Homœopathy For Acne

Robert Medhurst

Acne vulgaris and its associated scarring and comedones (blackheads) are commonly seen in adolescents, but can also occur in adults. Acne is not always an easy condition to deal with because of the often complicated underlying causes. Complementary medicine practitioners are frequently called on to assist in the resolution of acne, and homœopathic medicines should be thought of as a first line treatment given the holistic nature of this type of therapy.

While constitutional treatment aimed at prescribing the totality of the symptoms is always the preferred method of using homœopathic medicines, there are a number of remedies that are commonly prescribed for those suffering from this condition and these have been cited by some notable authors of homœopathic texts. For those who fail to respond to the remedy in a reasonable period of time, the services of a competent professional homœopath should be sought.

**Antimonium crudum**
The appearance that draws attention to this remedy is pimples that mainly appear on the cheeks and chin. The skin has a tendency to develop cracks and warts.
The acne lesions themselves, which are frequently burning and itching in character, become pustules and then develop into boils. The acne may be associated with gastrointestinal complaints and the symptoms are worse at night, from cold bathing and worse in the heat of the summer sun.

**Carbo veg**
The need for *Carbo veg* is indicated by pimples accompanied with mottled cheeks and a red nose. The pimples may suppurate, exhibit an offensive odour, and may develop into carbuncles.
The skin is moist and itchy and weakness and flatulence may be seen in those requiring this remedy. Symptoms are worse for warmth and rich food.

**Graphites**
In this case, hard, indurated and itching pimples may be seen to ooze a gluey moisture if scratched. The lesions bleed easily and may be accompanied by comedones.
They commonly appear on the face, behind the ears and on the scalp, chest and back. The lesions tend to form keloid and the skin symptoms alternate with digestive disorders. Symptoms are worse at night and before the onset of menses.

**Hepar sulph**
This remedy is applicable in adolescents with unhealthy skin suffering from acne where sensitive, painful pimples are present. The pimples are small (or often pea-shaped) and may suppurate with white pus.
They bleed easily and may ulcerate if scratched or injured. Lesions appear more frequently on the forehead and/or lips.

Symptoms are improved by damp weather and aggravated by washing or touch.

**Kali brom**
*Kali brom* is one of the most commonly used remedies for acne. It may be needed in cases of aggressive teenage onset acne. Beginning with burning or prickling, the large blue-red pimples with yellow pusy heads and depressed centres leave discoloured and depressed scars. The area around the lesions may feel numb.
The lesions frequently occur on the forehead (especially the centre), shoulders, chest and back. The facial skin has a blotchy appearance and the acne often arises after sexual excess. Symptoms are improved by cold weather and aggravated by anxiety, mental stress and during summer heat.

**Nat mur**
This remedy is prescribed for severe acne in those people with oily, dirty skin who also suffer from anxiety and constipation. The tongue may appear to be mapped and the lips may be dry and cracked.
Acne occurs predominantly on the face, back and at the hairline. Symptoms are better in the open air and from cool bathing and worse from heat, bread and fatty foods.

**Nux vomica**
Acne that corresponds to *Nux vomica* is often seen after the excessive use of alcohol, food or stimulants, particularly where the skin symptoms are associated with gastrointestinal complaints. Part of the action may be explained in that it appears to have a detoxifying effect that improves the symptoms of conditions such as acne. Symptoms are aggravated by mental exertion or anger, cheese and fatty or spicy foods.

**Pulsatilla**
Those acne sufferers who respond to this remedy are often thirstless adolescents with menstrual disorders, circulatory problems, allergies or ear, nose or throat disorders. The acne lesions themselves may be itchy and have a slightly cyanotic appearance. Symptoms are worse for heat, ice-cream and rich, starchy or fatty foods.

**Sepia**
The *Sepia* type may develop acne during pregnancy or after the birth of her child. The acne may coexist with menstrual disorders. The acne lesions are often yellow tinged pimples appearing on the face and especially on the chin. The condition is improved after the cessation of menses and worse before menses and from breastfeeding.

**Silica**
The acne that responds well to this remedy consists of hard, deep pimples that fail to show pus or come to a head. The lesions commonly arise on the cheeks and forehead and then
resolve, leaving a pitting scar. Associated lymph glands may be swollen and the sufferer may have a history of boils and various forms of nail pathology.

**Sulphur**

Useful indicators for this medicine include pale, dry, dirty looking facial skin with bright red lips. Large, painful, burning or itching superficial acne lesions, as well as comedones showing significant amounts of underlying pus, often occur on the nose. The condition may be improved by dry warm weather and is worse for washing, before menses and after consuming fatty foods. It may be found to alternate with other complaints such as asthma.

**Thiosinimum**

This is not an acne medicine. However, *Thiosinimum* in low potency has been found by the author to be a very effective means of hastening the resolution of acne scars.

**Thuja**

The *Thuja* respondent will usually exhibit very oily skin, dilated pores and express feelings of great shame in regard to their acne. The lesions themselves often have sunken centres and appear commonly on the forehead, upper lip and adjacent to the nose. Symptoms are worse during menses.

**References**
