

# USING BOTANICALS IN TANDEM WITH CLASSICAL HOMEOPATHY: THREE CASES

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## ABSTRACT

These cases exemplify application of the guidelines proposed in the preceding article, focusing on the tandem use of botanical medicines and a single homeopathic similimum to manage three cases. In Case A (recurrent meningioma) both types of prescribing made significant contributions to improvement. In Case B (biliary dyskinesia) the homeopathic prescription contributed most to the patient's healing. In Case C (leiomyomata uteri) a complete reappraisal of the patient's self-medication led to significant improvement and surgery was avoided.

It is postulated that the outcomes achieved (and still in process) in these cases have resulted from the concomitant use of both botanical and homeopathic prescriptions. The balancing effect of botanicals supports the healthy functioning of the body and encourages the patient's vital force to find the best direction towards cure. The homeopathic remedies address the emotional, mental and spiritual factors which created predisposition to illness. It is proposed that gentle herbs do not antidote homeopathic remedies in most situations, but rather these modalities complement each other in promoting a deep and lasting cure for the patient.

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Potential Conflict of Interest Statement: Dr. Heron is technical director of Botanical Pharmaceuticals, a small herbal extract company that markets to health care practitioners. This company produces all the botanical preparations (and none of the homeopathics) mentioned in the cases, though they are widely available from other sources as well.

In all three cases there was a possibility of the need for surgery and in all cases it was successfully averted, suggesting the efficacy of the combination of homeopathic remedies and herbal medicines.

In case A the patient not only prevented a recurrence of a third meningioma but went from a very limited functional capacity to a full life with greater mental clarity and ability to pursue her own goals. In case B the patient avoided a cholecystectomy, learned to manage and prevent her gall bladder attacks and went on to resolve her limiting emotional patterns toward a significantly freer and more fulfilling life. In case C the patient avoided a hysterectomy and oophorectomy, a huge leiomyomata began shrinking and she eliminated many impediments to a successful career. The rationale for each of the prescriptions is described in detail below.

In each instance the same format is used. The cases are described; then the botanical formulas are noted and explained. When there is research to support use and activities of botanicals, it is cited and described. Then the homeopathic prescription for the case is explained including the rubrics used in repertorization. In all cases classical homeopathic prescribing was used, meaning just one remedy was given and not changed until its full action was completed.

During the course of each of these cases, the potency of the single constitutional homeopathic remedy was gradually increased. These cases are still being managed by the practitioner, and while the patients have improved their cure is not complete. Daily doses of the specific homeopathic remedy mentioned in each case were used in the belief that this approach would tend to maintain the effect of the homeopathic during concomitant botanical medicine administration. The author believes this worked effectively but other methods might work as well. The only limiting factor for the practitioner in determining whether homeopathic effects are being maintained is experience in managing cases homeopathically.

The most important guideline in case management is to never change homeopathic and botanical prescriptions simultaneously. In an acute situation, one must first rule out a proving or aggravation from the homeopathic, and in all cases described below, the constitutional remedy was maintained. In other cases where there is an aggravation, the remedy might be stopped briefly, but it is always returned to in order to complete its full action towards cure. The author has found it is best to use botanicals for support rather than for suppression of symptoms. These cases will demonstrate a variety of clinical situations where these guidelines in combining botanicals and homeopathic remedies are applied.

#### CASE A

A 61 year old woman was concerned about the possible recurrence of a **benign parasagittal meningioma**. She had the original tumor excised in 1984, but it recurred in 1992. She sought naturopathic care less than a year after her second surgery. She presented with dizziness, slight to moderate shortness of breath, headaches and weakness with mild ataxia leading to occasional falls. She had some loss of memory and difficulty with attention and concentration diagnosed by a psychologist as a cognitive disorder. He also diagnosed an anxiety disorder with depressive symptomology and recommended sedating antidepressants to address her anxiety, depression and insomnia. She experienced one seizure since the recurrence and had been on anti-convulsants since then. As a result of taking phenytoin (Dilantin) and gabapentin

(Neurontin) she had elevated liver enzymes (serum glutamic oxaloacetic transaminase (SGOT) 90 u/l, alkaline phosphatase (AP) 134 u/l, and gamma glutamyl transpeptidase (GGTP) 196 u/l) and depressed white blood cell count (WBC) of 3900/cc. Her fasting glucose ranged from 93-115 mg/dl and she had classic symptoms of blood sugar dysregulation. She had depressed thyroxine (T4) and elevated thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) levels and was on Armour thyroid.

