



HOMEOPATHIC APPROACH IN TREATMENT OF WATER RETENTION

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INTRODUCTION

Water retention is a condition in which the body retains water, causing swelling and tenderness, especially on the extremities and around the abdomen. Water retention occurs when there is an excess of interstitial fluid in some part of the body. Water, along with various other necessary materials nutrients and oxygen, are continuously brought to the cells throughout the body through the blood vessels. Water retention results from one or both of the following dysfunctions of these vessels: either the blood vessels begin leaking excessively, adding too much water to the tissues and cells; or, the capillaries (the smallest blood vessels, most directly connected to the cells) fail to efficiently reabsorb and remove water that has been added. In both cases the result is excessive water remaining as interstitial fluid. Because the amount of fluid leaving and being reabsorbed by the capillaries is controlled by fluid-pressure differentials, these two conditions are often coincident.

If there is excessive hydrostatic pressure (which pushes fluid pass the capillary wall into tissues and cells) or insufficient osmotic pressure (which will tend to draw fluid back into the capillaries) water will remain in the tissues. In healthy individuals, as hydrostatic pressure moves water into cells the osmotic pressure will increase---this healthful exchange can be called hydrostasis. If an imbalance exists in either of these mechanisms, water retention can result, and often both imbalances are present in sufferers.

Many women are familiar with the water retention associated with the menstrual cycle; this water retention is caused by the release of hormones which causes the kidneys to retain water, rather than flushing it out. Water retention can also be caused by medical problems with organs like the kidneys, heart, or liver, and it has been linked with thyroid problems as well. Finally, the body will retain water if people eat a diet which is too high in salt.

1. The Hydrogenoid Constitution is characterised by an excess of Hydrogen and consequently of water in the blood and tissues. Its corresponds closely with Hahnemann's Sycosis but it covers a much wider area and, is not by any means confined to the acquired or inherited results of gonorrhoeal infection. Intermittent-fevers and periodicity come within its sphere.
2. The 'Oxygenoid' Constitution is characterised by an excess of Oxygen, or, at lest, by an exaggerated influence of Oxygen on the organism (Hahnemann's Syphilis).
3. The "Carbo-nitrogenoid" Constitution is characterised by an excess of Carbon and Nitrogen (Hahnemann's the Psora).

The term 'constitutional' is used in more than one way by homeopaths. There are many uses for the term, as follows:

1. 'Constitutional prescribing' refers to selecting the one remedy which covers the totality of the patient's symptoms, (both mental and physical) at a given time. It contrasts with 'local prescribing', based on only a few localised symptoms, ignoring other 'unrelated' features of the case. Thus an acute remedy may be prescribed in a constitutional manner for an acute illness, and a polychrest may be prescribed unconstitutionally for the local symptoms of either acute or chronic disease.
2. A 'constitutional remedy' is one which covers the totality of a patient's mental and physical characteristics over a long period of time, excluding temporary changes during acute illnesses.
3. Some homeopaths use the term 'constitutional remedy' to refer to the deepest layers of a person's constitution, which may be partially obscured by more superficial layers.
4. Congenital anomalies also can be treated with constitutional treatment.

5. With a Constitutional approach Emotional derangement can be treated where prolong anxiety may cause personality disorder with frustrations, depression.
6. Constitutional medication also use as a system purifier with a regular interval.

The hydrogenoid constitution is more prone to retention of water; the extra growth regeneration is the main property of sycosis miasm: the causes of those diseases which Hahnemann arranged under the head of Sycosis is not the only cause of the development of this state of the body which is distinguished by a too great proportion of water, or by hygroscopic blood.

If the patient states, that he feels worse in cold, or damp weather, and in the rain, then one has to choose among the remedies which are similar to his disease, such only as contain a greater percentage of a combination of O with C and H, consequently produce more heat and diminish the influence of the water. Hence the symptoms of a disease in this constitution of the body are aggravated by everything which in any way increases the atoms of water in the organism, by baths, for example, and that all the same whether they are mineral baths or simple water baths; or whatever increases the attractions of the organic molecules for water, as, for example, the eating of animals which have lived in the water, as fishes, etc. All diseases in such constitutions are increased by cold, also by cold and cooling food and drinks, for example, sour milk, hard eggs, cucumbers and mushrooms, but chiefly by living near water, and especially standing water.

Another sign that a disease has occurred in such a bodily constitution is in the periodicity of its phenomena, and chiefly in its irregular and paroxysmal course. Many people are presented with daily periodicity or aggravation during full-moon due to gravitational change. For even the nervous system which, next to the brain in proportion to the other parts of the body, possesses by far the greatest percentage of water reacts on a plus of water with energy commensurate with that with which it carries over its reflex influence on the blood and other organic formations.

