

# Response to the Exciting Cause

It's important to realise that the same exciting cause, for example 'exposure to wind', can produce different levels of response in individuals and therefore quite different symptom pictures. Just to remind us, an "exciting cause" is the factor that triggers a person's decline from health into sickness and can be physical, mental, or emotional.

To further explain this concept we will examine four remedies that are common to and indicated for cold and flu symptoms. The idea is to underline the different levels of activity and response that these remedies are capable of. And to recognise the characteristic weakness within the remedy to the symptoms it produces and the role that the symptom has in the disturbance.

Some remedies go much deeper than others; some people's cold symptoms are very minor, such as sneezing, runny nose and fevers and have a speedier resolution whereas in others the disturbance goes much deeper and requires a remedy that expresses this deeper disturbance.

**Euphrasia:** Localised most markedly to the eyes with acrid discharges. The exciting cause is exposure to wind but usually warm wind. Centrally heated workplaces can often produce Euphrasia symptoms.

Catarrh flows copiously at night, > lying down, and this is a 'strange, rare and peculiar' symptom because what is much more common is congestion at night, i.e. < lying down. If there is a cough it is worse during the day – once again the > lying down aspect. *Reminder; the modality symbols < and > refer to symptoms being > better from or < worse from. E.g. Apis is > from cold compresses and < from applied heat.*

**Bryonia:** The Bryonia plant is a climber with specialised tendrils to hold on, this results in a remedy picture with a sense of lack of stability and insecurity. To compensate it stays still and 'holds on' resulting in congestion. The exciting cause may be getting soaked and cold or it can be from anger or chagrin. Bryonia symptoms are slow in onset, it takes longer to develop the cold symptoms and they go deeper, firstly there is copious catarrh and then slowly it builds up a congestion and there is painful dryness.

**Gelsemium:** Similar to Bryonia in its speed of action, the symptoms may take several days to develop after exposure to cold, damp conditions. Usually the exciting cause, even with flu symptoms, is a shock to the nervous system with over excitability initially and then weakness, trembling and fatigue. It doesn't so much produce localised symptoms, but states with shivering in the lead up to flu symptoms such as heavy limbs and heavy eyes with exhaustion, chill and a dopey feeling.

**Baptisia:** Severe acute disorders with very rapid onset, often following exposure to foggy, damp weather or inhaling foul vapours from sewers or swamps. The person succumbs deeply and quickly on a general level. In differentiating Gelsemium in flu symptoms the ache is stronger than the weakness. The aching and heaviness comes from a build up of toxins in the limbs. This remedy is often needed in countries with polluted waters; for example symptoms that come on rapidly after falling into a polluted river. Typhoid.

In conclusion the exciting cause and the progress and depth of symptoms shows us why one remedy is indicated over another and this is helpful in your differentiation. It's not enough to choose just on the perceived exciting cause, such as exposure to cold or wind, but also based on the presenting symptoms.

Next month we will explore **Emotional Trauma**.