

## General, Particular & Common Symptoms

In the Hierarchy of Symptoms the following categories fall below Mental/Emotional, Strange, Rare & Peculiar and Concomitant symptoms in importance. It's helpful to be able to recognise the category that symptoms fall into so as to place them correctly in the hierarchy. This will increase your chances of successful remedy selection. Focusing unnecessarily on particular and common symptoms distracts us from finding the best remedy for the individual.

**General Symptoms** refer to the body as a whole, including its processes; digestion, sweating, sleep, excretion and hormone function. It can help us recognise general symptoms by the way that we describe them; I feel tired, I am always hot (rather than 'my feet are hot'), I feel nauseous (rather than saying 'my stomach is nauseous'). A symptom also becomes general if three or more parts of the body share the same modality. For example: the three symptoms left sided headache, left sided weakness, left sided warts on the feet would elevate left sidedness to a general symptom.

Most 'exciting causes' that disturb and weaken the vital force also come under general symptoms. For instance, when respiratory symptoms always follow exposure to cold weather the general symptom 'worse in cold weather' is included in repertorising.

**Particular Symptoms** are sometimes also called Local Symptoms and refer to symptoms that occur in separate parts of the body; such as the hands, eyes, ankles etc. They can be recognised when the person talks of the part i.e. 'my hand is burning' or 'my hair is brittle'. Usually these particular symptoms are of less importance because they don't reflect the whole of the person and are often also common symptoms. The allopathic approach is to focus on and eliminate these symptoms however the homoeopath considers them to be a part of the whole disturbance. If we always focus on eliminating these particular symptoms without addressing the whole disturbance then we can expect either no response, incomplete action of the remedy or relapse.

**Common Symptoms** are associated with how disease patterns such as diabetes, measles, acne etc are described, particularly by allopaths. For instance high sugar content in the blood is a diagnostic sign of diabetes but does not lead the homoeopath to the correct remedy for the individual with this common symptom. Common symptoms are those that are typically experienced during the course of a disease or state, e.g. weeping after a recent grief. They rank least important when prescribing because they do not shed light upon the uniqueness of the suffering individual but rather they are common to the disease's state.

Next month we will explore: **ABC Remedies**