

# **Veterinary homoeopathy in a nutshell – illustrated on a case of severe chronic dermatitis**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Homoeopathy is a holistic therapeutic medical science based on the teachings of Samuel Hahnemann, a German born physician and founder of homoeopathy. The word homoeopathy is derived from two Greek words *homoios* meaning like or similar, and *pathos* meaning suffering. Combining the two words in “homoeopathy” indicates “like suffering”, so summarizing the basis of a safe, effective, increasingly popular and yet also cheap healing system of medicine. It is a curative system of medicine, not suppressive, not palliative or replacing. In contrast to orthodox medicine, homoeopathy regards living organisms as multidimensional beings, which apart from their physical plane also operate on three higher subjective planes, namely the emotional, the mental and the spiritual plane. These planes are inextricably interconnected in the state of health as well as disease.

Hahnemann discovered some 200 years ago that if a substance causes certain symptoms in a healthy individual, that same substance can be used to cure similar symptoms in a sick one. This Law of Similars is expressed by the Latin “*Similia Similibus Curentur*” – “Let likes be cured by likes”. To illustrate this Law of Similars take the homoeopathic remedy *Apis mellifica* which is made from the honeybee. When an inquisitive puppy is stung by a bee or a spider, we see urticaria, immediate swelling of the skin, becoming red, painful and oedematous. The remedy *Apis* given per os decreases the swelling so fast and perhaps in a more spectacular way than with a cortisone injection.

## **DISA, A SCOTTISH TERRIER FEMALE, 1 YEAR OLD – MOIST DERMATITIS**

### **HISTORY AND COMPLAINT**

First presentation: 12/12/2006

Disa is presented with a history of dermatitis since small. Long term treatments with antibiotics, cortisone and shampoos have not helped.

### **HOMOEOPATHIC CONSULTATION**

The homoeopathic consultation typically takes one hour to find out as much as possible about the animal and its surrounding. It also involves a full clinical exam and tests. Many questions need to be asked and one needs to be a good listener and also observer.

### **CASE HISTORY**

Very busy dog, always running around.

Has her own will, very obstinate. If the owner calls her she ignores it.

Likes to drink lots of water.

Does not like to be touched, very sensitive. I have to muzzle her to examine her. She is very irritable and wants to bite.

Bathing seems to improve the skin for a little while. She likes it and she likes the rain. She eats anything, likes meat very much and particularly cheese. Her diet is mainly pellets.

Likes children and people.

Very sensitive to noise, e.g. when other dogs are barking.

If she sees or hears any other dog she goes crazy, starts screaming hysterically and storms towards the other dog. She does not listen if the owner reprimands her.

Not scared of thunder.

The skin has a very offensive smell. Pruritus.

The mental and emotional symptoms are of cardinal importance to a homoeopath and are valued at a higher level than the physical. Those symptoms which are most unique are often clinically inexplicable, and when out of context, out of character, out of proportion and most singular, are referred to as strange, rare and peculiar. Those are the most important indicators to find the right remedy.

Chronic cases, particularly skin, are challenging. In this case several homoeopathic remedies were prescribed until a complete cure was achieved.



19/03/2007 Thick crusts dorsally on back and head. Disa does not want to be touched.



11/06/2007



She allows me to touch her-jumps into my arms. Crusts worse, all over body, alopecia around tail base.

Perineal area pustules, skin thickened, swollen vulva.





29/04/2008

Grooming. Offensive strong smell, like dead body even shortly after bathing again.



19/09/2008

Disa starts hiding in a cupboard at home and wants to be left alone.

#### HOW TO SELECT THE RIGHT REMEDY

After taking the case history an analysis of the case is achieved through repertorization. A homoeopathic repertory is an index/library of symptoms in a book or electronic format where remedies are classified by symptoms.

