

# Abscess/Boils

## Definition:

Abscess is a localized infection on any part of the body or organ, whereby there is inflammation, swelling, pus formation and painfulness; with or without other signs of infection.

## Causes of abscess:

Abscess is essentially caused by infection, largely bacterial infection. It can also be caused by parasite infection. An abscess may be caused or triggered by a foreign body or physical trauma or injury.

## Why does one get an abscess?

Any abscess is a sign of body's reaction to infection or trauma. It is a sign of body's defense mechanism at work whereby an army of white blood cells start fighting against the infection or foreign body and lead to pus formation. In this process, there will be inflammation, swelling, painfulness and even fever.

## Who gets frequent abscesses or boils?

A condition of frequent abscesses especially on the skin is a common phenomenon, suggesting underlying faulty immune system. In such cases, the underlying immunity calls for treatment besides addressing local infection as a stand alone problem.

## Where does one get abscess?

Abscesses can occur on any part of the body or organ. Some of the common sites are: Skin, mouth, liver, lungs, bones, appendix, mouth, spine, nose, sinus, tonsils, etc. It depends on the individual tendency to catch infection; which in turn is governed by the genetic predisposition.

## Symptoms of abscess:

The most common symptoms are pain, swelling, redness, pus formation, discharge, and fever. Also, depending on the site of an abscess, some symptoms may vary. For example, in case of abscess of brain, there will be neurological symptoms; and likewise. If the infection is severe and uncontrolled, there is a possibility of its spread to other parts of the body. Severe infection may lead to a serious condition called septicemia.

## Treatment of abscess:

Conventional treatment: Abscess due to bacterial infection respond to antibiotics. In case of un-ruptured pocket of pus, drainage may be required.

## Role of homeopathy for abscess:

- Acute abscess of recent origin can respond to homeopathic medicines; however, it may take little longer than antibiotics.
- Homeopathy is best indicated in the cases of 1. Frequent abscesses 2. Prolonged (chronic) abscess 3. Resistant abscess.

- In the above three categories, the formation of an abscess is surely a sign of altered underlying immunity, which can be treated effectively using homeopathy.
- Homeopathy is strongly indicated for recurring and resistant cases of abscesses. More reading: Case studies of Recurrent boils

## Acne

### Definition:

Acne or pimples is a common skin condition frequently seen in young individuals during teenage and youth years. This occurs mainly due to the action of hormones on the oil glands in the skin. The draining ducts of the oil glands get blocked and hence they are not able to drain the oil secretion. The oil and cells inside the blocked gland form a perfect environment for the growth of *Propionibacterium acnes* (the organism responsible for acne). Thus, it results in the formation of pimples or acne.

Acne usually occurs on the face, chest, back, shoulders and neck. It is one of the most common skin conditions. Although acne is not a serious threat to the health, yet it can lead to scarring and disfigurement of the face that can have a significant impact on the patient.

### Various Forms of Acne

Acne may present itself in various forms and these are as follows:

- **Whiteheads and blackheads (Comedones):** White or black tiny bumps on the skin which are nothing but the enlarged and plugged hair follicles
- **Papules:** Inflamed lesions that usually appear as small, pink bumps on the skin and can be tender to the touch
- **Pustules (pimples):** Pus-filled lesions that may be red at the base
- **Nodules:** Large, painful, solid lesions that are lodged deep within the skin
- Lesions that can cause scarring

### Types of Acne

Following are the commonly recognized types of Acne:

- **Acne vulgaris**
- **Acne rosacea**
- **Acne conglobata**
- **Acne cosmetica**
- **Acne fulminans**
- **Acne medicamentosa**
- **Acne keloidalis nuchae**

### Causes of Acne:

- One of the most important causes is the increase in the male hormones (androgens) that occurs in boys as well as girls during puberty. These hormones cause an increased production of sebum (oil) and hence result in acne.
- Hormonal changes related to pregnancy or such changes caused by starting or stopping birth control pills can also cause acne. Another factor is heredity or genetics; there is evidence to support the fact that the tendency to develop

acne can be inherited from parents. Apart from this certain drugs, including androgens and lithium, are also known to cause acne. Greasy cosmetics may cause further plugging of the follicles in the skin and hence can precipitate the onset of acne.

- Majority of people who develop acne are between the ages of 12 and 25. For most people, acne tends to go away by the time they reach their thirties; however, some people in their forties and fifties continue to have this skin problem.

## Homeopathic treatment:

Homeopathic treatment for Acne is **strongly suggested**. It helps in the following ways:

- Controls the tendency to have acne (often genetic, in severe cases)
- Addresses underlying hormonal disturbance which gives one a proneness to have acne
- Reduces excessive oiliness of skin
- Reduces acne directly
- Controls infection
- Controls scar formation
- Reduces hyperpigmentation following acne
- Controls tendency to scar formation following acne

## Homeopathic Remedies for Acne

Acne is a dynamic conditions triggered by multiple factors such as hormones, food, climate, irregular lifestyle and stress. The homeopathic medicines for acne or pimples are chosen on the basis of the underlying causes and factors which lead to or increases acne. There are about 20 most common medicines to choose from, for acne.

**Calcaria Sulphuricum:** This medicine is often indicated for those who have a tendency to get pus formation on acne. The person may be less tolerance to heat as compared to cold. The acne may be large, inflamed, red, and painful with tendency to get scars. It is one of the twelve tissue remedies used in homeopathy as well as in biochemistry.

**Silica:** A wonder drug sourced from sand, the metal Silica (Si) which works on the immune system, hormone in such a way that the tendency to get acne with pus formation, reduces after some doses of this medicine. The person tends to be sensitive to cold air, breeze and cold water. Usually, lean and thin physical structure, sharp mind but shy attitude, intelligent but less confident. Somewhat strong headed in his or her belief system.

**Dulcamara:** This medicine from plant kingdom works for acne and the marks left thereafter. Face may be full of acne and also with some allergic rash. When acne increases with change of climate from dry to humid, you have to remember Dulcamara.

**Natrum Muriaticum:** This homeopathic medicine, sourced from NaCl, simple salt, processed homeopathically through potentization, works as a remedy for many cases of acne. Hormonal disturbances such as PCOD or menstrual irregularities associated with or leading to acne may call for study of Natrum Muriaticum. The face may be oily, a bit hairy, hypertrophied acne, ugly scars, in young girls and boys, may benefit from this medicine. The personality that matches with this medicine is one that is self-centred, reserved, brooding over past issues, inability to forget and forgive; kind hearted yet somewhat egoist, less expressive with emotions, etc.

## Acne Rosacea

### Introduction

Rosacea is a chronic skin condition involving inflammation of the cheeks, nose, chin, forehead, or eyelids. It may appear as redness, prominent spider-like blood vessels, swelling, or skin eruptions similar to acne. However, acne rosacea is not same as teen-agers acne.

## Causes

It is believed that Rosacea is a disorder where the blood vessels become damaged when repeatedly dilated by stimuli.

Triggers that cause Acne Rosacea

- Exposure to extreme temperature.
- Vigorous exercise.
- Emotional factors (anger, fear, anxiety, embarrassment etc.)
- Sun exposure.
- Severe sunburn.
- Cold air.
- Change of weather and temperature.
- Some foods and drinks that can trigger the condition include alcohol, foods high in histamine like yoghurt, cheese, red wine etc. and spicy food.
- Certain medications (Vasodilator pills include blood pressure medications like nitrates, calcium channel blockers, and thiazide diuretics)
- Certain topical treatment for acne like microdermabrasion and chemical peels.

## Symptoms of Acne Rosacea

- Redness of the face in localized areas or covering the entire face.
- A tendency to flush or blush easily.
- A burning or stinging sensation of the face.
- Increased number of spider-like blood vessels (telangiectasia) of the face.
- Rhinophyma (red, bulbous nose)
- Pimple like skin eruptions.
- Watery eyes with redness.

## Complications of Acne Rosacea

- Psychological stress.
- Lack of confidence.
- Social isolation.
- Permanent changes in appearance (for example, a bulbous nose)
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## Tips to avoid acute flare ups

- Exposure to sun and to extreme temperatures should be limited as much as possible.
- Smoking, spicy foods, hot drinks, and alcohol may cause flushing and should be avoided.
- Red wine and chocolate are two well known Rosacea triggers.
- Try to reduce stress. Try deep breathing, yoga, or other relaxation methods.
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## Homeopathic Treatment

**Homeopathy is strongly recommended in Acne Rosacea. It helps in following ways:**

- Reduces the redness.
- Reduces the hypersensitivity towards stimuli.
- Controls underlying factors.

# ADHD

## Introduction:

ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) is a developmental and behavioral disorder in which a child or an adult consistently displays certain characteristic behaviors such as inattention, hyperactivity and impulsive attitude.

There was a time when children with ADHD were abused to be naughty and dumb. However, now it is understood that they call for special attention by parents, family members, teachers as well as the society.

ADHD is one of the most common disorders among children (3-5%) and often continues into adolescence and adulthood. It is more common in boys as compared to girls, the ratio being approximately 3:1.

Children suffering from ADHD act without thinking, are hyperactive and have trouble focusing on anything in particular. Their attention easily gets deviated and in spite of understanding what is expected from them, they are unable to focus on a particular thing. Such behavior is common amongst normal children also but the difference is that children with ADHD have these features persisting for long and they impair a child's ability to function socially, academically, and at home.

Short term memory loss is one of the symptoms of ADHD. Estimated half of the children outgrow hyperactive behavior when they grow into adulthood. However, almost half of the ADHD children continue exhibiting the symptoms throughout life.

## Causes of ADHD:

- ADHD has causes that have not been fully understood as yet and researchers are still exploring genetic linkage. It has been seen in many cases that children with ADHD often have some family member suffering from this disorder. Certain areas of the brain have been found to be comparatively smaller in children with ADHD as well some chemical changes in the brain have been detected.
- Some other risk factors for developing ADHD include: Premature delivery, very low birth weight, birth injury (to the brain) and smoking during pregnancy.

## ADHD in adults

It is not that only kids can have ADHD. Adults, too, can continue showing ADHD traits started in childhood. However, one cannot have ADHD starting from adulthood. Some of the signs and symptoms of ADHD in adults are as under:

- Hyperactivity at work place
- An inability to get organized at work. Careless, untidy, etc.
- Temptation to keep changing work, job, business, etc. Inability to pay attention to one work, task or project for adequate time
- Fast or rash driving. Ignoring and breaking signals
- Broken relationships with parents, friends, spouse, and neighbours.

## Homeopathic Treatment for ADHD:

Homeopathy is very strongly recommended for ADHD. Documented cases at Life Force as well as by other centers have suggested definite role of homeopathy towards the treatment of ADHD.

Homeopathy is very effective in reducing the hyperactivity and impulsiveness. It helps improve attention span and concentration.

Homeopathy is safe. Improvement is observed in cases of ADHD within about two to three months of medication, in most cases. The entire treatment may required to be extended for over an year.

## ALLERGY

### Definition:

Allergy is nothing but an exaggerated response of the body to certain external or internal agents, whereby body reacts in the form of symptoms such as itching, running of the nose, wheeze, inflammation, swelling, skin rash, etc. All the symptoms as above are simply expressions of an allergic process. One may be allergic to anything under the sun, inclusive of the sun, as they say.

### Remarks:

All kind of allergic disorders find excellent treatment with homeopathy. For a long time allergic conditions have been considered incurable merely due to the ignorance about the amazing benefits of homeopathy. Respiratory allergy, asthma, skin allergy, pollen allergy, frequent colds, childhood asthma, etc. just to name a few, are treated with tremendous success with well planned homeopathic treatment.

### Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:

Homeopathic treatment is very strongly recommended for all sorts of allergic disorders.

## ALZHEIMER

- Mother Nature has blessed mankind amongst all the entities on the earth with an extraordinary quality of logical and rational thinking. The storehouse of immense knowledge, 'BRAIN' is the source of this exceptional attribute. Unfortunately, the entire system of an individual becomes handicapped as the same brain starts deteriorating. The major culprit who is involved in the deterioration of brain is Alzheimer's disease (AD). Alzheimer's disease is a devastating disease of brain that robs the afflicted individual of intelligence, memory and eventually life.
- As many as 2-4 % of all people of 65 years of age and older have Alzheimer's. As many as 20 % (or more) of population over 85 years age have the AD. Alzheimer's disease (pronounced AHLZ-hi-merz) is one of several disorders that cause the gradual loss of brain cells. The disease was first described in 1906 by German physician Dr. Alois Alzheimer. However, Alzheimer's disease did exist long before the birth of Dr. Alzheimer. The research has shown that Alzheimer's disease is the leading cause of dementia; in fact 70% of dementias are due to Alzheimer's disease.
- Dementia is an umbrella term for several symptoms related to a decline in thinking skills and progressive deterioration of brain performance. Common symptoms include a gradual loss of memory, problems with reasoning or judgment, disorientation, difficulty in learning, loss of language skills, etc. People with dementia also experience changes in their personalities and behavioral problems. The cumulative effect of all these changes becomes distressing both to the individual and their families. It should be stressed that Alzheimer's disease knows no social, economic, ethnic or geographical boundaries; eventually those affected are unable to care for themselves and need help with all aspects of daily life. The magnitude of this disease is huge, there are estimated to be 17-25 million people worldwide with Alzheimer's disease.

## **What happens to brain in Alzheimer' disease?**

Alzheimer's disease is characterized by progressive death of brain cells. This results from two abnormal structures in the brain: Amyloid plaques (pronounced AM i loyd, which are clumps of protein fragments that accumulate outside of cells and Neurofibrillary tangles (pronounced NUR o FI bri lair ee), which are clumps of altered proteins inside cells.

## **Why these changes develop in the brain?**

Research about these structures has provided clues about why nerve cells die, but scientists have not determined exactly why these changes develop. In short, no one yet knows exactly what causes Alzheimer's disease. Most researchers agree that the cause may be a complex set of factors. Though Alzheimer's disease affects individuals in 40s and 50s, studies have shown that the greatest known risk for developing Alzheimer's is increasing age. As many as 2-4 % of all people of 65 years of age and older have Alzheimer's. As many as 20 % (or more) of population over 85 years age have the AD. A family history of the disease is another known risk. Having a parent or sibling with the disease increases an individual's chances of developing Alzheimer's. Many mysterious diseases have provided interesting clues through genetic studies. Scientists have identified certain genes, which are very strongly related to Alzheimer's.

## **Other factors:**

Many diverse medical theories, including the biochemistry of acetylcholine and neurotransmitters, inflammation, oxidative stress and free radicals, and homocysteine, nutritional and vitamin deficiencies, as probable causes of Alzheimer's disease has been put forth. A wide array of risk factors for Alzheimer's include, disorders of blood circulation, hormonal imbalance, head trauma, emotional stress, alcohol abuse, metabolic defects, nutritional deficiencies, and even some infections.

## **How Alzheimer's presents:**

Declining memory is the most common early symptom of Alzheimer's. Some change in memory is normal as we grow older, but the symptoms of Alzheimer's disease are more than simple lapses in memory. People with Alzheimer's experience difficulties communicating, learning, thinking, and reasoning - problems severe enough to have an impact on an individual's work, social activities, and family life.

While it's normal to forget appointments, names, or telephone numbers, once in a while, those with Alzheimer's will forget such things more often and not remember them later. In addition, People with ordinary forgetfulness can still remember other facts associated with the thing they have forgotten. For example they may briefly forget their next-door neighbor's name but they still know the person they are talking to is their next-door neighbor. A person with dementia will not only forget their neighbor's name but also the context.

Individuals with AD begin to misplace everyday items, such as the car keys or eyeglasses, and become disoriented and get lost in familiar surroundings (such as when driving on well-known streets). With Alzheimer individual find difficult to perform even familiar tasks and may forget the steps for preparing a meal, using a household appliance, or in what order to put clothes on.

A person with Alzheimer's disease often forgets simple words or substitutes unusual words, making his or her speech or writing hard to understand. Individuals with Alzheimer's often show poor judgment about money, and mathematics. People's personalities ordinarily change somewhat with age. But a person with Alzheimer's disease can change a lot, becoming extremely confused, suspicious, fearful, or dependent on a family member. An Alzheimer's may become unusually emotional and experience rapid mood swings for no apparent reason. Alternatively a person with

Alzheimer's may show less emotion than was usual previously. In addition, they may experience delusions (believing in a reality that does not exist), and hallucinations (seeing things that do not exist).

In the terminal phase, Alzheimer patient enters in a world where he can recognize nothing... neither family members and friends, nor himself.

How the disease progresses: Alzheimer's disease advances at widely different rates. The duration of the illness may often vary from 3 to 20 years. Eventually, the person with Alzheimer's will need complete care. If the individual has no other serious illness, the loss of brain function itself may cause death.

### **How the condition is diagnosed:**

Early diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease is an important step in getting appropriate treatment, care, and support services. There is no one diagnostic test that can detect if a person has Alzheimer's disease, but the process involves several kinds of tests and may take more than one day to complete the evaluation. Evaluations may include the following steps:

- A medical history, which collects information about current mental or physical conditions, prescription and nonprescription drug use, and family health history
- A mental status evaluation to assess sense of time and place; ability to remember, understand, and communicate; and ability to do simple math problems
- A physical examination, which includes the evaluation of the person's nutritional status, blood pressure, sensations, balance, and other functions of nervous system
- Investigations like a brain scan like CT and MRI to detect other causes of dementia such as stroke and laboratory tests, such as blood and urine tests, for checking various components of blood, hormones, enzymes, infections, etc.

### **Treatment:**

Alzheimer's disease is difficult disorder. Homeopathy system offers reasonably positive treatment if not cure.

When we discuss the role of medicine for certain diseases, we probably do not talk of the 'cure' in real sense, but more of 'control' and 'relief'. AD is one such condition, where homeopathy has following role to play:

- To control the disease process whereby further deterioration of the brain damage is helped to certain extent
- To improve to an extent some of the symptoms: communication, failing memory, anxiety, restlessness, etc.
- Many of the problems associated with dementia such as restlessness, depression, and agitation can be treated effectively and gently with homeopathy. It may also be possible, especially in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease, to improve someone's memory with homeopathic medication. Timely administered homeopathy medicines can prevent further progress of disease.
- Homeopathy is over 207 years old medicine originated in Germany. Homeopathy is the revolutionary, natural medical science and a system of medicine, which is gentle, effective, and devoid of any side effects.
- The homeopathic remedies are prepared from natural substances to precise standards and work by stimulating the body's own healing power.
- Homeopathy is one such branch of therapeutics, which believes in treating the patient who is diseased and not merely diseased parts of the patients. This holistic approach goes in a long way in the management of various chronic and deep-seated diseases, including Alzheimer's.
- It goes without saying that every person is unique and dementia affects people differently - no two people will follow exactly the same course. Hence, an approach to dementia care, which recognizes the personal history, character and individuality of the person with Alzheimer's, has been shown to have a positive impact on the progress of the disease.

- Homeopathy undertakes study of each Alzheimer's as separate entity and does in-depth evaluation of the disease as well as patient as person. It means, the physician has to understand the patient and his/her problems more deeply, with regards to its symptoms, its diagnosis as well as its probable genetic background. The study also involves deep evaluation of the mind and emotions. After appreciating the patients in his totality, a suitable medicine called as 'constitutional medicine' is selected for the patient. The medication based on such foundation brings deeper level healing process for the sufferers of chronic diseases.
- We, at Life Force, have some experience in treating AD; and the experience has suggested that some definite improvement takes place with regards to memory.
- It should be noted that there is no single specific remedy for all the cases of Alzheimer's. The exact treatment is determined only on in-depth evaluation of individual case.

## **APLASTIC ANEMIA**

### **Definition:**

Aplastic anemia is a rare (5-10 cases per million), serious condition where the bone marrow fails to produce white cells, red cells and the platelets. Aplastic anemia is observed in children as well as in adults.

The term Aplastic comes from the word *aplasia* that means failure of generation or formation. Anemia means deficiency in the oxygen-carrying component of the blood.

The spongy material inside the bones is called as bone marrow and is like a factory that produces blood cells (red cells, white cells and platelets). In case of Aplastic anemia bone marrow fails to form or develop blood cells.

### **Remarks:**

The red cells in the blood carry oxygen from the lungs to all areas of the body. In Aplastic anemia with less number of red cells, body parts do not get sufficient oxygen that is absolutely essential for their functioning.

White cells fight infection by attacking and destroying germs and their less number in Aplastic anemia leads to poor defense mechanism making the suffering individual prone to various and at times lethal infections.

Platelets are blood cells that control bleeding by forming blood clots in areas of injury. Reduced platelets lead to blood clotting disorder, whereby blood does not clot naturally, leading to uncontrolled bleeding.

## **APPENDICITIS**

Appendicitis is a common medico-surgical condition. Appendicitis is nothing but an inflammation of the appendix. The appendix is a small pouch attached to the beginning of the large intestine in the right lower part of the abdomen. Function of appendix is still not understood; but it is largely considered to be almost a useless body organ. It is one of the most common causes of emergency abdominal surgery in order to avoid rupture of the appendix into the abdomen.

### **Types of Appendicitis:**

This can be categorized as under:

- Acute appendicitis: This appears suddenly, and runs a short course, calling for urgent attention and treatment; mostly surgical treatment.
- Chronic appendicitis: As the name suggests, it is a long standing inflammation of the appendix.
- Recurring appendicitis: Appendix, if not removed, may have a tendency to get inflamed and infected, again and again.

## **Chronic appendicitis**

It is a sequel of acute appendicitis. In some patients the symptoms of appendicitis, are less intense and continue for a long duration, they may be continuous or intermittent. They may present as pain in the abdomen, which will be bothersome but not incapacitating. The person may experience pain and abdominal discomfort in the right iliac fossa. A partial obstruction of the appendix and milder bacterial infection are generally responsible. They may settle down with a course of antibiotics, but resurface again. This also indicates a lowered immune system.

## **Causes of appendicitis:**

It usually occurs when the appendix becomes blocked by hard faecal (stool) matter, undigested food, a foreign body or rarely a tumor. When the appendix is blocked, it becomes inflamed due to swelling and ulceration of mucous membrane lining and results in a condition termed appendicitis. If the blockage continues, the inflamed tissue becomes infected with bacteria and begins to die from a lack of blood supply, which finally results in the rupture of the appendix (perforated or ruptured appendix).

Infection in the gut or other parts of body may also inflame the appendix and cause appendicitis.

## **Incidence:**

It can affect any age group, more common age group is 15-45.

## **Symptoms of appendicitis:**

- Pain in lower abdomen to start with.
- Pain begins in the middle of the abdomen "belly button" (umbilicus).
- Pain slowly moves in the next 24 hours to the right lower abdomen (toward the right iliac fossa).
- Pain is unlike any pain felt before.
- Pain is worse on motion, taking deep breath, coughing and sneezing.
- Loss of appetite.
- Nausea.
- Vomiting.
- Constipation or diarrhea.
- Inability to pass gas.
- Low grade fever.
- Feeling that passing stool will relieve discomfort.
- Abdominal swelling.

## **Similar conditions:**

Other conditions that cause abdominal pain may have symptoms similar to the symptoms of appendicitis:

## **Diagnosis of appendicitis:**

Diagnosis can be made clinically by history of symptoms given by patient and by the presence of the following signs on examining the patient.

## Signs:

On examination, doctor can elicit tenderness in the right iliac fossa.

There can be rebound tenderness; it is the pain that is worse when the doctor quickly releases his or her hand after gently pressing the area of tenderness on the abdomen.

### Rectal examination

May disclose tenderness in the right side of pelvis.

## Investigations:

Blood Count: may reveal leucocytosis. i.e. raised WBC count. X-rays- An x-ray can rule out signs of obstruction or perforation of the GUT as cause of pain. In rare cases, an appendicolith, which is hardened stool in the appendix, may be found and seen on the X-ray. Ultrasound- An ultrasound may show appendiceal inflammation. CT scan- The most common and reliable imaging test that is used to diagnose appendicitis is currently the CT scan. The CT scan is excellent if there is doubt regarding the nature of the pain as it can identify other common causes of pain in that region like -stone in the ureter, gall-stones, ruptured tubal pregnancy. In appendicitis it shows the inflamed appendix quite clearly.

## Prevention:

A diet high in fiber and low in sugar is advisable to prevent constipation.

## Conventional Treatment:

Appendectomy (surgical removal of appendix)

## Homeopathic Management:

Homeopathy is indicated in the first day or the second day, in the early stage. Homeopathy may help some cases. However, acute appendicitis may turn out to be a surgical condition, where homeopathy may not work. Acute appendicitis can be best managed under proper supervision of a surgeon.

Homeopathy is indicated for the treatment of chronic and recurrent appendicitis. The medicines help for complete recovery and strengthen the immunity. Every case of appendicitis needs professional evaluation by an experienced homeopathic physician before deciding if it is suitable for surgery or homeopathy.

- Kidney stones.
- Urinary tract infections.
- Hernias.
- Gall stones.
- Colitis.
- Ovarian or testicular problem.

## ATAXIA

Ataxia is more of a symptom rather than a disease. Ataxia in Greek means "out of order" or "loss of balance". Ataxia is a common neurological symptom which makes patient feels insecure due loss of control while doing day-to-day activities.

Ataxia is lack of muscle coordination due to the small brain's (cerebellum) failure to regulate the body's posture, regulate its strength and direct the limb movements, thus resulting into wobbliness or clumsiness.

Ataxia may affect the fingers and hands, the extremities, the entire body, speech or even the eye movements.

A person with a long-standing ataxia may have damaged a part of the brain (cerebellum) that controls muscle coordination.

## **Incidence:**

Hereditary ataxia is rare. In case of Hereditary ataxia, more than one family member may suffer with the same disease of ataxia. Acute ataxia can be a relatively common complication of conditions such as a stroke, encephalitis (infection of the brain), or multiple sclerosis. Men and women both are equally affected.

## **Types of Ataxia**

There are three major types of ataxia, which also includes causes based on the area of brain, spine or ears affected.

- **Cerebellar ataxia:** There is an affection of the cerebellum, where, depending on the exact area affected, one experiences different symptoms of imbalance.
- **Sensory Ataxia:** There is a loss of perception about body parts, due to affection of the dorsal column of spinal cord.
- **Vestibular Ataxia:** This results from an impairment of inner ear, which forms what is called as vestibular system, responsible for maintaining balance. Vertigo is a prominent symptom in case of vestibular ataxia.

## **Ataxia can be broadly classified in two types:**

- **Hereditary ataxia:** Here, the symptoms develop slowly, over many years and are caused by underlying problems with the genes.
- **Acute Ataxia:** The symptoms develop suddenly, due to a trauma, injury, or a health condition such as a stroke.

## **Causes of Balance Loss:**

Ataxia can be caused by any of the following reasons:

- Genetic fault inherited from either of the parents or both.
- Vitamin B12 deficiency.
- Thyroid hormone deficiency (Hypothyroid or under active thyroid) This can be checked by a simple blood test of T4, TSH.
- Brain surgery
- Gluten allergy
- Brain tumor
- Alcohol abuse
- After effect of radiation overdose
- Drug abuse: Adverse effects of Cannabis, alcohol, anti-epileptic medicines, some tranquilizers (benzodiazepines)
- Infections, like chicken pox (they usually disappear after infection is cured)
- Head injury
- Exposure to toxic chemicals
- Multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, and other neurological conditions
- Malformation of the cerebellum while the baby is still a foetus

## **Loss of Balance (Ataxia) Symptoms:**

Ataxia can cause a wide range of symptoms suggesting loss of balance, such as:

- Loss of balance while getting up, walking
- Sense of giddiness or vertigo
- Difficulty in walking
- Difficulty in speaking
- Difficulty in swallowing (dysphagia)
- Difficulty in performing tasks that require a high degree of physical control, such as writing, eating etc.

## **Diagnosis of Ataxia:**

In some of the cases, the cause remains unknown. MRI or a CT scan is advised to rule out any brain damage. Blood tests - some types of ataxia are an effect due to the make up of blood. Urine tests - urinalysis may suggest specific systemic abnormalities that are linked to some forms of ataxia. 24-hour urine is advised if Wilson's disease is suspected. Genetic tests are conducted to determine whether the patient has inherited the symptom of ataxia (Hereditary Ataxia).

## **Treatment for Ataxia:**

- Treatment for acute ataxia will depend on the underlying cause. For example, ataxia that is caused by an infection will often resolve once the infection has been treated.
- Medication - Some patients with ataxia telangiectasia are prescribed gamma-globulin injections.
- Auxillary modes of treatment are :
- Occupational therapy
- Counselling
- Speech therapy
- Orthopedic care
- Supplements and Nutrition

## **Homeopathic Treatment for Ataxia**

- Homeopathic treatment has been found to be effective in treating various forms of ataxia. Depending on the underlying cause and nature of impairment, one can decide the prognosis with homeopathy. All in all, homeopathy can offer significant results in most cases of ataxia where there are reversible or functional changes. In the cases of chronic ataxia such as hereditary ataxia, homeopathy can work on controlling the further damage and deterioration. In such cases, homeopathy could give partial and symptomatic relief. It cannot be said that homeopathy can cure or reverse chronic (long standing) ataxia. It must be noted that even a good control that homeopathy offers, is considered significant if achieved.
- Homeopathic medicines help improve muscle coordination, dysphagia and uncontrollable eye movements. Some of the commonly indicated medicines, based on the cause of ataxia, can be listed here: Agaricus, Gelsemium, Conium, Alumina, Belladonna, Causticum, Pulsatilla, etc.

## **ATHEROSCLEROSIS**

Atherosclerosis is a condition in which there is a deposition of fat on the inner lining of arteries. Arteries are blood vessels carrying oxygenated blood from the heart to other parts of the body.

Advanced atherosclerosis leads to build up of cholesterol and calcium on the fatty layer. This leads to hardening of the artery and narrowing of the arterial diameter leading to decreased blood supply to the organ that the artery is supplying.

## **Cause:**

It can be classified into modifiable factors and non-modifiable factors.

### **01** Modifiable factors:

Atherosclerosis is a lifestyle disorder. Smoking, unhealthy highly fatty and cholesterol laden food is the cause. Like non-vegetarian food, ice-creams, sweets, lack of exercise and physical activity can cause dyslipidaemia which causes raised low density lipo-protein which is the bad lipoprotein and low level high density lipo-protein (the good lipo-protein) in the blood. Herpes virus and cytomegalovirus is associated with atherosclerosis. Diabetes mellitus and Hypertension can make one more prone to atherosclerosis.

Obesity, short sleep duration, hyperthyroidism, elevated uric acid levels, elevated serum Homocysteine levels, elevated uric acid levels, elevated levels of C reactive protein in blood, stress or clinical depression, Chlamydia pneumoniae infection

### **02** Non-modifiable factors:

Aging and family history play a major role in the development of disease. Asians and males are more prone to the disease.

## **Symptoms:**

The disease remains asymptomatic for a long time till the plaque causes severe distortion of the artery and compromises blood supply to the organ concerned. This can lead to heart attack, paralysis, claudication which is reduced blood supply to the extremities or even death.

## **Prevention:**

Research has proven that consumption of omega-3 oils from fatty fish or plant oils such as flax or canola oils, exercising and losing weight, stopping smoking, reducing stress have been proved to decrease the incidence of the disease in majority of the cases.

## **Treatment:**

Homeopathy has great scope in the treatment of atherosclerosis. It can arrest the progress of the disease and prevent untoward happenings like heart attack, paralysis, reduced blood supply to extremities which is known as claudication and death.

## **Definition:**

Autism is a complex neurological disorder detected in children in their initial three years of life, which is result of impaired functioning of the brain, expressing itself in the form of inability for social and communication skills, impaired intellectual faculty and hence affecting the developmental of the child. The exact cause behind autism is not yet fully understood.

Estimated 1.5 million American children and adults, over 1.7 million children in India and about 0.2% of the world population is affected by this disorder, affecting all races almost equally.

## **Causes of Autism:**

There are structural and functional changes in the brain in the patients with autism. However, the exact cause for these changes are not fully understood.

Some of the triggering factors considered responsible for Autism are:

- Genetic predisposition
- Exposure to environmental chemicals
- Intake of some drugs, medicines during pregnancy
- Metabolic imbalance
- Vaccinations

## **Symptoms of autism:**

Autism can present with a wide spectrum of symptoms, also in varied severity, mild, moderate to severe. The symptoms may present in different combinations. The major symptoms relate with:

- Marked deficits in communication and social interaction
- Language impairment
- Preoccupation with fantasy
- Abnormal behavior, such as repetitive acts and excessive possessiveness to certain objects such as car, doll, keys
- Intellectual impairment

The common end symptoms could be some or many of the following:

- Annoying obstinacy in behavior
- Poor verbal expression, uses gesture to point out for his needs
- Repeating words or phrases
- Laughing, crying without apparent cause
- Prefers solitude
- Throws Tantrums
- Difficulty in social interaction with his age or elders
- No eye contact while communication
- Unresponsive teaching
- Failure to perceive fears of danger, leading to jumping from high place, playing with pointed objects
- Physical hyper-activity or under-activity
- Underdeveloped fine motor skills
- Not responsive to verbal instructions with normal hearing
- Spinning objects
- Inappropriate possessiveness to objects
- Over-sensitivity or under-sensitivity to pain
- Screaming and shouting out of proportion
- Repeats the same words (echolalia)

It may be noted that autism affects the developmental of the intellectual faculties. The autistic children are able to express love and affection and also can respond to love.

## **Diagnosis of Autism:**

There are no laboratory tests for autism. The diagnosis is arrived at by clinical evaluation and a detail developmental case history of the child. Psychological evaluation may be carried out by a professional with expertise in handling such cases. There are several Autism screening tests to conclude the diagnosis.

## **Diet for Autism**

The theory is that some people with autism cannot properly digest gluten and casein, which form substances that act like opiates in their bodies. This "drug" substance alters the person's behavior, perceptions, and responses to his environment, according to this theory. Research in the U.S. and Europe has found substances with opiate activity in the urine of a significant number of children with autism.

Some parents, doctors and researchers say that children have shown mild to dramatic improvements in speech and/or behavior after a gluten-free, casein-free (GF/CF) diet.

Gluten and gluten-like proteins are found in wheat and other grains, including oats, rye, barley, bulgar, durum, kamut and spelt, and foods made from those grains. They are also found in food starches, se molina, couscous, malt, some vinegars, soy sauce, flavorings, artificial colors and hydrolyzed vegetable proteins.

Casein is a protein found in milk and products containing milk, such as cheese, butter, yogurt, ice cream, whey and even some brands of margarine. It also may be added to non-milk products such as soy cheese and hot dogs in the form of caseinate.

Foods that CAN be eaten on a gluten-free, casein-free diet include rice, quinoa, amaranth, potato, buckwheat flour, soy, corn, fruits, vegetables, beans, tapioca, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, teff, nuts, eggs, and sorghum, among others.

## **Homeopathic Treatment of Autism:**

The homeopathic approach to handling chronic disorders being totalistic and aiming at treating the genetic tendencies with a well strategic management, offers effective treatment for autism and related disorders.

The homeopathic case evaluation of the child with autism incorporates the detail study of the family history of serious diseases, which are known to form the genetic ground for autism. The case analysis also takes into account impaired functions in terms of behavior, social skills, communication, speech, tantrums, etc.

The commonly homeopathic medicines indicated for autism are about twenty in number. The exact medicine, its combination with other support medicines, its dose and repetition depend on the case history. The medicines are essentially safe and absolutely non-toxic.

In our study at our center, we have observed encouraging results in autism children when treated with homeopathy for over six months. The treatment may require to be continued for over one year, depending on the severity of the presentation. The homeopathic medicines can be combined with other traditional measures.

## **BACKACHE**

Pain in the back anywhere below the ribs and up to the hips is called low back pain. It is a condition that affects over 90% of the population at one time or the other. Next to common cold, it remains the most common reason why people seek medical help.

Many people who experience low back pain do not meet up with a doctor since it usually resolves on its own. They may suffer from any dull aches to sharp pains or even numbness. The pain characteristically lingers on for a day or two before it gradually subsides. In many, the pains keep recurring in varying intensities.

Studies have shown that back pain is the single most reason cited by employees for taking maximum number of 'sick leaves'. Stresses and strains of daily living and overuse and misuse of the muscles of the back are the commonest causes of backache.

## Why is back pain so common?

The curvature of the normal spine is such that, the bony column is weakest at two points. The cervical spine (the nape of the neck) and the dorsal spine are the weakest points. The lower back bears at least one half of the body weight. Hence, these points bear the brunt of repeated stresses and strains.

Every joint has an optimum position of function, departures from which increase the likelihood of strains and pains. Over time muscle strains lead to an overall imbalance in the muscle structure. There is constant strain on the muscles, bones, tendons, discs etc. The most common cause of back pain is poor posture. The real pain might be triggered by sudden lifting of weights, a sudden turn or a wrench, a fall on the back, sitting in a cramped position for a long time, horse-riding, riding a tractor etc. Occasionally, it won't be one event alone which triggers your backache. You may have been doing things improperly for a long time » standing, sitting or walking, until suddenly one simple movement might trigger your pains.

These so-called last straws to the already overburdened back are some of the following:

- Trauma: acute or chronic » unusual lifting, sudden wrenches, fall etc.
- Psychic factors like depression ' can cause lowered (poor) muscle tone and cause backache
- Any acute illnesses » can cause poor muscle tone
- Fatigue
- Pregnancy
- Obesity » causes increased lordosis
- General poor health
- Localized, focal infections
- Faulty structure of feet.

What makes backache worse is that once the pain starts, in order to avoid stressing the painful parts, we tend to perform actions ( walk, stand, lift etc.) with the use of other muscles which are not used to moving in that pattern. This further increases the stress on the muscles

## Causes of backache

Apart from the above mentioned triggers, backache can be caused by a number of other conditions.

- **Osteoarthritis (OA):** with increasing age, the joints of the backbones undergo degeneration. OA of the joints that link one vertebra to its neighboring ones (called the facet joints) causes back pains.
- **Vitamine D3 and Calcium deficiency:** Routine blood test for Vitamin D3 and Calcium, bone density study will help evaluate the health of bones. Osteoporosis is a common condition leading to back pain.
- **Herniated Discs (disc prolapse):** any heavy strain or increased pressure in the back can displace the round, resilient discs which act as shock absorbers for the back bones. They cushion every impact on the back such as when jogging, weight lifting, horse-riding etc. injuries, normal wear and tear, and diseases that affect the backbones can cause minor tears on the disc surfaces as well as make them bulge out from their places. Displaced discs can press on surrounding nerves and cause pain, tingling & numbness in the legs.
- **Injuries and fractures of the vertebrae (backbone):** conditions that cause nerve, bone and tissue injury can cause back pain ' vehicular accidents, fall from a bike, fall on the back compressing the structures in the back.
- **Compression of the spinal cord itself (Spinal stenosis):** the spinal cord travels through a narrow, hollow shaped bony canal called the 'spinal canal'. With aging, the lumen of this canal tends to become narrow, compressing the contents within it. Back pain is a common symptom of spinal stenosis.
- **Deformities:** often the backbone curvature is damaged secondary to other diseases. The alignment which is usually straight tends to deviate either to the sides (scoliosis) or appear bent forwards (kyphosis). Long-term mal-alignment of

the vertebral column can cause tremendous stress and strain on the supportive muscles that surround it. This usually gives rise to backache.

- **Occupational:** many occupations can take a toll on your back. If your work requires long hours of standing, lifting of heavy weights or sitting in an uncomfortable position, your back will possibly suffer.
- **Athletes** are very prone to low back aches.

Back pain might also originate from the nerves, spine and muscles of the back. Conditions affecting structures present in the abdomen and pelvis - (kidneys, ovaries, intestines, prostate etc.) can cause a backache. In general backache is never really serious. It is self-resolving and lasts only for some days.

70% of persons approaching a GP are better in 3 weeks while 90 % are better in 6 weeks time, irrespective of the treatment received.

### **The less common causes of back pains include:**

- **Infections:**tuberculosis and osteomyelitis are conditions that cause back pains. But, fever, body ache and other symptoms generally accompany back pains in these conditions. Bacteria and viruses can enter the spine either through direct trauma, through surgical procedures, injection treatments or spread through the blood stream.
- **Ankylosing spondylitis:**a condition which causes inflammation of the joints in the spine.
- **Pagets disease:** a disorder which affects the bones of spine, chest, skull, pelvis and legs due to abnormal bone growth.
- **Pelvic inflammatory disease:** any inflammation of the uterus, ovaries or the fallopian tubes can present with low back pains. Generally the pains are accompanied by uneasiness and fever.
- **Pancreatitis:** the pancreas when inflamed can cause sudden, severe pains in the abdomen accompanied by nausea, vomiting and fever. Occasionally, the pains radiate to the lower back also.
- **Aortic aneurysm:** the aorta is the largest artery carrying blood away from the heart. In some conditions, the walls of the aorta can become very thinned out due to overstretching. This can cause pain in the back especially if the thinned out wall ruptures.
- **Kidney stones or urinary tract infections:** Stones in the kidneys or anywhere within the urinary tract cause obstruction to normal flow of urine as well as braise the walls of the ureters (two structures which carry urine produced within the kidneys to the bladder where they are stored before being excreted), and can also cause back pains.
- **Tumors:** any abnormal growth of tissues especially in the back region.

### **When to see my doctor?**

Your back pains definitely deserve medical attention in the following situations:

- Your pains are accompanied by persistent fever.
- You suddenly lose control over your bowel and bladder movements.
- There are additional symptoms of numbness in the feet, nausea vomiting etc.
- You have had a violent accident involving the back.
- There is redness of the skin overlying the backbones.
- Pain is elicited even with slight application of pressure.
- You have developed weakness in the legs along with or after onset of the back pains.
- The pains radiate below the hips to the legs.
- Even the slightest movement is intolerable.
- You have been on steroid treatment for other conditions.
- You have a positive medical history of a tumor in the past.
- You are HIV positive or have an addiction to drugs.
- You have lost weight in the recent past.
- You are above 50 years of age.

- You are less than 20 years and feel this is the worst back ache of your life.
- You have had back aches in the past, but this episode is clearly different.
- Your low grade pains persist for more than two weeks.
- In spite of resting your back, the pains do not improve significantly in one or two day's time.

## How do I prevent backaches?

Some simple measures can help keep back pain at bay!

- Learn to bend and lift objects properly.
- Avoid standing for long periods at a stretch. If you must stand for a long time, make sure your ears, shoulders, hips and knees are in the same straight line.
- If you have long hours of sitting, like a long car drive, try taking stops every one hour and walk around a bit.
- When sitting for long, make sure your chair has a high back and supports your back (especially the region between the ribs and hip-bones) curvature properly. You may need the help of a pillow for the same.
- Your chair should not be too high or too low either. Again, when sitting on a chair, make sure that both your feet touch ground completely. Your knees should extend beyond the seating provided and they should also be higher than your hips.
- Don't slouch when sitting.
- While sleeping, make sure your bed provides adequate support to your back. Very soft beds can strain your back muscles. If you are prone to back pains, then sleep on your back with your legs straight. Bending the legs at the hips increases stress on your back muscles.
- Exercise daily. A good exercise will improve your posture.
- A complete workout session should include walking/swimming aerobic activity + riding a stationary bike.
- **Never skip your warm-up exercises**, even if you do regular workouts.
- Manage your weight. Try maintaining your body weight within the range optimal for your age, sex, and daily routines.
- Have foods rich in calcium, Vitamin D, phosphorus and proteins. They both help in building and repairing bones and muscles.
- Wear low-heeled shoes. Avoid wearing stilettos for long periods.
- Quit smoking. Smoking contributes to osteoporosis. It hardens the arteries supplying blood to our bones and reduces the blood supply to other vital structures that form your backbone.
- Relax. Avoid stress from getting at you. Stress causes the supportive muscles of the back to go into an abnormally contracted state. Try yoga, tai chi and massages which are known to help.

