

Centre for Integrative Medical Training  
In Association with London Integrated Medical Health Education



# Pre-membership Course in Medical Homeopathy

A Blended Course in Homeopathic Medicine for Healthcare Professionals

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## Unit 67

Materia Medica Studies & Additional Therapeutic Pointers for Week 11

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**Eczema - A Homeopathic Approach** Notes by Dr Peter Fisher



**Points to look for in history**

**Precipitating factors - life events**

Present phase acute/plateau  
Emotional trauma acute/chronic  
Work stress  
Menarche/menopause/pre-menstrual  
Specific allergens/contact  
Alternation with other atopic features  
or apparently unrelated illness.

**Distribution**

Flexor/large areas  
Specific areas: hands, finger tips, knuckles, nails  
in or behind ears, eyelids, hair margin, perioral,  
nipples, genitalia, perianal.

**Type**

How itchy? Maddening/voluptuous, must scratch until bleeds,  
burning after scratching  
When itchy? After bath, in bed, stress  
Cracking - where?  
Desquamation - how much?  
Exudation - colour  
Vesiculation  
Associated urticaria, angioedema, erythroderma

**Modalities**

Season  
Time of day  
Local temperature  
Local applications  
Bathing  
Menstrual

**Associated features**

Rhinitis/conjunctivitis  
Asthma  
Others

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## Some Important Homeopathic Medicines for Eczema

### Graphites

Flexor distribution, behind ears, eyelids, sometimes genitalia.  
Exudation ++, at least when bad, typically yellowish, but may be clear, sticky  
Cracking ++, sides of finger joints, angles  
Nail problems - transverse ridging, corrugation  
Association with events of female reproductive cycle  
Typically no strong seasonal modality  
often no strong mentals, but may resemble Puls  
Constipation  
Alternation with other complaints



### Petroleum

May resemble Grap - hands, perianal and genital, cracking  
Chapped knuckles  
<< winter  
Often local vaseline >  
Various digestive problems, travel sickness, diarrhoea  
May be forgetful, confused

### Sulphur

Non-flexor distribution, itchy +++ voluptuous, burns after scratching  
Scratches until bleeds, then >  
< heat < bed  
< bathing (but may be > cool bath with emollients, often < again on drying)  
Alternation or association with other complaints especially asthma  
Perennial dry rhinitis  
< winter  
Typical mentals, strong-willed, argumentative, opinionated, enjoys debate, not afraid of rows. Disorder/untidy. May be scruffy, dishevelled or smelly, or flamboyantly dressed  
Hot, hot feet  
Food: fat, spice, alcohol  
Typical appearance large dry, excoriated patches

### Psorinum

"Chilly sulphur"  
Indicated remedy fails to act (especially Sul), no clear picture  
Vesiculation around finger webs

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### **Arsenicum album**

Non-flexor distribution often patchy, guttate  
Itchy ++, burns after scratching, restless  
Dry, desquamation ++  
< winter  
Itching > heat, but maybe < in bed at night  
Associated with asthma, hayfever  
Anxious +++, uptight, worrier, neat, fastidious, houseproud  
Chilly ++

### **Arsenicum iodatum**

Similar to Ars alb, desquamation +++  
Less chilly, may not be chilly at all  
Mentals similar, but less marked  
Often severe hayfever, conjunctivitis ++

### **Natrum muriaticum**

Dry crusty eruption, or generalised erythema  
Hair margin or perioral  
Eczema associated with herpes simplex  
< winter  
Eats salt ++  
Emotional stress related  
Typical mentals depressed, never cried, or only in private  
Sympathetic ++ to others, can't ask for help, copers

### **Calcarea carbonica**

Eczema associated with chronic urticaria, dermatographism <  
winter, cold  
Chilly, but sweats ++ especially on head  
Fat, flabby  
Anxious, wakes at night worrying

### **Lycopodium**

Seborreic dermatitis  
Digestive problems  
Shy, awkward, anticipation ++

### **Croton tiglium**

Itchy eczema of genitals, nappy rash  
Itchy scleroderma  
Diarrhoea



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**Acute dermatitis, including aggravations**

**Belladonna**

Acute erythroderma, skin dry, red, hot, glowing  
Not itchy  
Pupils may be dilated  
Patient feels chilly, but skin < heat



**Rhus venenata**

Skin dusky red, hot, itchy +++  
May be fine vesiculation  
>> local heat

**Anacardium orientale**

Acute urticaria, itchy ++  
May be precipitated by work stress  
Irritable ++, violent temper  
Indigestion > eating

**Apis mellifica**

Acute angioedema  
Lips, eyelids, tongue swollen ++  
Sometimes precipitated by emotional shock  
<< heat > local ice

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## **AGGRAVATIONS**

Common in skin problems

### **Precautions:**

Low potency for most remedies, in plateau phase

Distinguish from steroid withdrawal

Identify infection early (common in Graph aggravations),  
treat with antibiotic

### **Counsel patient (in advance!)**

### **Steroid withdrawal:**

Can be tricky

### **Counsel patient**

- Not to stop steroids abruptly
- To continue previous regime until definite improvement (2-4 weeks)
- Then alternate steroid with suitable bland preparation
  - eg Calendula cream (contains Lanolin)
  - Yellow Soft Paraffin for very dry, cracked skin (Petroleum cases)
  - Graphites cream/ointment
  - Hamamelis for varicose eczema
  - Emulsifying ointment, E45, Nivea, etc
- then gradually phase out steroid creams
- Evening primrose oil (orally) in heavy or long term dependency

