

# women & homoeopathy

**T**his leaflet covers some of the issues relating to women's health and the homoeopathic and natural remedies that may assist you in achieving and maintaining overall good health and emotional well being.

The information and remedy pictures that follow are available in traditional homoeopathic texts. If a homoeopathic remedy picture matches your individual symptom picture the remedy may offer symptomatic relief. Homoeopathic principles should be applied when using any homoeopathic remedy. Always read the product label. If symptoms persist consult your health care practitioner promptly.

A woman's natural menstrual cycle is a constant reminder that our hormones are changing and that when these hormones are "well tuned" we can experience these changes as positive, with surges of energy and intuition, and a sense of being part of something bigger than ourselves. There is, of course, the other side of the hormonal picture when things are not so well balanced, often accompanied by physical and emotional problems. Homoeopathy is singularly well placed to address these imbalances.

Generally, the hormonal system maintains its own balance until something causes an imbalance - for example, going off the contraceptive pill; a miscarriage or termination; pregnancy; post-pregnancy; menopause; or the shock of a death or loss. Remedies like *Sepia*, *Lachesis* and *Pulsatilla* are often described as female remedies - all having their own specific "personalities" - but *Belladonna*, *Ignatia* and *Calcium Carbonicum* (remedies we know for other reasons), are often effective, as it's always the individual picture that's important. Remedies selected to address the whole picture will have the deepest action.

With the aid of a good prescribing book and your home remedy kit, many simple problems can be addressed - but sometimes it's difficult to be objective, or the problems are too complex to address with home prescribing. A thorough consultation with your homoeopath to determine a deep acting Constitutional remedy is then recommended to facilitate a return to health and happiness. The healing that follows the sharing of such problems and issues with a practitioner cannot be underestimated, and often clarity and lifestyle changes follow the consultation.

## Breast Tenderness

Breasts respond quickly to hormonal changes, and any kind of pain or tenderness can cause fear. If you have any worrying suspicions see your doctor immediately. Many changes and lumps in the breast prove harmless - tenderness before periods is common, glands in the breast can swell when fighting general infection, and benign cysts or thickening of glandular tissue for no known reason are also common. The remedies most useful for uncomplicated breast tenderness before periods are *Phytolacca* and *Pulsatilla*.

Breast tissue is often a storage place for toxins. Drainage of toxins can be encouraged by regular breast self-massage and may also help regulate hormone levels assisting menstrual and menopausal symptoms. (See *Aromatherapy*)

## Cystitis

Drink plenty of water, eat extra vegetables, drink cranberry juice and avoid acid foods. Constant desire to urinate with burning and stinging, only a few drops pass - *Cantharis*. Constant desire with stinging pains and increased amount of urine - *Apis*. With high temperature - *Belladonna*. Burning between urination worse intercourse - *Staphysagria*. It can also be the result of a proliferation of the candida albicans organism.

## Emotional Upsets

It is important to take time to address disappointments, grief and emotional upsets as they arise. Suppressing our emotions may lead to physical illness over time.

**Miscarriage:** *Aconite* or *Ignatia* taken soon after can help in coming to terms with the loss.

**Abortion:** remedies will likely be those for period pain to help with any physical symptoms plus *Arnica*, as well as *Aconite* or *Ignatia*.

**Loss of a family member:** Child, spouse, parent: Sudden death where shock and panic are marked - *Aconite*. Sighs, tears, laughter, anger - or a silent, unspeakable sadness - *Ignatia*. When a normally emotional person cannot express their grief - *Pulsatilla*. Cannot express or experience feelings of grief or anger - *Staphysagria*.

**Dejection:** Is not uncommon, particularly if menstrual or menopausal symptoms are causing discomfort, but

also because of the hormonal changes taking place. This can be alleviated greatly by choosing one of the indicated remedies, as it will usually address both the physical and emotional state. If symptoms persist then see your health care practitioner.

### Flooding

As women near menopause periods may become heavy, irregular or even missed completely. Bleeding may be negligible, but the opposite can also be true, associated with anxiety, fatigue and frequent hot flushes.

If fatigue & exhaustion are marked accompanying symptoms - **China** or **Phosphorus**. Colicky pain better once flow is established, black menstrual blood which may be thick & offensive - **Lachesis**.

Heavy & excessive loss, exhausted, tearful, miserable - **Nat Mur**. Periods early & heavy, pulling or dragging cramping pains, constipation, insatiable hunger, loss of libido - **Sepia**. Bright red blood accompanied by weakness, nausea & vomiting - **Ipecac**.

### Heavy & Painful Periods

Reduce red meat & milk & increase fatty acids such as **Linseed** and **Borage**, and **Evening Primrose Oil**. Check **iron** levels, increasing iron naturally may be preferable to supplements.

Cramping, labour-like pains in spasms. Heat & pressure relieve - **Mag Phos**. Colicky, labour like pain with vomiting & diarrhoea, very angry - **Chamomilla**.