## Diagnosis of Backache

Backache is a symptom, causes for which are numerous. A sound clinical evaluation often suffices to trace the cause. Most physical exams will involve an examination of the following:

- **Palpation:** Your doctor will check for any sign of pain produced with application of pressure. He will also need to verify whether you have any outward signs of trauma » broken bones, brazed skin etc. your doctor will also assess your reflexes, joint stability and flexibility of the muscles around the joints.
- **Gait:** Check the way you walk. Is pain or stiffness preventing a normal gait?
- **Stance:** any abnormal posture adopted when standing
- **Range of motion:** To check if the range of motion is painless or painful, restricted and stiff.
- **Straight leg test:** this test is done to confirm the affection of the sciatic nerve as it passes through your leg. Doctors may even advice a few tests and laboratory investigations.

- A **complete blood count** along with **erythrocyte sedimentation rates** » this would help in tracing causes like infections.
- Other tests depending on presentation of symptoms may be required e.g. the **test for tumor markers** where malignancies are suspected.
- **Radiographic evaluation:** where the back pains are not relieved by rest or medications and where there is a history of acute trauma to the back, or other symptoms like weakness of legs or numbness, a radiographic evaluation becomes necessary.
- **Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Computed Tomographic Scanning:** both non-invasive tests that provide highly accurate results. These tests can often diagnose the presence of an illness, or herniated discs even in asymptomatic patients. MRI uses no ionizing radiation and is better at imaging soft tissue (e.g., herniated discs, tumors). CT scanning provides better imaging of cortical bone (e.g., osteoarthritis). Compared with MRI, CT scanning is less sensitive to patient movement and is also less expensive.
- **Bone scanning:** also called **Bone Scintigraphy** » useful when radiographs of the spine are normal but the clinical findings are suspicious for osteomyelitis, bony tumors or hidden fractures.
- **Needle electromyography and nerve conduction studies:** useful in differentiating peripheral nerve damage from disorders of single nerve roots or muscles.

## Treatment of Low Backache

### Conventional treatment

- Painkillers and correction of structural deformities are the mainstay of conventional approach to back pains.
- **Pain killers:** Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs) given for two weeks usually reduce the pains.
- **Physiotherapy:** physical treatment through appropriate exercises for improving posture and muscle tone provide lasting relief.

## Homeopathy For Low Backache

Homeopathic medicines offer excellent relief from low back pains. Homeopathic medications can relieve the spasms of the back muscles and provide effective pain relief without any side effects. Homeopathy is strongly recommended.

## Homeopathic Remedies for Backache

Some common homeopathic medicines for backache:

Related conditions: Rheumatoid Arthritis, Ankylosing Spondylitis, Cervical Spondylitis, Multiple Myeloma

- **Magnesium phosphorica:** This over-the-counter medicine is safe to take in 6c potency, for getting superficial relief in pain, before you consult a professionally trained homeopathic doctor.
- **Kali carbonicum:** This medicine is often indicated in females having chronic backache due to physical and mental stress, prolonged anxiety. The individuals requiring this medicine are often worrying-type, slightly self-centered, fearful, and who may also have some gastrointestinal ailments such as gastritis and/or respiratory disease such as asthma or allergies.
- **Natrum sulphuricum:** This medicine works especially if there is a history of back or spine injury leading to backache. The pain may aching in nature, constant, more at night and more in humid climate. The patient may be sensitive by nature, emotionally governed and might look arrogant in attitude.
- **Arnica Montana:** This popular home-remedy for backache is more famous as anti-injury medicine. It helps by reducing swelling and relieving the pain in back. The potency suggested is 30c, to be repeated every 3 hours, if required.

## BELL'S PALSY

Facial paralysis also called as Bell's palsy, is a condition where one of the sides of the face meets with paralysis. Bell's palsy is a self resolving condition having partial or complete weakness of the facial muscles. Usually one side of the face is affected.

Two hundred years ago, Sir Charles Bell first detailed a condition which causes weakness or paralysis of the facial muscles.

The Facial Nerve originating in the brain (in the pons) controls the muscles of the forehead, neck and facial expressions. It is also responsible for the 'perceived sound volume'. Besides, it also stimulates secretions of tears and saliva. Trauma of the Facial nerve in any form causes Bell's palsy.

The condition affects men and women alike, has no age bar and has no particular affinity for any one side of the face. One in every 65 people will suffer from Bell's palsy once in their lifetime. It is the most common disorder affecting just one nerve (mononeuropathy) making it most common cause of acute facial paralysis.

### Symptoms

Symptoms range in severity from mild weakness to total paralysis. They include:

- Mild to moderate to severe weakness of facial muscles (one of both sides)
- Paralysis of facial muscles
- Difficulty in drinking, chewing, eating and blowing
- Twitching
- Weakness
- Headache
- Giddiness
- Discomfort or pain in the jaw or behind the ear on the affected side
- Ringing in the ears
- Loss of taste
- Increased sensitivity to noises in the ear of the affected side
- Symptoms associated with paralysis
- Drooling of saliva
- Drooping eyelid or corner of the mouth
- Dryness of eye or mouth
- Impaired sense of taste
- Excess tear formation in one eye.

Facial distortion can be quite significant in Bell's palsy.

### Causes of Bell's Palsy:

The exact cause remains unknown. However, some of the following factors could cause or trigger Bell's palsy:

- Viral infections: Herpes Simplex Virus-1 (HSV-1) is a virus considered causing 70% of all Bell's palsy.
- Lyme Disease (a bacterial infection transmitted by tick-bites)
- Trauma or injury to facial nerve

## Diagnosis

Bell's palsy is a diagnosis of exclusion. All other known causes of facial palsy need to be eliminated before naming the condition as Bell's palsy.

Facial palsies from other causes usually present a number of symptoms not seen in Bell's palsy. They necessarily do not affect the muscles of the forehead. Besides, Bell's palsy will not bring about paralysis, weakness or numbness in other parts of the body.

## How soon will it improve?

Most people improve after the first two weeks. Complete recovery is usually seen in 3 to 7 months. Some may take longer for complete recovery 9 months to a year.

## Complications

If you suspect Bell's palsy, its best to seek medical attention immediately. In majority of cases, the prognosis is very good. Complete facial paralysis or starting medications very late are commonly associated with complications.

- Permanent contractures and spasms of the facial muscles
- Persistent loss in taste sensations
- Chronic eye (corneal) infections
- 'Crocodile tear syndrome' in which tears are involuntarily shed while eating

## Treatment:

Good news is that most people with Bell's palsy recover completely within 3 to 9 months. Yet, the most important factor in treatment is to eliminate the source of the condition.

### Conventional treatment:

- Antiviral therapy with **acyclovir** is the treatment of choice.
- **Steroids** (prednisolone) are given to prevent further damage from nerve inflammation.
- **Pain killers** (ibuprofen, acetaminophen and aspirins) are given to minimize pain and discomfort.
- **Lubricating eye-drops** -> artificial tears, eye ointments and gels - prevent the eyes from dryness and irritation.
- Electrical stimulation of the facial nerve will prevent further muscle degeneration and speed up recovery.
- **Active physiotherapy sessions with facial muscle exercises** strengthen the muscles, prevent permanent contractures and help gain control over facial expressions.

### Homeopathic treatment:

Homeopathic treatment has known antiviral activity. It is also targeted towards healing of nerve damage in case of traumatic cases of Bell's palsy. Some of the commonly indicated medicines are *Causticum*, *Arnica*, *Hypericum*, *Mezerium*, *Belladonna*. There are about 25 possible medicines to choose from, depending on the exact cause and symptoms.

# BRONCHITIS

## What is Bronchitis

Bronchitis simply means an inflammation of the *bronchus*, the windpipe. This is usually caused by infection (viral, bacterial, fungal, etc) or allergy or both. This condition is widely prevalent throughout the world and is a frequent cause of absenteeism from school and work.

Bronchitis seems to be slightly more common in women as compared to males though the difference is not significant. It is more common amongst the younger age-group as compared to the adult population.

## Causes of Bronchitis:

- Allergy (environmental and industrial pollutants, pollen, etc.)
- Tobacco
- Infections (viral, bacterial, fungus)
- Immunological
- Exposure to temperature changes (extreme cold, change from cold to heat and vice versa, etc.)

## Symptoms of Bronchitis:

Cough is the most common symptom. The cough may be either dry (without mucus) or wet (with mucus), depending on the cause and severity. Allergic cough is often dry while infective cough has a tendency to have mucus production. The symptoms of Bronchitis may be listed as under:

- Cough (with or without mucus)
- Fever
- Chest pain,
- Difficulty in breathing. (dyspnea)
- Throat pain
- Nose congestion,
- Body ache, joint pain, tiredness (usually due to infection).

## Bronchitis Types: Acute, Recurrent and Chronic bronchitis

A single episode of bronchitis which may resolve within less than three weeks may be called as an Acute Bronchitis.

If there is an underlying cause of lowered immunity, tendency to catch infection or if there are factors such as Smoking and environmental pollution; there may be a tendency to have Recurrent Bronchitis.

Those patients who have lowered immunity and / or are exposed to maintaining factors such as smoking, pollutants (pneumoconiosis, excessive alcohol consumption and exposure to cold and draught, etc.) may present with Chronic Bronchitis, whereby the patients may have symptoms of Bronchitis for long time, as long as two months to over years.

## Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:

Homeopathic treatment is very strongly suggested during for all forms and stages of Bronchitis.

**Homeopathy** has proven treatment which helps towards:

- Relieving nasty cough
- Controlling and treating the underlying tendency to catch cold and cough

- Improving immunity and general vitality
- Reducing the severity, frequency and duration in case of Recurrent bronchitis
- Helping allergic as well as infective cases of bronchitis

## **CALCANEAL SPUR**

Patients complaining pain in one of the heels or back of the foot, often returns from the doctor's office with a diagnosis of Calcaneal spur.

The technical name for heel bone is Calcaneus, which is one of the foot bones. Spur means a bony projection. (Spur has different meanings.)

When there is a bony projection of the heel bone (Calcaneal spur), the patient will face difficulty with movements. This disease is more frequently observed in females.

### **Symptoms:**

The symptoms arise due to friction of spur with the bone and other soft tissues. There will be poking or stitching pain. The pain can be very severe for many. The pain could be severer. Most patients may present with pain while initial making steps, especially while getting up from bed in the morning. The friction leads to inflammation or swelling.

### **Causes of Calcaneal Spur (Heel Pain):**

The exact cause is not known.

### **Investigations and diagnosis:**

X-ray will show the bony Calcaneal spur very clearly. Plantar fasciitis is a related condition.

### **Treatment:**

It is a bony projection is a mechanical problem, which may require surgical removal if it is very large and if the symptoms do not reduce with medicines. Avoidance of wearing high heels is recommended in all cases. Conventionally, the patients are treated with pain killers or periodical injection of cortisone in the affected region.

### **Homeopathic Treatment for Calcaneal Spur:**

There are some effective homeopathic medicines prescribed on the basis of exact case analysis. The selection of such a medicine could not be easy; may best be done by an experienced homeopath, after evaluating the x-ray. Homeopathy can offer excellent relief in pain in many cases. However, it cannot reverse the bony growth. The patient may have to take medicine periodically. Radiological cure may not be achieved. Homeopathy offers excellent results in Calcaneal spur and it is very strongly recommended.

## **CARBUNCLE**

### **Introduction:**

A carbuncle is a skin infection presenting with multiple boils on the skin. It can occur anywhere in the body caused due to bacteria called Staphylococcus aureus. Carbuncles are commonly seen around the nape of neck and the back. It presents with painful boils discharging pus and necrotic (dead cells) material involving the skin and deeper tissue.

The infection is contagious and may spread to other areas of the body or other people.

### **Incidence:**

- Most patients are adults with poorly controlled diabetes.
- It is more commonly seen in males than females.
- Not seen in children.

### **Cause:**

There is no exact cause as to why does one get bacterial infection leading to Carbuncle. However persons with diabetes and weakened immunity are more prone to develop a carbuncle.

Carbuncle can increase due to shaving and poor hygienic conditions.

### **Distribution:**

- Nape of the neck is the classic and most common site.
- Trunk and proximal extremities are affected less commonly.
- Other Sites being: Back, Shoulder, Cheek, Upper Lip, Dorsum of Finger.

### **Signs and Symptoms:**

- Fever and enlarged Lymph nodes may be present in some cases.
- Skin becomes red and swollen.
- Carbuncle presents with pus filled boils (mass), dead tissue, which spread rapidly.
- Subsequently central part softens, multiple vesicles appear on skin which transforms into pustules which may burst or coalesce to form an ulcer.
- Burning pain and severe itching in and around the site of carbuncle is the most distressing symptom.

### **Diagnosis:**

- Mostly diagnosed clinically by expert eyes.
- Biopsy may be required to confirm the diagnosis.
- Blood sugar levels must be checked to rule out Diabetes.

### **Conventional treatment:**

- Anti bacterial soap found to be effective in control of infection to the other parts of the body.
- A course of Antibiotic should be completed.

### **Homeopathic management:**

Carbuncle finds an excellent treatment with homeopathy. Most cases heal and antibiotics can be avoided.

### **The duration of treatment for Carbuncle:**

Most patients show significant improvement in about five to six weeks. The full length of treatment is usually for about four months. Some patients may need longer course of medication. It is possible to avoid antibiotic in most cases, if timely homeopathic treatment is used.

## **Complications:**

- Sepsis
- Spread of infection to other areas
- Permanent scarring of the skin
- Abscess of the brain, skin, spinal cord, or organs such as the kidneys.

## **CARPAL TUNNEL SYNDROME**

Carpal Tunnel Syndrome is a common condition which causes pain and weakness in the muscles of the hand.

There is a small tunnel shaped structure in our wrist joint which houses a nerve called the median nerve. This particular nerve is very important for functions and sensations of the muscles of the palm. Any increase in the contents of the carpal tunnel or decrease in the size of the tunnel itself can compress the nerve as it passes through the tunnel from the hand into the palm.

### **Causes of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

The exact of CTS is unknown though certain medical and occupational conditions can increase risks.

- repetitive stress (like interminable hours over a key-board!)
- pregnancy,
- oral contraceptive pills,
- under active thyroid functions,
- diabetes
- acromegaly
- osteoarthritis
- rheumatoid arthritis,
- cardiac failure,
- trauma and fracture of wrist bone (lunate)
- premenstrual stress.

Other factors which increase the likelihood of CTS are:

- CTS affecting any family member.
- Occupations (assembly line workers, meat packers, food processors, and the like, not general office work),
- Stress,
- Obesity
- Age (40)

### **Symptoms of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

- Sensation of numbness and tingling especially of the thumb, index and middle fingers.
- In early stages this sensation is more like having your hands simply "falling asleep" (in fact, only pain with absence of this sensation makes this diagnosis unlikely!!).
- With intense pain, relief is obtained by characteristically flicking or shaking the wrist
- Weakness of the muscles of the palm
- Difficulty in making a fist
- Tendency to drop things easily
- Grasping objects becomes very difficult
- Person tends to become clumsy

- Later on, there is visible wasting of the muscles of the palm.  
Commonly, the symptoms appear at night because many people sleep with bent wrists which further compresses the carpal tunnel. Simple flexing of the hand at the wrist to 90 degrees causes considerable reduction in the tunnel size.

## **Diagnosis of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

Your doctor can diagnose this condition in the clinic (PHALEN'S TEST, TINEL'S TEST).

In few cases of suspicion these investigations may be used

- Electromyography
- Nerve conduction studies
- MRI
- Ultrasonography.

## **Prevention of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

The most effective way to prevent carpal tunnel syndrome is to take frequent breaks from repetitive movement such as computer keyboard usage as well as treating the precipitating conditions (diabetes, hypothyroidism etc.)

## **Treatment of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

Lifestyle Modifications

Decrease excessive consumption of:

- sugars
- caffeine
- processed grains and corn
- protein intake
- foods containing yellow dyes
- alcohol
- estrogens
- oral contraceptives, post-menopausal drugs
- penicillamine
- radiation exposure
- tobacco

Have more of these in your diet.

- whole grains
- seeds
- nuts (peanuts, walnuts)
- soybeans
- fresh salmon and cod (cold-water, non-farmed)
- brewer's yeast
- molasses
- liver
- wheat bran and [wheat] germ etc.
- Avocadoes, bananas, prunes, blueberries
- cabbage
- green leafy vegetables

- raisins

It is also recommended to make efforts in adopting a more ergonomic work and life environment.

### **Conservative management**

- Wrist splints worn at night.
- Carpal injections (hydrocortisone acetate)
- Painkillers (NSAIDS)
- Ultrasound therapy.
- Physiotherapy.

### **Surgical repair**

Decompress the nerve by dissecting the flexor retinaculum (tendon sheath of the muscles of the hand which form the roof of the carpal tunnel).

Surgical corrections reportedly have 54-60% success rates eventually end up requiring additional surgeries (in 10% cases).

### **Homeopathic treatment for Carpal Tunnel Syndrome**

- Homeopathy can be considered a good alternative to the use of steroid in most cases. It is recommended to start with homeopathy before option for cortisone.
- It can offers great control in pain and stiffness, providing a substitute to pain killers. Homeopathic medicines are safe and do not have side effects what the NSAIDS have.
- There are no side-effects to homeopathic treatment.
- Timely homeopathic treatment can prevent the use of surgery.

## **CATARACT**

Cataract is development of haziness in the vision either partial or complete which gradually increases overtime. Cataract affects the lens of the eye and prevents light from penetrating hence obstructing vision.

### **Causes:**

- Aging
- Diabetes and hypertension of long duration
- Ultraviolet light e.g.: pilots are more prone to the disease as they fly at high altitudes continuously
- Infra-red radiation e.g.: glassblowers are exposed to infra-red radiation by virtue of their occupation
- Trauma to the eye

### **Symptoms:**

Loss of clear vision and haloes around street lights at night. In early stages only haloes around lights at night are visible. The symptoms gradually advance causing loss of clear vision finally leading to blindness.

## **Prevention:**

Research has proven that statins given to patients at risk for age related nuclear cataracts (central) delay the process of cataract formation. Anti-oxidant use has not been proven to delay the process of cataract formation.

## **Treatment:**

Extra capsular Lens Extraction: In this procedure the lens is removed and the capsule is left intact. The process is completely safe.

Constitutional homeopathic treatment can delay the formation of cataract in high risk patients like pilots, glassblowers and the aged.

Homeopathy has no role to play in treatment of cataract. Over the counter homeopathic eye drops available in the market do not do any good and lengthen the process of cataract maturation causing further problem to the patient for a longer duration. Homeopathy is not recommended in the cases of cataract.

# **CELLULITIS**

## **Introduction:**

Cellulitis is an acute or chronic inflammation of the connective tissue of the skin, caused by infection with a type of bacteria (staphylococcus, streptococcus or other bacteria).

Cellulitis frequently occurs on exposed areas of the body such as the arms, legs, and face. It is characterized by redness, swelling, warmth and pain or tenderness.

The swelling can spread rapidly.

## **Causes:**

Cellulitis occurs when the bacteria enter through a break in the skin. This break need not be visible to the naked eyes. Group A Streptococcus and Staphylococcus are the most common bacteria which can cause cellulitis. Predisposing factors for cellulitis include insect bites, animal bites, itchy (pruritic) skin rash, recent surgery, athlete's foot, dry skin, eczema, burns and boils, lymphedema swelling, diabetes, patients on immunosuppressive or corticosteroid medications, etc.

## **Symptoms:**

The affected area is red due to the inflammation and there may be warmth over it. Tight, glossy, "stretched" appearance of the skin is commonly seen. Pain or tenderness of the affected area is also seen. Other symptoms that may be seen include fever (with or without chills), sweating, fatigue, muscle pains (myalgia) and malaise. Occasionally, local lymph nodes may be swollen.

## **Self care for Cellulitis patients:**

Rest the affected part of the body Elevate the infected area to decrease the swelling and to relieve the discomfort.

## **Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:**

Homeopathy can effectively manage cases of cellulitis. The skin swelling, redness and pain can very well be treated with homeopathy. Not only does homeopathy successfully manage acute cellulitis but it also helps in preventing the recurrent attacks in cases where this tendency is present. Local care of the affected part combined with homeopathic treatment can ensure good recovery of cellulitis.

## CHRONIC FATIGUE SYNDROME

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) generally refers to a disorder in which there is severe and persistent tiredness, which is not relieved by rest.

As the name suggests, it is a state of chronic fatigue that exists without any cause for more than six months and is accompanied by difficulties in short-term memory and/or concentration.

Chronic fatigue syndrome affects approximately ten people among thousands of people.

This condition occurs most commonly in young to middle-aged adults. It occurs more commonly in females than in males.

### Causes of CFS:

Though the exact cause of chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is unidentified some theories suggest CFS may be due to some viral infection or due to altered immune system.

### Symptoms of CFS:

Generally the symptoms of CFS are similar to those of the flu and other common viral infections, which include

- Extreme fatigue. A new onset of unexplained, continual fatigue which is unrelated to exertion and not significantly relieved by rest, which also causes a considerable reduction in previous activity levels.
- Muscle Pain.
- Pain in multiple joints.
- Headache.
- Impaired short-term memory or concentration.
- Extreme and prolonged exhaustion after physical or mental exertions.
- Not refreshing sleep.

### Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Homeopathy

Chronic fatigue syndrome can be effectively treated with homeopathy. The medicines are selected in homeopathy on the basis of patients individual symptoms pertaining to fatigue, the factors leading to it such as exertion, body position, time of the day; besides the emotional factors, food habits, as well as the preceding ailment such as some viral infection, etc.

As many people with CFS have depression and other psychological disorders that may improve with the constitutional and holistic individualistic approach of homeopathic treatment.

Combined action of constitutional Homeopathy Treatment and some simple but effective process like Sleep management techniques, light exercise; healthy diet can give a very good and effective result in treatment of chronic fatigue syndrome.

## COELIAC DISEASE

Coeliac Disease (or celiac) disease is a disease of small intestines. This is a disease of immune system that affects the absorption of essential nutrients from the small intestines. The small intestines abnormally react to gluten (certain type

of proteins) and produce the symptoms. Gluten is a protein that may potentially lead to problems such as Coeliac disease, dermatitis, autism, IBS, eczema, etc.

It is a disorder of small intestine in which a person has an immune reaction to eating Gluten. The delicate linings of the small intestines get damaged in response to the reaction of gluten, which lead to the symptoms.

## **Gluten:**

Gluten is a protein found mainly in wheat, barley, oat and rye. Gluten is found in any food prepared from such cereals, including pasta, cakes, cereals, most types of breads, biscuits and certain types of sauces. It may be noted that wheat allergy and Coeliac disease (due to gluten hypersensitive) are two different conditions.

Most beers, which are made from barley, so they contain gluten.

## **Prevalence**

As per a study, one in about every 1700 persons suffers with Coeliac disease. While, estimated 1% population in the US and the UK suffer with gluten sensitivity. This disease is observed in infants, children as well as adults; in males as well as females. It seems that the actual figures of people suffering with Coeliac disease and gluten sensitivity may be much more. It is interesting to note that the gluten-free products market in 2010 was \$2.5 billion, which indicates the incidence of this disease group.

## **Symptoms**

Since the linings of the small intestines get damages in response to gluten allergy, the inflamed intestines produce symptoms such as diarrhea, bloating of abdomen. Also, there is lack of absorption of essential components such as vitamins, minerals, which leads to loss of weight, lethargic feeling and other related symptoms.

Some babies may show skin rash due to gluten sensitivity. Many times, some patients may not have any symptoms. The symptoms may disappear once patient omits gluten in diet, by following gluten free diet. Infants Soon after introducing solid food containing gluten, the baby may fail to grow or gain weight. As food is not absorbed properly, the stools may be pale, bulky and offensive smelling.

The abdomen may be swollen and the baby may have repeated vomiting. The symptoms of coeliac disease in children may be similar to those in infants. In addition, poor absorption of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients results in anemia and poor growth in children.

Anemia (low hemoglobin) in spite of eating well should make a doctor think of Coeliac disease. Adults: The signs and symptoms of coeliac disease in adults vary from person to person. Generally, the most common symptoms observed are diarrhea and weight loss. However, some people diagnosed with coeliac disease may have constipation and are found to be obese.

Patients may present with symptoms of indigestion, bloating of abdomen, mild abdominal pain and loss of appetite. In addition to these digestive symptoms, other symptoms include: Anemia, headache, fatigue, itchy blisters on skin (often called as dermatitis herpetiformis), numbness and tingling in feet and hands, osteoporosis, osteomalacia, damage to dental enamel, joint pain and acid reflux or heartburn.

## **Causes of Coeliac disease**

Coeliac disease being an auto-immune disorder, where the immune system mistakes one of the substances that makes up gluten, called gliadin as a threat to body; and starts fighting against it. In this process, the body produces antibodies against the gluten and the small intestines get inflamed on the surface.

The surface of the intestine is usually covered with millions of tiny tube-shaped growths called villi. Villi increase the surface area of the gut and help it to digest food more effectively. However, in coeliac disease, the damage and inflammation to the lining of the small intestine flattens the villi, which reduces their ability to help with digestion.

One has to have a genetic predisposition to get affected by Coeliac disease. It often runs in families. Some of the genes found to be associated with the coeliac disease are HLA DQ2 and HLA DQ8. Either one or both of these genes are present in every person with coeliac disease.

But merely having these gene mutations doesn't mean you'll get coeliac disease, other factors must be involved. Sometimes coeliac disease is triggered or becomes active for the first time after surgery, pregnancy, childbirth, viral infection or severe emotional stress.

Some environmental factors like previous infection of the digestive tract or improper diet also play a role in triggering coeliac disease in infancy, childhood or adults. People with auto-immune disorders like diabetes type-1, ulcerative colitis, rheumatoid arthritis, thyroid disorders or some neurological disorder like epilepsy are at a higher risk of getting coeliac disease.

## Diagnosis

There are several serology (blood) tests available that screen coeliac disease antibodies. The most commonly used test is called tTG-Iga. If the test result is positive, then a biopsy of the small intestine is carried out. If the biopsy report shows underlying damage to the surface of intestine, the diagnosis gets confirmed.

It is very important to include gluten containing products in the diet at least for 6 weeks before undergoing these tests. The tests may show negative, if you are on a gluten-free diet. If blood and biopsy results seem unclear to diagnose coeliac disease, gene (HLA) testing can be useful.

People affected by coeliac disease have HLA DQ2, HLA DQ8, or parts of these genes. But only 1 in 30 people having these genes will develop coeliac disease. This test is helpful in people who have already commenced gluten-free diet, as the gene test is not dependent on gluten intake. People who are gluten sensitive experience symptoms similar to coeliac disease, but will not have intestinal damage and will test negative for coeliac disease antibodies.

## Complications

People with coeliac disease who continue to take gluten in the diet or who are yet to be diagnosed with coeliac disease are at a risk of developing long-term complications like osteoporosis, malnutrition, lactose intolerance, other auto-immune disorders and in rare cases bowel cancer.

## Treatment:

A strict lifelong gluten-free diet is currently the only effective treatment in coeliac disease. The gluten-free diet allows the small bowel to heal and the symptoms improve considerably within weeks of starting gluten-free diet. In addition to gluten-free diet, it is advised to start vitamin and mineral supplements to replace any deficiencies at least for the first six months after diagnosing coeliac disease. If the small intestine is severely damaged, then a doctor may recommend steroids for healing of the small intestine.

For other associated conditions with coeliac disease like itchy skin rash, osteoporosis, anemia, etc. medications should be started accordingly.

## Homeopathic treatment for coeliac disease

The homeopathic approach to treating coeliac disease is similar to treating any auto-immune or allergic disease.

Homeopathy recognizes coeliac disease as hypersensitive state due to immunological reactivity governed by genetic tendency; and treats it accordingly. The homeopathic medicines are targeted at controlling the body's over-reaction to gluten and also aimed at controlling the symptoms.

The homeopathic treatment is largely based on the constitutional approach. Some of the commonly used medicines are Silica, Calcaria phosphorica, Phosphorus, Kali carbonicum, Thuja occidentalis, Calcaria Carbonicum, Sulphur, Lycopodium clavatum, and some more.

## CONJUNCTIVITIS

### Definition:

Conjunctivitis is an inflammation or swelling of conjunctiva, which is an outermost covering of the eye and the inner eyelids. Most common causes of conjunctivitis include infections and allergies. Conjunctivitis can be acute (of short duration), chronic (long lasting) or recurring in nature. Conjunctivitis is probably the most common disorder of the eyes.

### Symptoms:

- Redness
- Irritation
- Watering
- Thick, stringy discharge which may be yellowish or greenish in color
- Eye pain
- Swelling of the eye
- Sensation of particle in the eye
- Aversion to light
- Sneezing and runny nose in allergic conjunctivitis.

### Causes:

It can be classified into two types:

#### A] Infectious conjunctivitis:

Infectious conjunctivitis is either bacterial or viral in origin and spreads to the other eye when one eye is infected. It also spreads to people coming in contact with the affected person.

#### B] Non-infectious conjunctivitis:

Non-infectious conjunctivitis occurs due to pollen or some foreign body or pollutants or dust or household cleaners, smoke, entering the eye, underlying diseases like rheumatoid arthritis, cytomegalovirus, lupus, Kawasaki's disease, Ulcerative Colitis, Crohn's Disease. It does not spread. Herpes can also cause non-infectious conjunctivitis. Chemical conjunctivitis is caused due to burns and exposure to toxic chemicals. Allergic conjunctivitis is accompanied by irritation and discharge from the nose as well which is worse in dry weather and better by moist weather.

### Prevention:

Staying away from allergens, is one way of preventing allergic conjunctivitis.

Washing the eyes, face and hands frequently during the day prevents infectious conjunctivitis.

Staying away from crowded places and using personal towels and napkins and handkerchiefs prevents the disease from spreading to others.

### **Conventional Treatment:**

- Decongestant and antihistaminic eye drops or cromoglycate eye drops are used in allergic conjunctivitis.
- Antibiotic eye drops are used in bacterial conjunctivitis.
- Warm compresses help in viral conjunctivitis.
- A wash out of the eyes with saline helps in chemical conjunctivitis.

### **Homeopathic Treatment:**

Homeopathy has great scope in the treatment of conjunctivitis both the infectious and the non-infectious varieties by improving the immunity. Homeopathy is found to be more effective in chronic and recurring conjunctivitis such as Phlyctenular conjunctivitis, immunologically mediated conjunctivitis, etc. All forms of chronic and recurring conjunctivitis patients are strongly suggested to check the homeopathic option.

## **CONSTIPATION**

People mean many things when they say they have constipation. Infrequent passing of stools, difficulties in voiding, sense of incomplete voiding are all suggestive of constipation. The normal reference range for bowel movements is very varied. Some people have bowel movements three times a day; others, only one or two times a week.

Medically, constipation is defined as fewer than three bowel movements in a week. Constipation may be considered severe, when there is less than one bowel movement in a week.

### **Symptoms**

Infrequent stools with no other complaints is rarely abnormal. Women are more affected than men. The elderly and children are however most prone to constipation.

- Hard, difficult to pass stools which require straining or manual removal with fingers - felt more than 25% of times.
- Stools infrequent, less than three times a week.
- Sensation of incomplete voidance.

Other symptoms that a person with constipation may feel are:

- The abdomen may seem bloated, distended or crampy.
- The bowel sounds may seem enhanced.

### **Causes**

Many factors contribute to development of constipation. Different people will have different set of causative factors.

- Insufficient fiber intake in diet.
- Not chewing the food properly / eating hurriedly.
- Reduced water intake.
- Various medications
- Iron supplements
- Antidepressants, tri-cyclic anti-depressants.

- Anti-convulsants
- Diuretics
- Stopping cigarette smoking.
- Abuse of laxatives.
- Medications containing calcium and aluminium.
- Endocrine disorders like - under active thyroid.
- Any severe illness like stroke, paralysis.
- Major changes in life like pregnancy, old-age or traveling.
- Psychosomatic causes like depression and anxiety neurosis.
- Biochemical imbalance ' low potassium levels in blood.
- Lead poisoning.
- Conditions that obstruct the normal passage of the stools within the intestines ' foreign bodies in intestines, strictures, adhesions, tumors, etc.
- Abdominal surgeries.
- Weakened pelvic floor muscles.
- Constipation can occur sometimes as part of a condition called 'irritable bowel syndrome' where it alternates with diarrhea.

## Diagnosis

A proper clinical history and physical examination usually suffices to diagnose constipation.

The presence of hard stools, difficulty in eliminating them and feeling of incomplete voiding of stools usually indicate the presence of constipation. Very hard, small, pellet-like stools which are eliminated with a lot of difficulty certainly indicate constipation even if stool occurs every day.

In very severe constipation of long standing, a physical examination may reveal the presence of hard lumps over the abdominal surface.

Other tests that your doctor may advice are:

- Anorectal function tests - identify constipation caused by abnormal functioning of the anus or rectum.
- Sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy.
- Colorectal transit study - shows how well food moves through the colon.
- Defecography - evaluates completeness of stool elimination, evaluates rectal muscle contractions and relaxation and abnormalities in the anal canal or the rectum.
- Barium enema X-rays of the abdomen to detect the presence of any foreign bodies or other structural abnormalities within the intestines.
- Tests to rule out an under active thyroid.

## Prevention

Constipation is a condition easier to prevent than to cure. Tackling the problem at its onset can prevent many years of discomfort and sufferings.

## Tips to Prevent Constipation

- **Have more fibres** in your diet. 25 to 30 grams of daily intake can prevent constipation. Fibres help retain water in the stools thus making them softer and easier to expel.
  - Whole grain cereals and breads
  - Dried fruits, such as prunes and raisins
  - Popcorn, nuts, and seeds

- Beans and legumes
- Raw fruits and vegetables
- **Drink plenty of fluids, preferably water.** 8 glasses a day will help. Have more if you are physically active. Prune (manukka) juice, and other fruit drinks are known to normalize bowel motility.
- **Cut down on soft drinks and alcohols.** Dehydration is a major contributor for hard, lumpy & irregular stools. Overuse of colas, alcoholic and caffeinated products can contribute to constipation. They are dehydrating agents.
- **Check your medicine closet.** Identify your routine medications that may contribute to constipation. Let your doctor help you find an alternative.
- **Don't curb your natural tendencies!** Do not ignore your body's natural urge to defecate. Over time, your body will stop having these natural urges and constipation will set in. Train your child to void himself when he has the urge, even if he'd rather play.
- **Stop the regular use of laxatives and enemas.** Their long-term use can aggravate constipation. If you must take laxatives, then try starting with very low doses. Avoid randomly self-medicating oneself.
- **Exercise, Exercise, Exercise!!** Physical inactivity can certainly make bowel movements very sluggish! People tend to cut down on physical activities as they age, for many reasons. Walking is a great way to exercise and prevent constipation.

## Treatment

Changes in living and diet can alleviate the symptoms of chronic constipation. An under active thyroid disorder or mood disorders like anxiety neurosis will require treatments specific to them.

A major part of treatment consists of adding more fibre and fluids in the diet; engaging in more physical activities and modifying the stress factors that contribute to constipation.

Constipation not improving with life-style changes is managed with

- Laxatives
- Enemas

However, long term use of laxatives can cause further symptoms of distention and bloated feeling, not to mention an ever increasing dependence on them.

## Homeopathic treatment for Constipation:

Homeopathy offers promising cure for constipation. Chronic constipation results from various constitutional problems such as stress, genetic predisposing, altered sleep pattern, etc. Homeopathy offers treatment which is based on the patient's individual case pattern. Homeopathy is strongly recommended for all cases of constipation.

Homeopathic treatment for constipation is based on the treatment of internal causes leading to development of constipation. Most cases of constipation may not need medicine but some lifestyle and food changes.

The homeopathic medicines for constipation have a distinction over the purgatives by it not being habit-forming. Most of the purgatives are habit forming, doing more harm at the end, on stopping it. Homeopathic medicines are NOT habit forming, as they are actually not purgatives.

## Some common homeopathic remedies are listed below:

**Nux vomica:** This is an over-the-counter homeopathic medicine, which is safe to take for a few days, for getting relief in constipation. Typically, this medicine is suitable for young executives or businessmen, who are always on the go, living stressful life, pressure of deadlines, frequent travellers, irregular sleep habits, use or abuse of alcohol and smokers, and who are highly ambitious. They are likely to be lean, thin in physical structure and may be regular at gym, still not satisfied with bowel movements. Nux Vomica 30c potency for a week may help them with constipation.

**Bryonia alba:** This medicine is suitable to those who are constipation and having dry, hard stool, requiring straining at passing stool; or those who have no desire to pass stool for a couple of days. Again, they are business executives, living stressful urban lifestyle.

## COPD

COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary (lung) Disease) is a common form of chronic lung disease found all across the world. It is the abbreviation of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder. Pulmonary refer to lungs. It includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. Bronchitis is discussed separately. Here we will focus on Emphysema.

Emphysema is a chronic progressive disease of lung. It is caused by destruction of tissue surrounding air sacs (alveoli) in lungs. Due to this, alveoli cannot retain air inside them ultimately leading to shortness of breath.

### Causes of COPD:

Major causes include smoking and pollution.

### Symptoms of COPD:

Patients suffer lack of oxygen and excess of carbon dioxide in lungs. Patient exhibit shortness of breath. Symptoms usually get increased by physical activity. Eventually it will occur after any physical exertion. Later on the patient may complain of rapid breathing (tachypnoea). They may also lose weight. The anteroposterior diameter of chest may increase (barrel chest).

### Diagnosis of COPD:

Diagnosis of COPD is done by the doctor with the help of clinical examination and some simple tests, which include:

- Spirometry (Lung function test)
- X-ray chest
- Complete blood count
- Blood test to rule out tuberculosis

### Homeopathic treatment

Homeopathy offers good supportive role in cases of Emphysema. Homeopathy can control further destruction of the tissues in lungs. In addition it enhances body's immunity. Thus symptomatic relief and prevention of complication are main achievement by homeopathy.

In severe cases supplementary oxygen may be beneficial. Homeopathy can also reduce need for bronchodilators, cortisone and antibiotics (in case of infection).

## CORNS CALLOSITIES

Callosities also known as clavus or corns, are toughened areas in the skin, as a result of repeated pressure or repeated contact with rough surfaces. They are most common on the hands and feet but appear localized to the area that bears repeated pressure or abrasion.

Cause of Callosities (Corns):

Corns and calluses arise from hyperkeratosis, a normal physiological response to chronic excessive pressure or friction on the skin.

The outermost layer of skin called the stratum corneum is maintained as a hard, protective, layer by the process of keratin deposition (keratinisation). The stratum corneum is thus maintained as a highly protective sheath over the skin. In hyperkeratosis, there is excess deposition of keratin over the skin as a result of repeated pressure or shear strain that chronically displaces or disrupts the stratum corneum. This excess deposition may happen either locally or in a diffuse manner depending upon individual tendencies and the nature of stresses involved.

Often, callosities are found in sensitive areas of the body where the overlying skin is exposed to repeated wear and tear. They are the body's natural response to repeated moderate and constant, pressures. Callosities are commoner over the skin overlying the weight bearing areas of the body while the corns may appear on non-weight bearing areas of the palms and soles.

The corn is a localized collection of dead skin cells which have a very hard (indurated) centre. Many clinicians believe that a typical callosity differs from a corn because, its center unlike the corn is softer and not a hardened core.

Occasionally, when corns become painful, they are called 'bunions'.

The most common sites for clavus formation are the feet, specifically the dorsolateral aspect of the fifth toe for heloma durum, in the fourth interdigital web of the foot for heloma molle, and under the metatarsal heads for calluses.

## Who gets a corn or callus?

Anyone who subjects their body parts repeatedly to pressures, are candidates for corn or callus formations.

One's chances of developing corns or callosities increase if they are subject to the following conditions:

- Ill-fitting shoes.
- High-heeled shoes.
- Cramped footwear, use of hard footwear, using shoes without socks, etc.
- Foot deformities: bony projections or poorly united fractures, the presence of a second toe longer than the first toe.
- Dancing bare feet or wearing uncomfortable shoes.
- Playing musical instruments like the guitar, sitar, drums, etc.
- Writers are prone to developing callosities over the middle finger called 'a writer's bump'.
- Weight lifting can cause callosities in the palms of the person.
- Occupations like hair-dressers, carpentry, boxing, cherry pitting, dancers who perform spins on their backs, jewelry making etc. increase the occurrence of callosities on parts exposed to repeated frictions and pressures.
- Infants and children who suck their toes or fingers develop callosities over the areas of friction.
- Some medical conditions predispose a person to callosities. Callosities may form a part of their symptoms (keratoderma palmaris et plantaris) or natural sequel of the disease progression. Conditions that present with callosities at some point are:
  - Diabetes -> chronic diabetes with peripheral neuropathy.
  - Syphilis
  - Rheumatoid arthritis -> abnormal pressure if there is a deformity of the foot.
  - Diseases which affect nerves carrying sensations (sensory neuropathies)
  - Obesity
  - Bulimia nervosa
  - Amputation
  - Exposure to toxins like arsenic can cause hyperkeratosis of the palms and soles.
  - Certain religious activities like offering prayers by kneeling with hands on forehead give rise to callosities on forehead called 'prayer calluses'.

## Symptoms

- Affected area of the skin appears rough, thickened and hyperkeratotic.
- It is common to find the callus present with fungal infections.

- Pain: on applying direct pressure is not uncommon. Some callosities can be so painful that they seriously alter the person's gait and daily activities.
- Occasionally - presence of a keratin plug in the centre of the callus.

## Diagnosis

Callosities can be diagnosed through proper descriptions of the symptoms, clinical examination, and histopathological reports of a biopsy specimen.

## How long do Callosities last?

In most cases, the callus resolves once the offending pressures are removed. But, if they are caused by an underlying condition, there are high chances of recurrence.

## Treatment for Callosities (Corn)

Any treatment measure opted for must treat not only the corn or callus, but also provide relief from the underlying cause.

Callosities may be acutely painful because of pressure of the central keratin plug on underlying nerves in the papillary (second layer of skin) layer. Callosities which are soft or overlying bony surfaces can occasionally become infected due to minor tears in the thin overlying skin.

- Pain relief can be obtained by paring the callus and relieving the tension within.
- Regular scrubbing with a pumice stone after soaking the feet or callus in warm water can prevent recurrence especially in painless callosities.
- Uses of proper footwear which distributes weight evenly can prevent the recurrence of callosities.
- Adequate antibiotics or anti-fungal therapy will control the superadded infections.

## Homeopathy for callosities

Callosities and corns show promising results with homeopathic treatment. Homeopathic medicines can relieve the pain as well as recurrence of the callosities. Painful callosities that cannot be scrubbed by pumice stones respond well to homeopathic medications taken internally.

## DANDRUFF

Dandruff is one of the most common ailments affecting the scalp. Dandruff is nothing but excessive scaling of dead cells of the skin of the scalp. As you are aware, body undergoes constant but gradual renewal every 24 hours. However, when it is much faster renewal of the skin, it becomes visible in the form of scales, which we call dandruff.

