

Irritable Remedies

As we've discovered it's not enough to simply gather a long list of symptoms, find a remedy that slots in and then expect it to act. The remedy will be a much better fit and achieve a greater result if it also matches the intensity and importance of the symptoms.

We are going to explore four remedies known for their irritability. They have very similar physical presentation, including symptoms of irritability with weakness and sensitivity, however they are also markedly different.

Arsenicum album: It is a useful remedy for mental symptoms of melancholy, irritation, intense anxiety and restlessness. When well, these are very energetic people and great organisers with terrific strength and perseverance. However when ill the opposite occurs, they get very anxious and suffer weakness and profound prostration that is out of proportion. They can be difficult, critical and argumentative, easily offended, easily startled, insecure, forgetful, sensitive to pain. There is a feeling that their ailment is more serious than it is and despair of ever getting well, often fearing that they are going to die. They depend on others, are afraid to be alone and desire company due to the sense of insecurity. They are anxious about what may happen to them or family members. Even when they feel extremely weak these people are clean and tidy, partially to relieve their restlessness. There is a great fear of being poisoned by something in their environment and are susceptible to poor diet, too much fruit, cold foods and drinks. Like Apis and Rhus tox the irritability in Arsenicum produces a histamine reaction with irritation.

Apis mellifica: With Apis the restlessness and irritability are more from physical discomfort especially allergic reactions with swollen, shiny, red patches with a stinging itchiness. There is a sense of insecurity, hysteria, suspicion and jealousy. Fussy, fidgety and hard to please like a busy bee. The trouble with the bee is that they like to be in control and for everything to revolve around them. Apis is often indicated for PMS where there is bloating and fluid retention along with a tearful, depressive mood and a clumsy lack of coordination. Apart from bites, stings and allergic reactions the ailments of Apis can be as a result of jealousy, fright, vexation, anger and hearing bad news.

Rhus tox: According to Margaret Roy this is a remedy of 'acid' reactive constitutions. There is extreme restlessness and irritability when the 'flow' is stagnant leading to a build up of toxins. This especially happens in cold, damp situations, the cold and damp sinks into the bones to stiffen limbs especially if they become chilled after overheating as the heating flow is shut down. The limbs need to move and the mind is anxious; the irritability keeps them on the move. They are worse before storms, more sluggish and more irritable. Better from heat and rubbing because the flow is stimulated. In their personality they are industrious, conscientious types but eventually the strain becomes too much. Like Nux they can become irritable when anything gets in their way (in the way of their flow), they need to be active and can become hostile and tend to blame others easily.

Hepar sulph: These people are very sensitive, especially to cold and even a draft of air can bring on symptoms such as croup; they are easily disturbed with slow recovery, everything festers and suppurates. Not only are their discharges sour but their disposition can be sour as well. The symptom of a splinter like sharp, stitching pain in the throat is caused by the drying of the mucous membranes, which then become very sensitive. They are very irritable and any stimulus disturbs them and brings up their anger. They are very hard to get along with, nothing pleases them and they dislike company. Like Nux they can be hurried and impulsive and can even have a desire to kill people who disturb them. Any slight exertion will cause the patient to perspire and the sweat is cold and profuse and smells sour and offensive, like rotten cheese. Bodily discharges are yellow and thick and also smell offensive. If a cough is present, it is a dry, hacking cough with rattling of mucous in the chest.

Next month we will explore **Response to the Exciting Cause**.