There are many common causes of fluid retention, which include:

- 1) Gravity - standing up for long periods of time allows fluid to 'pool' in the tissues of the lower leg.
- 2) Lifestyle – diet (excess sodium in the diet, insufficient protein or vitamin B1 deficiency) and lack of exercise. Drinking less fluid will not cure water retention. One of the causes of water retention is dehydration due to not drinking enough water.
- 3) Hot weather - the body tends to be less efficient at removing fluid from tissues during the summer months.
- 4) Burns - including sunburn. The skin retains fluid and swells in response to burn injuries.
- 5) Menstrual cycle - some women experience oedema in the two weeks prior to menstruation, believed to be caused by the impact of hormones on fluid balance.
- 6) Pregnancy - hormones encourage the body to hold onto excess fluid.
- 7) The Oral Contraceptives Pill - Oral contraceptives that include oestrogen can trigger fluid retention.
- 8) Medications - certain drugs, including high blood pressure medication (antihypertensives), corticosteroids and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) are known to cause fluid retention.
- 9) Low-Calorie Diets - water retention cause overweight. But overweight people tend to go on a low-calorie diet. A low-calorie diet will unfortunately not get rid of water retention - it can actually make it worse, especially if you eat less than 1,200 Calories a day for months or years. This is because you may not have enough protein in your blood to draw excess water out of your tissues. This type of water retention can cause generalized puffiness but if severe can give you a swollen tummy.
- 10) Histamine- Histamine causes water retention leading to bloating and tummy swelling. If you have ever been stung by an insect or developed an itchy red lump after a mosquito bite, you will be familiar with the effects of histamine. Histamine widens the joints between the cells which line your smallest blood vessels, known as your capillaries. This makes them leak both water and protein into your "tissue spaces" - the area surrounding the cells of tissues such as flesh, organs and intestines. If the protein cannot be removed from your tissue spaces, it will stay there, attracting water.
- 11) Medical conditions - Fluid retention may be a symptom of serious underlying conditions, including: kidney disease, heart failure, chronic lung disease, liver disease, thyroid disease, arthritis etc.

Symptoms of retaining water are:

- 1) A puffy face, especially around the eyes.
- 2) Abdomen water-logged and bloated during press it with Puffy arms.
- 3) Ankles and fingers that swell up, the affected body parts may ache & joints may feel stiff.
- 4) Skin- Dry skin or dandruff.
- 5) Unexplained weight fluctuations over a few days or weeks.
- 6) Proneness to allergies.
- 7) Breast tenderness or heaviness during period.
- 8) Oedema- When pressed, the skin may hold the indent for a few seconds (pitting oedema) in other cases, the skin may not indent when pressed (non-pitting oedema)
- 9) Mood disorder with fatigue-ness.

Management:

Many types of water retention can respond to dietary measures. The Waterfall Diet has been designed by British nutritionist Linda Lazarides to help release excess water weight as quickly as possible. It can also help to treat health problems associated with water retention, such as swollen legs, arthritis, high blood pressure and PMS. A low salt diet. Besides avoiding obviously salty fries, pizza, salted nuts and other convenience foods, cut down on foods containing hidden salt. These include some processed foods, salad dressings, cereals and canned soups. Become a label reader. Moreover, don't add salt during the cooking process and stop salting your meals at the table.

- Diuretics (water pills)
- Treatment for the underlying medical condition: for example hormone replacement (thyroxine) in the case of hypothyroidism, PCOD.
- Lifestyle changes in response to the underlying medical condition: for example avoidance of alcohol, if liver disease is the cause.
- Changes to medication or dosage, if drugs are the cause.
- Dietary modification, if malnutrition is the cause.
- Drink plenty of water. It may sound contradictory but a well-hydrated body is less likely to retain fluid.
- Reduce intake of the dehydrating drinks such as tea, coffee and alcohol.
- Cranberry juice has a mild diuretic action.
- Lie down with your legs higher than your head when possible.

Treatment aspect of Homoeopathy:

Excess Body weight is the primary maintaining cause of so many diseases (Diabetes, Hypertension, Hyperlipidaemia, heart diseases-etc). Incidentally water- retentions is the one of the vital factor of overweight. Due to altered physiological states water may be retained in a body for different etiological causes that has been written before; so correction of the altered physiological state with homoeopathic constitutional treatment will give good prognosis.

According to discipline of Homoeopathy, the detail examination of the patients with proper case recording is a primary step of the treatment, where individualization of the patients is our first duty. Next step is to synchronize the patient history picture with medicinal picture or in other words synchronize disease pathogenesis of the patients with Medicinal pathogenesis. The constitutional approach will be the right way to evaluate a person as a whole. During study within small observation Cal Carb, Thuja, Medorrhinum, Nat-sulph and Sepia find the most useful medicine for water retention.

In cases where there is a combination of the hydrogenoid and carbo-nitrogenoid constitutions the Hydrogenoid must be cured first and then the Carbo-nitrogenoid. This corresponds with Hahnemann's directions regarding Sycosis and Psora - Sycosis was to be dealt with first. Lots of fundamental work has been waiting since the works of Von Grauvog's on the past, which should be looked into by future generation.

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