### Symptoms of dandruff:

Dandruff, per se, is not a disease but a symptom. Excessive and obvious scaling of skin which is visible in the form of white (grey), flaky substance is the most common symptom (or sign) of dandruff. It may often be associated with itching, oily skin, irritation or redness of underlying skin. It tends to be chronic (long lasting) as well as recurring.

Dandruff could be of two major types: a. Dry (flakes appear silvery and white) b. Moist. (where the flakes appear pale yellowish with unpleasant smell.)

## Causes of dandruff:

Dandruff results from rapid maturing (and hence shedding) of the cells every week, instead of every month.

Excessive oil (sebum) production precipitates dandruff in many people. This over activity could result from more than one reason. The causes, triggering factors and maintaining factors can be categorized as under:

### Internal causes

### External causes

Hormonal imbalance

Infection (Pityrosporum Ovale or Malassezia Globosa) (Debatable.)

Poor Health

Excessive use of hair sprays, gels

Allergic (Hypersensitive)

Improper use of hair : coloring products, hot iron curls

Emotional Stress

Cold weather, dry indoor heating

Excessive consumption of fat, starch, sugar

Infrequent shampooing of hair or Inadequate rinsing or shampooing of hair

Improper Nutrition

Poor Hygiene

Hereditary Predisposition

Excessive junk food

Dandruff is often found to be is mostly seasonal. Some patients find it most severe during winter and mildest during summer.

Though Dandruff is called as *Dry Scalp* but the people with oily scalp tend to suffer the most.

## Diagnosis of dandruff:

While concluding the exact diagnosis of dandruff, your doctor often requires ruling out other underlying diseases, which often resemble present like dandruff: They are

- Seborrhoeic dermatitis
- Psoriasis
- Fungal infection

Your doctor will be able to evaluate your history and the exact diagnosis could be arrived at by a close clinical examination. No biopsy is required.

## Treatment of dandruff:

The challenge of treating dandruff lies in the successful control of its relapse. It is not very difficult to treat dandruff for once. However, it is not easy to treat dandruff forever!

The treatment for dandruff should aim at controlling the underlying causing factors as well as the symptoms.

## Conventional treatment:

The conventional treatment often treats the end result rather than the root cause of dandruff. Most commonly measures are use of

- Use of Anti-dandruff shampoo's

- Ketoconazole
- Antifungal shampoo
- Selenium sulphide

### Homeopathic treatment:

Homeopathic treatment aims at treating dandruff in totality. In other words, it treats the underlying cause of dandruff (please check the causes as described above) and hence helps preventing recurrence of dandruff.

The medicines used for dandruff are geared towards altering the activity of the scalp tissue and therefore slow down the multiplication of the cells of the scalp. Homeopathic medicines possibly depress the abnormal multiplication of cells of the scalp called 'stratum corneum'. Homeopathic medicines are unique in the respect that they can act as immune-modulators and address underlying immunological parameters while treating dandruff.

### Homeopathic Remedies for Dandruff

- Some of the commonly used homeopathic medicines for dandruff are
- Mezerium, Thuja Occidentalis, Kali sulphuricum, Kali muriaticum, Sulphur, Psorinum, Natrum muriaticum, Graphites, Sepia and more.
- **Mezerium:** This medicine is prepared from the plant, which grows in Russia, Scandinavia and Asia, with bright red berries. Mezerium helps those cases of chronic dandruff who have thick scabs which are hard to remove, which may leave behind painful marks and possibly scars.
- **Thuja Occidentalis:** This powerful medicine helps resistant cases of dandruff, where the patients have oily hair, itching on scalp and may also have oily face; with or without acne or pimples. These patients are usually sensitive to cold. One may need just a few doses selected in correct potency by a professionally trained homeopathic physician.

## DENGUE

Dengue is a serious viral infection prevalent mostly in the tropical countries like India, Africa etc.

**Causes:** It is transmitted by an infected female Aedes aegypti mosquito. When the mosquito bites a person infected with dengue, the dengue virus enters the body of that particular mosquito. When the infected mosquito bites a healthy human being, the dengue virus enters the human body and the person shows the symptoms of dengue.

### Symptoms:

- High grade fever with chills. Fever is as high as 104°F
- Severe headaches
- Severe joints and muscle pains
- Severe pain in eyeballs especially while moving the eyes.
- Appearance of skin rash mostly on the abdomen and limbs.
- Nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite
- Internal and external bleeding in the body

Dengue fever should be suspected when the patient complains of very high temperature and severe body pain. While giving the history the patient says, I feel as if each bone of mine is broken. When a practitioner gets to hear such kind of words or description by a patient, he should investigate that patient for dengue fever immediately.

Dengue fever is also known as the Break bone fever. Platelet counts start decreasing fast in the blood in such patients. Platelets are responsible for stopping the bleeding occurring anywhere in the body. The decrease in number of platelets increases chances of hemorrhage from various parts of the body in the patients suffering from this disease.

Following symptoms in a patient of Dengue are considered the alarming signs. Such patients should be kept under close medical observation.

- Bleeding from the nose
- Bleeding from mouth
- Passing blood in urine. This may present as passing reddish or brownish urine.
- Passing blood in stools. Or passing dark colored stools.
- Bleeding under the skin causing bruising on the body.
- Severe hypotension means drop in the blood pressure.
- Brain hemorrhage and internal bleeding in various parts of the body like stomach, lungs etc.

### **Diagnosis:**

Diagnosis is confirmed by doing Dengue IgM test along with other blood tests like CBC ESR, Liver function test, PCR and virus isolation tests are the confirmatory tests for the Dengue fever.

### **Prevention:**

Spread of this disease can be reduced by taking following measures.

- As far as possible wear clothes that cover the skin of the whole body. This prevents the skin exposure to the mosquitoes.
- Use mosquito repellents in the room
- Use nets and screening on windows.
- Avoid storing water in bathrooms and kitchen as dengue spreading mosquitoes breed in clean and stagnant water.
- Avoid keeping plants in the house. Because this is an ideal ground for the mosquito breeding.

### **Treatment:**

The treatment is given symptomatically. Ideally, patient should be hospitalized to keep a check on platelet counts and as there is lot of loss of fluids from the body patient has to be administered IV fluids to keep him hydrated. Patient of Dengue can easily go into hypotension (low blood pressure), so continuous Blood Pressure monitoring is also very important. When there is a need doctor advises the patient for undergoing platelet transfusion.

### **Role of homeopathy:**

Dengue is the disease which requires a close monitoring of the patient in the hospital. Administering homeopathic drugs along with other conventional drugs can speed up the time of recovery in the patient.

Homeopathic medicine Eupatorium Perfoliatum is one of the drugs best known to reduce the body pain considerably in the patient suffering from Dengue. Apart from this, drugs like Aconite, Gelseminum, Bryonia Alba, Rhus Toxicodendron, and Ipecacunha etc. can be given as per the symptoms.

As a supportive line of treatment along with conventional medicines, homeopathic medicines can offer best results in the treatment of Dengue. More research is required to prove if Dengue could be prevented by using homeopathic prophylactic medicines. Some study in Brazil has shown encouraging results with homeopathic preventive.

## **DENTAL DISEASE**

The spread of the virus occurs by droplet infection i.e. when a person infected with Rubella sneezes or coughs he throws the virus in the air; the droplets in the air spread infection in the healthy individuals.

## **Symptoms:**

Symptoms of Rubella are generally mild. They appear after 2 to 3 weeks after the person is infected by Rubella virus. The disease presents itself in the following way.

- Development of red or pink rashes first on face then trunk and then on the extremities.
- Bright red conjunctiva of the patient.
- One peculiar symptom is the child affected with Rubella presents with sunken eyes.
- Presence of fever, cold and cough
- Enlargement of lymph nodes especially behind the ears and the neck.
- Child becomes irritable and cranky.
- In adults or adolescents Rubella can cause severe joints pain or arthritis.

## **For how long the patient of Rubella can spread the infection to others?**

The patient of Rubella can spread the infection for almost 20 to 25 days. The patient is contagious for about 10 days before the onset of rash and he remains contagious for about another 7-15 days after the rash disappears.

**Rubella and pregnancy:** If a pregnant woman contracts Rubella during pregnancy, then her child bears the serious consequences of it. The children of such mothers develop Congenital Rubella Syndrome in the first year after the birth.

## **Symptoms of Congenital Rubella Syndrome:**

- Cleft lip
- Cleft palate
- Retardation of physical growth
- Mental retardation
- Congenital cataract
- Low birth weight
- Congenital defects in the heart etc.

## **Prevention:**

Rubella can be easily prevented by giving vaccine to the child. The child should be given the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) vaccine at 9 months, 15 months and at 4-6 years of age before entering the school. Most parents give first two doses of vaccines but they tend to forget the MMR vaccine dose at 4-6 years of age.

Rubella vaccine should be taken by the women of child bearing age before planning the pregnancy. But care should be taken that women should not become pregnant for at least 28 days after taking the Rubella vaccine. A person develops lifelong immunity against Rubella, after getting infected by the disease.

## **Treatment:**

Isolation of the patient suffering from Rubella is the most important part of the treatment. The patient should be isolated from others during the infectious period because the Rubella infection can very easily spread in healthy individuals.

Doctors generally give the symptomatic line of treatment for controlling the severity of fever, body pains, headaches and cough cold etc.

# DEPRESSION

## Definition:

Depression is a chronic, long lasting or recurring and treatable disorder, where the patient experiences sadness, worthlessness, loss of motive, loss of interest and/or hopelessness.

A depressive disorder is an illness that involves the mood and thoughts and in simple words can be expressed as persistent sad mood. Depression is not a character flaw or a sign of personal weakness and the suffering person can't make himself well by trying to snap out of it. Depression affects the way a person eats and sleeps, the way one feels about oneself, and the way one thinks about things.

Depression results from a complex, partly understood biochemical changes in the brain, which are influenced and supported by multiple causes inclusive of genetic trait, circumstantial factors, hormonal factors, socio-personal reasons, etc. Increased levels of brain chemicals called neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and norepinephrine are found to improve the state of depression.

Depression is much more common than we believe. However to get precise figures in terms of its prevalence is difficult as many of them go undetected and untreated. Women are twice more often affected with depression than men.

Not everyone who is depressed experiences all the symptoms listed below. Some people experience a few symptoms, some many. Severity of symptoms varies with individuals and also varies over time.

## Common Symptoms of Depression

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood and unexplained crying spells
- Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, guilt feeling, worthlessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities that were once enjoyed, including sex, social withdrawal
- Loss of energy, persistent lethargy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Insomnia, early-morning awakening, or oversleeping
- Appetite and/or weight loss or overeating and weight gain
- Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts
- Restlessness, irritability, anger, agitation
- Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment, such as headaches, digestive disorders, and chronic pain

Though the precise cause and nature of depression is not clearly understood, it is believed to be an illness involving an imbalance of brain chemicals called neurotransmitters. The reasons that can induce such chemical imbalance are as follows:

**01** Some types of depression run in families, suggesting that the condition can be inherited from parents and grandparents as a genetic predisposition.

**02** When this genetic predisposition is topped with stresses at home, work, or school, it can evolve in depression. Stress can be in the form of a serious loss, difficult relationship, financial problem, or any stressful change in life patterns, etc.

**03** People who have low self-esteem, who consistently view themselves and the world with pessimism or who are readily overwhelmed by stress, are prone to depression.

**04** Medical illnesses such as stroke, a heart attack, cancer, Parkinson's disease, and hormonal disorders can cause depressive illness.

Very often, a combination of genetic, psychological, and environmental factors is involved in the onset of a depressive disorder.

## Homeopathic Treatment

Homeopathy offers an excellent treatment for all stages of Depression, especially in the early stages. Homeopathy can take care of various symptoms of depression. Extreme cases of depression or the cases where the patients are on high doses of the conventional medicines for a long time (drug dependency) may not find good results using homeopathy.

Homeopathy can positively influence personality traits that are working at the base of disease. The important aspect is that depression is a disease in which genetic make-up is topped with environmental stress result in disease. Homeopathic medicines are very deep acting and having potential to counter genetic tendencies. Homeopathy medicines address the root cause of the disease and hence prevent the relapse and recurrence of the condition. Last but not the least, homeopathy medicines are absolutely free from any side-effects as opposed to most of conventional medicines like anti-depressants and anxiolytics.

Homeopathy goes into the depths of depression, and the treatment is thus based on the underlying causes of it.

The results achieved using from homeopathy can be augmented with supportive measures like counseling and psychotherapy.

## Homeopathic Remedies for Depression

Selection of a correct homeopathic medicine for depression requires professional skill, detailed case evaluation of the patient's life space, in-depth knowledge of homeopathy, proper understanding about depression and the psychological diseases, training in counseling and the like. Simply buying some homeopathic medicines from the market and taking randomly would not give any benefit. Some of the commonly indicated homeopathic medicines are listed here:

**Aurum Metallicum:** This medicine is prepared by processing the precious metal, gold (Au). This is a deep acting; effective medicine, which can influence and help recover from deep-seated depression.

The patient requiring this medicine is likely to have lost interest in life. There is a sense of loathing for life, lack of joy, loss of smile, loss of hope. Desire to live life is lost and as a result you find this patient gloomy, sad, depressed, lost somewhere, vacant and isolated. He may be feeling lost, lonely and all alone in the world. He may have seen a very hectic and even successful career; and due to some triggers, there would be an U-turn and the person falls into deep valley of depression.

**Manganese:** This metal medicine has ample of gloominess, depression and sadness. You may find this person reserved, self-turned, un-social, keeping away from meeting with people. You may find this person in the house, in his or her room, keeping himself isolated. He may feel better by very sad music.

# DIABETES TYPE 1

## Introduction:

Type I Diabetes is also known as Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (IDDM) or Juvenile Diabetes. Diabetes mellitus is a syndrome (= set of symptoms) characterized by increased level of sugar (glucose) in the blood due to deficiency or inactivity of hormone 'Insulin' that is absolutely necessary to monitor glucose metabolism of body. By and large IDDM is an early-onset disease and is frequently seen in children though adults can also be affected by it. Diabetes is prevalent worldwide and if not attended properly, it may lead to serious complications.

## Causes of Diabetes 1:

IDDM occurs as a result of decreased production of hormone 'Insulin' by the pancreas (the organ that synthesizes insulin). This occurs due to loss of the insulin-producing cells (beta cells of the islets of Langerhans) of the pancreas.

Auto- immunity (disturbance of immune system where body's defense mechanism starts attacking body's own organs and tissues) has been strongly suggested as a causative factor in the initiation of Type I Diabetes. Genetic factors may also have a role to play in this alteration of the immunity. Type 1 diabetes also appears to be triggered by some viral infections or less likely stress-related or environmental factors (such as exposure to certain chemicals).

## Symptoms:

The classical triad of diabetes symptoms is polyuria (frequent urination), polydipsia (increased thirst) and polyphagia (excessive hunger/appetite). These symptoms may develop quite fast in children. There may also be weight loss and excessive fatigue.

## Homeopathic treatment

In case of Insulin Dependent Type I diabetes, the role of homeopathy is restricted to controlling the complications of diabetes such as diabetic neuropathy, nephropathy, etc. Homeopathy does not have medicines that could stimulate the pancreas to secrete insulin in cases of Type I diabetes.

# DIABETES TYPE 2

## Introduction:

Type II Diabetes is also known as Non-Insulin Dependent Diabetes Mellitus (NIDDM) or Adult-onset Diabetes. Diabetes mellitus is a syndrome (= set of symptoms) characterized by increased level of sugar (glucose) in the blood due to deficiency or inactivity of hormone 'Insulin' that is absolutely necessary to monitor glucose metabolism of body. This is a metabolic disorder that is primarily characterized by insulin resistance, relative insulin deficiency and consecutively hyperglycemia. Diabetes is prevalent worldwide and if not attended properly, it may lead to serious complications.

## Causes of Diabetes 2:

NIDDM basically occurs due to defective insulin secretion combined with defective responsiveness of the body to the insulin (also called Insulin resistance). Due to both these factors, hyperglycemia starts occurring in the body. NIDDM is strongly associated with obesity and with increasing age. A strong inheritance pattern has been noted in cases of

type 2 diabetes. Sedentary lifestyle, pregnancy, hypertension, cardiovascular diseases, etc pose as risk factors for developing Diabetes.

Type 2 diabetes can begin at any age though it is not very common in childhood. It usually begins with insulin resistance, a condition in which the body does not use insulin properly. At first, the pancreas keeps up with the added demand by producing more insulin but later it loses the ability to secrete enough insulin in response to meals. This ultimately results in Hyperglycemia (high levels of glucose in circulation).

## Homeopathic Treatment for Diabetes 2:

Type II Diabetes is a constitutional disorder as it is an offshoot of constitutional defects (genetic factors, altered immunity) having an impact on the entire constitution of an individual. Hence it calls for an in-depth constitutional approach for its management.

Homeopathy is based on the principle that disease is a total affliction of body. Moreover homeopathy recognizes importance of the underlying causes such as genetic and inherited factors as the root of any ailment of the body. Homeopathic medicines prescribed on such criteria plays a crucial role in management of many deep-rooted, chronic, difficult diseases; one amongst them being Diabetes.

When we talk about diseases like diabetes, we talk in terms of management rather than cure. Homeopathic treatment along with intake of hypoglycemic drugs and/or insulin can prevent the progress and the complications associated with this condition. Moreover timely administered homeopathic medicines help in maintaining the levels of exogenous insulin and hypoglycemic drugs at minimum possible dosage and in preventing the further progress of the disease. However, it may be noted that there is no substitute to insulin in homeopathy. The role of a healthy diet and exercise cannot be underestimated along with all the above treatment measures.

## DRY EYES

### Introduction:

Dry eyes occurs due to decreased secretion of tears in the eyes' tear glands.

### Types of Dry Eyes

It is of two types:

**A Primary:** Where the problem is inherent and the tear glands secrete less amount of tears.

**B Secondary:** Where the tear glands secrete less tears due to some systemic problem or auto-immune disease or some medications.

### Symptoms of Dry Eyes:

- 01 Itching
- 02 Dryness
- 03 Burning
- 04 Redness
- 05 Irritation
- 06 Excessive tears
- 07 Blurred vision improving with blinking
- 08 Increased sensitivity to bright light
- 09 Sensation of speck in the eye

**10** Pulling sensation behind the eye

**11** Increased discomfort after reading, watching TV or working on the computer, driving

## Causes:

- Aging
- Increased symptoms in dry weather and environment and better in humid weather and environment like rainy days and in the shower
- Hormonal changes during menstruation, pregnancy and menopause can cause dry eyes
- Antihistamines, sedatives, diuretics, Tricyclic antidepressants, phenothiazines, beta-blockers, nasal decongestants, atropine, pain relieving opiates such as morphine and birth control pills can cause dry eyes
- Sjogren's syndrome
- Sensory denervation
- Systemic lupus erythematosus
- Wegener's Granulomatosis
- Diabetics are at an increased risk of dry eyes
- Thermal or chemical burns
- Bulging eyes
- Drooping Eyelid
- LASIK, refractive surgeries
- Vitamin A deficiency
- Trachoma
- Diphtheric keratoconjunctivitis

## Treatment for Dry Eyes:

Constantly blinking eyes while watching TV, working on the computer, etc Wearing glasses or having a downward gaze while working on the computer can also help. Research has proven that consumption of dark fleshed fish and omega-3 fatty acids causes decreased incidence of dry eyes in women. Customized contact lenses like Boston Scleral lenses are known to help in the secretion of tears. Surgeries like blocking tear drainage, punctal plugs and cauterization of puncta are performed to help the patients.

# DYSLEXIA

## Introduction:

Dyslexia is one of the most common learning disabilities and about 4% of people over the world suffer from it. These patients have difficulty in processing language, especially in tasks involving reading and writing. Dyslexia is more common in males as compared to females and it can continue into adulthood also.

## Symptoms:

Symptoms of dyslexia may vary from mild to very severe and can be broadly grouped into the following categories:

### 1) Reading (and spelling):

- The child is often confused by letters, numbers, words, sequences or verbal explanations
- His reading or writing shows repetitions, additions, transpositions ('b' instead of 'd', 'p' instead of 'q'), omissions, substitutions, and reversals in letters, numbers and/or words
- He may feel that the letters or words to be moving or jumping around on the page when he is reading or writing

- He reads and rereads with little comprehension
- He seems to have difficulty with vision, yet eye exams don't reveal a problem

## **2) Writing (motor skills):**

- He has trouble with writing or copying in class
- He is clumsy, uncoordinated while writing, handwriting may be illegible
- He can be ambidextrous and often confuses left/right, over/under

## **3) Hearing and Speech:**

- The child is easily distracted by sounds or he may hear things that have not been said
- He may face difficulty in speaking out what he is thinking (cannot put thoughts into words)
- He may mispronounce words (e.g. 'God' instead of 'Dog'), transpose words while speaking, leave sentences incomplete or take long halts during his speech

## **4) Memory:**

- He has poor memory for facts, sequences, information that has not been experienced
- His memory can be very good for things that have been experienced
- In general the child can appear to be very bright and intelligent but when it comes to reading, writing, spellings, etc he can be very bad at these
- The child learns best through experience, observation, demonstrations, experimentation, and visual aids
- He can fare well in verbal tests but may not be able to do well in written exams

## **5) General features:**

- The child can be very talented in art, drama, music, sports, mechanics, story-telling, designing, etc
- He may have high IQ but may not score well academically
- At school he may be labeled as lazy or careless due to his symptoms
- The child may develop low self-esteem due to his inability to cope up with the educational system

## **Causes of Dyslexia:**

Dyslexia is an inherited condition which appears to affect more boys than girls and the genetic component has been found to play an important role in the development of this condition. In dyslexic patients, structural differences in the way the brain is wired up during development stage have been found. There has been found a deficit in a special pathway between the eye and the brain- the "magnocellular pathway"- in dyslexic individuals. Many people with dyslexia have also found to be deficient in omega-3 unsaturated fatty acids.

## **Homeopathic treatment:**

Dyslexia a constitutional disorder, as it is an outcome of a constitutional problem (genetic factors). Homeopathy is definitely recommended for the management of dyslexia. Special modified teaching methods and educational environment, special tutoring, summer school, speech therapy, or placement in special classes helps the dyslexics to cope up better. Homeopathic treatment is extremely effective in the cases of Dyslexia and **strongly recommended**. along with other supportive therapies.

## **DYSMENORRHOEA**

It can be defined as pain which is in relation to menses that is troublesome so as to disable a woman from performing her routine chores.

Dysmenorrhea can be classified into primary dysmenorrhea where no underlying pathology can be demonstrated and secondary dysmenorrhea which has a definitive underlying causative pathology.

On the basis of the character, dysmenorrhea can also be classified into spasmodic and membranous type.

As the names suggest, the spasmodic type of dysmenorrhea involves severe pain which waxes and wanes in intensity with the contraction and relaxation of the uterus while the membranous variety has actual shedding of chunks of meaty portions of the innermost wall of the uterus called the endometrium. Very often dysmenorrhea is accompanied by a whole lot of symptoms such as giddiness, nausea, vomiting, muscle cramps, fever, etc.

### **Remarks:**

Excessive production of prostaglandins is one of the major causes for most signs and symptoms of dysmenorrhea. Primary dysmenorrhea is almost wholly due to this and may be due to a tight cervix, the mouth of the uterus. Such cases improve totally after a normal child birth due to stretching of the uterine musculature. Secondary dysmenorrhea, however, needs proper investigating into in order to know the causative pathology. The underlying pathology needs to be treated to control painful menses. Pain-killers can only offer temporary relief. The common causes of secondary dysmenorrhea are pelvic infections, congestive or inflammatory conditions within the pelvis like endometriosis, uterine tumors such as polyps or fibroids, and the presence of a foreign body such as an intrauterine contraceptive device [IUCD].

### **Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:**

Homeopathy has a promising role to play in cases of dysmenorrhea. The medicines are known to reduce the severity of the pain as well as to treat the cause, whenever possible. Every patient with dysmenorrhea may present with a different set of individual symptoms, which are carefully noted while deciding the homeopathic line of treatment. Homeopathic treatment is strongly suggested.

## **Elephantiasis**

Elephantiasis is a disease in which the patient's leg may swell up like that of an elephant. Elephantiasis is produced due to the disease Filariasis that is caused by parasites, which spread through mosquito bites to humans. This disease can have impact on personal life, psychological state, physical disability and economical state of the patients. Actually, Lymphatic Filariasis is called Elephantiasis, as it produces above stated symptoms.

Elephantiasis may affect the lymphatic system of the body, especially the legs, hands, genitals in males as well as in females; producing swelling of the affected parts. This disease affects millions of patients in Africa and other tropical countries such as India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, etc.

### **Signs and symptoms of Elephantiasis:**

Elephantiasis is caused by filarial parasites and it happens over a long period of time due to recurrence of infection.

#### **The signs and symptoms are as under:**

- Initial symptoms may be episodes of fever with chills (like malaria) with body ache. Such episodes may keep recurring to lead to long term changes.
- Once the parasites enter the lymphatic system of the body, more symptoms appear due to their effect on lymph glands.
- Inflammation of lymphatic glands or lymph nodes which may appear swelling and painful. Such inflamed lymph nodes could be found in arms, pelvis (groins), neck, behind the knees, etc.
- Chronic lymphatic affection due to Filariasis over the period of time can lead to swelling of legs, scrotum (in males), vulva (females), or arms. Elephantiasis can look ugly and disfiguring due to large swollen body parts, including large scrotum. It is often associated with thickening of skin in the affected parts.

## Causes of Elephantiasis

This disease is caused by Filariasis, which is caused by parasites called *Wuchereria bancrofti*. These parasites spread by mosquito bites.

## Treatment for Elephantiasis

The treatment of Elephantiasis is essentially targeted at treating the active infection of *Filaria*.

Even if Filariasis infection is controlled, the lymphatic swelling which have already occurred may not reverse. So the lymphatic swelling would not reduce significantly even after successful treatment of Filarial infection. Conventional medicines, which suggest the use of some antibiotics, would be indicated in active infection. Surgical treatment may be required in the resistant cases with large swelling and thickening.

## Homeopathic treatment for Elephantiasis and Filariasis:

Homeopathic treatment helps only reduce the frequency of Filariasis infection to certain extent. Once Elephantiasis takes place, that is, in the cases with large swelling of limbs, legs, hands, genitals, etc. homeopathic medicines do not or cannot cure the swollen body parts.

## Scope of homeopathy for Elephantiasis:

Homeopathy is suggested only for controlling the infection of Filariasis. Homeopathy is not indicated for reducing the huge swelling in Elephantiasis.

## ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION

Erectile dysfunction (ED) is a fairly common condition affecting men worldwide. Though the term ED covers a wide range of disorders, it commonly refers to having trouble getting or maintaining an erection. ED is not uncommon and its incidence increases with progressive age. It was formerly called impotence and its incidence increases in ages above 65.

Persistent ED has a significant impact on the man's self-image as well as on his partner's sex-life. Indeed for many men & their partner this can be a frustrating problem as the penis is unable to become sufficiently rigid and performing intercourse may seem impossible.

Most often the symptoms of erectile dysfunction are:

- Inability to achieve an erection or maintaining it to complete the act of sexual intercourse
- Premature ejaculation
- Complete inability to achieve an erection.

Though once considered a taboo, more men are now seeking information regarding ED as well as volunteering to share valuable information about it. Current estimates state that Chronic ED affects about 5% of men in their 40s and 15-25% of men by the age of 65. Transient ED and inadequate erection affect as many as 50% of men between the ages of 40 and 70.

To understand ED, it is essential to understand the normal process of achieving an erection. The anatomy of the penis is worth understanding in this aspect.

## Anatomy of penis

The penis contains two chambers full of spongy tissue called the corpora cavernosa. When a man becomes sexually aroused impulses from the brain and local nerves cause muscles in the corpora cavernosa to relax, allowing blood to flow in and fill the spaces within the tissue.

This creates pressure in the corpora cavernosa, making the penis expand.

A membrane called the tunica albuginea helps trap the blood in the corpora cavernosa, thereby sustaining erection.

The erection is lost when the muscles contract to stop blood flowing into the penis, and open outflow channels.

## Causes of Erectile Dysfunction:

A successful, sustained erection requires a sequence of events to occur in a precise fashion. Anything which disrupts this sequence can lead to problems either getting, or keeping an erection.

The most common cause of erectile dysfunction is damage to the tissues, either the nerves, arteries, muscles or fibrous tissue.

Conditions such as

- Diabetes
- Kidney disease
- Chronic alcoholism
- Multiple sclerosis
- Underactive thyroid disorder
- Arterial Disorders (peripheral vascular disease, hypertension; reduced blood flow to the penis). Cardiovascular disease

Other factors to be thought of are:

- Neurogenic Disorders (spinal cord and brain injuries, nerve disorders such as Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, multiple sclerosis, and stroke.)
- Damage to the nerves and arteries near the penis during surgery, particularly for prostate and bladder cancer.
- Physical injury to the penis, spinal cord, prostate, bladder or pelvis.
- Common medications, including blood pressure drugs, antihistamines, antidepressants and tranquilizers can precipitate erectile dysfunction.
- Psychological factors such as stress, anxiety, guilt, depression, low self-esteem, and fear of sexual failure cause up to 20% of cases.
- Lifestyle: alcohol, drugs and smoking.
- Illness of the tissue of the penis itself (cavernosal disorders)
- Hormonal Disorders (pituitary gland tumor; low level of the hormone testosterone).
- Aging.

## Diagnosis of Erectile dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction has many predisposing factors. One of the basic aims of diagnosing this condition is to ascertain whether the underlying cause of ED stems from psychological factors or whether there are indeed any physiological causes. More often both these factors co-exist in the same person.

A useful and simple way to distinguish between physiological and psychological impotence is **to determine whether the patient ever has an erection.**

If never, the problem is likely to be physiological; if sometimes (however rarely), it could be physiological or psychological.

## Clinical Tests Used to Diagnose ED

There are no tests per se which diagnose erectile dysfunction. Many laboratory investigations are conducted to primarily rule out conditions like diabetes, arterial diseases [disorders of blood vessels supplying the heart (Coronary Artery Disease), increased lipid(fats) in bloodstream, disorders of peripheral blood vessels etc.]

Yet, other tests are performed to measure the severity of erectile dysfunction. These tests also provide an insight to the possible cause of ED. Some of these tests have been outlined:

- **Duplex ultrasound:** A chemical which induces an erection (prostaglandin) is injected in the penis. Once an erection is achieved the ultrasound is used to study the degree of dilatation of the penis as well as to measure the blood pressure within the organ. This test identifies any structural or functional inadequacy within the penis.
- **Penile nerve function:** the physician squeezes the head (glans) of the penis. This generally causes simultaneous contraction of the muscle of the anus. The time period between the stimulus and contraction is a good indicator of the activity of the nerves supplying the penis. Certain conditions like diabetes, and many nerve diseases causing ED can be the cause of an abnormal penile nerve function.
- **Nocturnal penile tumescence (NPT):** Commonly a man can have five to six erections in the night during sleep (REM phase). Thus, their absence indicates trouble with the blood supply, the nerve functions or with both. This study concentrates on studying the rigidity of the penis, by recording the circumference. However, this test can often give ambiguous results since, with some men, it is normal to not have as many erections.
- **Penile Biothesiometry:** This test uses electromagnetic vibration to evaluate sensitivity and nerve function in the glans and shaft of the penis. A decreased perception of vibration may indicate nerve damage in the pelvic area, which can lead to impotence.
- **Dynamic Infusion Cavernosometry:** (Abbreviated DICCC),it gives a measurement of the vascular pressure in the corpus cavernosum during an erection. Fluid is pumped into the penis at a known rate and pressure.. To do this test prostaglandin E-1, which causes dilatation of the blood vessels, is injected to measure the rate of infusion required to get a rigid erection and to help find how severe the venous leak is.

### Other similar tests one may hear of are:

- Corpus cavernosometry
- Digital Subtraction Angiography
- Magnetic resonance angiography (MRA)

## Treatment of Erectile dysfunction

### Conventional treatment

Due to the sensitive nature of this condition, the conventional modes of treatment give a lot of emphasis to

- Psychotherapy
- Daily exercises; these increase blood flow to all parts of the body, increase levels of male hormones, increases levels of certain neurohormones which are mood elevators.

When psychotherapy fails to bolster the person's self-image interventional modes are applied.

- Drugs [oral drugs, penile suppositories, ointments, injectable, hormone treatments (rare) etc.]
- Vacuum devices - these work by drawing blood into the penis. It must be used just before intercourse.
- Surgery - as a last measure when all other methods fail to better ED. Prosthetic implants (artificial rods) are inserted into the penis and allowed to remain there. However, these are very expensive and also irreversible.

All treatments aim at helping the individual achieve an erection and maintaining it long enough to perform intercourse. However, no treatment can provide a permanent cure for this condition.

## Homeopathic Treatment for Erectile Dysfunction

Homeopathy offers remarkable results in the cases of Erectile Dysfunction, which may have arisen from both physical and psychological causes. Both, the mental as well as physical component of the disorder can be addressed using homeopathic medicines for Erectile dysfunction.

## Homeopathic medicines for erectile dysfunction

Selection of Homeopathic medicines for erectile dysfunction is not very easy. These medicines cannot be taken over the counter. The patient requiring Homeopathic medicines for erectile dysfunction should visit a qualified and trained homeopath or find one online to get real help, as the selection of the medicine is difficult.

For selecting suitable Homeopathic medicines for erectile dysfunction, your homeopath will study the cause of the problem. He or she will go into the detail of why do you have it at the first place, to check if it resulted from dysfunctional relationship or due to some physical problem or due to emotional stress.

**Nux vomica:** This is often indicated for young, hard-working executives who are not able to function adequately in the bed. This may arise due to a number of reasons such as stress due to work, deadlines, stress of achieving targets, irregular sleep and food pattern, lack of exercise, alcohol, drugs, smoking, etc. This medicine may help but superficially, and another deeper acting medicine may be required after its use.

**Caladium:** The patients requiring Caladium may have complete failure in sexual relation, due to the fact that they may not get an erection at all or the erection wouldn't last for over a minute. Coldness of genital, lack of erection or early ejaculation are some of the symptoms requiring Caladium. This patient may be a smoker.

## Some tips for patients with erectile dysfunction

- Work on improving relation between you and your partner.
- Avoid alcohol, smoking and drugs which are sure to kill your sex life.
- Relax before sex.
- Sex is not an act between thighs but an interaction between two minds. Spend time on foreplay. Allow time.

## FATTY LIVER DISEASE

A collection of fats in the liver cells is called fatty liver. This condition is also called steatosis hepatis or steatorrhoeic hepatitis.

Fatty liver by itself though abnormal, is a relatively harmless condition. The liver is the largest organ in the human body. It plays many roles in keeping the biochemical balance intact. You should know some normal functions of the liver to understand how disease affects it.

Under normal conditions, your liver creates optimal nutrition for all the 50 trillion odd cells in your body. Different roles played by the liver are:

- Production of bile - which is necessary for proper digestion. Bile salts emulsify the fats and improve digestion. Also, when fat soluble vitamins A, D, and K are dissolved in bile, they are absorbed better. A good measure of toxic substances are produced in the body daily. Many of these are only fat soluble. These are dissolved in bile and finally emptied into the intestines to be thrown out as fecal matter. The liver thus helps in elimination of toxic byproducts from the body by producing bile.
- Production of many clotting factors and proteins from amino acids which are important for every process of healing, repair and cell growth.
- It is the largest storehouse of many vitamins (A, D, K + B12), iron and minerals. The liver also converts all the B-Complex vitamins into their active forms. Every nutrient, be it vitamins, minerals or amino acids, are converted into their biologically active forms by the liver. Nutrients in foods and supplements are never in their active, absorbable forms. The liver makes them active thus, making them available for body functions.
- The liver has huge stores of energy. It produces glucose from the different sugars in our diet and stores it in the form of glycogens.

- It buffers any major fluctuations in glucose levels by converting glycogens to glucose when glucose levels are low and vice versa when glucose levels are high.
- It is vital in the removal of old, worn-out red blood cells from circulation.
- The thyroid hormone T4 is converted into its more potent form T3 within the liver
- Detoxification of the body is a major function. Chemicals, industrial pollutants, metabolic wastes from junk foods, drugs, insecticide residues, alcohol, etc. are some of the dangerous toxins eliminated through our liver.

## What is Fatty Liver?

Fatty liver has large amounts of fats (triglycerides) accumulating within the liver cells. Excess aggregation of fats within the small hepatocytes swells them up and occasionally the whole liver is enlarged enough for feeling it.

Fatty liver can be a harbinger of more troublesome conditions. Steatosis simply means collection of fat vacuoles within the liver cells (hepatocytes).

Alcohol and obesity are two leading causes of fatty liver worldwide. Alcoholic Liver Disease (ALD) and Alcoholic Fatty Liver (AFL) are entities by themselves. Obesity plus other non-alcoholic conditions comprise Non Alcoholic Liver Disease (NALD).

When these fat cells cause inflammation of the liver tissues, it's called steatotic hepatitis and it is of notable concern. Both alcohol as well as other conditions causing major biochemical changes in our bodies can cause steatotic hepatitis. When this condition is due to reasons other than alcohol, it's denoted by the term Non-Alcoholic Steatotic Hepatitis or more commonly as NASH.

Fatty liver when inflamed, can over a period of time cause scarring and fibroses of the liver. This condition called cirrhosis is serious and has serious side-effects if left unchecked.

## Stages (Grades) of Fatty Liver

Fatty liver as mentioned is not a critical condition, its stages of development are divided in grades

- Grade 1
- Grade 2
- Grade 3

Grade 1 and grade 2 of fatty liver can be controlled with proper medication.

## Causes of Fatty liver

Why fatty liver occurs, is unknown. A fatty diet or overeating by itself never results in a fatty liver. The fat may come from increased absorption from the intestines or from elsewhere in the body. But, putting it generally, the liver loses its capacity to eliminate fats deposited within it. Yet, 70% of persons suffering from NASH are found to be obese.

## Some common causes of NASH are:

- **Metabolic syndromes**  
Apart from alcohol, there are many conditions that cause an imbalance in the body's metabolic capacity
- Diabetes
- High blood pressures (hypertension)
- High blood cholesterols
- Pregnancy
- Glycogen storage disease
- Congenital disorders like Wolman's disease
- Congenital diseases like Wilson's disease which affects copper levels

- Weber-Christian disease affecting nutrient absorption.
- Galactosemia - a disorder which affects the way milk is metabolized in the body.
- Infections like tuberculosis and malaria.
- **Nutritional causes**
  - Severe mal-nutrition
  - Obesity
  - Sudden rapid weight loss
  - Surgeries performed to reduce obesity - gastric bypass surgery, jejunum-ileal bypass, etc.
- **Drugs**
  - Corticosteroids
  - Valproic acids (used in epileptic patients)
  - Medications for heart conditions like irregular heartbeats and high blood pressures e.g. amiodarone; diltiazem.
  - Sedatives
  - Tamoxifen - used in treating breast cancer.
  - Methotrexate
  - Anti-retroviral drugs (indinavir)
  - Overdose of Vitamin A.
- In extreme cases, amiodarone and methotrexate can cause cirrhosis.
- **Other**
  - toxins from food stuffs like
  - rancid peanuts - aflatoxins are extremely toxic
  - mushroom poisonings
  - phosphorus from environment

## Risk factors for Fatty liver

Your chances of developing fatty liver are high if you

- are obese
- are an alcoholic
- Suffer from high blood pressures which often fluctuate or are on long-term medications for the same.
- Blood cholesterol levels are high.

## Symptoms of Fatty liver

Mild Fatty liver is usually asymptomatic. It is detected incidentally during routine tests performed. However, some persons can have symptoms which are often vague.

- Malaise - or a feeling of severe discomfort, making the person want to rest,
- Fatigue - even with moderate exertion
- Fullness and heaviness in the abdomen, more in the right upper corner
- Occasionally the liver maybe painful on pressure.

However, with fatty liver unchecked can progress into cirrhosis which is life-threatening. Thereafter, features of liver failure present themselves.

- Yellowish discoloration of skin (jaundice), dark colored urine.
- Weight loss
- Nausea and vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Mild to moderate reddish discolorations just below the superficial skin layers which blanch on pressure (spider naevi)
- Abdominal distension (due to increased fluid in the abdomen - ascites)

- Easy bleeds from small trauma.
- Blood doesn't clot soon enough
- Fine to moderate tremors of the fingers
- Flapping tremors of the hands (asterexis)
- Itching in hands and legs which gradually spread all over the body
- Veins in legs, abdomen, seem engorged and distended.
- Giddiness.
- Poor memory, poor concentration, dullness of thoughts, mental confusion » this is an emergency (encephalopathy)!!
- Depression
- Loss of sexual interest

## Diagnosis of Fatty liver

Commonly, the diagnosis is incidental. Some tests which identify the disorder are:-

- **Ultrasound (Ultrasonography):** A painless, non-invasive test, when performed by an experienced personnel, it can accurately identify fatty liver. The liver size can be measured and this test can be valuable in grading the improvement.
- **Liver Function Tests:** Abnormal levels of liver enzymes in the blood identify as well as provide a deeper understanding of the cause of fatty liver. This test also provides insight into the efficacy of treatment and the improvement to be expected.
- **Computed Tomography Scan (CT scan):** non-invasive. Measures internal organs accurately and in detail by the use of X-rays.
- **MRI:** Also non-invasive. Uses radio waves in a magnetic field to scan the structures of internal organs.

## Tips for prevention of Fatty liver

- **Say No To Alcohol**  
Or if you have started having alcohol, try not to have more than two pegs in a week.
- **Quit Smoking**  
Smoking can cause many biochemical and hemodynamic changes which make you more vulnerable to liver damage.
- **Control Weight Gain**  
70% of persons suffering from NASH are found to be obese.
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids**  
Found to be promising in preventing fatty liver. Found in natural sources like walnuts, fish oils (cod, salmons), and flaxseed oils.

## Treatmnt of Fatty liver

### Conventional Treatment

There is no standardized treatment for fatty liver. Treating the underlying cause can easily reverse the abnormal changes in the liver, provided, it is early in the disease.

Some common measures that improve fatty liver are:

- Exercise and weight loss programs: Obese patients have a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or more. A realistic weight loss program should try reducing the BMI by two units of the existing one. Aerobic exercises are best suited to burn off fat. However, one should bear in mind that for long term success, it is not the intensity of the workout, but the sustenance that matters.

- Control cholesterol levels.: Besides regular workouts, a healthy approach to avoid consumption of saturated fats in diet can reverse fatty liver. Cholesterol lowering medications used in adjunct to exercise can reverse fatty liver.
- Control Diabetes: Effective management of sugar levels with life-style changes, medications and insulin can stop further advancement of fatty liver into something serious like cirrhosis or liver failure.
- Avoid harmful substances.: Certain drugs, alcohol, junk foods etc. are better avoided when once diagnosed with fatty liver. Talk to your doctor regarding medications that can cause fatty liver. Chances are he can suggest better alternatives.

## Homeopathic treatment for Fatty liver

Homeopathy addresses the underlying causes behind fatty liver, improves liver functions and reduces the symptoms as well as modifies the disease process. Homeopathy is recommended for cases of Fatty Liver.