#### Repertorization

1. Mind – Obstinate, stubborn, headstrong
2. Mind – Irritability, general
3. Perspiration – Odor, general - fetid
4. Skin – Excoriation, skin
5. Skin – Eruptions, skin – suppurating
6. Food – Cheese, general-desires
7. Mind – Vindictive, vengeful

## 8. Mind – Sensitive, mental, oversensitive, emotional – to noise

	nit-ac.	sep.	kali-c.	lyc.	ars.	lach.	phos.	caust.	puls.	sil.	bar-c.	calc.	hep.	merc.	mus-t.	sulph.	anac.	bell.	
1	21	16	15	15	14	14	14	12	12	16	15	14	14	13	13	13	12	12	11
2	2	1	4	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	3	3	2	1		2	3	3	1
3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	2	3	4	2	3	4	3	3	3
4	3	2	2	1	2	1	3		3	3	3		3	2	2	1	1	1	2
5	3	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	2
6	3	3	1	3	2	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	2	3	3	2		1	1
7	2	1	1	1			2	1	1			1			1				
8	2				1	3		1									3		
9	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	2

### Murphy Repertory Version 3

Repertorization points to a selection of remedies. In this case Nitric Acid is in first place with a score of 21.

Now the Materia Medica, a book or a computer program containing the properties of medicines, properties which have been proved on healthy individuals, is consulted to confirm if Nitric Acid fits the symptom picture.

Remedies are made potentially from any substance that surrounds us – be it from the mineral, plant or animal kingdom. Each homoeopathic remedy has a unique physical, emotional and mental picture. Over the last 200 years these remedy pictures have been discovered in “provings” in healthy individuals. Hahnemann himself and many others tested several substances on themselves thereby eliminating the need for animal experiments. It was also discovered that the effects of a substance were enhanced by diluting it. The elaborate procedure of diluting a substance is called in homoeopathy “potentizing”. Each homoeopathic remedy has a number after its name which refers to the level of potency. The remedy *Urtica urens* (stinging nettle), for instance, will increase milk production in a high potency or dilution, but reduce it though in a low potency. The art of homoeopathic healing is not only to find the right remedy, but also the right potency or level of dilution.

### TREATMENT

Nitric Acid in a 30c potency (meaning the substance has been diluted with 99 parts, 30 times) for some days and then later in a higher 1M potency, achieved a complete cure of Disa.

At first, within two weeks of giving this remedy, she started to come out of the cupboard where she went to hide before, became more lively and playful again. Gradually she was bleeding less from the skin and less smelly and the hairs started regrowing.

She is still fine today after 5 years and does not need any medication.



26/11/2008

Groomed. Disa looks stunning.



## DISCUSSION

How does homoeopathy work?

The theory is that every living organism contains a vital force within the body which regulates the functioning of the body. Thus treating a patient homoeopathically implies treatment of the whole patient not just the diseased part. One does not therefore treat a named disease but the totality of symptoms unique to that individual patient.

Nitric acid is a highly corrosive acid, HNO<sub>3</sub>. It causes blisters and ulcers and very offensive discharges – exactly like Disa had. The homoeopathic Nitric acid is given in a highly diluted dose, so as to prevent side effects. It stimulates the vital force to react to the symptoms and overcome them by the body's own healing power.

## CONCLUSION

It is obvious that homoeopathy differs considerably from orthodox medicine. This does not mean the two are incompatible. There are situations when they can or must be used together. Like when a dog has severe gastroenteritis, accompanied by loss of fluids, certainly fluid replacement via a drip is needed. The use of conventional medicines together with homoeopathic remedies achieves though better control of the diarrhea and vomiting.

Homoeopathic remedies work for all sort of pets and the range of animals to be treated homoeopathically has no limits – from tiny bush babies, birds, our common companion animals, farm animals to also game. The medicines are given in the form of granules, tablets or fluids and are usually administered per os or with drinking water or food.

The Organon of the medical art is the basic philosophical text of homoeopathy. It sets out Hahnemann's ideas. Whoever steps on the homoeopathic path finds himself on a life long learning and life changing journey as the opening paragraph of the Organon states: it is the physician's highest and only calling to make the sick healthy, to cure as it is called.

If you are interested in finding out more about the IAVH please contact: Dr. Anita Schwan 012 5270653 [tokolosh@netactive.co.za](mailto:tokolosh@netactive.co.za)

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