Cutting, tearing pains, with nausea, headache, vomiting & tearfulness - **Pulsatilla**. Bearing down feeling & low back pain with deep despair and indifference to loved ones - **Sepia**. Pains much worse for movement, must lie still & hold abdomen - **Bryonia**.

### Hot Flushes

This common female problem causes embarrassment and discomfort, and an optimum temperature can be difficult to maintain. Sometimes the overall situation can improve with home prescribing, however it can often be hard to find a suitable remedy and treatment from a qualified homoeopath should be sought.

Red, burning face, palpitations & intolerance of pressure or touch - **Belladonna**. Sweating with flushing & often violent headache on top of scalp. Very talkative. Intolerant of tight clothing - **Lachesis**. Wants company and is tearful most of the time. Milder & very variable flushes, hot face, chilly body - **Pulsatilla**. Flushes of heat, tired, indifferent towards the family and wants to be left

alone - **Sepia**. Hot with hot, burning feet, needs to put them out of bed. Frequent waking - **Sulphur**.

### Incontinence

No desire daytime, much more at night - **Lycopodium** or **Phos Acid**. During dreams and nightmares - **Equisetum** or **Belladonna**. Desire worse lying down, coughing or passing wind - **Kreosotum** and **Plantago**.

### Insomnia

With poor digestion or from mental overwork at night. Wakes early and cannot go back to sleep - **Nux Vomica**. Drowsy by day and sleepless at night. Catnaps & vivid dreams - **Sulphur**. From grief, worry, fright or disappointed love, every sound wakes them - **Ignatia**. Can't stop thinking, especially after happy news - **Coffea**.

### Medical Procedures

Trauma from procedures such as mammogram, biopsy, cautery etc can cause a lasting impression. See the Surgery Info sheet or your home prescribing book. Homoeopathy can be a very good support physically and emotionally in the event of cancer treatments, surgery, radiation and/or chemotherapy.

**Pap Smears:** Abnormal cells in a pap smear are not always an immediate cause for concern, and if your medical practitioner suspects nothing serious and is willing to take a second test after a period of time, constitutional treatment may resolve any abnormality. In addition, taking **Folic Acid**, **B6** and **Magnesium** supplements may help the body normalise these cells.

### Menopause & Ageing

Menopause is a gateway into a new phase of life as a woman's body ends its child-bearing years and adjusts to lower hormone levels.

Oestrogen production, which was the job of the ovaries during reproductive years, is largely taken over by the adrenal glands. During this transition some women experience symptoms such as hot flushes, heavy and irregular periods, vaginal dryness, extreme tiredness, and emotional disturbances including despair, which can make this a very distressing time.

As we begin to age, we often find that things just don't work as well as they used to. Circulation may become sluggish resulting in puffy hands and ankles, dizziness/vertigo may be associated with hardening of the arteries, and muscles & joint problems may occur. Careful eating, attention to lifestyle, and homoeopathy can help enormously during this transition. However, if any symptom becomes a major life issue, consult your health care practitioner.

## Infertility

Homoeopathy can be successful in helping with treating the many causes of infertility. These include endometriosis, cysts, absent menses, infertility since the pill, and many others. A consultation is recommended to choose deep acting remedies to restore hormonal balance.

## Nutritional Needs & Supplements

Eat a healthy diet with plenty of salads & leafy green vegetables. Cut down on dairy, sugar, salt, caffeine & alcohol for overall good health.

Supplementing with vitamins **C**, **B-complex** (especially **B6**), and **E**, and **Zinc**, **Folic Acid**, **Magnesium** and **Iron** with a balance of essential fatty acids may help with menstrual problems. **Evening Primrose** or **Starflower Oil** are popular. **Dong Quai** is a Chinese Herb which is particularly effective in the treatment of menopausal symptoms.

## Osteoporosis

This is thinning of the bone caused by loss of calcium. It is best combatted with a generally healthy lifestyle, including regular weight bearing exercise, and a healthy diet rich in calcium well before, and continuing through, the menopause.

**Calcium** supplements may be taken in conjunction with magnesium, however dietary calcium is also important, and homoeopathic constitutional treatment can give your system the best change to absorb the calcium. **Calc Carb**, **Calc Fluor**, **Calc Phos**, and **Silica** may have a specific action on the bones, and can be taken in a tissue salt combination on a regular basis to aid cell function.

## PMT

Homoeopaths understand that menstruation does not induce uncontrollable emotions, but simply lowers a woman's ability to repress genuine, often difficult emotions which are already present.

Try reducing or eliminating sugar, dairy, caffeine (chocolate, cola & coffee) & meat. Increase your intake of **B6**, **B12**, **C**, **E**, **Selenium** & **Magnesium** as they are required by the liver to break down extra & inactive oestrogen.