## FIBROADENOMA

### Introduction

Fibro adenomas are non-cancerous (benign) and harmless tumors which are made up of fibrous tissues of the breast. These are common in adolescent and young women. The incidence of Fibroadenoma reduces with increasing age.

### Signs and symptoms

- Fibroadenomas are smooth, round and easily movable swellings. It is referred as 'Breast Mouse' or 'floating tumor' as it easily slips away from fingers. Size of the tumor may vary from one to five centimeters.
- It could be single or multiple. Generally it is painless and may affect both breasts.
- Pain and tenderness (pain when touched) may be present especially before periods and subsides after periods. These cyclical changes are because of the hormonal changes. This is the reason why it is less common after menopause.

### Causes of Fibroadenoma

Exact cause of Fibroadenoma is unknown. It is because of the cyclical hormonal changes that take place in the body of women of child bearing age.

### Diagnosis

- Clinical history
- Physical examination
- Mamography – It is the process of using low amplitude x rays to examine breast.
- Biopsy – Women in their teenage do not need biopsy, if lump dissolves on it's own.

### Dangerous signs

- Sudden increase in size of tumor
- Pain in breast not affected by menstrual cycle
- Hard, immovable tumors

Transformation of Fibroadenoma into cancerous tumor is very rare. Only 0.002-0.012% of the Fibroadenoma convert into cancerous growth.

## **Treatment Conventional treatment**

- 1) Fibroadenoma can subside on it's own.
- Cryoablation (use of extreme cold to destroy tissue) is safe and effective and less invasive method of treatment for Fibroadenoma.
- Surgical removal may be required in case of large Fibroadenoma.

## **Homeopathic treatment**

Homeopathy is strongly suggested in the treatment of Fibroadenoma. Homeopathy can be given as a baseline treatment in mild and moderate cases where as it has good supportive role in advanced cases of tissue changes. The results using homeopathy in the cases of Fibroadenoma are very good.

Homeopathic medicines are prescribed after studying patient's complete case history. It enhances the body's self healing mechanism (immunity) thus further recurrence of fibroadenoma can be prevented.

At Life Force we have treated and documented good number of cases of Fibroadenoma using homeopathy at Life Force.

# FIBROMYALGIA

Fibromyalgia is a disorder which causes muscle pain and fatigue. The word Fibromyalgia means pain in the soft fibrous tissues in the body- the muscles, ligaments and tendons. Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) share a number of symptoms and the names are often used interchangeably with each other. People with fibromyalgia have "tender points" on the body; these are specific places on the neck, shoulders, back, hips, arms, and legs and these points hurt when pressure is put on them.

Women are more commonly afflicted with Fibromyalgia than men and it can occur at any age. Patients with Fibromyalgia say that they have ache all over the body. Their muscles may feel like they have been overworked or pulled. The severity of symptoms may fluctuate from patient to patient. Patients generally feel devoid of all energy and extremely fatigued without any apparent cause.

## Common features of Fibromyalgia are:

- Pain: Deep muscular aching pain; at times there may be throbbing, shooting, and stabbing, burning pain. Pain generally involves muscle groups that are used repetitively.
- Fatigue: May range from mild fatigue to incapacitating lack of energy in others. Typically describes as "brain fatigue" in which patients feel totally drained of energy.
- Sleep disturbances: Un-refreshing sleep; waking up tired after sleep.
- Chronic headaches: Recurrent migraine or tension-type headaches frequently seen in these patients.
- Other common symptoms:
  - a** Premenstrual syndrome and painful periods
  - b** Chest pain
  - c** Morning stiffness
  - d** Numbness and tingling sensations
  - e** Muscle twitching
  - f** Dizziness and impaired coordination can occur

## Probable causes of Fibromyalgia:

Fibromyalgia is a widespread musculoskeletal pain and fatigue disorder for which the cause is still unknown yet there are many triggering events thought to precipitate its onset. A few examples would be:

- An infection (viral or bacterial)
- An automobile accident
- The development of another disorder such as rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, Ankylosing spondylitis or hypothyroidism
- Repetitive injuries
- Researchers have found that people with Fibromyalgia may have abnormal levels of several chemicals, such as substance P and serotonin.

## Remarks:

Conventional treatments do not have much to offer to a patient of fibromyalgia and are geared toward reducing pain and improving the quality of sleep. Homeopathy is one branch of medicine that can bring significant relief to the sufferers of **Fibromyalgia**. Homeopathy has effective medication that works at the physical as well as the mental plane and hence can be instrumental in giving maximum relief to these patients. The underlying stress that can be a trigger for this disorder can also be effectively handled with homeopathic treatment. It improves the general immunity and vitality of the patient and also targets the increased sensitiveness to pain that these patients suffer from.

# G6PD DEFICIENCY

G6PD is an enzyme called glucose-6-phosphate-dehydrogenase. An insufficient amount of this enzyme is termed G6PD deficiency. Though the disease is rarely fatal, it causes a spectrum of complaints like jaundice in the newborn as well as acute and chronic breakdown of red blood cells. This condition is prevalent throughout the Mediterranean, the African, Asian and Middle East countries. This is the most common enzyme deficiency in the world. 400 million people worldwide are affected by this enzyme disorder.

## What is G6PD deficiency?

G6PD is a genetic, X-linked, metabolic disorder, passed on from mother to mostly the male child (females are usually healthy carriers of the gene defect). G6PD is an enzyme that keeps the red blood cells (RBCs) healthy and plays an important role in oxidizing processes. A deficiency can lead to sudden destruction of red blood cells.

Being a genetic disorder, there are more than 300 variants of this condition. The symptoms vary in their severity in different people according to the variant form of the genetic defect. G6PD plays an important role in the production of a chemical - glutathione. This chemical antioxidant is essential for maintaining the integrity of the cell walls of the RBCs.

Hemoglobin is the oxygen carrying protein in blood. It is a major component of all red blood cells and gives them their red color. This protein picks up oxygen from the lungs, carries it throughout the body and delivers it to all your cells. In addition, hemoglobin also picks up some of the carbon dioxide produced by the cells and transports it to the lungs from where it is exhaled out.

Cells need oxygen for their basic functions and to keep them alive. Hence, without enough red blood cells to transport oxygen to your cells and carbon dioxide away from your cells, it is like literally suffocating every tissue and organ system in the body. When glutathione levels are very low, the hemoglobin in the RBCs are unable to bind with oxygen. This breaks down the cell wall, spilling out all its contents.

## Symptoms of G6PD deficiency

Most forms of G6PD are mild and do not have any symptoms. Symptoms develop when people are either exposed to certain foods or drugs (fava beans; sulpha-drugs and particularly those drugs having '-quine' at the end of their names), or when the person is severely ill, or when exposed to noxious substances.

**Symptoms develop when rapid breakdown of RBCs occurs.**

### Some symptoms seen are:

- Fatigue
- Appearing very pale
- Sudden rise in body temperature
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Rapid heart beats
- Shortness of breath
- Pain in the back or abdomen
- Urine appears very dark, red, red-brown, brownish or tea colored
- Yellow coloring of the eyes and skin (jaundice)
- Spleen may be enlarged

The symptoms usually disappear when the offending food or drug is stopped.

**Infants** with G6PD deficiency can present with prolonged jaundice anywhere around days 1-4 after birth.

## When to meet the physician?

You need to immediately meet up with your physician if:

- You experience severe exhaustion or pale skin or any of the persisting symptoms become worse.
- Your urine appears very dark, red, red-brown, brownish or tea colored.
- Your urine output has noticeably reduced recently.

## Diagnosis of G6PD deficiency

When any of the above mentioned symptoms present themselves in a person of ethnic groups susceptible to the condition then, G6PD deficiency is suspected. In children, most cases go undetected until the child develops a health problem.

Some laboratory investigations asked for are:

- Complete blood count: active G6PD shows presence of "Heinz bodies" (protein aggregates) within the red blood cells.
- Liver Function Tests: done to rule out other causes of liver damage and jaundice.
- Coomb's Test: to check for presence of direct antiglobulin. The results should ideally be negative as RBC breakdown isn't an auto-immune condition.
- Haptoglobin: reduced in RBC breakdown (hemolysis).
- Beutler Fluorescent spot test: The conversion of nicotinamide adenine dinucleotide phosphate (NADP) to its reduced form in RBCs is the basis of diagnostic testing for the deficiency.

## Treatment of G6PD deficiency

For the majority of people affected, treatment of G6PD is as simple as avoiding the triggering agent. Severely ill children may need hospitalization, oxygen support and intravenous fluids.

It is important to avoid the foods and drugs below.

- Antibiotics (Sulphonamides, Co-trimoxazole (Bactrim, Septrin), Dapsone, Chloramphenicol, Nitrofurantoin, Nalidixic acid)
- Antimalarials (Chloroquine, Hydroxychloroquine, Primaquine, Quinine, Mepacrine)
- Chemicals (Moth Balls, naphthalene, Methylene blue)
- Foods (Fava beans - also called broad beans)
- Other drugs (Aspirin, Phenacitin, Sulphasalazine, Methyl dopa, Large doses of vitamin C, Hydralazine, Procainamide, Quinidine, Some anti-cancer drugs)

## GALL BLADDER STONES

### Definition:

Gallstones are clumps of crystallized cholesterol or some pigments in the gallbladder. This condition is fairly common (affects 11% of general population) women are twice as likely as men to develop gallstones. (Medical dictum for Gallstones is: It's a disease of fat female of forty).

Gallbladder is a small sac situated just under the liver and it produces bile juice that is essential for proper digestion of fats. The bile juice mainly contains cholesterol, water, bile salts and a pigment called Bilirubin. When the proportion of these contents is altered in the bile juice, gallstones start forming.

## **Types of Gallstones:**

There are two basic types of gallstones:

- Cholesterol gallstones: Made up of cholesterol (accounting for about 80% of cases)
- Pigment stones: Made up of the pigment Bilirubin

### **Factors contributing to development of gallstones**

- Obesity
- It's twice as common in females as compared to males
- People over age of 60 years are at higher risk
- Fasting, diabetes, rapid weight loss can also lead to formation of gallstones in some cases

Many patients having gallstones may not have any complaint. However, some may experience pain in the upper abdomen radiating to the back. The pain may last up to 2-6 hours.

## **Remarks:**

All the factors that form stone are present in the bile under normal circumstances; however, they are in a dissolved state. If there is increase in concentration of cholesterol or pigments, they crystallize and precipitate out as stones. Factors such as increasing age, pregnancy, obesity, liver disorders, infections can have impact on development of gallstones. Some studies suggest that genetics and heredity factors are at the root of this condition that makes one prone to have gallstones.

## **Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:**

When the stones are of a smaller size, homeopathic medicines will help in possibly reduce the size of the stones. Homeopathy medicines are effective in alleviating pain as well as chronic inflammation of gallbladder (cholecystitis) associated with the condition. Homeopathy also helps to control further stone production activity. If the stones are bigger, multiple and impacted, it may require surgical intervention. In cases of Large and multiple stones, homeopathy has no curative role to play.

## **Homeopathic Remedies for gall bladder stones**

Some of the common Homeopathic medicines for gall bladder stones include *Calcarea carbonica*, *Chelidonium*, *Phosphorus*, *Lycopodium clavatum*, *Nux vomica*, *China sulphuricum*, *Berberis vulgaris*, *Thuja occidentalis*.

Gall bladder stones are found normally among 20% of the females. Small stones in the gall bladder could be helped with homeopathy. Large stones are better treated by surgery.

# **GANGLION**

## **Definition:**

Ganglion is a small sac filled with fluid and is formed from the lining of a joint or tendon. It usually forms when the tissues surrounding certain joints become inflamed and swell up with lubricating fluid.

## **Causes:**

It is generally caused due to some kind of trauma to the joint but the cause may not be evident in all cases. Ganglion formation is more common in women (M:F = 1:3) and 70% occur in the late teens and young adulthood. Some joint diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis have been associated with ganglion cysts. Occupational factors play an important role in the development of ganglion. Those occupations that require workers to overuse certain joints such as the wrist and fingers, for instance typewriters, pose a risk for ganglion cysts.

## **Symptoms:**

Most commonly, ganglion formation is seen on the wrist (usually the back side) and fingers, but it can also develop on the shoulders, elbows and knees. Ganglia are usually painless swellings that can form around any joint. However, the condition can become painful when the ganglion presses nerves. This pain can restrict the range of movements and activity of an individual. They can increase in size or can disappear spontaneously.

## **Suggestion about homeopathic treatment**

Largely ganglion is labeled as a surgical condition; however, in light of homeopathy it can be termed as medico-surgical condition. Surgeries done for ganglion are associated with rare complications like nerve damage, stiffness of joints and recurrence. Some cases of ganglion have been treated with success at Life Force. However, since surgery is faster, we do not recommend homeopathy for all cases of ganglion.

# **GASTRITIS**

## **Definition:**

Gastritis is defined as the inflammation of the inner lining of the stomach. This may be caused due to various reasons and the condition has become rampant with today's stressful and modernized life.

## **Causes:**

Any factor that injures the wall (protective lining) of stomach provokes the symptoms of gastritis. Common causes of Gastritis include:

- Infection: Most commonly Bacterial H-Pylori (Helicobacter Pylori) and occasionally due to Fungal, parasitic or viral infection
- Drugs: NSAIDs, Steroids, Aspirin, etc
- Stress
- Smoking
- Excessive alcohol consumption
- Backflow of bile into the stomach (Bile reflux)
- Excess of spicy foods
- Radiation

The medical dictum is: Gastritis is the result of Hurry, Worry, Curry.

## Symptoms:

Gastritis usually causes pain and/or burning in the upper abdomen or burning pain in the chest region. There may be loss of appetite or a sensation of fullness after a few mouthfuls. Gastritis can also cause belching (burps), nausea, vomiting, etc. The condition is more commonly seen in middle aged and elderly people though the occurrence in youngsters is on the rise nowadays.

## Remarks:

Homeopathy medicines for *gastritis treatment* are prescribed on the basis of presenting complaints while taking into account the physical, emotional and genetic make up that individualizes a person. This constitutional approach encompassing mind and body works at root-level. Hurry and Worry that are at the base of this disease are related to one's nature and tendency, which can be tackled by a constitutional or individualized homeopathic treatment for gastritis. Homeopathy is very effective in managing all the acute as well as chronic expressions of gastritis; it also plays an important role in prevention of relapse of the condition.

## GLAUCOMA

Glaucoma is a group of eye disorders due to loss of cells which are present in the retina and affection of the optic nerve which is the nerve supplying the eye caused by raised pressure in the eye. Untreated Glaucoma can lead to permanent damage of the optic nerve and loss of visual field where a person cannot see beyond a particular angle. Glaucoma is the third most common cause of blindness worldwide.

## Symptoms:

It is usually without symptoms, hence it is important to go for regular eye check-ups after the age of forty years. Symptoms can include patchy loss of peripheral vision, reduced clarity of colors, pain in or around the eyeball, nausea or vomiting and visual disturbances like halos around lights.

## Risk Factors:

- Family history
- Asians
- Africans
- Women
- Steroids
- Diabetic Retinopathy
- Central Retinal Vein Occlusion
- Eye Trauma
- Uveitis

## Conventional Treatment:

Reducing the pressure in the eye by medical or surgical means is the way of treating glaucoma. Usually eye drops are prescribed for reduction of eye drops.

## **Homeopathic treatment:**

Homeopathy can lower the progression of disease and in highly susceptible people can prevent the occurrence or prolong the onset of disease.

## **GOUT**

### **Definition:**

Gout is a form of arthritis which is caused by the accumulation of uric acid crystals in joints. In this condition, due to a metabolic dysfunction, there is deposition of uric acid in and around the joints causing severe painfulness, swelling and restricted mobility of the affected joint.

### **Causes:**

The underlying cause of gout is a disturbance in Purine metabolism of the body. Purine is a substance found plenty in the living cells as well as in many food articles. Uric acid is a body waste product, which is produced in the body after the breakdown of Purine. Under-excretion of uric acid through the kidneys and large intestines or excess formation of uric acid due to certain factors (such as alcohol, lack of physical activity, crash diet, meat, etc.) leads to accumulation of excess uric acid in the blood, eventually leading to Gout. The exact cause for the underexcretion remains unknown in many cases, and it is believed to be more genetically determined.

### **Symptoms:**

Gout is an intensely painful condition, which mostly affects only one joint (monoarthritis) at a time, most commonly the big toe. However, Gout may also affect elbows, knees, ankles, wrists or small joints of the hands and feet. The classic history in a patient suffering from Gout is of excruciating and sudden pain, swelling, redness, warmth and stiffness of the joint. Low-grade fever may also be present. The skin overlying the joint can also be swollen, tender and sore if it is touched even lightly. Patients with longstanding hyperuricemia (high levels of uric acid in blood) can have uric acid crystal deposits called tophi in other tissues as well, e.g. the helix of the ear.

### **Gout has four distinct stages:**

- Asymptomatic: High levels of Uric acid in blood but no joint complaints
- Acute phase: Acute complaints described above occur for a brief period
- Intercritical phase: There is no pain or swelling of joints in this phase, the patient is relatively symptom-free.
- Chronic: Gout attacks may become frequent during this phase and the condition may affect many joints at a time (polyarticular). Tophi formation may also be seen.

### **Suggestion about homeopathic treatment**

Having understood that Gout is caused by the constitutional factors, it calls for constitutional approach towards its treatment. The constitutional approach involves evaluation of the individual factors inclusive of one's personal and family history (ascertaining the genetic tendency), while planning a long-term treatment.

Homeopathic approach to Gout treatment is more of a totalistic approach. Homeopathy helps in controlling the pain during the acute attack of gout as well as helps in preventing the recurrence of such episodes. It helps in reducing stiffness and improves the mobility of the joints. Homeopathy is very **strongly suggested** for the treatment of Gout.

## **GUILLAIN BARRE SYNDROME**

Guillain-Barré syndrome is an acute illness which is caused by inflammation of peripheral nerves leading to loss of sensation, muscle weakness and, in more serious cases, complete paralysis and breathing difficulty. In almost eighty per cent of children these symptoms follow a recent illness (usually viral). This infection is thought to trigger a faulty response in the immune system.

The disease varies in speed of onset with children reaching their maximal disability over a matter of days or, much more gradually over a period of up to four weeks. Initial symptoms consist of tingling, numbness, unsteadiness and progressive weakness usually affecting the feet and then the hands and gradually progressing up the limbs. At the height of their illness about a quarter of children remain able to walk but the other three quarters lose their mobility and about sixteen per cent need to be artificially ventilated on an intensive care unit.

The diagnosis of Guillain-Barré syndrome is confirmed with a combination of lumbar puncture, where a high protein content is demonstrated in the cerebrospinal fluid and nerve conduction studies, which show slowing of nerve conduction in the nerve roots and/or peripheral nerves.

Recovery usually begins in two to three weeks and may be accompanied by pain and tingling in the limbs. Most children are able to walk unaided by six weeks and most are free from symptoms by about three months. Minorities of patients have some residual problems but these children are usually still able to walk unaided. The condition can occur at any age but there appear to be peak ages of onset in childhood at four years and twelve years. In general children make a much better recovery than adults.

In Guillain-Barré syndrome the body's immune system attacks part of the peripheral nervous system. Usually Guillain-Barré occurs a few days or weeks after the patient has had symptoms of a respiratory or gastrointestinal viral infection. The body's immune system begins to attack the body itself, causing what is known as an autoimmune disease.

Currently, plasmapheresis and high-dose immunoglobulin therapy are used. Plasmapheresis seems to reduce the severity and duration of the Guillain-Barré episode. In high-dose immunoglobulin therapy, doctors give intravenous injections of the proteins that in small quantities, the immune system uses naturally to attack invading organisms.

Axonal degeneration occurs, and recovery depends on axonal regeneration. In severe cases, recovery becomes much slower, and there is a greater degree of residual damage. Recent studies on the disease have demonstrated that approximately 80% of the patients have myelin loss, whereas, in the remaining 20%, there is axon loss.

### **Role of homeopathy:**

It has been clinically observed that homeopathy helps cases of GB Syndrome. It seems to help by correcting the altered immune system. The medicines are very effective in treating the residual symptoms of Guillain-Barré syndrome. Muscle weakness and power in the limbs can be corrected.

In the acute stage, in cases of danger of respiratory paralysis, allopathic medicines have an advantage, but for the residual neuro-muscular symptoms, Homeopathic medicines are highly effective and **strongly recommended**.

## **GYNECOMASTIA**

Gynecomastia is a condition where males have abnormally enlarged breasts, due to increased proliferation of breast tissues.

### **Causes:**

All men have both androgen and estrogen hormones, that is male and female hormones. When there is alteration in androgens and estrogens balance then it results in Gynecomastia.

#### **Other causes of Gynecomastia:**

- Chemotherapy for cancer
- Deficiency of testosterone
- Marijuana use
- Radiation treatment for testicles (leading to testosterone deficiency)
- Chronic liver disease
- Hormone treatment for testicular cancers
- Chronic renal failure
- Hyperthyroidism
- Malnutrition
- Klinefelter's syndrome
- Trauma
- Infections
- Unknown reasons

Certain medications can cause Gynecomastia. They interact with the natural levels of testosterone and estrogen, and upset the balance.

- Hormones (androgens, anabolic steroids, estrogen agonists)
- Anti-ulcer medications such as cimetidine
- Antibiotics (isoniazid, ketoconazole, metronidazole)
- Cardiovascular drugs, such as captopril and digitoxin
- Cancer chemotherapeutics for prostate cancer.
- Psychoactive agents, such as diazepam and tricyclic antidepressants

### **Symptoms:**

- Enlargement of male breast
- Tenderness and sensitivity may be present

### **Diagnosis:**

- Physical examination
- Past medical history
- Mammogram in case of cancer suspicion

### **Social impact:**

Gynecomastia may not be considered a serious medical condition, however, it has great impact on the mind of the person having it. Low self-esteem may lead to poor social networking, which may lead to some sort of anxiety and depression in some patients.

### **Treatment for Gynecomastia:**

Treatment for Gynecomastia depends on the cause of the Gynecomastia. The underlying cause has to be taken into consideration for the treatment.

- In pubertal cases, one should wait and watch as condition resolves by itself.
- If it is drug induced, then offending medications should be stopped.
- Surgery, for cosmetic reason and when there is pain and tenderness.

## **Counseling:**

Counseling by an expert helps patients of Gynecomastia feel comfortable with themselves.

## **Homeopathic approach for Gynecomastia:**

Homeopathy does not have any significant role to play in the cases of Gynecomastia. Homeopathy is not recommended.

## **H PYLORI**

### **What is H.Pylori?**

The meaning of H.Pylori is Helicobacter Pylori. These are the kind of bacteria which are most commonly found to be affecting the gastrointestinal tract of the human being. They are responsible for causing peptic ulcer as well as stomach cancer.

### **Symptoms of H.Pylori infection:**

The patient complains of gnawing, burning and twitching pain in stomach especially when he is fasting, or he may experience pain typically 2 or 3 hours after eating food. Usually, the patient wakes up at night with pain. He takes small quantity of food like biscuits or cold milk. Eating food in small quantity relieves the pain and again patient goes to sleep. This is the most characteristic symptom described by the patients affected with H. Pylori infection.

### **Other symptoms include**

- Sometimes, patient complains of passing black colored stools or vomiting of blood or coffee ground vomitus.
- Nausea
- Loss of appetite
- Burping
- Bloating
- Vomiting
- Fatigue
- Loss of weight
- This is an alarming symptom. It is a sign of emergency and requires immediate hospitalization of the patient.

### **Causes of infection with H. Pylori:**

- The exact cause of H.Pylori infection is unknown. But it is found that the spread of infection takes place via feco-oral route. This means contaminated water, food and lack of personal hygiene like not washing hands properly with soap and water after using bathroom leads to infection with H.pylori.

## Diagnosis of H.Pylori infection:

Following tests are done for the diagnosis of H.Pylori infection.

- **Endoscopy:** A long, thin, flexible tube with camera at one end is passed through the mouth of the patient. It is passed down further through stomach and upper part of duodenum. Through the camera doctor can detect any ulcer or erosion in the stomach or other parts of the G. I. tract.
- **Urea breath test:** This is done to check whether any gas is produced by the bacteria present in the body.
- **Barium X-ray:** In this test patients are made to drink a special chalky liquid. And then the X-rays are taken. The chalky liquid helps in detecting the presence of ulcer on esophagus, duodenum or stomach.
- **Blood test:** This helps in detecting antibodies against H.pylori infection.
- **Stool test:** This shows presence of occult blood and evidence of infection.

## Treatment of H.Pylori:

Conventionally, the infection with H.Pylori is treated symptomatically by prescribing antacids, painkillers, and antibiotics to the patient. When the patient gives history of bloody or coffee colored vomiting or passing tarry or black stools, then patient has to be admitted to the hospital. This is the sign that the patient requires a close medical attention.

## Treatment of H.Pylori with homeopathy:

Homeopathic medicines are found to be very useful in treating the cases of H. Pylori infections. They act by improving the digestion and reduce fatigue in patients. When the treatment is started in the early stage, small ulcers and erosions can be healed with the help of homeopathic medicines. Medicines like Phosphorous, Calcarea Carbonica, and Nitric Acid etc. are found to be helpful in the treatment of H. Pylori infection.

## HEMATURIA

Hematuria means presence of blood in the urine. Due to presence of blood in the urine, the color of the urine becomes reddish, brownish or cola colored

### Types of hematuria:

Hematuria is divided into two types.

- **Gross hematuria:** When there is the presence of frank blood in the urine, it can be seen with the naked eye. This is called as gross hematuria.
- **Microscopic hematuria:** This kind of hematuria is characterized by presence of RBC (red blood cells) in the urine. But RBCs are seen only when the urine is examined under the microscope. The color of the urine does not change and the patient cannot see blood on naked eye.

## Symptoms of hematuria:

Most of the time there are no symptoms of hematuria in the patient. It is painless. But, when the patient passes blood clots in the urine, the patient of hematuria may complain of pain.

## Causes of hematuria:

The most common causes of hematuria are infection of urinary tract (UTI), vigorous exercises, menstruation in females and trauma. The other important causes of hematuria include the followings.

- Presence of calculus (stone) in the kidney, ureter or bladder When the stone passes down, it can cause hematuria.
- Inflammation of kidney, urethra, bladder or prostate gland
- Polycystic kidney disease.
- Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE)
- Taking medicines like Aspirin, NSAIDS (Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs), and blood thinners like heparin and drugs like cyclophosphamide can cause hematuria.
- Cancer of kidney or bladder.
- Idiopathic (that is, unknown causes)

## Risk factors for developing hematuria:

Any person of any age including children and teenagers can suffer from hematuria in their lifetime. Following are the common risk factors for developing hematuria.

- When the patient has family history of kidney diseases.
- Ingestion of medicines like Aspirin, heparin and other pain relieving medicines of NSAIDS group.
- History of having enlarged prostate in the patient.
- Recent bacterial or viral infection.
- People who do strenuous exercises like running continuously for a long distance.
- History of presence of renal stones.

## Diagnosis of Hematuria:

Most common and useful test for diagnosing hematuria is the urine analysis test. Urine analysis test is done by doing microscopic examination of urine. If the sample shows the presence of more than 5 RBCs in two consecutive urine samples, given on two different days, then it confirms the diagnosis of hematuria and the case should be investigated further.

## Other tests include

**USG, CT scan and MRI scan:** Patient is subjected to USG or ultra sonography of kidney, ureter and bladder. This is the most convenient and useful test to find out presence of any calculus or tumor in the KUB region. Sometimes, if sonography findings are doubtful then patients are advised to undergo CT scans or MRI scans to get a more clear idea on the causes of hematuria.

**Cystoscopy:** This is a procedure in which the doctor passes a thin, flexible; lighted tube through urethra. The tube is further guided up to the bladder.

By doing this test doctor can examine the inner walls of bladder and urethras. If there is any obstruction of urine due to small urethral stones or bladder stones then they can be removed by doing cystoscopy. Urethral stricture can also be corrected by doing this test.

**Kidney biopsy:** A small piece of kidney is removed from the body by using a needle. This piece of tissue is then examined under the microscope by an expert. This test is useful to diagnose the type of kidney disease which causes hematuria.

**Blood tests:** Simple blood tests like CBC, S. creatinine, BUN are advised to the patient.

### Management of hematuria:

Management of hematuria: Hematuria is not a disease but a symptom of some underlying disease condition. So, management of hematuria involves resolving the underlying pathology responsible for the development of hematuria. This means, if the patient is found having urinary tract infection then he should be treated with appropriate antibiotics, if there is presence of stone in bladder, kidney or urethra then appropriate measures for the stone removal should be taken.

**Dietary modifications:** There is no particular diet change required for the patients suffering from hematuria. But, they can be advised to drink at least 10 to 12 glasses of water per day. This may help in flushing out small stones from the body.

### Homeopathic treatment for Hematuria:

Homeopathic approach is based on treating the underlying cause of hematuria. In those cases where exact cause is not elicited, there are some broad-spectrum medicines suggested to address the disease. Homeopathy is strongly suggested for hematuria.

## HEMOPHILIA

### Definition

Hemophilia is an uncommon, serious disease found in children where bleeding does not stop on its own. As we all know, if we get hurt on skin, there may be bleeding which stops automatically due to presence of some chemicals [called as Factor 8 (VIII) and 9 (IX)]. When these chemical factors are lacking in the blood, the bleeding does not stop on its own. This is exactly what happens in Hemophilia.

Hemophilia is a X linked genetic disorder caused as a result of the deficiency of factor VIII (hemophilia A) or factor IX (hemophilia B). It is a bleeding (coagulation) disorder where in the body impairs its ability to control the clotting of blood (stopping blood after blood vessel is cut).

Hemophilia is derived from the Greek word "Haimophilia" where haima means blood and philia means love.

**Incidence-** Boys are more likely to get affected because of its X linked nature. As males have two X chromosomes they are likely to inherit and show symptoms. Whereas females have only one X chromosome hence they usually remain carriers of Hemophilia without any symptoms.

### Signs and symptoms of Hemophilia

- Bleeding on any part of the body, externally or internally. There could be bleeding on skin, bleeding from nose, ears, or bleeding in intestines, joints, brain, etc.
- In the blood investigations, there is a normal bleeding time, thrombin time and prothrombin time but a prolonged partial thromboplastin time, hence there is a spontaneous prolonged bleeding compared to the normal individuals due to loss of factors.
- Tendency to bleed in the joint space especially into the knee joints without any evident trauma which can also lead to permanent disfigurement and disability (Hemophilia arthropathy)

- Children with mild to moderate hemophilia usually are symptom free but may have tendency to suffer from easy bruising and injuries due to frequent falls on walking.
- Mild hemophilia may not be noticeable and be accidentally diagnosed after a prolonged bleeding in a dental procedure.
- Hemophiliacs are prone to contract any infections like frequent cold and cough more easily compared to the normal individuals.

## Complications

- Joint damage due to haemarthrosis (hemophilic arthropathy)
- Deep internal bleeding like intracranial hemorrhage which is a serious medical emergency
- Transfusion infections like HIV and hepatitis C
- Adverse reaction due to factor transfusion

### Investigations

- 01 Complete blood count
- 02 Partial thromboplastin time
- 03 Prothrombin time
- 04 Bleeding time
- 05 Clotting time
- 06 Genetic testing and genetic counseling for a mother who is a carrier
- 07 Prenatal testing like amniocentesis

### Differential diagnosis (Similar diseases)

- 01 Von Willibrand disease may mimic hemophilia
- 02 Severe Vitamin K deficiency

## Treatment of Hemophilia

Hemophilia is a difficult disease to manage. It calls for systematic and strategic integration of the conventional medicine as well as homeopathic medicine.

### Conventional treatment

The ultimate treatment is to give factor VIII transfusions in hemophilia A or factor IX in Hemophilia B, which turn out to be very expensive. There is always a risk of contracting HIV and Hepatitis C during the transfusion of the factor concentrate. After a long term transfusion the patient becomes further immune and starts developing antibodies which moreover needs a different plan of treatment.

### Homeopathic treatment of hemophilia

Certain studies by hematologists have shown efficacy of homeopathy for the management of Hemophilia. There are various homeopathic remedies, which prove to be useful in controlling the bleeding tendencies in hemophilia. These homeopathic medicines have an affinity for act on the blood vessels, capillaries and helps in accelerating the healing mechanism. They create varied pathogenesis in the major arteries and veins of the body causing hemorrhage, oozing, effusions and delayed healing and prolonged clotting time when taken in their crude (raw) doses.

The medicines like Lachesis, Crotalus horridus, Phosphorus, Millifolium and Ipecacuanha have anti-bleeding effects. They are known to stimulate the factors in the blood vessel in order to facilitate the healing process and stop bleeding. Homeopathy in the treatment of hemophilia can be given as a supportive line of treatment especially in long standing cases. However acute exacerbations can be tackled with the conventional line of treatment. It has a good scope in

homeopathy as it reduces the dependency on clotting factor concentrates which are expensive and may be not affordable by every individual.

Homeopathy is a cost-effective which helps in reducing frequency and intensity of bleeding episodes. The frequency and duration of bleeding, easy bruising can be reduced.

There is no threat of any side effects due to the long term homeopathic treatment. It is easy and safe to take homeopathic medications for a long time. These medications act at the immunity level. The immune system is boosted in order to avoid the recurrence of infections which occurs frequently in hemophiliacs. Cold and cough is a common entity found which can be taken care of with a correctly selected homeopathic remedy.

It can be concluded that homeopathy has a good scope in treating various parameters and presentation of hemophilia through an individualistic approach. Homeopathy assures to improve the quality of life of the patient and also help patient's to lead an independent life by further increasing the life expectancy.

## HEPATITIS A

### Definition:

Definition: Hepatitis A is a viral infection caused by the Hepatitis A virus. Many people in India call this disease 'Jaundice'. Infections with Hepatitis A virus are mild in majority cases, with most people making a full recovery. In rare instances, a person with a compromised immunity may develop severe and life-threatening complications.

### Causes:

Hepatitis A virus is transmitted through food or water contaminated with feces of infected persons. You have higher chances of getting infected with the disease if you are in close contact with a person who is carrying the virus, even if he has no signs or symptoms.

### Signs and symptoms

After being exposed to the virus, it takes around 2 to 7 weeks to develop signs and symptoms of Hepatitis A. Symptoms usually last for about 2 months but may last longer in some cases.

#### **Symptoms and signs that you may suffer from are:**

- Feeling very tired
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Pain in abdomen especially on the right side underneath the ribs, the site where your liver is located.
- Soreness and aches in muscles
- Nausea and vomiting
- Low-grade fever
- Running nose, cough and sore throat may be found in kids

#### **After some days, you may develop certain symptoms that indicate the liver is affected, such as:**

- Dark urine
- Clay-colored stools
- Developing Yellow skin and yellow color of the white part of your eyes (Jaundice).
- Itching of skin

### Risk factors for developing Hepatitis A:

You're at increased risk of hepatitis A if you are:

- Living with a person affected with Hepatitis A

- Travelling to an area with high incidence of Hepatitis A
- HIV positive

## Diagnosis

Depending on the presenting symptoms, severity and origin of symptoms you should go and visit physician.

If needed and if the presenting symptoms match the symptoms manifested by the virus, doctor can suggest you for a blood test.

Hepatitis A Virus Test Hepatitis A virus blood test detects the protein made in response to the virus, by the body. This little information about the blood test can help you.

### IgM Anti - HAV

- This directs towards the conclusion that it is a recent infection (HAV).
- Can be detected within a span of 2 -3 weeks.
- It is self limiting
- Anti - bodies disappears from the body within 3 - 12 months of time.

### IgG Anti - HAV

- It shows you had chronic infection with HAV.
- After the initial first infection later 8-12 weeks these antibodies are formed resulting in life-long protection against HAV. Results of the blood tests: Negative results means that no antibodies against the hepatitis virus were found. Positive results mean that hepatitis A antibodies were found. Results are usually available in 5 to 7 days.

### Hepatitis A Test

**Negative:** No hepatitis A virus (HAV) antibodies are found

**Positive:** Hepatitis A virus (HAV) antibodies are found If yes,

Then more test are needed to see if it's an active infection or in latent phase (resolved)

## Complications of Hepatitis A

Viruses causing hepatitis in some or the other way are bad for the body. But Hepatitis A virus does not prove to damage liver on a long-term basis and rarely cause irreversible pathological changes. Rarely it can become dangerous causing acute liver failure requiring hospitalization.

## How to prevent Hepatitis A

It is possible to prevent Hepatitis A infection.

- Hand washing compliance
- Eating food only from hygienic places.
- Avoid eating out mostly in rainy weather as water born diseases are common in this season.
- Not to use personal care things of infected persons-like tooth brush, razor, towels etc.
- Drinking boiled water.

## Treatment

As we know that Hepatitis A is an acute outbreak of symptoms affecting liver superficially on the functional level. Mere keeping in mind the general precautions with the conventional treatment brings quick relief.

### General treatment

- Take complete rest
- Take plenty of fluids in diet
- Increase the intake of Glucose in diet

### **Diet Control**

- Specifically to avoid deep fried food.
- To avoid fats in food, i.e. ghee, milk products, refined or white flour (Maida).
- To take plenty of fruits, soups and bland diet.

## **Homeopathic treatment for Hepatitis A**

Homeopathy is known to work to the immunological level, and has proven its efficacy in the treatment of a wide range of viral infections. With homeopathic medicines, the cases of Hepatitis A are better controlled and symptomatic relief is also obtained very well. The best part of homeopathic treatment is that the disease is kept under control and general health improved without any kind of side-effects whatsoever. Some medications which act wonderfully on the acute exacerbation of Hepatitis A virus are Natrum sulphuricum, Chelidonium majus, Pulsatilla nigra, Bryonia alba, Nux vomica, and many more.

## **HEPATITIS B**

### **Definition:**

Hepatitis B is a viral infection caused by the Hepatitis B virus (HBV). This virus is capable of causing life-long infection, liver cirrhosis (scarring), liver failure, liver cancer and death.

### **Causes:**

As mentioned above the cause of Hepatitis B is the virus- HBV. The virus spreads when blood from an infected person enters the body of a non-infected person. This virus enters the blood stream and reaches the liver where it reproduces and releases large numbers of new viruses into the bloodstream. HBV can survive outside the body for at least 7 days and can still be capable of causing infection.

HBV is mainly found in the blood of infected individuals. Saliva, semen, vaginal secretions and breast milk also contain the virus but in lower concentrations as compared to the blood. Feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine and vomit have not been implicated in the spread of Hepatitis B. Unless they are visibly contaminated with blood, the risk of contracting hepatitis B from these fluids is practically nonexistent. Hepatitis B is not transmitted by casual contact, hugging, by sharing eating utensils, through food or water, etc.

After a person has been exposed to the HBV, the blood test (HBsAg) will become positive on an average within 4 weeks (range 1- 9 weeks). Usually within 15 weeks of onset of the symptoms, this test becomes negative in most individuals (except those who have developed chronic infection).

### **Risk factors for developing Hepatitis B:**

- Sexual contact with an infected individual
- Sexual contact with multiple partners
- Male homosexual contact
- Intravenous drug abuse (due to sharing of infected needles)
- Health care workers (due to close contact with infected individuals)
- Occupational blood exposure
- Sharing toothbrushes, razors, etc
- From an infected mother to new-born infant
- Chronic renal failure patients on Dialysis

- Tattooing, piercing of skin (ears, lips, navel, etc)
- Dental procedure
- Medical procedures (including transfusion of blood or blood products)
- Staying with a chronic Hepatitis B patient
- Traveling to countries which have a high prevalence of Hepatitis B

It must be noted that people of any age, sex, race or nationality can be infected by this virus.

## Symptoms:

Sometimes a person with HBV infection may not have any symptoms at all. In patients who do develop symptoms, they occur on an average of about 12 weeks (range 9-21 weeks) after exposure to hepatitis B virus. About 70% of the patients develop symptoms of Hepatitis B. The symptoms include:

- Jaundice: Yellowness of skin and/or sclera (white portion of the eyes)
- Loss of appetite
- Abdominal discomfort
- Nausea with or without vomiting
- Dark yellow urine
- Clay colored stools
- Lethargy, fatigue
- Body ache, joint pain, etc

## About Chronic Hepatitis B infection:

Chronic Hepatitis B means that the body did not get rid of the virus when the patient was first infected with HBV thus leading to long-term HBV infection. The younger the age group at the time of first infection with this virus, the higher is the chance of developing chronic HBV infection. Thus almost 90% of infected infants, about 30% of infected children between 1-5 years of age and only 2- 6% of infected people above 5 years of age will develop chronic infection.

Carriers of Hepatitis B are those individuals who are capable of transmitting the virus to other individuals. Majority of hepatitis B carriers are asymptomatic (displaying no symptoms) whereas only 30% of them show symptoms of the disease.

## Diagnosis:

Following are some of the common tests used to diagnose Hepatitis B infection:

**Hepatitis B Surface Antigen (HBsAg):** It can be detected in high levels in serum during acute or chronic hepatitis. The presence of HBsAg indicates that the person is infectious.

**Hepatitis B Surface Antibody (anti-HBs):** The body normally produces antibodies to HBsAg as a part of the normal immune response to infection. The presence of anti-HBs is generally interpreted as indicating recovery and immunity from HBV infection. Anti-HBs also develops in a person who has been successfully vaccinated against hepatitis B.

**Hepatitis B e Antigen (HBeAg):** This is found in the serum during acute and chronic hepatitis B. The presence of Hepatitis B envelope antigen (HBeAg) indicates that the virus is replicating and the infected individual has high levels of HBV.

**Hepatitis B e Antibody (anti-HBe):** This is produced by the immune system temporarily during acute HBV infection.

**Hepatitis B core antibody (anti-HBc)** This is an antibody to the hepatitis B core antigen. The core antigen is found on virus particles but disappears early in the course of infection. This antibody is produced during and after an acute

HBV infection and is usually found in chronic HBV carriers as well as those who have cleared the virus, and usually persists for life.

<b>Hepatitis B tests interpretation</b>		
<b>TEST</b>	<b>RESULT</b>	<b>INTERPRETATION</b>
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	Negative Negative Negative	Susceptible to Hepatitis B infection
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	Negative Positive Positive	Immune due to natural infection
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	Negative Negative Positive	Immune due to Hepatitis B vaccination
HBsAg anti-HBc IgM anti-HBc anti-HBs	Positive Positive Positive Negative	Acutely infected
HBsAg anti-HBc IgM anti-HBc anti-HBs	Positive Positive Negative Negative	Chronically infected
HBsAg anti-HBc anti-HBs	Negative Positive Negative	* 4 Interpretations possible

\* 4 Interpretations possible

- 1) Patient might be recovering from acute HBV infection
- 2) Patient might be immune and the test may not be sensitive enough to detect very low level of anti-HBs in serum
- 3) Patient might be susceptible and may be having a false positive anti-HBc
- 4) Patient may be actually chronically infected and may be having undetectable levels of HBsAg in the serum

### **Complications of Hepatitis B: These include the following:**

Chronic hepatitis  
Cirrhosis  
Liver failure  
Hepatocellular carcinoma

### **Homeopathic Treatment:**

Homeopathy is known to work to the immunological level, and has proven its efficacy in the treatment of a wide range of viral infections. With homeopathic medicines, the cases of Hepatitis B are better controlled, the process of cirrhosis is well kept under check and symptomatic relief is also obtained very well. Homeopathic treatment can also help in delaying the complications of Hepatitis B (such as cirrhosis and liver cancer) as far as possible. It may also be noted that the treatment for chronic Hepatitis B has to be planned for a longer duration of time. The best part of homeopathic treatment is that the disease is kept under control and general health improved without any kind of side-effects whatsoever.

