyturia, albuminuria; intense burning in urethra; urine hot, sparse; perspiration after micturition; usually advanced stages of urinary tract infections

SUBACUTE

Subacute infections of the urinary tract are usually the consequence of an impaired immune response. The subjects suffering from these often have a disposition to form deposits in the body resulting from inefficient metabolism. Joint complaints may be encountered in these persons.

- Benzoic acid
increased excretion of urates and hippuric acid; dark smelly urine that can be excoriating; gouty despoths; ganglion

- Nitric acid
splinter-like pains in the urethra; proteinuria, cylinders and erythrocytes in urine; sensation of urine being cold; profuse foul smelling urine; painful joints better through jarring

- Equisetum (Scouring rush)
sensation as if the bladder was too full with no relief after urination, stabbing burning pains, imperative desire to urinate; cloudy urine

- Berberis vulgaris (Barberry)
related to impaired liver metabolism; loin pain radiating into groin often renal calculi; increased desire to urinate; urine colour changeable

- Chimaphila umbellata (Pipsissewa)
vehement and increased desire to micturate; burning pain before, during and after micturition extending from bladder to orifice of urethra; dull pain over the kidneys; sensation of a ball in the area of the intestines; has to press while urinating which is easier spreading legs wide apart and leaning forward; thick stringy mucous with sparse urine

- Sabal serrulata (Saw palmetto)
stabbing pain during micturition; increased desire to urinate especially at night; sensation of the bladder and lower abdomen being too full; cloudy slimy urine; urates in sediment

- Populus tremuloides (American aspen)
pain behind pubic bone after micturition, intense burning pain; tenesmus; urine slimy-purulent; cystitis during pregnancy, in the elderly, post surgery

- Pareira brava (Virgin vine)
micturition only possible with strong pressing, has to bend over or crouch; sensation as if the bladder was over-stretched; increased desire to urinate extending to the thighs or penis; tickling in urethra, post-mictural dribble; strong ammoniacal smelling urine; containing purulentslime; shingle-like sediment; useful in inability to pass urine after birth

CHRONIC RECURRENT URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS

Chronic recurrent tract infections are a common problem in general practice. They are often difficult to manage requiring multiple course of antibiotics or long-term antibiotic treatment. Post-menopausal women are frequently affected and hormone replacement is applied. Despite these treatment efforts symptoms are often not controlled satisfactorily and patients suffer from the long-term effects of the treatment.

Homeopathically this condition is tackled with constitutional prescribing and can be very challenging but also rewarding to treat. In looking at reaction patterns we will often encounter the sycotic miasm: i.e. organ affinity to genito-urinary tract, frequent courses of antibiotics, impaired metabolism with tendency to deposits, general constitutional make-up.

As in all cases a comprehensive history must be taken and symptoms individualised. Remedies that have proven to be useful and that deserve particular consideration are:

- Medorrhinum
recurrent UTI often with rheumatic complaints; increased desire to urinate at night with possible incontinence; foul smelling urine, ammoniacal; immediately after urination urine is clear but forms a fatty film after standing; albuminuria, cylinders in sediment
- Thuja (Tree of life)
frequent desire to urinate; cutting pains in urethra; interrupted stream; post-micturitional dribble; sensation as if a drop of urine were passing through the urethra after micturition (SRP); cold shivers during micturition
- Lycopodium (Club moss)
often indicated in impaired liver metabolism with urinary problems; pale stools, pale urine, digestive problems; rheumatic complaints; frequent often ineffectual urge to micturate; nocturia; stream slow, poor, often interrupted by spasm of sphincter; has to wait during micturition for stream to restart and has to press; cutting pain during micturition, children often scream before urination; foul smelling urine with dark red sand-like sediment; at times frothy, milky, lots of leukocytes
- Nitric acid
s.a.

These are not the only deep acting remedies for recurrent UTI and their picture should be studied in greater detail.

URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS FOLLOWING TRAUMA

The following remedies are particularly relevant for women following gynaecological surgery and childbirth but may also be applied to men following injury to the genito-urinary organs.

- **Arnica (Leopard's bane)**
post-surgical, after catheterising, passing of calculi, blunt trauma, prostatectomy; urinary symptoms are not very prominent it is the aetiology that will lead you to the prescription
- **Hamamelis virginica (Witch hazel)**
bleeding after trauma to the urinary tract; increased desire to urinate
- **Staphysagria (Stavesacre)**
after gynaecological procedures; after intercourse "honeymoon cystitis"; frequent desire to micturate; difficulty emptying bladder; able to pass only drops of urine especially after surgical removal of calculi and after birth

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