Breast tenderness, fatigue, irritability, angry outbursts, complete indifference to loved ones - **Sepia**. Tearful & moody, craves company & affection, better outdoors - **Pulsatilla**. Irritable, wants to be alone, fluid retention - **Nat Mur**. Craves sweet or fatty food, constipation, very irritable, in a rush about everything - **Nux Vomica**. Worse for tight clothing, better when flow starts - **Lachesis**.

## Puberty

Hormone levels can be erratic and the resulting sense of instability very unsettling to young women. Well chosen remedies can be excellent for calming and regulating hormones. The balance that this brings ensures a smooth transition into womanhood.

**Irregular Periods:** Too early and excessive - **Calc Phos**. Delayed, scanty and protracted periods in weepy girls with changeable moods - **Pulsatilla**. Delayed periods in girls who are moody, irritable and indifferent - **Sepia**.

**Menstrual Cramps:** With breast tenderness - **Calc Carb**. With headache - **Calc Phos**. With depression and low self esteem - **Lycopodium**. Sad, weepy and irritable and with painful breasts - **Pulsatilla**. Dragging pains - **Sepia**.

**Ovulation Pain:** Right sided - **Belladonna**, **Apis** or **Lycopodium**. Left sided - **Lachesis** or **Colocynthis**.

**Pre-Menstual Syndrome:** With breast tenderness - **Calc Carb**. With weight increase - **Graphites**. With despair and abdominal bloating - **Lycopodium**. With irritability, wants to be alone - **Nat Mur**. Quarrelsome - **Nux Vomica**. Weepy - **Pulsatilla**. Moody - **Sepia**.

## Self Nurture

Life in the 21st Century is hectic and demanding, and women often do not have the time or energy to cope with all the demands placed upon them. To enable us to deal with the rigours of modern life we need to not only look after our health but to also regularly take time out for ourselves.

A massage, facial, yoga class, or a hot bath with our favourite oils, are all good ways to relax and revitalise ourselves physically and emotionally. A few minutes a day can make a huge difference to how we cope with life generally.

## Thrush

Reduce sugar & yeast-based foods, wear cotton underwear & avoid using scented soap & other commercial products in the vaginal area. A supplement of **Lactobacillus Acidophilus**, particularly after a course of antibiotics may help recolonise the flora in the gut. **Garlic** capsules, **Evening Primrose Oil** and **Folic Acid** can all assist a long term problem. Creamy, bland or yellow/yellow-green discharge, often before period - **Pulsatilla**. Offensive discharge with marked vaginal & vulval itching - **Sepia**. Clear, thick discharge, like the white of an egg. Worse mid cycle - **Borax**. Recurrent problems may indicate a deeper disturbance and benefit from the assistance of your homoeopath to prescribe a fundamental remedy as well as an individually tailored acute treatment program.

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## Vaginal Dryness

During menopause vaginal tissue thins and loses elasticity, which can cause dryness. This can lead to itching, burning, tightness, discomfort during intercourse, and sometimes infection. Dryness, obstinate constipation & often dry cough or sore throat - **Bryonia**. Flatulence, indigestion. Shy & nervous. External skin dry (opposite **Bryonia**) - **Lycopodium**. Solitary, tearful, depressed. Local vaginal symptoms may often be intensely painful - **Nat Mur**. Pain is considerable from intercourse & resentful feelings are common - **Staphysagria**. Dryness, indifference and aversion to sex - **Sepia**. **Calendula** cream can be an effective local lubricant & anti-septic skin healing treatment.

## Tissue Salts

Working at a cellular level tissue salts can help re-balance our systems and improve some of the symptoms of menopause - fatigue, bone thinning, loss of elasticity and digestive problems. Taken on a regular basis they complement homoeopathic treatment and won't interfere with the action of your remedies.

## Aromatherapy & Essential Oils

Aromatherapy affects us on many levels: mental, emotional and physical. As the sense of smell is linked to emotions it is on

this level that women can gain the greatest benefit. Nurturing yourself with an essential oil massage or even vapourising can work wonders to relieve symptoms of PMT, menopause, or general feelings of despair, stress and irritability.

**Depression:** Clary Sage, Bergamot.

**Mental Fatigue:** Basil, Rosemary, Rosewood, Lemongrass, Bergamot.

**Menopause Blend:** Geranium, Rose, Bergamot, Cypress, Ylang Ylang. Add Sage for hot flushes.

**Breast Massage:** These oils encourage drainage and hormone balance: Geranium, Juniper, Patchouli, Rosemary.

**PMS Blend:** Use as a massage at the onset of pre-menstrual symptoms: Geranium, Clary Sage, Rose, Juniper.

**Period Pain:** Clary Sage, Geranium.

**Stretch Marks:** Massage regularly with Lavender, Mandarin, Neroli & Orange in a Wheatgerm or Jojoba base.

## Bach Flower Remedies

These remedies help us on an emotional and mental level to cope with stress. Dr Bach felt that "dis-ease" is a sign of imbalance in one's emotions, attitudes and life directions. His aim was to create a safe system for people to be able to self prescribe.

Bach flower remedy information is available online and through Bach remedy stockists.