# HERPES

Herpes is a viral infection caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV). There are 2 types of Herpes Simplex Virus: Type 1 and Type 2. HSV type 1 causes Oral Herpes infection and HSV type 2 causes genital herpes. It must be noted that there is a considerable overlap in this- HSV type 1 can also cause genital herpes in some cases and vice-versa; this usually occurs due to transmission via oro-genital contact.

Some of the patients exhibit the symptoms due to the virus while in many patients the virus (HSV 1 or 2) resides in a latent (resting) state in the nerves (that supply sensation to the skin) without showing any indications of its presence.

Most of the sufferers have recurring infections, as the virus has a tendency to show up its disease activity periodically, especially during phases of stress, lowered immunity or sometimes without any known reason. There are over four million new cases of herpes reported every year in the US. Due to carefree sex and careless contact, as I put it, this infection is bound to touch an epidemic status one day.

## Transmission:

HSV infection is mostly spread by direct skin-to-skin contact. Transmission may occur directly, or through contact with infected razors, towels, dishes, and other shared articles. Sexual contact (including oro-genital contact) is the most common way to transmit genital HSV infection. The virus can be shed in saliva and genital secretions of patients, even if they have no symptoms.

## Symptoms:

Initial infection may not be noticed by the patient at times but if the lesions do appear they are usually more severe and subsequent recurrences tend to be milder. Typically herpes presents as small blisters (vesicles) filled with clear yellowish fluid. The blisters may occur on a raised, red, painful skin area and they may form, break, and ooze. Yellowish crusts may slough to reveal pink, healing skin underneath. There may be several smaller blisters that merge to form a larger blister. Oral herpes presents as skin lesions that occur around the lips, mouth and gums.

In males, genital herpes usually presents as genital ulcers which are most frequent on the glans, foreskin and shaft of the penis. They are generally sore or painful and last for 2 to 3 weeks. The local lymph glands get enlarged and tender. In women, similar lesions occur on the external genitalia and the mucosa of the vulva, vagina and cervix. Pain and difficulty passing urine are other common symptoms. Some people may also develop flu-like symptoms (fever, headache and muscular pain).

Genital herpes shows its activities by producing acute, chronic, episodic, local and/or generalized symptoms.

## The Horror:

The horror of herpes virus lies in its resistance to traditional medication and tendency to attack again and again. The herpes virus, detected 200 years ago has a great affinity to the human race and it is resistance to any treatment targeted at the local eruptions. That is to say local creams or any (so called) antiviral application may help little and cannot curb this horrible virus from within.

## Prevention of Herpes Genitalis

This infection is contracted by sexual contact. Simply, protected sex is the best way to have protection from this infection. Use of condom while having genital or oral sex works as a preventive measure.

## **The homeopathy approach and treatment:**

As a rule, homeopathy does not believe in local or external medication. The constitutionally selected homeopathic treatment administered orally helps inner healing and the recurring, chronic infection is thus treated successfully.

Over the year we have observed encouraging and positive result with well selected homeopathy medication. Homeopathy is strongly recommended for Herpes infection.

## **Some of the medicines for Herpes Genitalis**

Nitric acid, Thuja Occidentalis, Causticum, Medorrhinum, Silica are some of the commonly indicated homeopathic medicines often required in the course of treatment of Herpes Genitalis.

# **HERPES ZOSTER**

## **Introduction**

Herpes zoster (shingles) is a viral infection, caused by Varicella zoster virus. It is commonly called as shingles. According to study, 90% patients with Herpes zoster have had chicken pox few years back.

## **Prevalence**

In children and young adult the incidence rate is 2-4 per thousand. In adult age the prevalence is 8 – 10/ thousand.

## **Causative factors**

Varicella zoster virus causes acute illness chicken pox. Even after chickenpox is resolved the virus is not eliminated. It can go on to cause Herpes zoster. This virus is located in nerve cells. It may remain silent for years together. When it gets activated, the symptoms appear along the course of nerves.

## **Sign and symptoms**

Herpes zoster is characterised by painful eruptions (yellowish fluid filled) in a linear shape over limited area of body like face, eyes, genitals and other body parts. The eruptions can be reddish brown in colour. The pain may be mild or unbearable and is related to nerve in which the virus is located. The eruptions may subside in 3-6 weeks but pain may remain same.

Same presentation of the Herpes eruption can also be noted on genitals in male and females also. These eruption may last for 2-3 weeks or longer. The local lymph nodes may get swollen. There can be recurrent relapse.

Herpes Zoster is known to leave behind a painful condition called Post-herpetic Neuralgia in many patients.

## **Transmission**

Skin to skin contact is the major source of spread. Transmission may also occur directly, or through contact with infected razors, towels, dishes, and other shared articles. Oral sex is the most common way to transmit genital HSV infection.

## **Investigation**

- Blood test for Herpes antibodies isolation
- PCR (polymerase chain reaction)
- Virus can be detected by investigations of variety of body fluids such as eye secretions, mouth secretions, blister fluid, genital secretions, urine and blood and in very sick patients, the cerebrospinal fluid.

## Conventional Treatment

Antiviral, Analgesics and steroids are the treatment that may help little in some patients but can not kill this horrible virus from within. Body may develop resistance to same dose of the antiviral or analgesics medicines. Then subsequently the power of the antiviral medicines needs to be increased. Again resistance develops and the cycle continues till patient starts getting severe side effects.

Steroids have their own set of side effects on Blood sugar, blood pressure, bone mass, body weight etc.

## Homeopathic Treatment for Herpes Zoster

Homeopathy can effectively treat Herpes zoster. In homeopathy there is no local or external medication. Constitutional medicines are given after studying mind and body in detail. Constitutional medicines reduce the intensity of pain, burning and subsequently reduce infection, and shorten the duration of infection. Relapses are also prevented by homeopathy. Homeopathy is also very effective in the cases of Post-herpetic neuralgia. Homeopathy is strongly advocated in the cases of Herpes Zoster.

## HOT FLASHES

### What are Hot Flashes?

"Hot flashes" are terms used to explain sudden sensations of

- Extreme heat,
- with profuse sweating.
- Rapid heart beats.

These last anywhere between 2 to 30 minutes.

### Why do they occur?

The hot flash results from altered thermal stability, which is maintained by the hypothalamus (a brain region located above the pituitary gland on the brain's floor). This organ controls the body's temperature regulation. Estrogen levels can affect some functions of the hypothalamus. During menopause, the ovaries produce less estrogen. Sensing this, the hypothalamus responds by rapidly changing body temperature. The result may be a hot flash.

### How frequent are they?

- Some people get only 2 episodes in a week while others suffer multiple episodes in the same day.
- Some women go from feeling hot to feeling cold. The hot flash may begin with a sudden tingling in the fingers, toes, cheeks, or ears.
- Severe hot flashes occurring the night time, called 'night-sweats', can lead to severe sleep deprivation.
- Severe hot flashes can cause 'rosacea' (flushing and redness) on the central face and across the cheeks, nose, or forehead.
- As estrogen is typically lowest at night, a woman might get night sweats without having any hot flashes during the daytime.

## How long will these hot flashes last?

Nearly 85% of perimenopausal women suffer from hot flashes. 25% of these may keep having them up to 10 years after menopause.

## Who gets hot flashes?

Conditions which predispose to hot flashes:

## Do men have hot flashes?

Yes.

**Normal aging** can cause the condition in a few men. Men receiving **testosterone suppression treatment** or **castration for prostatic carcinoma** are known to suffer hot flashes. **Alcohol** is another proven factor that can cause this condition in many men.

## Diet & Lifestyle Changes

### DIET

Alcohol, coffee, caffeinated beverages, chocolates, very hot or spicy foods etc. are established triggers for hot flashes. Try to avoid these. Identify the triggers in your case.

Have more of foods that alleviate the condition. Soya milk, whole soya beans, tofu, tempeh, black cohosh. Osteoporosis is another condition aggravated by menopause. Have foods rich in calcium and vitamin D, and talk to your physician before opting for supplemental calcium.

### Exercise

Exercising regularly minimizes the effects of hot flashes. If you are going through menopause & do not exercise, then start now. You can walk, run, ride a bicycle, or do another activity. Just don't exercise within 3 hours of going to bed to help prevent night sweats. Regular session can also prevent other health conditions like osteoporosis, high blood pressures, stroke and diabetes.

### Clothes

Wear only cotton clothes. Since, hot flashes are worse in summers, try wearing clothes in layers. This makes it easier to shed them in case of a sudden attack.

## Treatment options available for hot flashes

### Conventional Treatments

Generally, if your symptoms are mild, no treatment is required. Medications are needed only when hot flashes disrupt your daily life. Declining estrogen levels in blood is known to contribute to hot flashes. The conventional treatments emphasize on **Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)** as the first line of treatment. It is advisable to start with the lowest dose which alleviates the symptoms and to increase the dosage gradually, based on symptom response. However, HRT is associated with many side-effects, like breast cancer, stroke, and dementia, making their long-term benefits very doubtful.

**Gabapentine**, to an extent, alleviates hot flashes in castrated men, or those being treated for prostate carcinoma.

Other alternatives to decrease the intensity & frequency of hot flashes are changes in diet and living.

## Homeopathic Treatment for Hot flashes:

Being a hormonal disorder connected with body's own thermal regulatory mechanism, **homeopathy** has a great role to play. We have treated a number of cases where patients have reported significant to complete recovery from Hot flashes. The medicines are selected on the basis of individual case details and are very effective. **Homeopathic treatment** for Hot flashes is strongly recommended.

## HYPERTENSION

### Definition:

Raised blood pressure is labeled as hypertension. In realism, blood pressure of an individual tends to increase with advancing age. So, term hypertension will be used when blood pressure exceeds the normal range for a particular age group.

Unattended blood pressure can lead to a number of serious complications including stroke, heart diseases, kidney failure, etc.

### Remarks:

Hypertension is very common in general population. However, in 95% of cases a specific underlying cause of hypertension cannot be pointed out. This hypertension is labeled as essential hypertension and is believed to be related to genetic and heredity factors. There are multiple factors that increase chances of hypertension significantly: Age, Obesity, High levels of body fats (cholesterol), Excess consumption of alcohol and smoking, Food (more salt intake), Life-style factors (lack of exercise, lack of sleep, mental stress, etc). There is a very small group of cases where hypertension is a result of some specific disease condition in the body and is labeled as secondary hypertension.

It can be easily perceived that hypertension is a constitutional disorder as constitutional defect (genetic factors) is at the base of it and the disorder itself has impact on entire constitution of an individual. While treating hypertension, the treatment needs to be planned to focus at a root level: to affect the genetic tendency. **Homeopathic treatment** does that precisely.

### Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:

**Homeopathy** can play major role in management of essential or secondary hypertension. Timely administered **homeopathy medicines** can assist in preventing further complications of condition. Life-style modification with moderate exercise, weight reduction, salt restriction can enhance the benefits of homeopathy.

In our experience, early cases of hypertension respond to homeopathy much better than those late cases who are already on some antihypertensive medicines for long period of time. Again, homeopathy is not best suited during the acute hypertensive crisis. We, at Life Force, undertake only early cases of Hypertension, who are not on the conventional anti-hypertensive medications. We also undertake those resistant cases who have not responded to the conventional treatment.

## HYPERTHYROIDISM

### Definition:

Excessive secretion of thyroid hormones in the body is called as hyperthyroidism (hyper=more).

Thyroid is small gland situated in the midline and base of the neck. The gland produces thyroid hormones T4 (Tetraiodothyronine/Thyroxine) and T3 (Triiodothyronine) that are absolutely essential for maintaining harmony of various body functions. Thyroid hormones govern the speed of body's chemical reaction and have positive influence

on growth of an individual (mental and physical). Because thyroid hormones affect growth, development and many cellular processes, excess of thyroid hormones has widespread consequences on the body.

## **Causes**

There are many causes that can cause over activity of the thyroid gland and in most cases the entire gland is producing more hormones, this is seen in Grave's disease. Grave's disease is actually an auto-immune disorder in which the body's immune system mistakenly starts attacking it's own cells (in this case the thyroid gland) resulting in inflammation and enlargement of the gland (Goiter) and production of excess hormones. In some cases, there is a particular solitary nodule in the gland (called 'Hot' nodule) that is producing more hormones; there may also be multiple such nodules in the gland Inflammation of the thyroid gland (Thyroiditis) due to any other cause can also result in hyperthyroidism.

## **Symptoms**

Increased secretion of thyroid hormones can produce myriad of symptoms that vary from person to person and with the age of patient. The common symptoms include:

- Weight loss despite normal or increased appetite
- Palpitations
- Heat intolerance
- Nervousness
- Insomnia
- Difficulty in breathing
- Increased bowel movements
- Light or absent menstrual periods
- Fatigue
- Tremors of hands and fingers
- Irritability
- Excessive perspiration

## **Signs commonly seen in patients with Hyperthyroidism:**

- Fast heart rate
- Muscle weakness
- Trembling hands
- Weight loss
- Hair loss
- Staring gaze
- Warm moist skin
- Lump in the neck (Goiter)

## **Remarks:**

Hyperthyroidism being a constitutional disorder calls for an in-depth constitutional approach for its management. The science of homeopathy is based on the concept that disease is total affliction of body and may find its local expression at the level of certain organs. Hence homeopathy prescription take into account presenting complaints along with physical, emotional and genetic make up of a person that individualizes him/her. The remedy prescribed based on this entire totality treats the disorder at its root cause and thus restores the normal functioning of the body.

## Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:

Homeopathy is suggested for cases of hyperthyroidism. Homeopathy helps in alleviating the symptoms associated with the condition. Moreover, homeopathy works at a deeper level to bring deviations of immunity back to normalcy and to restore the harmony of the body. Homeopathy works better in the early and mild cases of Hyperthyroidism and not in chronic and severe cases. Extreme cases where the hyper activity of thyroid gland has affected other vital organs, homeopathy has limited role.

## IDIOPATHIC THROMBOCYTOPENIC PURPURA

ITP is an auto-immune disorder of the platelets (blood cells) leading to increased bleeding and bruising on the body. It is also referred as immune thrombocytopenic purpura.

Platelets are blood components found in blood along with red blood cells and white blood cells. Platelets are also called as thrombocytes. They are produced in the bone marrow. Platelets help in clotting of the blood. The normal range of platelets in a healthy person is from 150000 to 450000 per cubic millimeter. A person with ITP has platelet count as low as 20000 or less.

It is more common in children than in adults. Usually women are more likely to develop ITP.

ITP can be classified into two types:

**01** Acute ITP- Children are more prone to suffer from acute ITP especially following a viral infection. It is usually self-limiting immune response of the body and the child is fine within 2-6 months without requiring any treatment.

**02** Chronic ITP- ITP which is present for 6 months or longer is termed as chronic ITP. This form of ITP is more common in adults. It can trigger after a viral infection, with use of certain drugs, during pregnancy or due to the auto-immune response of the body.

## Causes of ITP

As the name suggests, it is idiopathic i.e. of unknown cause. There is an auto-immune reaction in the body by which antibodies are formed against platelets. These antibodies get attached to the platelets and flow in the blood stream. Spleen, which protects the body from infection, identifies these antibodies attached with platelets as abnormal and destroys them. As a result the platelet count gets low which results in easy bleeding and bruising on the body.

ITP may be associated in people with infections like HIV, Hepatitis C or H pylori.

## Signs and Symptoms of ITP

Generally, an individual with ITP may be symptom free. But when the platelet count gets significantly low, the signs and symptoms observed are:

- 01** Pin point bleeding spots (petechiae) on skin
- 02** Easy bruising (purpura) on the skin and mucous membranes
- 03** Bleeding from nose
- 04** Bleeding from gums
- 05** Heavy menstruation
- 06** Prolonged bleeding from cuts or injuries
- 07** Fatigue
- 08** Significant bleeding can lead to hematoma; lumps of blood under the skin

When the platelet count goes below 5000, than there are possibilities of bleeding in the brain and other internal organs.

## Diagnosis of ITP

The diagnosis is usually made by excluding other underlying diseases or use of certain medications like Aspirin, Ibuprofen responsible for low platelet count and bleeding disorder.

A complete blood count (CBC) determines the value of platelets in the blood. In ITP, the value of RBC's and WBC's are normal and only platelet count gets low.

Tests for blood clotting time and bleeding time, where clotting time is normal and bleeding time is prolonged.

Blood Smear- To confirm the platelet count by observing the blood smear under the microscope.

Detecting antibodies associated with platelets in the blood.

Bone marrow biopsy or aspiration - This is rarely done. In ITP, the bone marrow shows normal or greater number of megakaryocytes (early form of platelets). The platelets are normal in the bone marrow and are destroyed in the blood stream and in the spleen.

Splenomegaly (enlargement of spleen) excludes the diagnosis of ITP.

## Treatment of ITP

Most children and adults with mild ITP do not require any treatment. A regular platelet count monitoring is sufficient to manage ITP.

However, in children and adults with very low platelet count and significant bleeding calls for treatment.

Treatment includes

Corticosteroids- oral or as intravenous injections becomes the first choice of treatment for the conventional doctors. However, prolonged use of steroids are responsible for side-effects like osteoporosis, diabetes, weight gain and cataract.

**01** Intravenous Immunoglobulin (IVIG) in cases of severe bleeding, immunoglobulins when given intravenously helps in increasing the platelet count rapidly but its effect lasts only for a couple of weeks.

**02** Platelet Transfusion helps in cases of emergency but is helpful for a short period as the immune response of the body destroys even the newly received donor platelets.

**03** Anti-D immunoglobulin - for patients with Rh (D)-positive blood group

**04** Splenectomy in rare cases when body is not responding to medications, removal of spleen is done in order to prevent the destruction of platelets. Spleen is an organ which helps in protecting the body against infections so by removing the spleen the body gets more prone to catching infections.

**05** Administering other immuno-suppressive drugs

## Management

ITP cannot be prevented but its complications can be avoided or reduced.

Avoid medicines like ibuprofen, aspirin that affects platelets and increase the chances of bleeding.

Avoid injuries, which can cause bleeding, and bruises.

Effective and quick management of infections.

## Homeopathic treatment for Idiopathic Thrombocytopenic Purpura

(ITP): The homeopathic approach to treat ITP is aimed at addressing the immune system, which is affected in this disease condition. The mechanism of action of homeopathic medicines is not understood. However, it is a common experience that homeopathy works in the cases of ITP. Homeopathy is strongly suggested as a supportive therapy. At Life Force, we have documented several cases of ITP with substantial results.

## **Definition:**

Keloid is a form of scarring. It may appear on skin as red, raised formation of fibrous scar tissue, caused by excessive collagen formation in the skin layer (dermis) during the process of connective tissue repair, after any trauma or injury to skin. Some people have a tendency to have keloid formation after any kind of skin injury.

## **Causes:**

Keloids results from skin injuries such as:

- Acne
- Surgical cuts
- Trauma
- Scratch marks
- Vaccination sites
- Ear piercing
- Burns

## **Signs and Symptoms:**

Keloids look like:

- Dome shaped raised and shiny appearance.
- Pink to red in color
- Itching
- Sometime pain or tenderness

## **Diagnosis:**

- Clinical examination- The diagnosis is made by just looking at the lesion and enquiring about the history of skin injuries.
- Skin biopsy- It may be required to differentiate with other skin tumors.

## **Conventional treatment for Keloid:**

- Surgical removal- It is more risky as it causes formation of recurrence of Keloid at the site of surgical incision.
- Laser treatment- It is more beneficial and safe. It is not very painful. It helps in regression of the Keloid by suppressing the proliferation of Keloid fibroblast.
- Corticosteroid injections- It is used as a first line of treatment where injection is given at the site of the Keloid. It helps in flattening the Keloid.
- Radiation- It is used after surgical removal of the Keloid. It is safe and effective and helps in reducing the recurrence of Keloids resulting from surgical excision.
- Cryotherapy- Liquid nitrogen is used to flatten the Keloid.

## **Homeopathic approach in treating Keloids:**

Homeopathic medicines can partially reduce scarring if keloids are very mild. Moderate to severe keloids generally do not respond to homeopathy. Itching and painfulness can reduce with homeopathic medicines. Some cases of keloid tendency may be controlled with homeopathy to certain extent. Recommended in selected cases.

# KIDNEY STONE

## Definition:

Kidney stones are clumps developed from solidified crystals in the kidney or urinary tract. The urine has all the ingredients that form the stone, but all these ideally pass through without our knowledge. When there is an imbalance in any of these substances, the crystals cluster together into stones. The size of the stone can be as small as a grain of sand to one as large as the size of a golf ball. The most commonly found kidney stone in humans is usually made of calcium oxalate. Other rare varieties of kidney stones include those made up of cystine, struvite (magnesium, ammonium and phosphate), calcium phosphate, uric acid, etc.

Kidney stones are one of the most painful of the urologic disorders. Men tend to be affected more frequently than women.

## Causes of Kidney stone formation

Certain foods may promote stone formation in people who are susceptible. This stone formation is enhanced when there is increased intake of calcium, calcium oxalate, uric acid or salt in our diet, with an inadequate intake of fluids. A positive family history (genetic tendency) also makes a person prone to kidney stone formation.

Certain foods that increase the risk for kidney stone formation in susceptible individuals include: Spinach, rhubarb, chocolate, peanuts, cocoa, beet, coffee, cola, nuts, strawberries, tomato juice, grapefruit juice, apple juice, soda (acidic and contains phosphorus), all types of tea, and berries.

## Symptoms of Kidney stones:

Kidney stones can remain asymptomatic until they obstruct the flow of urine. When obstruction to the flow of urine occurs at some point of time, the patient starts experiencing acute symptoms. Patient usually presents with the most agonizing pain in the lower back just below the ribs, which often extends into the groin area (described as 'loin to groin' radiation of pain). The patient may also experience nausea, vomiting, blood in the urine (haematuria), restlessness and fever (if infection is present).

Stones less than 5 mm in size usually pass out spontaneously; however the majority of stones greater than 6 mm require some form of intervention, especially so if the stone is stuck causing persistent obstruction and/or infection of the urinary tract.

## Suggestion about homeopathic treatment

When the stone size is small, homeopathy is likely to help in the passage of stone as well as in relieving the agonizing pain caused by the same. If the stone size is larger, or the stone is impacted, or there are multiple stones, then the patient is better treated surgically. However, even after surgical removal of stones, homeopathy still has a role to play in preventing its recurrence (as the chance of having recurring stones are about 70-80%).

# LIPOMA

## Definition:

Lipoma is a benign (non-cancerous) tumor that is made up of fat cells. It can occur in any tissue that contains fat but most commonly it occurs in the subcutaneous (beneath the skin) tissue.

Lipomas are soft, round, mobile and doughy to feel. They are situated just below the skin and the overlying skin looks normal. They are more commonly observed on back, extremities, and chest. Lipoma is more commonly observed in

age group of 40-60 years. Single Lipoma is more commonly seen in women and multiple Lipomas (Lipomatosis) more common in men.

### **Remarks:**

Often, treatment of a lipoma is not necessary, unless the tumor becomes painful or restricts movement. People opt for treatment largely for cosmetic reasons. Lipoma is a true surgical condition as medicines cannot dissolve the accumulated fat. Hence surgical removal is the mainstay management for Lipoma. If they do not harm you, they are better not disturbed surgically.

## **LIVER CIRRHOSIS**

The liver is the largest gland in the human body. 'Cirrhosis' of liver is a condition wherein the normal liver tissues get damaged and replaced by scar tissue. Healthy liver cells get substituted with fibrotic scar tissue in a very slow and gradual process. Conditions leading to recurrent inflammation of the liver cells (hepatitis) heal with fibrosis and scar tissue formation.

### **How does cirrhosis affect the liver?**

Cirrhosis can disrupt many vital functions of the liver. Any condition that can damage the liver cells can cause cirrhosis. The liver gets its major supply of blood from the venous system of the intestines. The presence of scar tissues can reduce the effective circulation of blood within the liver. This slows down the transport and elimination of the various products of liver metabolism. The liver breaks down many substances including red blood cells and drugs and toxins. With chronic inflammation & scar tissue formation, the liver function becomes very sluggish leading to accumulation of various harmful substances.

### **The liver performs many important roles.**

- Breakdown and elimination of many chemicals like alcohol, drugs and toxins.
- Breakdown and metabolism of red blood cells.
- Formation of cholesterol and breakdown of saturated fats.
- Formation and storage of important clotting factors.
- Manufacture bile - an important substance for digesting foods.
- Production and storage of sugar in the form of glycogen.
- Storage of vital nutrients like vitamins and providing them when their levels in the body are low.

### **Causes of Cirrhosis of Liver**

Cirrhosis is an outcome of several conditions harmful to the liver. The most common causes of cirrhosis are: -

- Alcohol
- Chronic viral infections - hepatitis (types B,C and D)
- Drugs and toxins.
- Autoimmune hepatitis
- Hereditary conditions like
- hereditary hemochromatosis
- Wilson's disease
- Cystic fibrosis
- Alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency
- Cystic fibrosis
- Conditions affecting the biliary system
- Primary sclerosing cholangitis

- Primary biliary cirrhosis
- Infections with parasites
- Schistosomiasis (snails)
- Cardiac failure - causes a condition called 'cardiac cirrhosis'.

## **Symptoms of Cirrhosis of Liver**

Cirrhosis in its early stages has no prominent symptom.

- Weakness/fatigue/exhaustion
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss or sudden weight gain
- Nausea
- Jaundice
- Itching of skin (pruritis)
- Swelling or distention of the abdomen
- Ascites » collection of excess fluid within the abdomen
- Swelling of the ankles
- Easy bruising
- Spider naevi » dilated capillaries on the upper chest, arms and forearms.
- Slow healing of wounds
- Palms appear very red and warm
- Asterixis » sudden, involuntary, violent twitching of the hand when it is held outstretched.
- Gynaecomastia » enlargement of breast in males
- Changes in personality
- increased irritability
- inability to concentrate
- weakness of memory
- indifference to personal appearance

## **Complications of Cirrhosis of Liver**

- Ascites and generalized swelling (edema) of body
- Hepatic encephalopathy
- Bleeding from varices. Varices are abnormally lengthened and dilated blood vessels. Cirrhosis causes stagnation in blood circulation, making the blood vessels engorged. with increasing pressures within the vessel, it may rupture and lead to bleeding. Blood vessels in the esophagus (food-pipe), the umbilical vessels (vessels in central abdomen),
- Hypersplenism » condition where an enlarged spleen
- Infection

## **Diagnosis of Liver Cirrhosis**

The diagnosis of cirrhosis may be missed in the initial stages of the condition. A history of medical conditions that can injure the liver is an indicator of possible cirrhosis in the future.

Your doctor will conclude a diagnosis of cirrhosis based on:

- Physical exam
- Liver function tests » the liver enzymes may show mild to moderate elevation.
- Ultra Sonography studies » non-invasive, sensitive indicator of any abnormal size of the liver.
- CAT scan » non-invasive and sensitive test which can specify the severity of cirrhosis as well as detect cancer even at its onset.

- Liver biopsy » considered a 'gold standard' for diagnosis. A small specimen of liver is obtained by performing either laparoscopic, percutaneous or transjugular approach.  
Though a 'liver biopsy' is often considered the gold standard of diagnosing cirrhosis, it need not be performed, if clinical examination, laboratory work-up and radiological studies indicate it.

## **Treatment of Cirrhosis of Liver**

### **Conventional treatment**

Treatment of liver cirrhosis depends upon the type and stage of cirrhosis. It mainly revolves around:

- Preventing further degeneration and loss of liver cells
- Prevent complications
- Treatment of complications
- Identify cancer at an early stage
- Surgery » liver transplant.

### **Preventing further degeneration of liver cells**

Cirrhosis is the most advanced stage of most liver diseases. However, this progression can be stalled, and made very slow by effective treatment of the presenting condition.

- Have alcohol in moderation. It's definitely better to avoid it altogether if you can.
- **Hepatitis B** is a significant cause for cirrhosis. Talk to your physician about vaccinations against the Hepatitis B virus.
- Avoid indulging in high risk sexual behavior. Both HBV and HCV infections are largely spread through multiple sex partners, indiscriminate use of needles, syringes, & other drug addiction paraphernalia like use of nasal cocaine.
- Avoid exposure to chemicals and toxins that harm the liver. When working with toxic substances, wear appropriate, protective covering.
- Avoid using tobacco. Eat a well balanced diet. Avoid having saturated fats and greasy foods (French fries, cheese burgers etc.) since they increase the load on the liver.
- Keep your weight within the range normal for your age and gender.
- Avoid foods containing colors and chemical preservatives.
- Be cautious when opting for vitamin and other supplements. Some of the supplements can actually increase stress on an already overburdened liver.

### **Other treatment options available are:**

- Medications
- Liver transplant

## **Medications**

- Interferones » drugs used in chronic viral infections of the liver. It helps by enhancing the body's immune system against the viruses.
- Corticosteroids » indicated in cirrhosis causes by any autoimmune liver disease process. The steroids prevent the immune cells from attacking the liver cells. However, their long-term use result in many adverse side-effects in nearly all organ systems in the body.
- Certain conditions like Wilson's disease and Hereditary Hemochromatosis require effective removal of the substance deposited in excess in the liver. Copper gets deposited in excess in Wilson's disease, and Hereditary Hemochromatosis results in excess iron deposition. Hence, treating the underlying condition can prevent the progress of established cirrhosis.
- Nutritional supplements, especially fat soluble vitamins to prevent deficiencies.

## **Liver Transplant**

Though expensive, a liver transplant can increase the survival rate by 80 - 90%. Cirrhosis progressive despite appropriate treatment; presence of multiple complications which are life-threatening are all indications for a liver transplant.

## **Homeopathic Treatment for Liver Cirrhosis**

Homeopathic medicines treat the underlying cause of Cirrhosis of Liver, such as viral infection, genetic tendency, bad effects of alcohol, metabolic changes, etc. and thus help to treat effects of Cirrhosis of Liver.

Homeopathy helps to control further cellular damage. It cannot cure the scarred tissues, as such, as it is not possible to regenerate scarred tissues.

When introduced at an early stage of cirrhosis, homeopathic medicines can effectively reduce the viral count (in Hepatitis caused by HBV and HCV) as well as give symptomatic relief without side effects.

Homeopathic medications can prevent the progress of cirrhosis and in very early cases of liver cirrhosis, the medicines restore majority of the normal functions of the liver.

## **LOSS OF LIBIDO (LOW SEX DRIVE)**

### **Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder - HSDD**

Every man and woman experiences low sex (loss of libido) drive during some period in life. If low sex drive is continued and lasting, it calls for treatment. Almost 15% of men have this problem all the time; while over 30% females have it, but may not voice about it.

As you know every disease has complex medical name. Similarly, Low sex desire is also called as (Hypoactive Sexual Desire Disorder - HSDD).

Let us look at the most common factors which contribute towards low sex drive.

#### **In men, following are the common causes:**

- Stress
- Lack of spark in marriage life
- Alcohol or/and smoking, drugs
- Drugs: Drugs depression, hypertension, pain killers
- Erectile dysfunction
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Low levels of testosterone hormone
- Hypothyroid (Under active thyroid)
- Anxiety, depression or other emotional diseases

#### **In women, one must check the following common factors:**

- Stress
- Lack of love in marriage life
- Child birth
- Reduced blood supply to vagina, leading to painful intercourse
- Hypothyroid (Under active thyroid) (More common than in men)
- Contraceptive pills
- Alcohol, smoking, drugs

- Diabetes
- Pregnancy
- Obesity
- Nerve injury following removal of uterus (hysterectomy)
- Drugs: Drugs depression, hypertension, pain killers
- Anxiety, depression or other emotional diseases
- Traumatic events in childhood such as child abuse

### **Symptoms of Low Sex Drive (Loss of Libido):**

Most cases present with loss of sexual desire over period of time. If it is sudden, one may have to rule out neurological problems. Less interest in sex, aversion to sex and lack of joy in sexual act are some of the symptoms.

Ask yourself following questions to determine if your sex drive is reducing:

- Is the sexual act becoming less frequent? (Well, this is not the only parameter.)
- Does it so happen that your partner has to put attempt to arouse you?
- Is it so that your partner says: "you do not seem to enjoy sex as much now a day."?
- No more condoms at home, and avoiding buying!
- Feeling lazy to "start"
- Sex has become more mechanical and less dynamic?
- Ask your partner, if he/she has observed change in your sex desire pattern

### **Investigations:**

Clinical investigations by a good doctor will help. Common laboratory investigations include hormonal test for Thyroid disorders, test for diabetes. Special investigations may be required in case of significant loss of erection in men and indications of neurological symptoms in women.

### **Treatment for Loss of Libido:**

Treatment depends on the cause behind low sex drive.

- If there is a treatable disease in the background, get treated. E.g. Hypothyroid, diabetes, etc
- Improve interpersonal relationship with your partner
- Reduce weight if you are obese
- Reduce stress
- Change over to gentle medicines such as homeopathy, for depression, anxiety disorders, if that is the underlying cause
- Bring romance, love and affection in your love life. Re-ignite the "spark."
- Take homeopathic medicines, if indicated

### **Homeopathic Treatment for Low Sex Drive:**

Homeopathy helps to treat the underlying disease which may be responsible for low sex drive, as suggested above. There are number of cases in which low sex drive may be present without any other disease in the back ground. Homeopathy offers promising results in improving low sex drive. It helps in following ways:

- Treating the underlying disease
- Treatment of Erectile dysfunction
- Reducing stress and improving your stress coping system
- Replacing your antidepressant and anti-anxiety medicines, whenever possible
- Enhancing your moods and stimulating your sex drive

Homeopathy is strongly recommended in the cases of Low sex drive or Loss of Libido.

## **LUMBAR SPONDYLITIS**

## What is Lumbar Spondylitis?

Lumbar Spondylitis or spondylitis is a condition where there is an inflammation of lumbar (lower vertebral) spine, popularly called as Back ache. The inflammation can be mild, moderate or severe leading to a range of severity of symptoms. There is not only inflammation of the vertebra but also some amount of fusing, which gives painful stiffness.

### Symptoms:

The symptoms of varying degree of pain associate with stiffness. There may be restricted mobility of the back, disturbing day to day life activities. There may also be deformity of the spine over the period of time.

### Related conditions:

Ankylosing Spondylitis is a similar condition which is more severe and considered to be an auto-immune disease, related with HLA-B-27 gene. The stiffness associated with muscle spasm leads to stiff-spine, often compared with a bamboo spine.

Rheumatoid Arthritis: Similar condition but affects more of the multiple and often large joints such as knee, shoulder, fingers and back. Positive Rh factor is a diagnosing modality.

### Homeopathic Treatment for Lumbar Spondylitis:

Yes, **homeopathy** does offer significant treatment for this condition. The treatment is targeted at relieving the inflammation and stiffness, making the life comfortable. Also, the underlying process leading to such chronic inflammation is addressed using the **homeopathic medicines**. However, homeopathy cannot revert the deformity.

## MASTOIDITIS

### Definition:

Mastoiditis is an inflammation of mastoid process (bone), the portion of the temporal bone of the skull that is behind the ear. Mastoid process contains open, air-containing spaces. Mastoiditis used to be a leading cause of child mortality.

Mastoiditis can be acute, chronic or recurrent.

### Causes:

In most cases, Mastoiditis is caused by certain gram-positive bacteria such as streptococci pyrogenes, Staphylococcus aureus, etc. Gram-negative bacteria can rarely cause Mastoiditis.

- Mastoiditis is usually caused by the infection of the middle ear, which is called acute otitis media. Infection from middle ear spreads to the air cells of the mastoid process.
- Mastoiditis may be the result of blockage of ear drainage. A skin tumor in the middle ear called Cholesteotoma may block the ear drainage.
- Perforation of tympanic membrane may also lead to Mastoiditis.

### Symptoms:

- Discomfort or pain behind the ear.
- Discharge of pus, fluid from ear.
- Redness and swelling behind the ear.
- Fever or headache in case of acute Mastoiditis.
- Hearing loss and vertigo

### Diagnosis:

It is best diagnosed clinically with the help of detail history and physical examination. CT scan, MRI and X-ray help to confirm the diagnosis and evaluate the extent of disease.

### Complications:

- Hearing loss
- Vertigo
- Meningitis
- Facial nerve palsy

- Brain abscess

## **Treatment Options for Mastoiditis**

### **Conventional treatment:**

In conventional medicines, Mastoiditis is treated with broad-spectrum antibiotics, often administered through the intra-venous route.

### **Homeopathic treatment:**

Homeopathic medicines help to treat the acute infection as well as the chronic and recurring infections. If the acute infection is very severe, homeopathy may not help fast enough. However, chronic and recurring Mastoiditis finds excellent treatment using homeopathy. Medicines are chosen based on some symptoms, extent of pathology and investigational findings. Some of the commonly indicated medicines are Mercurius solubus, Mercurius-iodum flavum and rubrum, Asafetida, Kali iodum, Pulsatilla nigra, Tuberculinum, etc. Homeopathy is strongly recommended in all chronic cases of Mastoiditis.

## **Meniere's Disease**

Meniere's disease is a disorder affecting the inner ear. It causes episodes of vertigo, fluctuating hearing loss, ringing in the ears (tinnitus) and a feeling of fullness or pressure in the ear.

### **Who Gets Meniere's disease?**

2 in every 1000 people suffer from Meniere's disease. People in their 40's and 50's are most affected. However, people in their 20's can also suffer from this condition. Meniere's affects men and women equally.

### **Symptoms**

The symptoms of Meniere's are variable. A typical attack is preceded by fullness in one or both ears. The attack generally consists of imbalance, vertigo, ringing in the ears (tinnitus), sweating and nausea. Though some people can predict the onset of an attack, most people find their onset unpredictable.

Severity and frequency of attacks are variable. Still an average attack lasts for many hours (days in some) and are followed by extreme exhaustion, making the person sleep for many hours together.

The typical symptoms seen in Meniere's disease are:

- **Vertigo**

This is a subjective feeling of rotation (either of oneself or the surrounding), having sudden onset and in severe cases, accompanied by sweating, nausea and vomiting.

- **Tinnitus**

There is a subjective sensation of ringing, roaring or swooshing in the ears. Usually one ear is affected, though it is not uncommon for both ears to be affected.

- **Hearing loss or deafness**

Progressive hearing loss in one (unilateral) or both (bilateral) ears is experienced. Initially, the lower frequencies are the first to go.

- **Fullness in both ears**

There is a feeling of fullness in the ears similar to that experienced in pressure changes. However, there is no relief obtained by swallowing.

- **Photophobia**

Increased sensitivity to light in any form which aggravates the headaches and vertigo is a common symptom.

### **What causes Meniere's disease?**

Studies have suggested the presence of an autoimmune factor in the development of Meniere's disease. The exact cause is yet unknown. The inner ear contains fluid called endolymph. This fluid is enclosed within a structure of membranes. Increase in pressures within this enclosure causes these membranes to bulge. This condition is called "hydrops". Yet, all persons with Meniere's

disease don't present with hydrops. Where the cause of hydrops is known, the condition is called "endolymphatic hydrops" and not Meniere's disease.

## Diagnosis

Good clinical history supported by otoneurological evaluation and audiometry help an experienced physician to make a correct diagnosis of Meniere's disease. An MRI is often suggested to rule out tumor of 8<sup>th</sup> cranial nerve.

## Homeopathic treatment for Meniere's disease:

Homeopathy works in most cases of Meniere's disease. Symptomatic relief as well as reduction in the swelling of the endolymphatic sac can be achieved. Recurrence of Meniere's disease can be controlled. Homeopathy is strongly recommended for Meniere's disease during all stages.

## MOLLUSCUM CONTAGIOSUM

More illustrative Molluscum contagiosum (contagiosa) is a commonly found skin infection, especially among children, which looks like small, pearl shaped, pinkish white eruptions on skin. It is a viral infection. It is also found in adults who are immunodeficient due to some reason. The infection is most common between the age of one to ten years. Molluscum Contagiosum can affect any area on the body but is usually observed on the face, arms and legs.

### Cause:

Molluscum contagiosum is caused by DNA poxvirus called the Molluscum contagiosum *virus* (MCV).

### Symptoms:

*(Armpit, face, neck: Photos of patients treated at Life force.)*

It is a benign self-limiting infection which presents in the form of rounded, pearl shaped eruptions. The lesions are flesh-colored, dome-shaped, and pearly in appearance.

They are usually 1–5 millimeters in diameter, with a dimpled center.

They are generally not painful, but they may itch or become irritated.

If it bursts, it can become painful and even may get infected due to some secondary bacterial infection. Picking or scratching the bumps may lead to further infection or scarring and bleeding.

In about 10% of the cases, eczema develops around the lesions. They may occasionally be complicated by secondary bacterial infection.

### Spread of Molluscum Contagiosum:

*(Face, neck: Photos of patients treated at Life force.)*

Being viral in origin, it spreads by skin contact and touch. The lesions shown above shows how infection has spread to nearby areas. The picture on the left also shows an infected form of Molluscum contagiosum.

Scratching the bumps and then touching the skin or through sex contact is the most common way it spreads from one part to the body to another. Handling objects that have the virus on them, such as a towel, can also result in infection. The virus can be spread among children at a day care or at school. It is limited to a localized area on the topmost layer of the epidermis. Children present with clusters largely due to self-spread.

Even after successful treatment, it can recur, since it does not give life long immunity.

### Prevalence:

About one in twenty young people are infected at some time with Molluscum contagiosum.

## Diagnosis:

Diagnosis is made on the clinical examination by experienced eyes. No blood test or biopsy required.

## Treatment:

Molluscum contagiosum is a self-limiting condition; which means that it gets cured if untreated. However, in that case, it may take up to six months. Some treatment measures may shorten the duration and reduce the chances of spread. It is contagious until the bumps are gone-which, if untreated, may be up to 6 months or longer. The time from infection to the appearance of lesions ranges from 2 weeks to 6 months, with an average incubation period of 6 weeks.

The Molluscum virus cannot be routinely cultured in the laboratory.

## General treatment:

It is done by popping the core containing the virus with a needle. The central waxy core contains the virus. This procedure must be done regularly to prevent multiplying of the virus. Once the virus-containing head of the lesion has been destroyed, the infection is gone.

## Surgical treatment:

### Cryotherapy:

It involves killing infected cells by "freezing" them with a pressurized liquid spray, usually liquid nitrogen or nitrous oxide. The procedure is relatively painless and can be performed by any health professional. The infected cells may fall off immediately or fade over several days.

### Laser therapy:

Pulsed dye laser therapy is the treatment of choice when there are multiple lesions. Any surgical treatment requires to be repeated each time, new crops of lesions appear.

## Homeopathic Treatment for Molluscum Contagiosum:

Homeopathy has effective treatment for a range of viral infections which includes Molluscum contagiosum. There are a few commonly indicated anti-viral medicines which are specially suitable for this condition. This problem is largely self-limiting and does not require medicine unless it is severe and extensive. It has to be remembered that the medicines have to be chosen based on the patient's individual symptoms; and not that they work for all the patients alike. Some of the medicines are Thuja occidentalis, Dulcamara, Silica, Natrum Muriaticum, Rhus toxicodendron, Causticum, Nitric acid, etc.

Homeopathic treatment is **strongly suggested** for Molluscum contagiosum, especially for the severe variety.

## MOUTH ULCERS

Recurring Ulcers in the mouth is a common problem for many. Small or large, one or several at a time, short lasting or those lasting for a few days, painful or not painful, could be some of the features of this condition. Medically, this condition is also called Aphthous stomatitis.

### Causes of Oral ulcers

The most common causes of recurring ulcers in the mouth can be summarized as under:

- **Deficiency:** Vitamin B12, folic acid and iron deficiency. This is a most common cause of ulcers in the mouth especially found among vegetarians. Also, iron deficiency in women due to heavy menses, could be a common cause. The treatment has to be targeted by proper supplements.
- **Stress:** Next common cause is acute or prolonged stress. Observed usually in those young people who live a stressful life due to stringent deadlines at work, irregular sleep pattern.
- Smoking, use of tobacco, drugs, etc.
- **Mechanical cause:** Pressure to a rough or decayed tooth, bad dentures, etc.
- Bad oral hygiene
- **Medicines:** Some of the conventional medicines are known to produce mouth ulcers. They include pain-killers (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medicines), antibiotics, anti-cancer (chemotherapy), radiation, immunosuppressive medicines such as methotrexate, cyclosporine, Alendronic acid (used for osteoporosis) and some more.

- **Infections:** Some bacterial, viral and fungal infections
- Some oral diseases like **Oral Lichen Planus**
- **Cancer:** A non-healing ulcer in the mouth with swollen lymph node in neck must be examined to rule out cancer.
- Some unknown causes

## Symptoms

As said above, ulcers in mouth could be in any form, size, shape, number and duration.

It is more often found above the age of 20 years, in both sexes. Children also may present with oral ulcers. Having ulcers once in a couple of years may not need much attention. However, if the ulcers keep recurring and if they take long time to heal, it calls for evaluation and strategic treatment.

## Treatment for Mouth Ulcer

As a rule, the treatment has to be targeted at the cause of the ulcers.

### Homeopathic treatment for oral ulcers

Recurring oral ulcers can be treated using homeopathy with great success. Depending on the cause behind the ulcers, the treatment has to be targeted. Some of the commonly used homeopathic medicines for acute and chronic oral ulcers are Borax, Nitric Acid, Carbolic acid, Mercurious solubus, Phosphorus, Arsenic album, Carbo animalis, Kali chloratum, etc.

Homeopathic treatment is strongly suggested for all cases of recurring and chronic Oral ulcers.

# MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS

## Introduction:

Multiple sclerosis is the disease of nervous system. The disease is more common in the western world. The disease affects young individuals, has a prolonged course and causes disability at the prime of life. The disease is marked by frequent remissions and relapses.

The disease produces a myriad of symptoms. Some of the common symptoms include haziness and dimness of vision, double vision, scanning speech, tremors of hands and legs, weakness of one or more limbs, numbness and tingling pains in the limbs, vertigo and loss of balance, etc.

## Remarks:

Though the condition produces life-impairing symptoms, the exact cause of this condition is not clear. Recent research suggests that the disease is due to disturbance of immune system where body's own defense mechanism starts attacking body's own organs and tissues. The genetic and heredity factors are at the root of this alteration of immune system.

To sum up, multiple sclerosis is a constitutional disorder and calls for an in-depth constitutional approach towards its management. Homeopathy, too, is based on the constitutional approach. **Homeopathy medicines** are prescribed after taking into account the presenting complaints along with physical, emotional and genetic make up that individualizes a person. Homeopathy medicines being deep-acting assist in bringing back deviations of immunity to normalcy.

## Suggestion about homeopathic treatment

Although Multiple Sclerosis has always puzzled physicians of all walks; interestingly homeopathy system offers reasonably positive treatment if not cure in such cases. The various expressions of disease can be managed effectively, gently, and safely with **Homeopathy**. Early intervention with homeopathy can assist in preventing further progress and hence deterioration caused by disease.

At Life Force, we have limited experience with Multiple Sclerosis. However, we have observed and documented significant results in some of the cases. Homeopathy is recommended for Multiple Sclerosis in all stages, especially earlier stages.

## **MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY**

Muscular Dystrophy is not a single disease but a group of hereditary muscle destroying disorders. There are more than 30 types of these disorders, vary in their inheritance pattern, rate of progression, initial muscle attacked and age of onset.

The skeletal muscles are the main group of muscles affected in this disorder. The skeletal muscles are used during the voluntary body movements. There is progressive weakness and degeneration of these group of muscles.

The disease may occur in adulthood or childhood, but the more severe form tends to occur in early childhood.

### **Causes of Muscular Dystrophy**

It is an inherited disorder, means it is passed down through generations in a family. Many cases occur from spontaneous mutation, that are not found in genes of either of the parent, and this defect can be passed to next generation.

### **Symptoms of Muscular Dystrophy**

The day to day activities of the patient is affected. Some of them are

- inability to walk
- poor balance
- loss of bowel control
- drooping eyelids
- waddling gait
- respiratory difficulty
- limited range of movements
- frequent falls
- loss of strength in a muscle or a group of muscles as an adult
- low muscle tone (hypotonia)
- joint contracture (club foot, claw hand or others)
- abnormally curved spine (scoliosis)

Some types involve heart muscles, causing cardiomyopathy or disturbed heart rhythm (arrhythmias)

### **Diagnosis of Muscular Dystrophy:**

The diagnosis is based on the combination of characteristic clinical presentation and the results of muscle biopsy.

### **Prognosis of Muscular Dystrophy**

There is no remission in this disease. The severity of the disability depends on the type of muscular dystrophy. Some cases may be mild and progress very slowly over a normal lifespan, while others produce severe muscle weakness and functional disability. All types of Muscular Dystrophy slowly get worse, but how fast this happens varies widely.

### **Treatment of Muscular Dystrophy**

It is not an incurable disorder, rather a genetic disorder for which no satisfactory treatment has been found in any system of medicine.

The treatment is aimed at controlling the symptoms.

Progressive loss of muscle mass is primarily responsible for reduced quality and length of life. The drug treatment is based on slowing the process of muscle degeneration and thus improvement of the quality of life. Corticosteroids are known to extend the ability of these patients to walk, but have substantial side effects and their mechanism of action is unknown.

Inactivity (such as bed rest and sitting for long periods) can worsen the disease.

Physical therapy, exercises, orthopedic instruments (wheel chairs and standing frames), speech therapy and corrective orthopedic surgeries may help to preserve muscle function and prevent joint contractures.

Occupational therapy may be given as a supportive line of therapy for being self sufficient to do daily activities (self care, self feeding etc)

## **Homeopathic treatment for Muscular Dystrophy**

Homeopathic treatment helps to slow down the process of muscular degeneration, and can work on bringing some symptomatic relief, such as improving muscle power. It is aimed at better quality life.

Homeopathic medicines are prescribed after the detailed case study consisting of physical, emotional and genetic make up of an individual. Homeopathic medicines help to reduce the muscle weakness and control the disease progression. There are some specific Homeopathic remedies, which help for muscle paralysis and weakness and which have been found effective in the treatment of Muscular Dystrophy. Homeopathic treatment is recommended.

## **MYASTHENIA GRAVIS**

### **What is Myasthenia Gravis (MG)?**

The term Myasthenia gravis means 'grave muscle weakness'. MG is a chronic progressive auto-immune disorder causing muscle weakness.

### **What happens in MG?**

In MG, there is weakness of voluntary muscles (those controlled by will) and easy fatigability. This weakness comes up during periods of exertion and improves after rest. MG is an abnormality of the transmission of signals at the Neuro-Muscular Junction (NMJ). (Signals travel from brain to muscles via the nerves and the place where nerve joins muscle is called neuro-muscular junction.)

### **Whom can it affect?**

- Females are affected more often than males
- Age of onset in females is during second to third decade
- Onset is after sixth decade in males
- 2 out of every 100000 people are affected by MG

### **Auto-immune nature of MG:**

- In MG, the body's defense system forms cells (antibodies) against acetyl choline receptors
- These receptors are required for transmission of signals across the NMJ
- When these receptors are blocked, altered or destroyed by the antibodies, muscle contraction cannot occur normally.

## **Causes of MG:**

- Genetic
- Immunological
- Thymus tumors or abnormal enlargement (hyperplasia)
- Stress (aggravating factor in existing cases of Myasthenia Gravis)

## **Muscles usually affected by MG:**

- Muscles controlling eye and eyelid movements
- Muscles of facial expression
- Muscles of swallowing
- Neck and limb muscles
- Occasionally respiratory muscles

## **Symptoms of MG:**

- Drooping eyelids (ptosis)
- Double vision (diplopia)
- Difficulty in speech, slurred speech
- Difficulty in swallowing
- Nasal sounding speech
- Weakness of neck muscles
- Weakness of arms and legs
- Symptoms are usually intermittent (i.e. come and go)
- Symptoms may disappear for weeks and may appear again, later
- Weakness tends to worsen as the day progresses and after prolonged activity

## **Myasthenia Crisis:**

- A condition in which respiratory muscles become severely weakened
- Patient may have breathlessness, choking, aspiration of food
- Myasthenia crisis is rare and may end in respiratory failure

## **Grades of MG:**

- Grade 1: Only ocular disease
- Grade 2A: Mild generalized weakness
- Grade 2B: Moderate generalized weakness
- Grade 3: Severe generalized weakness
- Grade 4: Myasthenia crisis

## **Triggers of Myasthenia Crisis:**

- Respiratory viral infections
- Sudden withdrawal of steroids
- Certain drugs
- Psychological stress

- Pregnancy
- Exertion (especially in hot climate)

### **Diagnosis of MG:**

This is mainly based on clinical findings and a few supportive investigations:

- Antibodies to acetyl choline receptors
- EMG (Electromyogram)
- Repetitive nerve stimulation
- Tensilon test
- CT chest (for thymus abnormalities)

### **Allopathic treatment mostly includes:**

- Acetylcholine esterase inhibitors (Pyridostigmine)
- Steroids
- Immunosuppressive drugs
- Plasmapheresis (a procedure in which abnormal antibodies are removed from the blood)
- Intravenous immunoglobulin (temporarily modifies the immune system and provides the body with normal antibodies from donated blood)
- Surgical treatment: Thymectomy

### **Homeopathic approach and scope:**

Myasthenia Gravis is an autoimmune disorder, which means that there is a fault with the immune system, guided by genetic tendencies and other general factors. In other words, MG is a constitutional disorder, where the whole constitution needs to be addressed. MG is a progressively deteriorating condition, calling for some measures to arrest or control the disease process. Homeopathic treatment being constitutional in nature, treats the disease at a deeper level, to achieve the following:

- Control of the disease process
- Symptomatic relief

Homeopathy has shown its efficacy in reducing the frequency of relapses and improving the power and tone of muscles. However, it may be noted that the improvement with homeopathy may not be as fast as one achieved by using the immunosuppressive medicines. The role of homeopathy is more as long term control, rather than for acute crisis control. **Homeopathy** with its constitutional approach works at deeper level and brings deviations of immune system back to normalcy and in consequence minimizes the need of exogenous neurotransmitters or steroids as prescribed by conventional treatment.

## **MYOPIA**

Myopia is known as nearsightedness in common parlance. People suffering from myopia can see near objects clearly and have a problem viewing distant objects which appear blurred and with less clarity. Myopia has high prevalence in Asian countries up to 80-90% as compared to 30-40% in European countries and the United States, and 10-20% in Africa. Research has proved a relationship between myopia and high IQ. Combination of genetic predisposition and environmental factors like near sighted work like reading, computer games, watching TV is one of the reasons for myopia.

## **Causes:**

Myopia is caused due to change in the curvature of the lens of the eye due to weakening of eye muscles.

## **Prevention:**

Longer exposure to daylight has been proven in a research to help prevent myopia.

## **Treatment for Myopia**

Eye glasses, contact lenses, refractive surgery is the conventional treatment for myopia.

Eye exercises and biofeedback have been known to help myopics .Biofeedback helps in voluntary control of involuntary activities like the urge to urinate, defecate, etc. Biofeedback helps by giving positive signals the brain like positive self talk and the like and hence improves vision. It is widely practiced with good results.

Homeopathy has no scope in myopia. No over the counter homeopathic eye drops help either in treating or preventing myopia.

# **NASAL POLYPS**

## **Definition:**

A polyp is a swelling of the lining (mucosa) of the nose and the para-nasal sinuses. Polyps generally occur due to long-standing inflammation of the lining of the nose and of the sinuses surrounding the nasal cavity (para-nasal sinuses).

## **Symptoms:**

Polyps look like small grapes deep inside the nasal cavity and can appear singly or in clusters. They are collections of inflammatory cells, fluid and tissue.

Common symptoms associated with polyps are:

- Nose-block forcing an individual to breathe through the mouth
- Runny nose and sneezing
- Reduced sense of smell and taste, etc.

## **Homeopathic treatment:**

Homeopathic treatment is targeted towards the root cause of the illness and hence the disease is treated from the core. Homeopathy believes in treating the patient and not just the disease.

## **Suggestion about homeopathic treatment:**

Homeopathy is strongly recommended for management of nasal polyps, especially when they are small in size. Timely administered homeopathy medicines help avoid surgery and its inherent complications. Moreover, it is very common for the condition to recur even after surgery. Homeopathy also has preventive role to offer, by which chance of recurrence is minimized.

# **NEURITIS**

## **Optic Neuritis**

Optic neuritis is inflammation or swelling of the optic nerve which is the nerve supplying the eye from the brain that may cause complete or partial blindness. It destroys the outer lining or sheath of the nerve.

## Causes:

- Multiple Sclerosis, almost 50% of the patients with multiple sclerosis develop this disease
- Herpes Zoster virus
- Autoimmune disorders like Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.
- Chloramphenicol, an antibiotic used to treat typhoid
- Inflammation of blood vessels supplying the nerve
- Ethambutol, an anti-tubercular drug

## Symptoms:

**01** Sudden blurred vision

**02** Loss of colored vision

**03** Pain in the eye

## Occurrence:

It affects young individuals predominantly in the age group of 30-35 years and females are more commonly affected than men. It is a self limiting disease and resolves on its own within 2-3 weeks unless the person is suffering from some auto-immune disorder like multiple sclerosis.

## Treatment:

Homeopathy has good scope in cases with early diagnosis and can prevent blindness.

# NEUROFIBROMATOSIS

## Definition:

Neurofibromatosis, also called as von Recklinghausen's disease, is a genetically inherited disease of nerve tissue. It causes tumors to grow on nerves (neurofibromas) that lie on or under the skin anywhere in the body. It affects the development and growth of nerve cell tissues. The tumors are usually benign (non cancerous). Even so, in some cases they can be disfiguring. They tend to grow in many numbers and varying size, over the period of years.

## Types of Neurofibromatosis:

There are two types of neurofibromatosis:-

- **NF1**- It is most common type of neurofibromatosis. It is caused by the mutation of the chromosome 17 affecting 1 in every 2,500-4,000 births. It mainly affects peripheral nerves associated with *café-au-lait* spots on the skin. *Café-au-lait spots* are light brown in color like coffee in milk. It is also known as von Recklinghausen disease.
- **NF2**- It is rare type of neurofibromatosis. It is caused by the mutation of the chromosome 22 affecting 1 in every 25,000. It mainly affects VIII cranial nerve (auditory-vestibular nerve) which passes information from inner ear to the brain. It causes hearing loss, ringing in ear and problem with balance.

## Causes:

Neurofibromatosis is a genetically inherited disease. If either parent has neurofibromatosis, then there are 50% chance of having the disease in their children. Neurofibromatosis also appears in families with no previous history of the condition. It results from change (mutation) in the genetic material of the sperm or egg during the time of conception.

## Signs and Symptoms:

- **Café-au-lait spots:** These are light brown in color like coffee in milk. If there are six or more *Café-au-lait spots* on the body then the chances of neurofibromatosis may be suspected. Such spots would precede tumors in any part of the body, not at the place of the spots.
- **Neurofibromas:** These are generally benign tumors which grow on nerves that lie on or under the skin anywhere in the body. They appear as lumps under the skin. It is likely to increase in size and number as the child gets older. Tumors are soft in nature.
- **Lisch nodules:** It is very small spots of brown color which appear in the iris of the eye. It generally has no symptoms.
- **Acoustic neuroma:** It is the most common type of the brain tumor which generally develop on the VIII cranial nerve (auditory-vestibular nerve) which passes information from inner ear to the brain. It is also known as vestibular schwannoma. When these tumor grow in size it causes- hearing loss, ringing in ear and problem with balance, facial weakness, facial numbness, vertigo.
- **Freckles:** These are small light brown spot on the skin which becomes more pronounced after sun exposure. In neurofibromatosis cases these freckles are found on uncommon places such as groin region, under breast and armpits.

## Diagnosis:

Diagnosis is mainly done by physical examination and enquiring about the family history of neurofibromatosis. One should have at least two of the following signs and symptoms to diagnose with neurofibromatosis.

- *Café-au-lait spots*- six or more *Café-au-lait spots* on the body of 5mm or more in size.
- Neurofibroma- appearance of two or more Neurofibromas.
- Family history of neurofibromatosis.
- Freckles on groin region, under breast and armpits
- Lisch nodules - At least two Lisch nodules on the iris
- Certain skeletal deformities such as scoliosis (forward bending of the spine)
- Optic glioma-a tumor on the optic nerve

MRI and X- ray are done for the screening of tumor and skeletal abnormalities. In NF2 - audiometry test for hearing loss.

## Treatments:

Most of the time it does not need treatment but if the tumors are painful, disfiguring, growing and compressing the adjacent tissues may need treatment.

**Surgery:** Large tumor may be removed surgically. Chances of growth of tumor at the same place, after the surgery, are very high. The doctor may remove a tumor and also treat bone abnormalities by surgical means.

**Radiation:** Radiotherapy is used to shrink tumors.

**Chemotherapy:** Some drugs are useful in treating tumors.

**Counseling** - Some patient and family members may experience emotional or psychological issues (sadness, shock, anger, frustration, embarrassment etc.) as a result of neurofibromatosis. They become isolated and withdraw themselves from the society. They may have emotional setback about their appearance.

Family counseling and genetic counseling may help people with neurofibromatosis to be comfortable with themselves and their family members.

## Homeopathic approach for Neurofibromatosis:

At Life Force we have treated several cases of Neurofibromatosis. We have observed that this disease cannot be cured with homeopathy. In a few cases we have observed that the growth in size and number remains under control, using

homeopathy; which takes many years of treatment. However, we do not have a huge study. We usually do not recommend homeopathy for Neurofibromatosis.

## NON-HEALING ULCERS

### Definition:

Any Non-healing wound or ulcer on skin that has been present for 3-4 weeks duration, without healing is called Non-healing ulcer.

### Causes:

Some of the major causes are listed under:

- Vascular congestion
- Infection (mostly due to resistant bacteria)
- Poor nutritional
- Diabetes mellitus
- Some systemic disease such as SLE (Systemic Lupus)
- Unknown causes

### Types of Non-Healing Ulcers

There are a few types of Non-healing ulcers:

- Pressure ulcers
- Venous stasis ulcer
- Diabetic Ulcer
- Arterial ulcer
- Pyoderma gangrenosum
- Marjolin's ulcer

### Pressure Ulcers:

Pressure ulcers are formed when skin and tissue are compressed leading to decrease in circulation and oxygen to the area, causing tissue damage, which results in formation of ulcers. Most often found on lower limbs especially heels and buttocks. These are commonly found in people confined to bed or wheelchair, inability to shift positions, poor nutrition, etc.

### Venous Stasis ulcer:

Venous stasis ulcers account for 70 to 80 percent of all lower extremity ulcers. [Varicose veins](#), sustained venous hypertension, due to chronic venous insufficiency lead to damage of valves in the legs. This results in tissue swelling, increase in pressure, and formation of venous ulcers. These ulcers are most often found on medial side of ankle, mostly around the malleoli and calf. Pitting oedema is often present and may predate the ulcer.

Management involves assessment of blood flow to the extremity, wound management, compression stockings and/or wraps.

### Diabetic Ulcer:

These ulcers result from damage to peripheral nerves due to diabetes. They are most commonly found on bottom of the foot or on the foot.

## **Arterial ulcer:**

These ulcers are due to reduced arterial blood supply to lower limbs. Most common causes are atherosclerosis and peripheral vascular disease. Arterial ulcers develop on the distal extremities and are sharply demarcated and painful with little granulation tissue. Mainly occur on toes, heels, and bony prominences of foot. The toenails thicken and become opaque and maybe lost, Gangrene may set in. Onset can be precipitated by trauma. Management involves assessment of blood flow to the extremity, wound management.

## **Pyoderma gangrenosum:**

These are small ulcers that begin as painful, pus-filled sores that unite into a non-bacterial sore within days. These are usually found on the exterior surfaces of the legs or the face. Pyoderma gangrenosum is an immune-mediated, inflammatory condition commonly associated with inflammatory bowel disease and immuno-deficient states.

## **Marjolin's ulcer:**

This entity was first described in 1828 by Marjolin, who diagnosed Non-healing ulcers developing in burn scars. Later, Dupuytren found these ulcers to be malignant in nature. Today, the term Marjolin's ulcer is used to describe a cancer arising from any site of chronic inflammation. Marjolin's ulcers occur most often on the extremities and in wounds that have been present for 30 years or more.

## **Diagnosis:**

Diagnosis of Non-healing ulcers is based on physical examination and specific tests such as Biopsy, Magnetic resonance imaging of Non-healing pressure ulcers, Doppler flow-metry of leg arteries or Doppler Ultra-sonography of the lower limb venous system.

## **Self help for Non-healing ulcers:**

Avoid walking barefoot. Wearing compression stockings, skin care (Keep legs and feet clean and dry, lubricate dry skin), avoid cuts, cracks, abrasions. Leg elevation and calf exercise are recommended. Patients are encouraged to decrease their risk factors (e.g., smoking, tobacco, etc.) and to manage co-existing conditions such as diabetes, blood pressure, cholesterol.

## **Conventional Treatment:**

Topical antibacterial agents, Antiseptics, Antibiotics, Skin grafting, Reconstructive surgery, angioplasty, amputation, Hyperbaric oxygen (HBO) therapy.

Diabetic ulcers have a high incidence of infection, which further slows the healing process. Cleansing and semi-permeable foam dressing is recommended along with diabetes control. Venous ulcers are also susceptible to infection. Venous eczema is seen in severe cases.

In Marjolin's ulcer, wide excision followed by skin grafting is recommended. Elective lymph node dissection has been suggested because of the high rate of metastasis. Finally, amputation may be recommended for recurrent disease, or when a Marjolin's ulcer is associated with underlying osteomyelitis (ulcerated bone).

Non healing ulcer generally does not respond to conventional therapies in few weeks of treatment.

## Homeopathic treatment for Non-healing ulcers

Homeopathy has very good medicines for treating non- healing ulcers.

Homeopathic remedies directly enhance the inherent healing capacity and treat by addressing the underlying causes as described above. All cases are assessed individually and treated according to the underlying etiology.

## NUTRITIONAL ANEMIA

Anemia is the most common of all blood disorders. The term anemia (derived from Greek) means a deficiency of blood.

Anemia results from reduced red blood cell production in the bone marrow. Hemoglobin is the oxygen carrying protein in blood. It is a major component of all red blood cells and gives them their red color. This protein picks up oxygen from the lungs, carries it throughout the body and delivers it to all your cells. In addition, hemoglobin also picks up some of the carbon dioxide produced by the cells and transports it to the lungs from where it is exhaled out.

Cells need oxygen for their basic functions and to keep them alive. Hence, without enough red blood cells to transport oxygen to your cells and carbon dioxide away from your cells, it is like literally suffocating every tissue and organ system in the body.

### Symptoms of Nutritional Anemia

Symptoms of anemia are usually very vague and hence, it goes undetected in many people. People tend to ignore these symptoms until they become quite disturbing. Thus, it is necessary to know some of the often ignored symptoms:

- Tiredness
- Pallor (pale appearance)
- Rapid heart beats (sensations of pounding heartbeats)
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of sex drive
- Nervousness
- Depression
- Poor concentration
- Weak memory
- Easy bruising of body parts
- Slow healing of wounds
- Worsening of symptoms of other diseases
- Angina - heart pain from insufficient oxygen
- Claudication - cramped pains in muscles being used.
- Pica - the consumption of non-food items like wax, dirt, paper, grass or hair is often a symptom of anemia.

### Must see your physician when?:

- You feel tired for more than five days
- You are unable to perform routine activities

- There is persistent exhaustion with even minimal exertion
- The skin appears pale, and there is fatigue plus breathlessness on moderate exertion.
- Your tongue appears, smooth, shiny and very clean always
- There is yellowish (jaundiced) appearance of the skin.
- Your wounds don't heal soon or when there is presence of bluish-green discolorations under the skin.

## **Causes of Nutritional anemia:**

Causes of anemia can be broadly grouped in to the following categories:

- Insufficient production of red blood cells or hemoglobin
  - Starvation/poverty
  - Deficient dietary intake of iron, Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and folic acid impairs the bone marrow functions.
  - Conditions like cancer, chronic illnesses, allergic reactions to prescribed medications, toxic substances, etc.
  - Inherited defects like Thalessemias and sickle cell disease which cause faulty red blood cell structure thus, hastening red blood cell destruction.
  - Complete failure of the bone marrow in producing red blood cells is called aplastic anemia
- Increased destruction of red blood cells.
  - Increased destruction of red blood cells means they are destroyed before their normal life span is completed. A normal red blood cell lives for approximately 120 days. Many conditions increase their destruction.
  - Infectious conditions like malaria Rh-incompatibility in a pregnant mother.
- Loss of blood
  - Increased loss of blood when menstruating Silent duodenal or gastric ulcers (common in immuno-compromised, elderly and diabetics)
  - Cancers of the intestines
  - Any disorder which impairs the coagulability of blood (hemophilia)

## **Some of the most common causes of nutritional anemia are:**

- Iron deficiency
- Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> Folic acid deficiencies (these usually occur together)
- Thyroid disorders
- Lead toxicities
- Infectious diseases like malaria
- Alcoholism
- Vitamin E and B<sub>6</sub> deficiencies.
- Premature born infants.
- Medications which
  - Prevent iron absorption from the gut e.g. 'proton pump inhibitors' in treating acidity, tetracycline etc.
  - Cause chronic, mild bleeding from the gut e.g. NSAIDs (ibuprofen, naproxen used widely as pain-killers).
  - Aspirin is another widely used medication known to cause mild to moderate bleeding from the gut.
  - Hydrocortisones and valproic acid are drugs which cause folic acid deficiencies.
  - Vitamin B12 deficiency can be caused by drugs like amoxicillin (antibiotic), and phenytoin (anti-convulsive).

## **Risk factors fro nutritional anemia:**

Ones chances of developing anemia increase particularly if they are:

- Menstruating and having heavy bleeding or excessively long periods (monthly blood loss depletes iron)

- Pregnant
- Lactating
- Athletes (especially endurance athletes)
- An alcoholic
- Vegetarians or vegans
- Using nonprescription drugs and natural remedies whose side-effects are less known.
- Habituated to having tea in excess (tannin in tea causes decreased absorption of iron).

### **Diagnosis of Nutritional anemia:**

Anemia is diagnosed through blood check ups and clinical examination. Your physician can diagnose anemia when told of your symptoms. A simple blood test called "complete blood count (CBC)" maybe advised by your physician.

This provides an idea of the hemoglobin count. Other tests required of anemic patients are:

- Blood Smear: study the structure of red blood cells with a microscope after preparing a slide smear.
- Serum iron, iron binding capacity and Serum ferritin: to detect iron deficiency.
- Reticulocyte count: Reticulocytes are immature red blood cells. Their raised levels in the blood indicate an increased destruction of red blood cells.
- Serum Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> and folic acid: Measured to rule out their deficiencies.
- Hemoglobin electrophoresis: to rule out disorders in which hemoglobin structure is abnormal.
- Coombs test: to find antibodies for red cells
- Red cell fragility: done to know how easily the cells get destroyed.
- Bone marrow biopsy: any abnormalities in cells which produce the red blood cells can be identified by studying a sample of bone marrow.

### **Treatment for Nutritional anemia:**

Conventional treatments emphasize on:

Lifestyle changes and

Medications.

Lifestyle changes

Some life style changes can help you remain healthy without having to depend upon too many medications.

### **Diet for Nutritional Anemia**

A balanced and nutritious diet can go a long way in reversing anemia.

- Red meats, egg yolks, clams & liver are some of the richest sources of iron.
- However, there is hope **for vegetarians** too. Dietary iron is obtained from:
- Spinach and other dark leafy vegetables
  - Dried beans
  - Parsley (herb) is one of the richest source of iron among plants
  - Nuts, seeds
  - Dried fruits (apricots, peaches, raisins, and prunes)
  - Fortified cereals
  - Fortified soy products
  - Brewers yeast

**Cooking in iron pots and pans** can also increase the amounts of iron consumed.

**Vitamin C** can **enhance iron absorption** in the body. So, a **diet rich in vitamin C** consisting of fresh fruits and vegetables (amla, guavas, limes, oranges, tomatoes, cabbages, etc.) should be maintained as well.

**Exercises** in moderation can improve blood circulation. However, an excess is additional stress which can be harmful in severe anemia. So, discuss with your physician before starting any regimen.

### **Medications**

For the treatment of anemia, prescription drugs as well as over the counter medications are available. Still, it is better to seek medical advice before starting any supplementary regimen.

The most common prescription medications are:

- Folic acid supplements
- Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> injections
- Iron supplements
- Intake of iron supplements can cause toxicity in some persons. A rare genetic disorder called hemochromatosis causes increased absorption of iron leading to an overload. This condition is as dangerous as having too little iron in the body. Since men lose less iron compared to women, hemochromatosis is more prevalent in men. The condition is also common in persons from Northern Europe.

### **Homeopathic Treatment for Nutritional anemia:**

In addition to the supplements with iron and other components, homeopathic medications work wonders for cases of Nutritional anemia by treating the cause such as problems with absorption and assimilation of food. The medicines increase iron absorption and its assimilation. The medications act without any side-effects. Homeopathy is strongly suggested for Nutritional anemia.

## **OBESITY**

Obesity means an excess fat collection in the body. There is always an optimal weight for every age and sex. In obesity, this weight exceeds the upper limit of normal by 30%.

**Morbid obesity** is a condition wherein people are overweight by 45 kilos to what is normal for their age and sex.

The prevalence of obesity has increased sharply since the mid seventies especially in the developed countries. In fact, obesity has become so rampant that more children and teenagers are obese nowadays than ever before. 70 % of the adult population in the U.S.A is considered obese.

Obesity is not just a cosmetic consideration. It is a medical condition associated with illness and disability. It can lead to: -

- Diabetes
- High blood pressures
- Heart diseases like coronary heart diseases (CHD)
- Diseases of gall bladder
- Sleep apnea plus other respiratory problems
- Osteoarthritis
- Stroke
- Increased risks for many cancerous conditions in both men and women.

### **Causes of obesity**

There are many theories explaining what causes obesity.

## Genes versus Environment

Identical twins are known to have very identical BMI even when grown apart. This favors the concept that weight gain and obesity are controlled by genes.

However there are many instances where environmental conditions overwhelm the action of genes in obesity. Famines are known to prevent obesity even in those most prone to it genetically.

A number of conditions have been identified where obesity is a feature right from birth. In these children, along with obesity there are other symptoms that help differentiating these conditions from each other.

## Race and Socio-economic conditions

The odds of having obesity and obesity related health conditions varied among persons depending on their age, gender, race, income and smoking.

In the developed countries, obesity is more prevalent among people in the lower socio-economic strata where as, in developing countries, obesity is a problem more seen within the higher socio-economic strata.

## Medications

- Psychotic Drugs
  - There are four major groups of drugs which can cause obesity: Benzodiazepines, Lithium, Antidepressants, Antipsychotic drugs
  - Estrogens
  - Corticosteroids
  - Insulin
  - Sulphonyl urea agents (used in treatments of diabetes)

## Medical Conditions

- **Pregnancy**

The increased demand for energy and the heightened metabolic activity of the body on account of the drastic hormonal changes, predispose pregnant women to weight gain and obesity. Women are known to gain as much as 12 to 16 kilos during pregnancy.
- **Tumors**

Tumors arising in the brain like craniopharyngeomas -> which is a non-malignant tumor, most commonly occurring in children (5-15 age group) and presenting with obesity, lethargy, poor memory and recurrent headaches.
- **Endocrine disorders**

Disorders affecting the hormone producing plus secreting glands of the body are called endocrine disorders.
- **Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome**

a condition where a woman's sex hormones get out of balance. There is an abnormal increase in the production of the male hormones (androgens) causing obesity, irregular periods, acne, hair loss from the scalp but increased body hair etc.
- **Underactive thyroid disorder**

can cause obesity inspite of loss of appetite.
- **Cushing's syndrome**

a disorder in which the body produces excess cortisol resulting in obesity along with other symptoms of fatigue, weakness, facial flushing, round (moon) face, etc.

## So how is OBESITY measured?

The most widely used calculator for obesity is the Body Mass Index (BMI). This number is a ratio of a person's weight (in kilograms) to his height (in meter square). BMI from 30 up to 35 indicate obesity. For adults above 35, a BMI greater than 27 is considered obese. According to the American Obesity Association (AOA) BMI also indicates the potential health risks that accompany obesity.

### BMI Category

#### Health Risk

18 - <25

Minimal

25 - <27

Low

27 - <30

Moderate

30 - <35

High

35 - <40

Very high

>40

Extremely high

BMI less than 19 indicates mal-nutrition, while people with BMIs 25 up to 30 are considered overweight for their age and sex. BMI over 40 suggests morbid obesity. The BMI is a very sensitive indicator of obesity for people between the ages of 19 and 70 years.

Still, BMI is unsuitable in:

- Elderly people with general debility.
- Deformities of the spine like scoliosis (lateral deviation of the backbones) or kyphosis (forward deviation of the backbone)
- Children growing up very fast.
- Pregnant or lactating women.
- Body builders and athletes

Scientists use other, more sensitive methods to assess obesity.

## CT & MRI Scans

- These are non-invasive methods which can assess the collection of fat cells. They are very reliable and identify the precise points of fat collection in the body.

## Abdomino-Gluteal Ratio/Waist Hip Ratio (WHR)

- This measures the proportion of fat distribution around the torso. These measurements have a strong correlation with general health and fertility. It is optimal for men to have a ratio of 0.9. A ratio of 0.7 in women is considered very healthy. Ratios in **women** exceeding **0.9** and in **men** exceeding **1.0** imply obesity. WHR is a better tool for assessing a person's risk for heart attack than the BMI.

## Anthropometry

- The BMI is of limited use in certain occasions. Many conditions render the BMI an unsuitable tool for health assessment. As a person accumulates fat in his body, fats are first deposited under the skin before being deposited around internal organs. Instruments that measure the fat deposited under the skin are called "skin calipers".

Lesser used methods that scientists employ to study obesity are:

- Densitometry -> where weight is measured under water
- Water dilution methods

## Symptoms and Diagnosis of Overweight

The world health organization (WHO) has categorized obesity as a metabolic disorder. Often obese people approach their doctors when other health conditions worsen due to obesity.

Signs and symptoms that suggest its time to tackle obesity are:

- Your diabetes does not improve inspite of medications and you are overweight. Remember that all obese persons do not develop diabetes, but 80% of diabetics are obese.
- You have trouble conceiving. Impotence and infertility are conditions worsened by obesity.
- The menstrual cycles have become irregular. You either have them too often or they seem to be diminishing in flow and appear later than usual.
- You have lately developed high blood pressure or your existing high pressures are not responding well to medications.
- Off-late you suffer from increased daytime sleepiness. Chances are you may suffer from sleep apnea.
- Obesity increases chances of skin infections. Fungal infections are common in skin folds of the abdomen, torso and lower limbs.
- Obesity can result in many chemical changes within the body. In some people, the Uric Acid content in blood rises sufficiently to cause **gout**-> a common condition causing joint inflammation.
- The weight bearing joints of the body -> back bones, knees, ankles etc. can suffer from **joint inflammation** (osteoarthritis). Pains in the back and knee are common complaints associated with obesity.
- Young Children who are obese are more prone to joint problems, especially of the knee joints and lower limbs.
- Obesity can cause hemodynamic changes that resulting in stasis of blood flow especially in the lower limbs which lead to varicose veins.

## Treatment of Obesity:

Optimal treatment plans for obese people consist of the following:

Changing diet and behavior.

Introducing Exercise, Drugs and surgery (last option)

### Dietary + Life style changes

Excess calories consumed end-up being stored as fat. A good diet plan must have foods high in nutritive value and low in empty calories.

Give up the idea of starving yourself. Crash diets rarely remedy the situation. You are likely to quit the regimen very soon either out of frustration or from progressive weakness.

Instead, try to eat more of the right kind of foods. The realistic approach is to achieve a "healthier weight" and not what is touted as the "ideal weight".

- **Don't avoid carbohydrates** -> have less of simple carbohydrates (sugars) and consume more of complex carbohydrates. Most naturally occurring complex carbohydrates also provide sufficient vitamins and minerals for energy production. Wheatgerm, bran, oats, cornmeal, maize, buckwheat and barley are all excellent sources of complex carbohydrates.

These foods are best consumed as they are that is in their natural states.

- **Complex carbohydrates** -> minimum 60% of your daily calories must come from carbohydrates. If you are uncomfortable using complex carbohydrates routinely, there are plenty of choices you may opt for
  - pasta and its varieties
  - whole grain cereals
  - muesli
  - shredded wheat
  - porridge oats
  - corn
  - yam
  - oat cakes
  - lentils
  - beans
  - brown rice
  - potatoes
  - brown bread
  - pitta bread
- Avoid food fads which promise dramatic weight loss in little time. Rapid weight loss generally means you are losing a lot of proteins and body fluids. This eventually depletes your body's muscle mass and leads to exhaustion. The ideal diet will enable the body to burn fat while conserving muscle proteins.
- Add more high fiber foods. Vegetables, fruits, beans and whole grains are high in fibers which prevent excess absorption of carbohydrates from the intestines.
  - Have plenty of red, yellow and orange fruits which are high in antioxidants.
- Avoid having animal fats. These are high in saturated fats which lead to conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes. Animal fats are very rich in cholesterol which can cause heart diseases along with obesity.
- Drink plenty of water. Recent studies have shown that simply having more water can increase your metabolic rates thus help in burning more calories in the form of fat.
- Maintain a balance between caloric intake and energy expenditure. It is true that obese people consume more calories than they require and burn fewer calories. So an ideal balance needs to be maintained.
  - Start being more active.
  - Walk more, use the car less often.
  - Avoid using the car for short distances -> try cycling or walking instead.
  - Climb stairs instead of always using the elevators.
  - Pursue active recreational sports when home rather than watching television or surfing the net.
- Increase your fitness levels by including activities that you enjoy. It takes about 3,500 excess calories to gain just 0.5kg (1lb). Few people gain more than 2lb to 5lb each year. Weight fluctuates from day to day, but you should aim to stay about the same weight from week to week.
- Have moderate sizing when at the restaurant. Try having starters instead of heavy desserts. Restaurants generally provide very large servings, try to split your dish with a friend and do not order anything offered super sized.
- Eat a variety of foods. Try and get your vitamin and mineral nutrients from food and not through supplements.
- Have adequate amounts of calcium. Calcium is essential for strong bones and teeth.

## **Medications**

Anti-obesity medications are prescribed mostly only to persons who suffer from morbid obesity. The most commonly used drugs are:

- Orlistat
- Sibutramine
- Metformin

- Byetta
- Symlin 90

These drugs act by suppressing the appetites, increasing the body metabolism and preventing the absorption of fats from the digestive system.

## **Surgery**

Performed only where all other methods to lose weight fail. The procedures done commonly, aim to reduce the stomach size and bypass the stomach by connecting the food pipe to the small intestine. Common procedures include gastric bypass, vertical banding and gastroplasty.

## **Homeopathic Treatment for Obesity:**

Homeopathic approach to the treatment of Obesity entails treating the treatable cause, if possible. For example, if obesity is due to hormonal disorders such as Hypothyroidism, it calls for the treatment for the same. Besides the treatment, disciplines diet habit and exercise schedule form important part of the treatment. It may be noted that there are no standard medicines in homeopathy which can reduce weight.

# **OSTEOARTHRITIS**

## **Definition:**

Osteoarthritis is one of the types of arthritis that is caused due to degeneration and eventually loss of the cartilage of joints. Cartilage is a tissue that covers the inside of the joints and acts as a cushion between the two bones forming a joint. When the cartilage starts undergoing degeneration, the bone becomes inflamed as its protective covering is lost. This causes pain during weight bearing activities such as standing, walking, etc.

## **Joint structure**

## **Causes of Osteoarthritis:**

Osteoarthritis occurs commonly as a person ages and it is frequently seen in persons above the age of 55 years though it can also occur earlier than this. Before the age of 45 years, it is more common in males. Genetic predisposition also is one common cause for osteoarthritis. This condition usually affects the weight bearing joints such as the knees and hips; it can also affect other joints such as those of the hands, feet and the spine.

## **OA knees:**

When the osteoarthritis is due to ageing process it is known as primary osteoarthritis; when there are other conditions in the background that have triggered this disorder, it is known as Secondary osteoarthritis. Secondary osteoarthritis can be caused by any of the following:

- Trauma
- Joint surgery
- Obesity
- Congenital anomalies of the joint
- Gout
- Diabetes
- Hormonal disorders (especially Growth hormone disorders)

## **Symptoms of Joint Pain (Osteoarthritis):**

The common symptoms of Osteoarthritis: **Heberden's nodes**

- Pain and stiffness of the affected joint
- Swelling and warmth of the joint
- Creaking of the joint
- Pain is usually worse after repetitive use of the joint
- Stiffness is usually worse after a long period of inactivity
- Pain may occur at rest too (in severe cases)
- Limited mobility of joints
- Inability to squat
- Bony enlargement of small joints of fingers (called Heberden's nodules) Spine osteoarthritis can cause:
- Neck pain and stiffness
- Backache
- Tingling numbness of extremities

## **Homeopathic treatment:**

Osteoarthritis is a degenerative joint disease where the pathological changes in the joint are almost irreversible. Homeopathic medicine can alleviate the pain significantly but cannot cure the disease completely. Most cases respond well as far as the long-term pain relief is concerned. Homeopathic medicines are definitely suggested for osteoarthritis, especially for early cases where the medicines can slow down the degenerative process and offer considerable pain relief.

## **Homeopathic medicines for Osteoarthritis**

Osteoarthritis is an aging disease where bones in the joints show signs of aging, inflammation and deformity, with the symptoms of pain, swelling and reduced mobility.

Homeopathic medicines if chosen well can reduce pain and improve mobility. Some of the commonly used homeopathic medicines for Osteoarthritis are Rhus toxicodendron, Bryonia alba, Arnica Montana, Calcarea fluoride, Calcarea carbonate, Pulsatilla nigra, Radium bromide, Kali carbonicum, etc. First three medicines may be used as over-the-counter medicines for self help, not others.

## **PARKINSON'S DISEASE (PD)**

Parkinson's disease, also called paralysis agitans or shaking palsy is a movement disorder. Cases of PD are reported at all ages, though it is uncommon in people younger than 40.

This disease is more common among men and usually occurs after 60 years.

The average age at which symptoms begin in the USA, is 58-60.

The nerve cells in the part of the brain which control movements are mainly affected. The nerve cells (neurons) which make the chemical called dopamine either don't work sufficiently or are completely destroyed. The real cause behind this had never been identified. Though, many risk factors have been enumerated in literature.

## Symptoms:

Persons suffering from Parkinson's disease need not present with every common symptom. The number of symptoms and their intensities are known to vary with every individual. Most common signs & symptoms of Parkinson's include:

- **Tremors** felt in the fingers, hands, arms, legs, jaw and face. Initially these tremors are mild and visible only while resting. Eventually they become visible even during routine movements.
- **Rigidity** is another symptom. Persons suffering often feel stiffness or inflexibility in their muscles. Muscles normally stretch when they move, and then relax when they are at rest. In rigidity, the muscle tone of an affected limb is always stiff and does not relax, sometimes resulting in a decreased range of motion. Muscular movements like walking, running, dancing, sitting, grasping objects with fingers all seem very stiff. Rigidity can cause pain and cramping. The sense of fluidity in these movements is lost. In advanced conditions, even the facial muscles become very rigid, thus giving an appearance of an expressionless face, something akin to wearing a mask.
- **Bradykinesia** or slowness of movements usually accompanies the sensation of stiffness and rigidity. A person with bradykinesia will probably also have incomplete movements, difficulty initiating movements and sudden stopping of ongoing movement.

There is increasing inability to perform tasks which require rapid alternating movements.

- Loss of balance and in coordination of movements results in frequent falls when beginning to walk or run.
- **Gait:** There is a '**shuffling**' gait characterized by short steps, with feet barely leaving the ground, producing an audible shuffling noise. Small obstacles tend to trip the patient.
- **Decreased arm swing.** Turning 'en-bloc', rather than the usual twisting of the neck and trunk and pivoting on the toes, **PD patients keep their neck and upper body rigid**, requiring multiple small steps to accomplish a turn. **Stooped, forward-flexed posture** both when sitting and standing. **Festination:** a combination of stooped posture, imbalance, and short steps. It leads to a gait that gets progressively faster and faster, often ending in a fall.
- **Dystonia:** abnormal, sustained, painful twisting muscle contractions, usually affecting the foot and ankle, interfering with gait. However, dystonia can be quite generalized, involving a majority of skeletal muscles; such episodes are very painful and completely disabling. They may go through **periods of "freezing"**, which is **when a person feels stuck to the ground and finds it difficult to start walking**. The slowness and incompleteness of movement can also affect speaking and swallowing.
- **Speech:** the voice becomes very soft. Later, the sound turns hoarse and monotonous. Occasionally, the speech becomes excessively rapid, soft, and poorly-intelligible.

Gradual progress in the disorder causes an inability to understand the meaning & essence of speech. Also, there is difficulty in deciphering the facial expressions seen on others when conversing.

- **Drizzling:** Weak swallowing and stooped posture causes drooling of saliva.

More symptoms which are seen in PD are:

- Small, cramped handwriting (micrographia)
- Dementia and confusion
- Fear or anxiety
- Slow thinking & memory problems
- Sexual dysfunction
- Fatigue and body aches
- Compulsive behaviors
- Loss of energy
- Sleep disturbances: excessive daytime sleepiness; insomnia; vivid, disturbing dreams.

These symptoms certainly vary in intensities in different persons. They are seen as the disease progresses and everyone do not suffer from all of them.

Pathogenesis:

We now know that many of the signs and symptoms of Parkinson's disease develop when certain nerve cells (neurons) in an area of the brain called the substantia nigra are damaged or destroyed. Normally, these nerve cells release dopamine — a chemical that transmits signals between the substantia nigra and another part of the brain, the corpus striatum. These signals cause your muscles to make smooth, controlled movements.

As a normal part of aging everyone loses some dopamine-producing neurons.

People with Parkinson's disease lose half or more of neurons in the substantia nigra. Although other brain cells also degenerate, the dopamine-containing cells are critical for movement and so their damage takes center stage.

### **Causes of Parkinson's disease:**

Why Parkinson's Disease occurs, no one knows. These are some factors that scientists believe predisposes individuals to PD.

- **Genetic factors:** About 15 to 25 percent of people with Parkinson's report having a relative with the disease. This means that if your parent has Parkinson's, your chances of developing the disease are slightly higher than the risk in the general population.
- Studies have revealed that there may be more of a genetic basis to young-onset PD (that is, the 10 percent or so of people with Parkinson's for whom onset occurs at or before age 50) than to later-onset PD.
- The vast majority of Parkinson's cases are not directly inherited, but researchers have discovered several genes that can cause the disease in a small number of families. Genetic diseases occur when important genes contain mutations, which result in abnormal proteins that in turn cause disease.
- **Environmental factors:** Scientists have suggested that Parkinson's disease may result from exposure to an environmental toxin or injury. Research has identified several factors that may be linked to PD, including rural living, well water, herbicide use and exposure to pesticides. Pesticides are thought to adversely affect the brain by inhibiting energy production resulting in brain cell death.

Studies have also shown that smoking and caffeine use appear to protect against the development of PD. However, it is universally agreed that the health risks associated with smoking are worse than any incidental benefits that might be gained by this habit.

Also, a synthetic narcotic agent called MPTP can cause immediate and permanent Parkinsonism if injected.

- **Head trauma:** Past episodes of head trauma are reported more frequently by sufferers than by others in the population.
- **Drug induced:** Antipsychotics, which are used to treat schizophrenia and psychosis, can induce the symptoms of Parkinson's disease (or parkinsonism) by lowering dopaminergic activity.

### **Diagnosis:**

Currently no blood or laboratory tests that have been proven to help in diagnosing PD. It is difficult to diagnose PD accurately. Thus, medical history and a neurological examination alone guide the physician in diagnosing.

**The Unified Parkinson's Disease Rating Scale (UPDRS)** is a rating scale used to follow the longitudinal course of Parkinson's disease.

Related conditions: There are a number of disorders that mimic Parkinson's disease in some of their symptoms. On close examination though, they are distinguishable from the idiopathic PD. These conditions fortunately have additional symptoms which do not occur in PD. Such disorders need to be ruled out before establishing a diagnosis of PD.

- **Multiple System Atrophy(MSA)**
  - Cerebellar ataxia
  - pyramidal weakness
  - autonomic failure (previously known as Shy-Drager syndrome)
  - nocturnal stridor
- **Progressive Supranuclear Palsy(PSP)**
  - failure of voluntary vertical eye movements
  - early dementia
- **Corticobasal degeneration(CBD)**
  - cognitive impairment
  - apraxia
  - myoclonus
- **Dementia with Lewy bodies(DLB)**
  - early cognitive impairment
  - hallucinations
- **Olivopontocerebellar Atrophy(OPCA)**
  - ataxia
  - dysarthria
- **Wilson's Disease**
- **Torsion dystonia**

These Parkinson-plus syndromes are usually more rapidly progressive and less likely to respond to anti-parkinsonian medication than Parkinson's disease. However, the additional features of the diseases may respond to medications not used in Parkinson's disease.

## Treatment options for Parkinsons Disease

### Conventional treatment

There is no permanent cure for PD. Though many patients show dramatic response to medications initially, with gradual progress, the benefits of drugs diminish.

Treatment usually comprises of: -

- Medications
- Councelling
- Physical therapy
- Surgery

*Medications:* medications help control the problems faced in walking, movements and tremor. However, they need to be taken in various combinations which need to be changed after every little while. The medicines used are:

- **Levodopa and Carbidopa:** Levodopa had been the 'gold standard' for treating PD since its introduction in 1960. levodopa is a naturally occurring substance in nature. It is a precursor of the chemical dopamine which gets converted to dopamine by the nerve cells in the brain. There is a fine meshwork-like structure in the brain which acts like a filter that allows only selective substances to cross through and enter the brain. This structure is called the blood-brain barrier. Dopamine itself cannot cross this barrier, but levodopa can. Hence, dopamine itself is never prescribed in PD. Unfortunately, though the side-effects of these drugs(nausea; postural reduction in blood pressures) are not major, their doses need to be frequently regulated. The quantity of each dose as well as its frequency of repetition keeps

increasing lifelong.

These medicines nevertheless allow persons suffering to extend the period for which they can lead a normal life.

- **Dopamine agonists:** though not levodopa, these drugs mimic the action of levodopa and cause neurons to behave as though they are receiving dopamine.

This class of drugs includes:

- Bromocriptine (Parlodel),
- Apomorphine (Apokyn),
- Pramipexole (Mirapex) and
- Ropinirole
- **Selegiline:** This drug helps prevent the breakdown of dopamine.
- **Catechol-O-methyltransferase:** These drugs prolong the actions of levodopa and carbidopa by preventing an enzyme from breaking down dopamine.
- **Anticholinergics:** These are used to control the tremors. But, often the side effects (loss of memory, hallucinations, confusions, dry mouth, nausea, urine retention, severe constipation) make their use undesirable.
- **Amantadine:** Provides short-term relief from early, mild Parkinson's disease. Side-effects (swollen ankles, purple mottling of skin) are not very severe.
- **Co-enzyme Q10:** The majority of the energy utilized by the cell is produced within the mitochondria. This is a substance present within the mitochondria of the cells. Co-enzyme Q10 is responsible for electron transport by which the cell derives energy from Oxygen during respiration. **Surgery**
- **Thalotomy:** destroys a few tissues within the thalamus (a major centre in the brain handling the relay of messages and transmitting sensations. This procedure reduces tremors in some people. Though, it can cause slurring of speech and lack of coordination in movements.
- **Pallidotomy:** this procedure consists of removing tissues within the pallidus (a part of the brain responsible for causing PD). Tremors, rigidity and slowness of movements are all controlled by this procedure. Though the procedure provides relief, the effects are not long-lasting and the condition usually recurs. Slurred speech, vision problems, severe weaknesses are some of the side-effects.
- **Deep brain stimulation:** A small device that transmits electrical impulses is planted deep within the brain from where it stimulates the sub-thalamic nucleus which controls many motor functions. This procedure however runs the risk of developing a bleed (hemorrhage) like a stroke. There are high incidences of developing an infection as well. Hence, this procedure is a last option.

## Counseling

Certain changes in diet and life style can go a long way in improving a persons coping skills with PD.

## Healthy eating

Eat more of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

These foods are high in fiber, which is important for helping prevent constipation. Also, drink plenty of water and increase fibre intake through supplements.

## Healthy Exercise

Regular exercise is extremely important if you have Parkinson's disease. It helps improve mobility, balance, range of motion and even emotional well-being. Your doctor or physical therapist may recommend a formal exercise program,

but any physical activity, including walking, swimming or gardening, is beneficial. Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking, jogging and dancing, may be helpful.

Keep in mind that your energy level may go up and down, and you'll sometimes need to pace yourself. If you're tired, try doing one part of your routine at one time of day and adding another segment later. Choose a time to exercise when your medicines are working well and you feel strong.

Be sure to stretch before and after you exercise. Stretching warms up your muscles, helps prevent stiffness, and improves your flexibility and balance.

### **Walking with care**

Parkinson's disease can disturb your sense of balance, making it difficult to walk with a normal gait. These suggestions may help:

- If you notice yourself shuffling, slow down and check your posture. It's best to stand up straight with your head over your hips and your feet eight to 10 inches apart.
- Buy a good pair of walking shoes. Avoid running shoes.
- Practice taking long steps and exaggerate lifting your legs and swinging your arms.
- If you become stuck in place — known as freezing  $\frac{3}{4}$  rock gently from side to side or pretend you're stepping over an object on the floor.

### **Avoiding falls**

In the later stages of the disease, you may fall more easily. That's because Parkinson's disease affects the balance and coordination centers in the brain. In fact, you may be thrown off balance by just a small push or bump. The following suggestions may help:

- Ask your doctor or physical therapist about exercises that improve balance, especially Tai chi. Originally developed in China more than 1,000 years ago, tai chi uses slow, graceful movements to relax and strengthen muscles and joints.
- Wear rubber-soled shoes. They're less likely to slip than are shoes with leather soles.
- Remove all area rugs from your home and make sure carpeting is secured firmly to the floor.
- Install handrails, especially along stairways.
- Keep electrical and telephone cords out of the way.
- Install grab bars around your tub and beside the toilet.
- Make sure you can reach the telephone from your bed and carry a cordless phone with you during the day.

### **Dressing**

Dressing can be the most frustrating of all activities for someone with Parkinson's disease. The loss of fine motor control makes it hard to button and zip clothes, and even to step into a pair of pants. A physical therapist can point out techniques that make daily activities easier. These suggestions also may help:

- Allow plenty of time so you don't feel rushed.
- Lay clothes nearby.
- Choose clothes that you can slip on easily, such as sweat pants, simple dresses or pants with elastic waistbands.
- Look for clothes and shoes with fabric fasteners, such as Velcro, or replace buttons on clothes you have with fabric fasteners.

## Speaking

Even in the early stages of Parkinson's disease, your voice may become very soft or hoarse. To communicate more easily:

- Face the person you're talking to, and deliberately speak louder than you think is necessary.
- Practice reading or reciting out loud, focusing on your breathing and on having a strong voice.
- Speak for yourself — don't let others speak for you.
- Consult a speech-language pathologist who is trained to treat people with Parkinson's disease.

## Movement Therapies

May help people with Parkinson's improve motor skills and balance, and help them walk better.

- Music therapy: A recent study showed symptoms improved with music and dance therapy compared to physical therapy
- Alexander Technique: emphasizes posture and balance. May help improve mobility and gait
- Feldenkrais Method: aims to re-educate the body about movements that are difficult. May improve gait

## Nutritional supplements:

Many supplements may interact with medications you take for Parkinson's, or may only be effective at particular doses, do not take any supplements, even vitamins, without your doctor's guidance.

## Homeopathic Treatment for Parkinson's disease:

Our experience based on about 10 cases of Parkinson's disease (as on April, 2008), is suggestive of encouraging results. At this point, we recommend homeopathy in the early cases and also those cases where the conventional treatment has either not helped at all or has helped partially.

## PCOD

### Definition:

PCOD (Poly Cystic Ovarian Disease) or PCOS (Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome) is a disease characterized by multiple ('poly') cysts (small sacs filled with fluid) in the ovaries.

Patients with PCOD have abnormal levels of hormones that result in irregular menses, infertility and certain masculine changes in the body.

### CAUSES OF PCOD:

PCOS problems are caused by hormone changes **hormonal imbalance**. One hormone change triggers another, which changes another.

1. **Raised levels of Testosterone** – Androgens or "male **hormones**," although all women make small amounts of androgens....Higher than normal androgen **levels** in women can prevent the ovaries from releasing an egg (ovulation) during each menstrual cycle. Excess androgen produced by the theca cells of the ovaries, due either to hyperinsulinemia or increased luteinizing hormone (LH) levels.

2. **Raised levels of Luteinising Hormone (LH)** – Due to increased production from the anterior pituitary. This stimulates ovulation but may have an abnormal effect on the ovaries if levels are too high.
3. **low levels of Sex Hormone-Binding Globulin (SHBG)** – A protein in the blood, which binds to testosterone and reduces the effect of testosterone.
4. **Raised levels of Prolactin** - Hormone that stimulates the breast glands to produce milk in pregnancy.
5. **High levels of Insulin** (a hormone that helps convert sugars and starches into energy) If you have insulin resistance, your ability to use insulin effectively is impaired, and also your pancreas has to secrete more insulin to make glucose available to cells (so, hyperinsulinaemia) Excess insulin might also affect the ovaries by increasing androgen production, which may interfere with the ovaries' ability to ovulate.

A significant **hereditary component**, if your mother or sister has PCOS, you're more likely to have it.

If you're **overweight**, your chances of developing it are greater. As weight gain increases insulin resistance. Fatty tissues are hormonally active and they produce estrogen which disrupts ovulation.

## PCOD Symptoms:

Generally, the patient presents with the following symptoms:

Various hormones of the body operate in harmony to regularize smooth functioning of all systems including the reproductive system.

The disturbance of hormonal mechanism makes the ovaries produce excessive amount of the male reproductive hormones (androgens) and at the same time, there is failure of egg formation. This excess of androgens with absence of ovulation may cause infertility.

With this understanding, that the disturbed hormonal functioning of the body lies at the root of PCOD, it can be easily perceived that this constitutional disorder will require constitutional approach towards its rectification.

The homeopathic approach towards management of *PCOD* is constitutional, taking into account the presenting complaints along with physical, mental and genetic make-up that individualizes a person. Homeopathic medicines which act at root level can bring back deviations of hormonal system back to normalcy and in many cases abolish the need for exogenous hormones with their side-effects and complicate surgical procedures. Moreover, with this hormonal harmony, chances of conception increase significantly.

## DIAGNOSIS OF PCOD

1. Typical **medical history**: Regular/ irregular menstrual cycles, heavy/scanty menstrual flow, the need to take hormonal tablets (progestins) to induce a period etc.
2. **Physical Signs**: Often **obese** and may have **hirsutism**, (excessive facial and body hair) as a result of the high androgen levels.
3. Diagnosis can be confirmed by **vaginal Ultrasound (USG pelvis)**: Shows that both the ovaries are enlarged; the bright central stroma is increased, and there are multiple small cysts in the ovaries. These cysts are usually arranged in the form of a necklace along the periphery of the ovary
4. Blood levels of hormones:
  - High LH (luteinizing hormone) level; and a Normal FSH level (follicle stimulating hormone) i.e. a **reversal of the LH: FSH ratio**, which is normally 1:1.
  - Elevated levels of androgens (a high **dehydroepiandrosterone sulphate (DHEA-S)** level);
  - Fasting cholesterol and triglyceride levels;
  - Glucose tolerance test.

## ANTI- PCOD DIET:

Polycystic ovarian disease is a common hormonal disorder found in one out of 10 women. Women suffer from irregular menses, unusual hair growth on the body and most of them gain weight too. Others may not show any

symptoms and have a normal body type along with small cysts in the ovaries. Females are noted to have a predisposition to PCOD or it may also run into families. A right diet with adequate exercise has shown great results in PCOD recovery.

#### **The do's and don'ts in a PCOD diet:**

- Diet should be dominated with lots of fruits and vegetables on a daily basis. Avoid dairy products as much as possible.
- Lean cuts of chicken and fish can be taken. But avoid red meat.
- Hydrate yourself well by having minimum 2-3 liters water/day, coconut water, buttermilk, vegetable soups and smoothies. Avoid aerated drinks and sugary foods.
- Eat unsaturated fats and delete saturated and hydrogenated fats from your diet. Always check the label of the product while buying them.
- Binge on whole wheat products like wheat pasta, wheat *poha* and avoid maida, suji
- Brown rice in and white rice should be out of your diet. Red rice is also found to be rich in antioxidants which can be used as a substitute for white rice.
- Include natural herbs in your diet like flax seeds, methi seeds, coriander, cinnamon.
- Include millets like barley, *ragi*, quinoa, and oats. They are known to cool your body.
- Say Yes to walnuts, almonds and no to cashews
- Whole pulses like skinned green moong dal, *chana dal*, yellow *moong dal*, whole pulses to be included in various preparations.

#### **NOTE:**

- Eat small meals frequently throughout the day, maintain a low salt diet to avoid water retention. So it is a 'Yes' to salads and 'No' to pickles and papads.
- Exercise for 30- 40 minutes daily (Brisk walking, yoga and meditation)
- Never skip your breakfast. Avoid junk, carry home food whenever and whenever possible. Sleep right and avoid stress. There may be individual variations in diet as per the state of health.

#### **HOMOEOPATHIC TREATMENT IN PCOD:**

The human body has been perfectly enabled by nature to keep itself disease free. It is only when the immunity or its own internal vitality is deranged that the body becomes incapable of keeping itself disease free. Therefore Homeopathy tries to restore the balance of that vitality. Once the vitality regains its original balance, it is able to nurse itself back to health without any external aid.

- Homeopathic medicines correct the hormonal imbalance & neutralize its negative effects.
- The cysts dissolve gradually can be checked in the next f/u after 3-6 month of starting the treatment, by repeating the USG pelvis.
- The menstrual cycle gets regularized. Other complaints, including acne and hair growth on the face, are also taken care.
- Opens the possibility of becoming fertile in the future for women to bear pregnancy.

#### **HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES:**

- PULSATILLA:
  - Menses are suppressed, scanty or short and that appear too late.
  - The character of menstrual blood is dark, black, pale, clotted or highly changeable.
  - The peculiar constitutional symptoms for use of Pulsatilla are a mild, gentle, sensitive, emotional nature in women,

- A tendency to weep and timidity.
- A lack of thirst and need for open air.
- SEPIA:
  - Facial hair appears especially on the chin and upper lip.
  - Irregular, feeble menses or suppressed periods.
  - Menstrual irregularity is an intense bearing down sensation in the pelvis.
  - Indifference to family members
  - Irritability, aversion to occupation, sadness.
- THUJA:
  - Hair growth on the face and body and retarded periods of scanty duration. During periods, pain may be felt in the left ovary.
- Other homeopathic medicines useful in PCOD:
  - CALCAREA CARB, APIS, LACHESIS, LYCOPODIUM, PHOSPHORUS, CALCAREA CARB, MEDORRHINUM, CALCAREA PHOS, KALI CARB.

#### **OTHER TREATMENTS AVAILABLE FOR PCOD:**

- **Lifestyle changes:**
  - Weight loss
  - Low-calorie diet
  - Moderate exercise activities
- **Medications (Hormone Therapy):**
  - To regulate your menstrual cycle.
    - a) Combination birth control pills — pills that contain both Estrogen and Progestin.
    - b) Progesterone for 10 to 14 days every one to two months.
    - c) Metformin, an oral medication for type 2 diabetes that improves insulin resistance and lowers insulin levels.
  - To help you ovulate:
    - If you're trying to become pregnant
      - a) Clomiphene (Clomid, Serophene) is an oral anti-estrogen medication to take in the first part of your menstrual cycle.
      - b) Metformin may be added to help induce ovulation.
      - c) Gonadotropins — follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) and luteinizing hormone (LH) medications, administered by injection.
      - d) Letrozole works to stimulate the ovaries.
  - To reduce excessive hair growth:
    - a) Birth control pills to decrease androgen production
    - b) Spironolactone that blocks the effects of androgens on the skin.
    - b) Eflornithine is another medication possibility; the cream slows facial hair growth in women.
- **Surgery:**
  - Laparoscopic Ovarian Cauterisation or
  - Ovarian Drilling or
  - LEOS (laparoscopic electrocauterisation of ovarian stroma).

This should be reserved for women with PCOD who have large ovaries with increased stroma on ultrasound scanning. Destroying the abnormal ovarian tissue helps to restore normal ovarian function and helps to induce ovulation.

## **PEMPHIGUS**

## Introduction:

Pemphigus Vulgaris is a serious skin disease. Relatively, it is a rare disease, which is characterized by formation of blisters and erosions of the skin and mucus membranes. The blisters are often called as bulla or bullae, which are filled with thin, watery fluid; which eventually burst, slough off and lead to sore spots. It can affect mouth, genitals and any part of skin. It is most commonly observed in middle-aged or older people. It is a chronic and recurring disease. It is not a contagious disease; does not spread by touch or air.

## Causes:

Pemphigus is understood to be an auto-immune disease; though, the exact cause remains ill-understood. IN pemphigus, body's immune system fails to recognize body's own protein called desmoglein protein, and reacts in the form of severe inflammation, blister formation, pain and soreness.

**01** Autoimmunity - Pemphigus Vulgaris is an autoimmune disease.

**02** It can be the result of prolonged use of certain medications like Penicillamine (antibiotic), Blood pressure medications called ACE inhibitors and Chelating agents. Usually, this variety of pemphigus tends to recover in most cases on stopping the medicines.

## Pathology:

Autoimmunity is the process in which body produces antibodies against normal cells and proteins of the body. In case of Pemphigus Vulgaris, body's immune system produces antibodies against specific proteins called desmogleins in the skin and mucus membranes. These proteins bind skin cells together. Antibodies, which are formed against these proteins, break the bonds between skin cells. This pathology leads to formation of blisters.

## Symptoms:

Most commonly affected areas are mouth, scalp and trunk.

- Painful blisters and sores in the mouth, followed by blisters on skin.
- Peeling of skin
- Crust formation

## Diagnosis:

- It is best diagnosed clinically by an experienced eye.
- Nikolsky's sign - When the surface of unaffected area is rubbed with finger or cotton, the skin separates easily. This is called as positive Nikolsky's sign.
- Skin or oral biopsy - It shows intra-epidermal vesicle caused by breaking of epidermal cells.
- ELISA test - Anti Desmoglein antibodies can be detected in the blood using this test.

## Treatment Options for Pemphigus Vulgaris

### Conventional treatment:

It includes use of following medicines.

- Cortisone
- Anti-inflammatory drugs

- Immunosuppressant

### **Homeopathic Treatment:**

Homeopathy aims at addressing the underlying process and after effect of auto-immune activity. The results with homeopathy may not be as drastic and quick as probably with the use of cortisone. However, homeopathy is strongly indicated in most cases of pemphigus as a support measure, which helps not only to manage the disease better, but also helps to reduce the dependency of cortisone.

## **PEPTIC ULCER**

Ulcerations (sores) in the lining of upper part of the digestive tract are known as Peptic Ulcers. The ulcers may exist in the lower part of food pipe (oesophagus), in the stomach or in the initial part of the intestine (duodenum). About 10% of all adults are affected with Peptic ulcers at some time in their life. The incidence of Peptic ulcers is more common in males as compared to females.

### **Causes of Peptic Ulcer:**

The underlying process that results in Peptic ulcer formation is excess of acid production in the stomach and damage to the protective barrier inside the stomach. Certain things that can trigger excess acid production or can cause damage to the protective lining of the stomach are:

- Emotional stress
- Foods (spices, pungent foods, etc)
- Overuse of certain drugs, especially NSAIDs (Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs)
- Infections (H-Pylori)
- Hereditary
- Smoking

### **Types of Peptic Ulcers:**

Peptic ulcers usually run a chronic course and complaints tend to be episodic in nature; the patient is usually free from the symptoms in between these episodes. Some of the common symptoms of Peptic ulcers are:

- Pain in the epigastrium (upper part of abdomen)
- Hunger pain- worsening of pain when the stomach is empty
- Night pain- wakes the patient from sleep
- Heartburn
- Water brash
- Loss of appetite (anorexia)
- Nausea
- Haematemesis (vomiting of blood)
- Dark or black stools

The pain is usually relieved by taking some food, milk, antacids, by belching or vomiting.

### **Diagnosis:**

Diagnosis of Peptic ulcers is confirmed by:

- Endoscopy to evaluate ulcers

- Biopsy may be required
- Barium meal (double contrast)
- Stool examination
- Complete blood count

### **Complications:**

- Hemorrhage
- Perforation of ulcer
- Gastric outlet obstruction (obstruction in terminal part of stomach)

### **Things to avoid in case of Peptic ulcer disease:**

- Spicy foods, pungent things
- Excess of alcohol
- Oily foods
- Heavy meals
- Allopathic painkillers
- Above all avoid worrying!

### **Homeopathic treatment of Peptic Ulcers:**

Peptic ulcer disease is a constitutional disease that finds its local expression at the level of the digestive system. Being a constitutional disorder, it calls for constitutional approach towards treatment. Homeopathic approach towards the management of Peptic ulcer disease involves the evaluation of the complaint in details while taking into account individual factors such as one's personal and family history while planning a long-term treatment. Since the treatment targets the root cause, Homeopathy offers long-term cure instead of temporary relief. It treats at a deeper level of immunity and enhances the healing capacity of the body. Homeopathy can also help to prevent complications of Peptic ulcers.

### **Homeopathic Remedies for Peptic ulcer**

Peptic ulcer could be in the duodenum (Duodenal ulcer, DU) or in the the stomach (gastric ulcer). Based on the symptoms and by endoscopy we can diagnose the location of ulcer. The homeopathic medicines for peptic ulcer are many, one has to select based on the exact diagnosis and individual symptoms; including the personally type of the patient.

**Graphites:** This homeopathic medicines sourced from the mineral is a powerful remedy for all kinds of ulcers in stomach, intestines, as well as on the skin. The patient may feel pain in stomach after about two hours of food, a sign of gastric ulcer, requiring Graphites. There may be dislike for sweets, sensitivity to cold air, dryness and roughness of skin, tendency to ulcer and scar formation, associated eczema or such skin disease, irregular menses in females; apart from the clinical symptoms belonging to the stomach ulcer.

**Phosphorus:** A popular homeopathic medicine, very effective for diseases of esophagus, stomach, jejunum, intestines and colon, this medicine works very well when indications match. Burning pain in upper abdomen, sinking feeling, emptiness in stomach, losing weight in spite of eating well, sensitive to cold air, kind hearted personality, cares for others, friendly and talkativeness, etc. are some of the features indicating the need for Phosphorus.

## **PHOTODERMATITIS**

As they one can have allergy or sensitivity to anything under the sun, including the sun. Yes, there is a disease in which one tends to be allergic or sensitive to sunlight. That is called Photodermatitis or photosensitivity.

### **What is Photodermatitis?**

It is a skin disorder where the skin abnormally responds to the sunlight, especially the Ultra-violet (UV) rays, which lead to rash on skin. The skin rash could lead to itching, burning and swelling. This can lead to darkening of the skin subsequently.

### **Causes of Photodermatitis**

The main cause behind Photodermatitis is body's inherent tendency to react to sunlight. There are some chemicals and medicines which may make one prone to have such hyper-sensitive, which include certain antibiotics, anti-diabetic drugs, psoralens, coal tars (used for psoriasis), salicylanilide (industrial chemical). Vitamin B3 (niacin) deficiency can also trigger photosensitivity.

### **What are the symptoms of Photodermatitis?**

As written earlier, the symptoms of Photodermatitis include rash on the sun-exposed areas such as face, arms, hands, back or all over the body (in case of sun-bathing). Reddening of skin with itching, mild scaling, burning and pain are common symptoms. In some cases there could be mild, thin, watery discharge. The skin tends to turn dark or black subsequently in many patients, especially on face. Darkening of the skin may not disappear on stopping of exposure to sun, unfortunately.

### **Treatment for Photodermatitis**

There are some homeopathic medicines, which help to recover from severe forms of Photodermatitis and its after effects such as hyper-pigmentation. Most importantly, homeopathic medicines taken over some time, may reduce sensitivity of skin to sun exposure. We have also observed reduction in darkening of skin after using homeopathic medicine. Homeopathy is strongly recommended in the cases of Photodermatitis or photosensitivity. The medicines in homeopathy for Photodermatitis are better selected and prescribed on the basis of individual patient's case totality.

## **PILES**

### **Definition:**

Piles (Haemorrhoids) are swollen and inflamed blood vessels (veins) in the rectum and anus. Piles are broadly classified as follows:

**External:** Piles that are outside the anal verge

**Internal:** Piles that occur inside the rectum

### **Causes of Piles:**

These include the following:

- Genetic predisposition (weak rectal veins, walls)
- Poor muscle tone in the rectal region
- Constipation
- Obesity
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Chronic cough

- Pregnancy
- Overuse of laxatives or enemas
- Lifting heavy weights habitually

## Symptoms of Piles:

Symptoms vary depending upon the site of piles, duration of complaints and general health of the person.

**External piles** present as a swelling outside the anus with irritation and itching. These can be painful sometimes and usually do not bleed.

**Internal piles** are usually not painful but these bleed when they are irritated such as during the passage of hard stools. They can be classified into four grades:

- **Grade 1 piles** are small swellings on the inside lining of the anus. They cannot be seen or felt from outside the anus.
- **Grade 2 piles** are partly pushed out (prolapse) from the anus when you go to the toilet, but quickly 'retract back' inside again.
- **Grade 3 piles** hang out (prolapse) from the anus and are felt as one or more small, soft lumps that hang from the anus. However, they can be pushed back inside the anus with a finger.
- **Grade 4 piles** permanently hang down from within the anus, and cannot be pushed back inside. They can sometimes become quite large.

Some of the other symptoms generally associated with piles are:

- Protrusion of piles outside the anus; this usually occurs after defecation, prolonged standing or unusual physical exertion
- Bleeding from the anus: This can occur before, during or after stools. This will be bright red blood, not usually mixed with the stools, but often seen on the toilet paper.
- Soreness, pain, itching in the anal region
- In case of profuse bleeding that is chronic, the patient may be anemic
- Sensation of something coming down, or a bulge or lump at the anus
- If the piles outside the anus develop a blood clot inside, (thrombosed piles) it leads to a particularly tender, hard lump

## Homeopathic piles treatment:

Homeopathic medicines are **very effective** in management of piles and the symptoms associated with it such as pain, bleeding, itching, etc. The point to be emphasized is that the relief of symptoms is obtained with absolute gentleness and without invasion or surgery of any kind. Moreover, the condition has high relapse rate following surgical treatment, since surgery does not target the root causes like genetic tendencies, habitual constipation, etc. Homeopathic medicines work at the root level and can modify these genetic tendencies thus reducing chances of relapse and recurrence of the condition significantly. Grade 1 and 2 of internal *piles treatment* can be significantly helped with homeopathy. Grade 3 piles can find some relief of symptoms with homeopathy but may not be completely cured. Grade 4 piles can get symptomatic relief with medicines.

## Homeopathic Remedies for Piles:

The most commonly used homeopathic remedies for piles (Hemorrhoids) include:

- **Aloes:** Sore pain in the anal area & pain in the pelvic region can be controlled with this remedy. Burning sensation in the rectum while passing stools can be controlled effectively with this remedy.

- **Muriatic acid:** Treatment In extreme cases of Piles where the person cannot bear touch, here muriatic acid is used to get relief. It is used in case of large, swollen, purple or blue hemorrhoids.
- **Sulphur:** It is one of the useful remedies for controlling major symptoms of internal and external Piles. Itching, burning, pain in the anal area can be controlled with this medicine.
- **Arsenic album:** For patients who experience burning sensation while walking or standing, or those with swollen, bluish piles with lot of bleeding are treated with this remedy.
- **Aesculus Hippocastanum:** This homeopathic medicine works better for patients with pain in back due to Hemorrhoids.
- **Calcarea fluorica:** Internal piles with itching and bleeding in the anal area are treated with this medicine.
- **Graphites:** This remedy works well for cases with cracks, soreness and itching around the anal area.
- **Hamamelis:** This is one of the important remedies used to control bleeding caused due to Piles. Pain in lower back and pulsation in rectum can also be controlled with this remedy.
- **Nux vomica:** Patient with painful itching and constipation can be treated with this remedy.

## Tips on how to prevent piles

Piles if not controlled in time can create problems in the long run, follow the tips below for preventing piles.

- Increase intake of fluids (Juices & Water)
- High fiber diet
- Exercise regularly
- Sit in warm water tub for minimum 10 minutes
- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables
- Avoid processed foods
- Control your weight
- Avoid too much of alcohol
- Quit smoking

## PLANTAR FASCIITIS

Plantar Fasciitis is the condition mostly found in the middle aged people. This condition compels you to leave all your work except for lying in the bed. In this blog we will discuss about the causes, symptoms and ways to deal with plantar Fasciitis.

### What is Plantar Fasciitis?

Inflammation of the plantar fascia is known as the Plantar Fasciitis. Plantar fascia is the band of tissue running in the bottom of the foot connecting the bones in the heels to the big toe.

### What are the causes of Plantar Fasciitis?

Continuous stretching and irritation of plantar fascia gives rise to Plantar Fasciitis. Plantar fascia works as a shock absorber for your foot. It also supports the natural arch of the foot. When there is excessive tension and stretching of the plantar fascia due to various reasons, small tears develop in them. These tears in the fascia make them irritated and inflamed and cause Plantar Fasciitis.

## What are the symptoms of Plantar Fasciitis?

Patient suffering from Plantar Fasciitis can have pain and stiffness in the bottom of the foot while taking first few steps in the morning after getting up from the bed or walking after sitting or standing for a long period of time. After first few steps the pain gradually subsides and it returns when you start using your foot after a long period of inertia.

## Who is at risk of developing the Plantar Fasciitis?

Following factors influence the development of Plantar Fasciitis.

- **Age:** People between the age group of 40 to 60 years are at higher risk of developing Plantar Fasciitis.
- **Runners:** In athletes like long distance runners, there is continuous pressure on their feet. This puts continuous pressure and a stretch on their plantar fascia leading to plantar Fasciitis.
- **Professional hazard:** Certain professions like that of a teacher, people working as sales executives in malls or big shopping centers are required to stand for long hours. Such people are at higher risk of developing Plantar Fasciitis.
- **Type of feet:** Those people who have high arches in their foot and those with totally flat feet are at higher risk of developing Plantar Fasciitis. As both these conditions put added pressure on the plantar fascia.
- **Obesity:** Obese people tend to get this condition because of the heavy weight puts pressure on the plantar fascia.
- **Pregnancy:** In pregnant women also tend to suffer from this condition due to weight gain during pregnancy.

## How Plantar Fasciitis is different from Calcaneal spur?

In Calcaneal spur also people get similar kinds of symptoms but both the conditions are different. Calcaneal spur is the bony projection of the heel bone while Plantar Fasciitis results due to the overstretching and irritation of the plantar fascia.

X-rays of the feet can confirm the diagnosis.

## What are the treatment options for Plantar Fasciitis?

Rest and ice fomentation on the foot relieves the pain of Plantar Fasciitis. Non-steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs reduce the inflammation of the plantar fascia and relieve the pain and stiffness.

**Exercises for plantar Fasciitis:** Following exercises are highly recommended for the patients of the Plantar Fasciitis. They help in improving the muscles strength of the feet and thereby help in a long run.

### Toe stretch:

**Step 1:** Sit on a chair. Extend the affected leg. Ensure that the ankle remains in touch with the ground.

**Step 2:** Stretch the big toe up towards the ankle using your hand, hold it in that position for 15 to 30 seconds and release it back. Do this 5 times in one session and repeat such sessions at least 4 times in a day.

### Towel stretch:

**Step 1:** Sit on a bed or floor. Place a rolled towel under the ball of the foot. Keep both ends of the towel in your hands.

**Step 2:** keeping the knees straight, gently pull the towel, hold for 15 to 30 seconds and then release. Repeat this, do 5 times in one session. Repeat this exercise at least 4 times in a day.

## What are the other options apart from the physical exercises?

Following measures should be followed apart from exercises.

- Avoid walking barefoot on the hard surfaces. Use soft slippers when you are indoors.
- Change the old shoes. Use the shoes which give a good support to your arch. Use of insoles (shoe inserts or heel cups) is recommended for better arch support.
- Sometimes when above measures don't work, doctors give splints which are to be worn at night.
- Lastly, steroid injections are given in the heels for obtaining relief.

- Very rarely when all the measures fail to relieve pain of Plantar Fasciitis, surgery is recommended by the doctor.

## **POLYMYOSITIS**

Polymyositis is a chronic and difficult disease condition calling for long-term planning treatment. As the name suggests, it is poly=many, myco=muscles, sitis=inflammation. That is, a disease condition where many muscles get inflamed. It is similar to another condition called dermatomyositis, where skin is also involved.

### **Symptoms of Polymyositis:**

Females are affected more than men. Usually, it starts after around 18 years. Patients present with muscular weakness in the legs, spreading to upper limbs and then eventually to entire body. There is a sense of tiredness or fatigue, due to muscle involvement. Patients also complain of painful body movement due to inflammation of muscles. Increasing difficulty in getting up, running, climbing staircase, and eventually day to day activities, forms a major symptom of this disease.

Polymyositis is a progressive condition, where more and more groups of muscles tend to get involved, leading to restricted mobility and increasing painfulness. It does not have a tendency to go into natural remission, as recorded in the cases at Life force.

Polymyositis is not a common disease, fortunately.

### **Causes of Polymyositis:**

The exact cause behind Polymyositis is not yet known. However, it falls in the category of auto-immune disease. It is also suspected to have some genetic links. Certain infections such as virus, parasites (protozoa), Lyme disease, etc. might trigger Polymyositis.

Recent studies indicated involvement of certain immunological parameter such as some cytokines (IFN-gamma) and IL 2, etc. which are released after microvascular muscle injury. That, in turn, lead to activation of some other cytokines such as TNF-alpha, which is also responsible for continued and recurring inflammation of the muscles. All in all, polymyositis is a multifactorial disorder, where genetic, immunological and other factors are involved. Homeopathic treatment tries to address multiple factors and bring about control of the disease processes as well relief in the symptoms.

### **How is Polymyositis diagnosed?**

Clinical diagnosis supported by one or more of the following investigations would help to confirm the diagnosis of Polymyositis:

- High blood levels certain enzyme called CPK (Creatine Phospho-Kinase)
- Muscle biopsy
- Electromyogram

### **Treatment of Polymyositis:**

**a** Conventional treatment: There is hardly any treatment except the use of cortisone and immunosuppressive medicines used conventionally. Also, physiotherapy and such supportive measures are useful.

## Homeopathic treatment for Polymyositis:

Experience suggests that homeopathy has reasonably good treatment to offer for Polymyositis, which works at two levels:

- 1 Controls further progress of disease
- 2 Improves the symptoms of pain, fatigue and mobility

Cases treated at Life Force are suggestive of definite contribution in the treatment of Polymyositis, where patients have documented improvement without use of cortisone. Homeopathy may not cure the Polymyositis but even if improvement as stated above is considered significant for a disease such as this. Homeopathy is strongly suggested for Polymyositis.

## POST HERPES NEURALGIA

### What is Post Herpetic Neuralgia?

Post herpetic neuralgia is a nerve disease occurs after an attack of herpes zoster infection. Herpes zoster or 'shingles' is a viral infection which affects the skin, especially sides of the chest, caused by varicella zoster virus. This is the same virus which causes chicken pox in children.

After an episode of herpes, the virus remains dormant in the nerve tissues of the body. This virus may become active when the immunity of the individual reduces or during convalescence after a major illness, resulting in blisters on the skin, known as shingles. It is accompanied with a rash which disappears without major consequences in about two to four weeks. Around 50% of individuals with shingles go on to develop post herpetic neuralgia (PHN) or after-shingles pain.

The neuralgia begins when the herpetic eruptions begin to heal. The pain appears usually in the affected dermatone or the affected nerve course and results in severe pain in the region which has the same nerve supply. The pain is a drawing, pricking type of intense pain, sometimes accompanied with burning sensation of the skin. The pain lasts from a few weeks to few months, rarely years.

### Causes/risk factors

- Severe rash within three days of shingles infection
- A study shows that, 65% of patients were women
- The chances of developing PHN, increases when the shingles occurs in persons over 50 years.
- The incidence of herpes zoster is up to 15 times higher in HIV-infected patients than in uninfected persons, and as many as 25 percent of patients with Hodgkin's lymphoma develop herpes zoster.
- Blacks are one fourth as likely as whites to develop this condition.
- Site of HZ involvement
  - Lower risk - Jaw, neck, sacral, and lumbar
  - Moderate risk - Thoracic
  - Highest risk - Trigeminal (especially ophthalmic division), brachial plexus

### Signs and symptoms

- A pain that continues for 3 months or more, after the healing of shingles, is defined as PHN.
- PHN pain may be burning, aching, itching and sharp and the pain can be constant or it can come and go
- The skin which was affected with blisters, may show scarring

- The involved dermatome may show altered sensations, either hypersensitivity or reduced sensitivity.
- In rare cases, where if the nerves involved also control muscle movement, the patient might also experience muscle weakness, tremor or paralysis

## Treatment

The conventional treatment is directed at pain control while waiting for the condition to resolve. Pain therapy may include multiple interventions, such as topical medications, over-the-counter analgesics, tricyclic antidepressants, anticonvulsants and a number of non medical modalities. Occasionally, narcotics may be required.

## Homeopathic approach

Homeopathy works well in cases of neuralgias. Homeopathic medicines have proven efficacy in the treatment of all sorts of neuralgia which include Post herpetic Neuralgia, Trigeminal Neuralgia, etc.

## PREMENSTRUAL SYNDROME (PMS)

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) has a wide variety of symptoms, including mood swings, tender breasts, food cravings, fatigue, irritability and depression. It's estimated that as many as 3 of every 4 menstruating women have experienced some form of premenstrual syndrome.

Symptoms tend to recur in a predictable pattern. But the physical and emotional changes you experience with premenstrual syndrome may vary from just slightly noticeable all the way to intense. Still, you don't have to let these problems control your life. Treatments and lifestyle adjustments can help you reduce or manage the signs and symptoms of premenstrual syndrome.

## Symptoms

The list of potential signs and symptoms for premenstrual syndrome is long, but most women only experience a few of these problems.

- Emotional and behavioural symptoms
- Tension or anxiety
- Depressed mood
- Crying spells
- Mood swings and irritability or anger
- Appetite changes and food cravings
- Trouble falling asleep (insomnia)
- Social withdrawal
- Poor concentration

## Physical signs and symptoms

- Joint or muscle pain
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Weight gain related to fluid retention
- Abdominal bloating
- Breast tenderness
- Acne flare-ups
- Constipation or diarrhea

## Causes

Exactly what causes premenstrual syndrome is unknown, but several factors may contribute to the condition:

Cyclic changes in hormones. Signs and symptoms of premenstrual syndrome change with hormonal fluctuations and disappear with pregnancy and menopause.

Chemical changes in the brain. Fluctuations of serotonin, a brain chemical (neurotransmitter) that is thought to play a crucial role in mood states, could trigger PMS symptoms. Insufficient amounts of serotonin may contribute to premenstrual depression, as well as to fatigue, food cravings and sleep problems.

Depression. Some women with severe premenstrual syndrome have undiagnosed depression, though depression alone does not cause all of the symptoms.

## PSORIASIS

Psoriasis is a genetically programmed inflammatory disease that primarily affects the skin in about 3% of individuals in the United States. Psoriasis is characterized by skin cells that multiply up to 10 times faster than normal. When these cells reach the surface and die, raised, red plaques covered with white scales form. Psoriasis begins as a small scaling papule. When multiple papules coalesce, they form scaling plaques. These plaques tend to occur in the scalp, elbows, and knees.

### Psoriasis Symptoms

Although psoriatic plaques can be limited to only a few small areas, the condition can involve widespread areas of skin anywhere on the body. Psoriasis symptoms vary depending on the type of psoriasis you have. Common psoriasis symptoms can include the following:

- Red patches of skin covered with silvery scales
- Small scaling spots
- Dry, cracked skin
- Itching, burning, or soreness
- Itchy plaques
- Small bleeding points when the scale is peeled away

### Types of Psoriasis

#### Plaque Psoriasis

Plaque psoriasis is the most common type of psoriasis and it gets its name from the plaques that build up on the skin. There tend to be well-defined patches of red raised skin that can appear on any area of the skin, but the knees, elbows, scalp, trunk, and nails are the most common locations. There is also a flaky, white build up on top of the plaques, called scales. Possible plaque psoriasis symptoms include skin pain, itching, and cracking.

There are plenty of over-the-counter products that are effective in the treatment of plaque psoriasis. 1% hydrocortisone cream is a topical steroid that can suppress mild disease and preparations containing tar are effective in treating plaque psoriasis.

#### Scalp Psoriasis

Scalp psoriasis is a common skin disorder that makes raised, reddish, often scaly patches. Scalp psoriasis can affect your whole scalp, or just pop up as one patch. This type of psoriasis can even spread to the forehead, the back of the neck, or behind the ears. Scalp psoriasis symptoms may include only slight, fine scaling. Moderate to severe scalp psoriasis symptoms may include dandruff-like flaking, dry scalp, and hair loss. Scalp psoriasis does not directly cause hair loss, but stress and excess scratching or picking of the scalp may result in hair loss.

Scalp psoriasis can be treated with medicated shampoos, creams, gels, oils, ointments, and soaps. Salicylic acid and coal tar are two medications in over-the-counter products that help treat scalp psoriasis. Steroid injections and phototherapy may help treat mild scalp psoriasis. Biologics are the latest class of medications that can also help treat severe scalp psoriasis.

#### Guttate Psoriasis

Guttate psoriasis looks like small, pink dots or drops on the skin. The word guttate is from the Latin word gutta, meaning drop. There tends to be fine scales with guttate psoriasis that is finer than the scales in plaque psoriasis.

Guttate psoriasis is typically triggered by streptococcal (strep throat) and the outbreak will usually occur two to three weeks after having strep throat.

Guttate psoriasis tends to go away after a few weeks without treatment. Moisturizers can be used to soften the skin. If there is a history of psoriasis, a doctor may take a throat culture to determine if strep throat is present. If the throat culture shows that streptococcal is present, a doctor may prescribe antibiotics.

## **Nail Psoriasis**

Many patients with psoriasis have abnormal nails. Psoriatic nails often have a horizontal white or yellow margin at the tip of the nail called distal onycholysis because the nail is lifted away from the skin. There can often be small pits in the nail plate, and the nail is often yellow and crumbly.

The same treatment for skin psoriasis is beneficial for nail psoriasis. However, since nails grow slow, it may take a while for improvements to be evident. Nail psoriasis can be treated with phototherapy, systemic therapy (medications that spread throughout the body), and steroids (cream or injection). If medications do not improve the condition of nail psoriasis, a doctor may surgically remove the nail.

## **PSORIATIC ARTHRITIS**

Psoriatic arthritis is a chronic disease characterized by a form of inflammation of the skin and joints. About 15%-25% of patients with psoriasis also develop an inflammation of their joints. Psoriatic arthritis is a systemic rheumatic disease that can not only cause inflammation of the skin, but in the eyes, heart, kidneys, and lungs as well. Currently, the cause of psoriatic arthritis is unknown, but a combination of genetic, immune, and environmental facts is likely involved.

### **Psoriatic Arthritis Symptoms**

Typically, a patient will have psoriasis months or years before they develop psoriatic arthritis. Psoriatic arthritis usually involves the knees, ankles, and joints in the feet. There may also be a loss of range of motion of the involved joints as well as joint stiffness. Psoriatic arthritis can also cause inflammation of the spine and the sacrum, which causes pain and stiffness in the low back, buttocks, neck, and upper back.

### **Psoriatic Arthritis Treatment**

Treatment for psoriatic arthritis generally involves anti-inflammatory medications and exercise. It is important to stretch or take a hot shower before exercise in order to relax the muscles. Ice application after exercise can help minimize soreness and inflammation. Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may also reduce joint inflammation, pain, and stiffness.

### **Causes Psoriasis**

It is now clear that there is a genetic basis for psoriasis. This hereditary predisposition is necessary before the disease can be triggered by environmental factors. White blood cells called T-cells mediate the development of the psoriatic plaques that are present in the skin. When someone has psoriasis, their body is unable to offer protection from invaders. Instead, inflammation is promoted and skin cells are on overdrive. When cell growth is increased, old skin cells pile up instead of flaking off, causing psoriasis to occur. Currently, most experts conclude that environmental, genetic and immunologic factors interact to cause the disease.

## **RAYNAUD'S PHENOMENON**

Raynaud's (say "ray-NOHZ") phenomenon is a problem with blood flow. Your body doesn't send enough blood to your hands and feet, so they feel very cold and numb. In most cases, this lasts for a short time when your body overreacts to cold temperatures. You may also hear this condition called Raynaud's syndrome or Raynaud's disease.

For most people, Raynaud's is more of a nuisance than a disability.

### **Causes Raynaud's Phenomenon**

Often Raynaud's has no known cause. (This is sometimes called primary Raynaud's.)

Raynaud's is usually a symptom of another disease, such as lupus, scleroderma, rheumatoid arthritis, or atherosclerosis. It may also be caused by taking certain medicines, using vibrating power tools for several years, smoking, or having frostbite. (This is sometimes called secondary Raynaud's.)

Certain things can trigger an attack of symptoms. The most common trigger is exposure to cold. In the cold, it's normal for the body to narrow the small blood vessels to the skin and to open the blood vessels to the inside parts of the body to keep the body warm. But with Raynaud's, the body restricts blood flow to the skin more than it needs to. Other triggers can include emotional stress and things that affect the flow of blood, such as smoking, caffeine, and some medicines.

## Symptoms

During an attack of Raynaud's, the body limits blood flow to the hands and feet. This makes them feel cold and numb and then turn white or blue. As blood flow returns and the fingers or toes warm up, they may turn red and begin to throb and hurt. In rare cases, Raynaud's affects the nose or ears.

An attack most often lasts only a few minutes. But in some cases it may last more than an hour.

## RESTLESS LEGS SYNDROME

Restless legs syndrome (RLS) is a disorder of the part of the nervous system that causes an urge to move the legs. Because it usually interferes with sleep, it also is considered a sleep disorder.

### Symptoms of Restless Legs Syndrome

People with restless legs syndrome have uncomfortable sensations in their legs (and sometimes arms or other parts of the body) and an irresistible urge to move their legs to relieve the sensations. The condition causes an uncomfortable, "itchy," "pins and needles," or "creepy crawly" feeling in the legs. The sensations are usually worse at rest, especially when lying or sitting.

The severity of RLS symptoms ranges from mild to intolerable. Symptoms can come and go and severity can also vary. The symptoms are generally worse in the evening and at night. For some people, symptoms may cause severe nightly sleep disruption that can significantly impair their quality of life.

Restless legs syndrome may affect up to 10% of the U.S. population. It affects both sexes, but is more common in women and may begin at any age, even in young children. Most people who are affected severely are middle-aged or older. RLS is often unrecognized or misdiagnosed. This is especially true if the symptoms are intermittent or mild. Once correctly diagnosed, RLS can often be treated successfully.

### Causes of Restless Legs Syndrome

In most cases, doctors do not know the cause of restless legs syndrome; however, they suspect that genes play a role. Nearly half of people with RLS also have a family member with the condition.

#### **Other factors associated with the development or worsening of restless legs syndrome include:**

**Chronic diseases.** Certain chronic diseases and medical conditions, including iron deficiency, Parkinson's disease, kidney failure, diabetes, and peripheral neuropathy often include symptoms of RLS. Treating these conditions often gives some relief from RLS symptoms.

**Medications.** Some types of medications, including antinausea drugs, antipsychotic drugs, some antidepressants, and cold and allergy medications containing sedating antihistamines, may worsen symptoms.

**Pregnancy.** Some women experience RLS during pregnancy, especially in the last trimester. Symptoms usually go away within a month after delivery.

**Other factors,** including alcohol use and sleep deprivation, may trigger symptoms or make them worse. Improving sleep or eliminating alcohol use in these cases may relieve symptoms.

## RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disorder that can affect more than just your joints. In some people, the condition also can damage a wide variety of body systems, including the skin, eyes, lungs, heart and blood vessels. An autoimmune disorder, rheumatoid arthritis occurs when your immune system mistakenly attacks your own body's tissues.

Unlike the wear-and-tear damage of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis affects the lining of your joints, causing a painful swelling that can eventually result in bone erosion and joint deformity.

The inflammation associated with rheumatoid arthritis is what can damage other parts of the body as well. While new types of medications have improved treatment options dramatically, severe rheumatoid arthritis can still cause physical disabilities.

## Symptoms

**Signs and symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis may include:**

Tender, warm, swollen joints

Joint stiffness that is usually worse in the mornings and after inactivity

Fatigue, fever and weight loss

Early rheumatoid arthritis tends to affect your smaller joints first — particularly the joints that attach your fingers to your hands and your toes to your feet.

As the disease progresses, symptoms often spread to the wrists, knees, ankles, elbows, hips and shoulders. In most cases, symptoms occur in the same joints on both sides of your body.

About 40 percent of the people who have rheumatoid arthritis also experience signs and symptoms that don't involve the joints. Rheumatoid arthritis can affect many nonjoint structures, including:

- Skin
- Eyes
- Lungs
- Heart
- Kidneys
- Salivary glands
- Nerve tissue
- Bone marrow
- Blood vessels

Rheumatoid arthritis signs and symptoms may vary in severity and may even come and go. Periods of increased disease activity, called flares, alternate with periods of relative remission — when the swelling and pain fade or disappear. Over time, rheumatoid arthritis can cause joints to deform and shift out of place.

## Causes

Rheumatoid arthritis occurs when your immune system attacks the synovium — the lining of the membranes that surround your joints.

The resulting inflammation thickens the synovium, which can eventually destroy the cartilage and bone within the joint.

The tendons and ligaments that hold the joint together weaken and stretch. Gradually, the joint loses its shape and alignment.

Doctors don't know what starts this process, although a genetic component appears likely. While your genes don't actually cause rheumatoid arthritis, they can make you more susceptible to environmental factors — such as infection with certain viruses and bacteria — that may trigger the disease.

## Risk factors

Factors that may increase your risk of rheumatoid arthritis include:

**Your sex.** Women are more likely than men to develop rheumatoid arthritis.

**Age.** Rheumatoid arthritis can occur at any age, but it most commonly begins between the ages of 40 and 60.

**Family history.** If a member of your family has rheumatoid arthritis, you may have an increased risk of the disease.

**Smoking.** Cigarette smoking increases your risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, particularly if you have a genetic predisposition for developing the disease. Smoking also appears to be associated with greater disease severity.

**Environmental exposures.** Although uncertain and poorly understood, some exposures such as asbestos or silica may increase the risk for developing rheumatoid arthritis. Emergency workers exposed to dust from the collapse of the World Trade Center are at higher risk of autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis.

**Obesity.** People who are overweight or obese appear to be at somewhat higher risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, especially in women diagnosed with the disease when they were 55 or younger.

## RUBELLA

Rubella is a highly contagious viral disease, spread through contact with discharges from the nose and throat of an infected person. Although rubella causes only mild symptoms of low fever, swollen glands, joint pain, and a fine red rash in most children and adults, it can have severe complications for women in their first trimester of pregnancy. These complications include severe birth defects or death of the fetus.

### Signs and Symptoms

In children, rubella is usually mild, with few noticeable symptoms. For children who do have symptoms, a red rash is typically the first sign. The rash generally first appears on the face and then spreads to the rest of the body, and lasts about three days. Other symptoms that may occur 1 to 5 days before the rash appears include:

- A low-grade fever
- Headache
- Mild pink eye (redness or swelling of the white of the eye)
- General discomfort
- Swollen and enlarged lymph nodes
- Cough
- Runny nose

Most adults who get rubella usually have a mild illness, with low-grade fever, sore throat, and a rash that starts on the face and spreads to the rest of the body.

Some adults may also have a headache, pink eye, and general discomfort before the rash appears.

## SALIVARY GLAND STONES

A salivary gland stone -- also called salivary duct stone -- is a calcified structure that may form inside a salivary gland or duct. It can block the flow of saliva into the mouth.

The majority of stones affect the submandibular glands located at the floor of the mouth. Less commonly, the stones affect the parotid glands, located on the inside of the cheeks, or the sublingual glands, which are under the tongue. Many people with the condition have multiple stones.

### Salivary Gland Stone Causes and Symptoms

Salivary stones form when chemicals in the saliva accumulate in the duct or gland. They mostly contain calcium. The exact cause is not known. But factors contributing to less saliva production and/or thickened saliva may be risk factors for salivary stones. These factors include: dehydration, poor eating, and use of certain medications (such as antihistamines), blood pressure drugs, psychiatric drugs, and bladder control drugs. Trauma to the salivary glands may also raise the risk for salivary stones.

The stones cause no symptoms as they form, but if they reach a size that blocks the duct, saliva backs up into the gland, causing pain and swelling. You may feel the pain off and on, and it may get progressively worse. Inflammation and infection within the affected gland may follow.

## SCIATICA

Sciatica is pain, tingling, or numbness produced by an irritation of the nerve roots that lead to the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve is formed by the nerve roots coming out of the spinal cord into the lower back. It goes down through the buttock, then its branches extend down the back of the leg to the ankle and foot.

## Causes Sciatica

The most common cause of sciatica is a bulging or ruptured disc (herniated disc ) in the spine pressing against the nerve roots that lead to the sciatic nerve. But sciatica also can be a symptom of other conditions that affect the spine, such as narrowing of the spinal canal (spinal stenosis ), bone spurs (small, bony growths that form along joints) caused by arthritis, or nerve root compression (pinched nerve ) caused by injury. In rare cases, sciatica can also be caused by conditions that do not involve the spine, such as tumors or pregnancy.

## Symptoms

Symptoms of sciatica include pain that begins in your back or buttock and moves down your leg and may move into your foot. Weakness, tingling, or numbness in the leg may also occur.

Sitting, standing for a long time, and movements that cause the spine to flex (such as knee-to-chest exercises) may make symptoms worse.

Walking, lying down, and movements that extend the spine (such as press-ups ) may relieve symptoms.

## SCLERODERMA

Scleroderma (skleer-oh-DUR-muh) is a group of rare diseases that involve the hardening and tightening of the skin and connective tissues — the fibers that provide the framework and support for your body.

In some people, scleroderma affects only the skin. But in many people, scleroderma also harms structures beyond the skin — such as blood vessels, internal organs and the digestive tract. Signs and symptoms vary, depending on which structures are affected.

Scleroderma affects women more often than men and most commonly occurs between the ages of 30 and 50. While there is no cure for scleroderma, a variety of treatments can ease symptoms and improve quality of life.

## Symptoms

Scleroderma's signs and symptoms vary, depending on which parts of your body are involved:

**Skin.** Nearly everyone who has scleroderma experiences a hardening and tightening of patches of skin. These patches may be shaped like ovals or straight lines, or cover wide areas of the trunk and limbs. The number, location and size of the patches vary by type of scleroderma. Skin can appear shiny because it's so tight, and movement of the affected area may be restricted.

**Fingers or toes.** One of the earliest signs of scleroderma is an exaggerated response to cold temperatures or emotional distress, which can cause numbness, pain or color changes in the fingers or toes. Called Raynaud's disease, this condition also occurs in people who don't have scleroderma.

**Digestive system.** In addition to acid reflux, which can damage the section of esophagus nearest the stomach, some people with scleroderma may also have problems absorbing nutrients if their intestinal muscles aren't moving food properly through the intestines.

**Heart, lungs or kidneys.** Scleroderma can affect the function of the heart, lungs or kidneys to varying degrees. These problems, if left untreated, can become life-threatening.

## Causes

Scleroderma results from an overproduction and accumulation of collagen in body tissues. Collagen is a fibrous type of protein that makes up your body's connective tissues, including your skin.

Doctors aren't certain what prompts this abnormal collagen production, but the body's immune system appears to play a role. In some genetically susceptible people, symptoms may be triggered by exposure to certain types of pesticides, epoxy resins or solvents

## SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS

That red, itchy rash on your scalp that has flaky scales could be seborrheic dermatitis, or seborrhea. It's a common skindisease that looks similar to psoriasis, eczema, or an allergic reaction. And it can appear on your body as well as your scalp.

## Causes

We don't know what exactly causes seborrheic dermatitis. It seems to be a combination of things, including:

- Stress
- Your genes
- A yeast that normally lives on skin
- Certain medical conditions and medicines
- Cold, dry weather

It doesn't come from an allergy or being unclean.

Newborns and adults aged 30-60 are more likely to get seborrheic dermatitis. It's more common in men than women and in people with oily skin. These medical conditions can also raise your risk:

- Acne
- AIDS
- Alcoholism
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- Epilepsy
- Heart attack or stroke recovery
- Parkinson's disease
- Psoriasis
- Rosacea

## Symptoms

Dandruff and cradle cap are common names for seborrheic dermatitis. Babies 3 months and younger often get cradle cap: crusty yellow or brown scales on their scalp. It usually goes away before they're a year old, although it can come back when they reach puberty.

You might get seborrheic dermatitis on your face, especially around your nose, on your eyelids, or behind your ears. It can show up on your body, too:

- In the middle part of the chest
- Around the navel
- On buttocks
- In skin folds under arms and on legs
- In the groin
- Below breasts
- On babies, seborrheic dermatitis might be mistaken for diaper rash.

Skin can itch, burn, or look red. The scales that flake off could be white or yellowish and look moist or oily.

Because it can look like other skin conditions, you should see your family doctor to get a diagnosis and the right treatment. The dermatologist will ask about your medical history and look at your skin. You may need other tests if the doctor thinks it's related to another medical condition.

## SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

Sexual dysfunction refers to a problem occurring during any phase of the sexual response cycle that prevents the individual or couple from experiencing satisfaction from the sexual activity. The sexual response cycle traditionally includes excitement, plateau, orgasm, and resolution. Desire and arousal are both part of the excitement phase of the sexual response.

While research suggests that sexual dysfunction is common (43 percent of women and 31 percent of men report some degree of difficulty), it is a topic that many people are hesitant to discuss. Because treatment options are available, it is important to share your concerns with your partner and health care provider.

## TYPES OF SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

**Desire disorders** —lack of sexual desire or interest in sex

**Arousal disorders** —inability to become physically aroused or excited during sexual activity

**Orgasm disorders** —delay or absence of orgasm (climax)

**Pain disorders** — pain during intercourse

## AFFECTED BY SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

Sexual dysfunction can affect any age, although it is more common in those over 40 because it is often related to a decline in health associated with aging.

## SYMPTOMS OF SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

### In men:

- Inability to achieve or maintain an erection suitable for intercourse (erectile dysfunction)
- Absent or delayed ejaculation despite adequate sexual stimulation (retarded ejaculation)
- Inability to control the timing of ejaculation (early or premature ejaculation)

### In women:

- Inability to achieve orgasm
- Inadequate vaginal lubrication before and during intercourse
- Inability to relax the vaginal muscles enough to allow intercourse

## CAUSES SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION

**Physical causes** — Many physical and/or medical conditions can cause problems with sexual function. These conditions include diabetes, heart and vascular (blood vessel) disease, neurological disorders, hormonal imbalances, chronic diseases such as kidney or liver failure, and alcoholism and drug abuse. In addition, the side effects of some medications, including some antidepressant drugs, can affect sexual function.

**Psychological causes** — These include work-related stress and anxiety, concern about sexual performance, marital or relationship problems, depression, feelings of guilt, concerns about body image, and the effects of a past sexual trauma.

## SINUSITIS

Sinusitis is an inflammation or swelling of the tissue lining the sinuses. Healthy sinuses are filled with air. But when they become blocked and filled with fluid, germs can grow and cause an infection.

### Conditions that can cause sinus blockage include:

#### The common cold

Allergic rhinitis, which is swelling of the lining of the nose

Small growths in the lining of the nose called nasal polyps

A deviated septum, which is a shift in the nasal cavity

### Types

#### You may hear your doctor use these terms:

- Acute sinusitis usually starts with coldlike symptoms such as a runny, stuffy nose and facial pain. It may start suddenly and last 2-4 weeks.
- Subacute sinus inflammation usually lasts 4 to 12 weeks.
- Chronic inflammation symptoms last 12 weeks or longer.
- Recurrent sinusitis happens several times a year.

## Who Gets It

Lots of people. About 35 million Americans have sinusitis at least once each year. It's more likely if you have:

- Swelling inside the nose like from a common cold
- Blocked drainage ducts
- Structural differences that narrow those ducts
- Nasal polyps
- Immune system deficiencies or medications that suppress the immune system
- For children, things that can cause sinusitis include:
  - Allergies
  - Illnesses from other kids at day care or school
  - Pacifiers
  - Bottle drinking while lying on the back
  - Smoke in the environment
- The main things that make sinusitis more likely for adults are infections and smoking.
- Acute Sinusitis Symptoms
- The main signs include:
  - Facial pain or pressure
  - "Stuffed-up" nose
  - Runny nose
  - Loss of smell
  - Cough or congestion
- You may also have:
  - Fever
  - Bad breath
  - Fatigue
  - Dental pain

It may be acute sinusitis if you have two or more symptoms, or thick, green, or yellow nasal discharge.

## Chronic Sinusitis Symptoms

You may have these symptoms for 12 weeks or more:

- A feeling of congestion or fullness in your face
- A nasal obstruction or nasal blockage
- Pus in the nasal cavity
- Fever
- Runny nose or discolored postnasal drainage
- You may also have headaches, bad breath, and tooth pain. You may feel tired a lot.
- Lots of things can cause symptoms like these. You'll need to see your doctor to find out if you have sinusitis.

## SLEEP APNEA

Sleep apnea is a serious sleep disorder that occurs when a person's breathing is interrupted during sleep. People with untreated sleep apnea stop breathing repeatedly during their sleep, sometimes hundreds of times. This means the brain -- and the rest of the body -- may not get enough oxygen.

### There are two types of sleep apnea:

**Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA):** The more common of the two forms of apnea, it is caused by a blockage of the airway, usually when the soft tissue in the back of the throat collapses during sleep.

**Central sleep apnea:** Unlike OSA, the airway is not blocked, but the brain fails to signal the muscles to breathe, due to instability in the respiratory control center.

### Am I at Risk for Sleep Apnea?

Sleep apnea can affect anyone at any age, even children. Risk factors for sleep apnea include:

- Being male

- Being overweight
- Being over age 40
- Having a large neck size (17 inches or greater in men and 16 inches or greater in women)
- Having large tonsils, a large tongue, or a small jaw bone
- Having a family history of sleep apnea
- Gastroesophageal reflux, or GERD
- Nasal obstruction due to a deviated septum, allergies, or sinus problems

## Sleep Apnea Symptoms

- Waking up with a very sore or dry throat
- Loud snoring
- Occasionally waking up with a choking or gasping sensation
- Sleepiness or lack of energy during the day
- Sleepiness while driving
- Morning headaches
- Restless sleep
- Forgetfulness, mood changes, and a decreased interest in sex
- Recurrent awakenings or insomnia

## TENNIS ELBOW

Doctors know the condition as lateral epicondylitis. The rest of us call it “tennis elbow.” The term has entered wide use, though only a small group of people diagnosed with tennis elbow actually get it from playing tennis.

Tennis elbow is a common injury that will usually heal with minor treatment, but you have to give it time and rest.

### Causes Tennis Elbow

Tennis elbow is a classic repetitive stress injury caused by overuse. Any activity that strains the muscles around the elbow over and over again can cause it. There’s also a version golfers get called “golfer’s elbow.”

In tennis, hitting a backhand puts some stress on your forearm muscles, which repeatedly contract when you hit the ball. If you have poor technique or grip the racquet too tightly, that stress may increase in the tendons that connect the forearm muscles to the elbow. The tendons may get small tears.

The more you do it -- and tennis is a game of repeated strokes -- the greater the chance for tennis elbow.

**You can get it from other racquet sports, such as squash or racquetball. You can also get it from jobs or activities that involve repetitive arm motion, such as:**

- Tree-cutting (repetitive use of a chain saw)
- Painting
- Carpentry
- Playing some types of musical instruments
- Butchers, cooks, and assembly-line workers are among the groups that get it often.
- Golfer’s elbow differs from tennis elbow in that the pain is focused on the inside of the elbow. But the causes are similar: tendon tears caused by repetitive movement, whether it’s a golf swing, lifting weights, or simply shaking hands.

### Symptoms

The most common symptom of tennis elbow is an ache on the outside of the elbow. Over time -- from a few weeks to a few months -- the ache turns into a chronic pain. The outside of your elbow may become too painful to touch.

Eventually, you may find it harder or more painful to grip or lift things. Sometimes tennis elbow affects both arms.

## TINEA VERSICOLOR

Tinea versicolor is a fungal infection of the skin. It's also called pityriasis versicolor and is caused by a type of yeast that naturally lives on your skin. When the yeast grows out of control, the skin disease, which appears as a rash, is the result.

- The infection can happen for any of the following reasons:
- You have oily skin
- You live in a hot climate
- You sweat a lot
- You have a weak immune system
- Because the yeast grows naturally on your skin, tinea versicolor is not contagious. The condition can affect people of any skin color. It's more likely to affect teens and young adults.

## Symptoms of Tinea Versicolor

Acidic bleach from the growing yeast causes areas of skin to be a different color than the skin around them. These can be individual spots or patches. Specific signs and symptoms of the infection include:

Patches that may be white, pink, red, or brown and can be lighter or darker than the skin around them.

Spots that do not tan the way the rest of your skin does.

Spots that may occur anywhere on your body but are most commonly seen on your neck, chest, back, and arms.

The spots may disappear during cool weather and get worse during warm and humid weather. They may be dry and scaly and may itch or hurt, although this is not common.

## TINNITUS

Tinnitus is the medical term that refers to the perception of sound in one or both ears when no sound is actually present in the environment. While there's no proven cure for tinnitus, understanding the symptoms, causes and related illnesses, can help ease, manage or block out the ringing-in-the-ears sensation.

## Symptoms of tinnitus

Ring-in-the-ears or a fullness-of-the-head sensation are the most common symptoms of tinnitus. While ringing is the most common experience, the noise can also sound like a buzzing, hissing or whizzing sound. It can range from a low pitch to a high pitch and may be soft or loud at times. For some, tinnitus seems to get louder at night, just before sleep when no other sounds are competing with it. Tinnitus can remain constant or come and go intermittently. In severe cases, the ringing in the ears is loud enough to interfere with work or daily activity, whereas those with mild tinnitus can experience soft ringing that is no more than a minor annoyance.

## Causes of tinnitus

With so many people suffering from tinnitus, it is important to investigate what causes the ringing sensation. While the underlying cause of many cases of tinnitus is never discovered, there are some common causes which, in general, are known to aggravate the condition:

**Age:** Around the age of 60, hearing sensitivity can start getting worse. Hearing loss associated with natural aging is called presbycusis, and it can be accompanied by tinnitus.

**Loud noise exposure:** Being exposed to occupational loud noise on a regular basis from heavy equipment, chain saws or firearms is a common cause of tinnitus. However, even if you don't work in a noisy environment, you can still suffer the effects of noise exposure by listening to loud music through headphones, attending live music performances frequently and engaging in noisy hobbies.

**Unhealthy habits:** Researchers are not entirely certain why, but drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes, eating certain foods and consuming caffeinated beverages can play a role in tinnitus.

**Common ailments:** Having anemia, allergies, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, circulatory problems, diabetes and an underactive thyroid gland are all medical conditions that can lead to tinnitus.

## TONSILLITIS

At the back of your throat, two masses of tissue called tonsils act as filters, trapping germs that could otherwise enter your airways and cause infection. They also produce antibodies to fight infection. But sometimes the tonsils themselves become infected. Overwhelmed by bacteria or viruses, they swell and become inflamed, a condition known as tonsillitis.

Tonsillitis is common, especially in children. The condition can occur occasionally or recur frequently.

## Causes and Symptoms of Tonsillitis

**Bacterial and viral infections can cause tonsillitis. A common cause is Streptococcus (strep) bacteria. Other common causes include:**

- Adenoviruses
- Influenza virus
- Epstein-Barr virus
- Parainfluenza viruses
- Enteroviruses
- Herpes simplex virus

**The main symptoms of tonsillitis are inflammation and swelling of the tonsils, sometimes severe enough to block the airways. Other symptoms include:**

- Throat pain or tenderness
- Redness of the tonsils
- A white or yellow coating on the tonsils
- Painful blisters or ulcers on the throat
- Headache
- Loss of appetite
- Ear pain
- Difficulty swallowing or breathing through the mouth
- Swollen glands in the neck or jaw area
- Fever, chills
- Bad breath
- In children, symptoms may also include:
  - Nausea
  - Vomiting
  - Abdominal pain

## TRACHOMA

Trachoma (truh-KOH-muh) is a bacterial infection that affects your eyes. It's contagious, spreading through contact with the eyes, eyelids, and nose or throat secretions of infected people. It can also be passed on by handling infected items, such as handkerchiefs.

At first, trachoma may cause mild itching and irritation of your eyes and eyelids. Then you may notice swollen eyelids and pus draining from the eyes. Untreated trachoma can lead to blindness.

Trachoma is the leading preventable cause of blindness worldwide. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 6 million people have been blinded by trachoma. Most blinding trachoma occurs in poor areas of Africa. Among children under 5, prevalence of active trachoma infections can be 60 percent or more.

Early treatment may help prevent trachoma complications.

## Symptoms

**Signs and symptoms of trachoma usually affect both eyes and may include:**

- Mild itching and irritation of the eyes and eyelids
- Discharge from the eyes containing mucus or pus
- Eyelid swelling
- Light sensitivity (photophobia)
- Eye pain

Young children are particularly susceptible to infection. But the disease progresses slowly, and the more painful symptoms may not emerge until adulthood.

**The World Health Organization has identified five stages in the development of trachoma:**

**Inflammation** — follicular. The infection is just beginning in this stage. Five or more follicles — small bumps that contain lymphocytes, a type of white blood cell — are visible with magnification on the inner surface of your upper eyelid (conjunctiva).

**Inflammation** — intense. In this stage, your eye is now highly infectious and becomes irritated, with a thickening or swelling of the upper eyelid.

Eyelid scarring. Repeated infections lead to scarring of the inner eyelid. The scars often appear as white lines when examined with magnification. Your eyelid may become distorted and may turn in (entropion).

The scarred inner lining of your eyelid continues to deform, causing your lashes to turn in so that they rub on and scratch the transparent outer surface of your eye (cornea).

Corneal clouding. The cornea becomes affected by an inflammation that is most commonly seen under your upper lid. Continual inflammation compounded by scratching from the in-turned lashes leads to clouding of the cornea.

All the signs of trachoma are more severe in your upper lid than in your lower lid. With advanced scarring, your upper lid may show a thick line.

In addition, the lubricating glandular tissue in your lids — including the tear-producing glands (lacrimal glands) — can be affected. This can lead to extreme dryness, aggravating the problem even more.

## TRIGEMINAL NEURALGIA

Trigeminal neuralgia (TN), also known as tic douloureux, is a distinctive facial pain syndrome that may become recurrent and chronic. It is characterized by unilateral pain following the sensory distribution of cranial nerve V (typically radiating to the maxillary or mandibular area in 35% of affected patients) and is often accompanied by a brief facial spasm or tic.

### Signs and symptoms

TN presents as attacks of stabbing unilateral facial pain, most often on the right side of the face. The number of attacks may vary from less than 1 per day to 12 or more per hour and up to hundreds per day.

**Triggers of pain attacks include the following:**

- Chewing, talking, or smiling
- Drinking cold or hot fluids
- Touching, shaving, brushing teeth, blowing the nose
- Encountering cold air from an open automobile window

**Pain localization is as follows:**

- Patients can localize their pain precisely
- The pain commonly runs along the line dividing either the mandibular and maxillary nerves or the maxillary and ophthalmic portions of the nerve
- In 60% of cases, the pain shoots from the corner of the mouth to the angle of the jaw
- In 30%, pain jolts from the upper lip or canine teeth to the eye and eyebrow, sparing the orbit itself
- In less than 5% of cases, pain involves the ophthalmic branch of the facial nerve

## TYPHOID FEVER

Typhoid fever is caused by *Salmonella typhi* bacteria. Typhoid fever is rare in industrialized countries. However, it remains a serious health threat in the developing world, especially for children.

Typhoid fever spreads through contaminated food and water or through close contact with someone who's infected. Signs and symptoms usually include high fever, headache, abdominal pain, and either constipation or diarrhea.

Most people with typhoid fever feel better within a few days of starting antibiotic treatment, although a small number of them may die of complications. Vaccines against typhoid fever are available, but they're only partially effective. Vaccines usually are reserved for those who may be exposed to the disease or are traveling to areas where typhoid fever is common.

## Signs and symptoms are likely to develop gradually — often appearing one to three weeks after exposure to the disease.

- Early illness
- Once signs and symptoms do appear, you're likely to experience:
- Fever that starts low and increases daily, possibly reaching as high as 104.9 F (40.5 C)
- Headache
- Weakness and fatigue
- Muscle aches
- Sweating
- Dry cough
- Loss of appetite and weight loss
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea or constipation
- Rash
- Extremely swollen abdomen
- Later illness

### If you don't receive treatment, you may:

- Become delirious
- Lie motionless and exhausted with your eyes half-closed in what's known as the typhoid state
- In addition, life-threatening complications often develop at this time.
- In some people, signs and symptoms may return up to two weeks after the fever has subsided.
- Ulcerative Colitis
- Ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease are the most common types of inflammatory bowel disease. Ulcerative colitis affects only the colon and rectum. Crohn's can affect any part of the digestive tract. To learn more about Crohn's disease, see the topic Crohn's Disease

## Symptoms

- Belly pain or cramps.
- Diarrhea.
- Bleeding from the rectum.

Some people also may have a fever, may not feel hungry, and may lose weight. In severe cases, people may have diarrhea 10 to 20 times a day.

The disease can also cause other problems, such as joint pain, eye problems, or liver disease.

In most people, the symptoms come and go. Some people go for months or years without symptoms (remission). Then they will have a flare-up. About 5 to 10 out of 100 people with ulcerative colitis have symptoms all the time.

## URINARY TRACT INFECTIONS (UTIS)

A urinary tract infection (UTI) is an infection involving the kidneys, ureters, bladder, or urethra. These are the structures that urine passes through before being eliminated from the body.

### Causes UTIs in Women

UTIs are a key reason we're often told to wipe from front to back after using the bathroom. That's because the urethra -- the tube that transports urine from the bladder to the outside of the body -- is located close to the anus. Bacteria from the large intestine, such as E. coli, are in the perfect position to escape the anus and invade the urethra. From there, they can travel up to the bladder, and if the infection isn't treated, continue on to infect the kidneys. Women may be especially prone to UTIs because they have shorter urethras, which allow bacteria quick access to the bladder. Having sex can introduce bacteria into the urinary tract, too.

### Symptoms of UTIs

To identify a UTI, keep an eye out for the following symptoms:

- A burning feeling when you urinate
- A frequent or intense urge to urinate, even though little comes out when you do
- Pain or pressure in your back or lower abdomen
- Cloudy, dark, bloody, or strange-smelling urine
- Feeling tired or shaky
- Fever or chills (a sign the infection may have reached your kidneys)

## VERTIGO

Vertigo is a sensation of feeling off balance. If you have these dizzy spells, you might feel like you are spinning or that the world around you is spinning.

### Causes of Vertigo

Vertigo is often caused by an inner ear problem. Some of the most common causes include:

**BPPV.** These initials stand for benign paroxysmal positional vertigo. BPPV occurs when tiny calcium particles (canaliths) clump up in canals of the inner ear. The inner ear sends signals to the brain about head and body movements relative to gravity. It helps you keep your balance.

BPPV can occur for no known reason and may be associated with age.

**Meniere's disease.** This is an inner ear disorder thought to be caused by a buildup of fluid and changing pressure in the ear. It can cause episodes of vertigo along with ringing in the ears (tinnitus) and hearing loss.

**Vestibular neuritis or labyrinthitis.** This is an inner ear problem usually related to infection (usually viral). The infection causes inflammation in the inner ear around nerves that are important for helping the body sense balance

Less often vertigo may be associated with:

- Head or neck injury
- Brain problems such as stroke or tumor
- Certain medications that cause ear damage
- Migraine headaches

### Symptoms of Vertigo

Vertigo is often triggered by a change in the position of your head.

**People with vertigo typically describe it as feeling like they are:**

- Spinning
- Tilting
- Swaying
- Unbalanced
- Pulled to one direction
- Other symptoms that may accompany vertigo include:
- Feeling nauseated
- Vomiting
- Abnormal or jerking eye movements (nystagmus)
- Headache
- Sweating
- Ringing in the ears or hearing loss

Symptoms can last a few minutes to a few hours or more and may come and go.

### What are warts, and what causes them?

A wart is a skin growth caused by some types of the virus called the human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV infects the top layer of skin, usually entering the body in an area of broken skin. The virus causes the top layer of skin to grow rapidly, forming a wart. Most warts go away on their own within months or years.

Warts can grow anywhere on the body, and there are different kinds. For example, common warts grow most often on the hands, but they can grow anywhere. Plantar warts grow on the soles of the feet.

### **How are warts spread?**

Warts are easily spread by direct contact with a human papillomavirus. You can infect yourself again by touching the wart and then touching another part of your body. You can infect another person by sharing towels, razors, or other personal items. After you've had contact with HPV, it can take many months of slow growth beneath the skin before you notice a wart.

It is unlikely that you will get a wart every time you come in contact with HPV. Some people are more likely to get warts than others.

### **What are the symptoms?**

Warts come in a wide range of shapes and sizes. A wart may be a bump with a rough surface, or it may be flat and smooth. Tiny blood vessels grow into the core of the wart to supply it with blood. In both common and plantar warts, these blood vessels may look like dark dots in the wart's center.

Warts are usually painless. But a wart that grows in a spot where you put pressure, such as on a finger or on the bottom of the foot, can be painful.

Writers Cramp (Dystonia)

Chronic sustained pain or sudden painful contraction (cramp/spasm) of certain muscles of the hand and/or fingers are known as Writer's cramp.

The patient experiences uncontrolled, tiresome or tedious muscular contraction causes altered movements and abnormal position or attitudes of hands and fingers in In Writer's cramp. This disease generally affects one body part.

It generally affects people between the ages of 30 to 50 years, but it can affect at any age group, both men and women are equally.

### **Causes of Writer's cramp**

The exact reason behind Writer's cramp is not well understood, yet. It was generally believed to be the result of excessive muscular or motor activity, may be complicated by a faulty writing technique.

In some cases it may be aggravated by some certain chemical exposure as well as in some cases hereditary tendency may be observed.

### **Signs and symptoms of Writer's cramp**

The chief or main symptoms of Writer's cramp are feeling of pain and uneasiness while using the hand or fingers for a long time.

Difficulty is experienced by the patients in using the hands, for writing or for other occupational purposes.

The handwriting becomes changed, some times unreadable also, patients generally feel great difficulties due to the change in their signatures, there may be severe pain and uneasiness to write, type or during other occupational works.

Common symptoms include excessive abnormal or faulty movement of the wrist or elbow.

A similar situation can be observed in professionals like musicians playing certain instruments, or may be in case of typists or in golfers.

## **VOCAL CORD NODULES**

Vocal cord nodules are benign (noncancerous) growths on both vocal cords that are caused by vocal abuse. Over time, repeated abuse of the vocal cords results in soft, swollen spots on each vocal cord. These spots develop into harder, callous-like growths called nodules. The nodules will become larger and stiffer the longer the vocal abuse continues.

Polyps can take a number of forms. They are sometimes caused by vocal abuse. Polyps appear on either one or both of the vocal cords. They appear as a swelling or bump (like a nodule), a stalk-like growth, or a blister-like lesion. Most polyps are larger than nodules and may be called by other names, such as polypoid degeneration or Reinke's edema. The best way to think about the difference between nodules and polyps is to think of a nodule as a callous and a polyp as a blister.

### **SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS**

- Nodules and polyps cause similar symptoms:
- hoarseness
- breathiness

- a "rough" voice
- a "scratchy" voice
- harshness
- shooting pain from ear to ear
- a "lump in the throat" sensation
- neck pain
- decreased pitch range
- voice and body fatigue