Over the next year, with consistent daily dosing of her botanical formula, her liver enzymes normalized to SGOT 24-30 u/l, AP 87-92 u/l and GGTP 55-58 u/l along with a WBC of 4400-46000/cc with only slightly decreased doses of Dilantin and Neurontin. She continued the medications because she was afraid of another seizure. A computed tomography (CT) scan about four months into the treatment plan was initially read as a small growth of a new meningioma. Later, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) revealed the same abnormality, but it was interpreted as either scarring or tumor since there was no increased growth. No specific intervention was recommended as it was clear that her mental status, headaches and ability to function were improving. Prior to discovery of her second tumor all these factors had been deteriorating.

Her botanical formula was adjusted slightly during the first few months, but remained unchanged as soon as she began her constitutional homeopathic prescription. Her dose was 5-7 ml TID (1-1 1/3 tsp 3 times per day) which she took fairly consistently, except when she went on trips. One time her trip was extended to a month and her dosing of botanicals became so inconsistent that there was a regression in her serum liver enzymes and WBC. After a month of improved compliance the values returned to their prior normal values. Fortunately she had been on the program for approximately two years so her mental state and energy remained good. She remarked, "I was barely alive before, now I can do so much more."

#### BOTANICAL FORMULA

Parts

- 3 *Scutellaria lateriflora* 1:3.5  
(fresh Skullcap leaf & flower Tincture)

- 3 *Hypericum perforatum* 1:3  
(fresh St. John's Wort flower Tincture)
- 2 *Valeriana officinalis* 1:1  
(Valerian root Fluid Extract)
- 2 *Taraxacum officinalis* 1:1  
(Dandelion leaf Fluid Extract)
- 2 *Medicago sativa* 1:3.5  
(fresh Alfalfa leaf Glycerite)
- 1.5 *Stachys betonica* = *S. officinalis* 1:5  
(Wood Betony herb Tincture)
- 1.5 *Berberis aquifolium* 1:2  
(fresh Oregon Grape bark of root Tincture)
- 1.5 *Silybum marianum* 1:1  
(Milk Thistle seed Fluid Extract)
- 1 *Hyssopus officinalis* 1:2.5  
(fresh Hyssop herb Tincture)
- 1 *Echinacea angustifolia* 1:3  
(fresh Cone Flower root Tincture)
- 1 *Centella asiatica* 1:4  
(fresh Gotu kola leaf Tincture)
- 1 *Oplopanax horridum* 1:4  
(fresh Devil's Club bark of root Glycerite)
- 0.5 *Angelica sinensis* 1:7  
(Tang Quai root Tincture)

She was also eating ground *Silybum marianum* seed daily at approximately 3 tbs./day. This is a well documented liver antitoxic that works by multiple mechanisms. It was added for maximal effect. The flavonoid constituents of *Silybum* stimulate hepatic RNA-polymerase I and thereby stimulate hepatocyte regeneration. *Silybum* and silymarin have been shown effective in human studies in the treatment of cirrhosis of the liver (1), hepatitis B (2), and other toxic liver diseases (3). Silymarin has also been shown to protect against oxidative damage caused by certain prescription drugs (4). It was probably significant in protecting her liver both from damage and from her drugs. It also had a role in improving liver function and preventing tumor regrowth.

*Scutellaria lateriflora* is known for its mild sedative activity (5). It has a long tradition of use as a nerve sedative for anxiety, as an anticonvulsant and as a spasmolytic. In *Specific Medication*, Scudder states that it "exerts a direct influence upon the cerebrospinal centers, controlling irritation (6)." He also reminds us that this is a plant that

must be used in its fresh form, otherwise the preparation will be "totally worthless." *King's American Dispensatory* extolls its use in chorea, tremors, neuralgia, insomnia and all disorders due to nervous causes (7).

Extensive clinical trials have supported the use of *Hypericum perforatum* for depression (8). Perhaps most relevant to this case, recent research has revealed a potential anti-tumor action of hypericin in the central nervous system (9).

*Valeriana officinalis* has been used traditionally to treat insomnia and anxiety. These uses have been validated in clinical trials (10). It has also been shown to be of benefit in insomnia in elderly persons (11).

*Taraxacum officinale* has a long history of medicinal use in a variety of conditions due to its ability to stimulate the liver and kidneys in their function of detoxifying the body. Rudolf F. Weiss, MD in *Herbal Medicine* describes the numerous constituents including bitters, enzymes, vitamins as having stimulating effects on "cell metabolism as a whole" as well as on the liver and kidneys (12). The root is considered restorative to the liver. It has been shown to stimulate bile production (13). Both the root and leaf have similar effects. *Taraxacum* leaf has been shown to cause diuresis in animal studies (14) and also in humans (12). This patient had a tendency to retain water. Since *Taraxacum* was important in her formula, tincture of the leaf was used.

Well known now as a phytoestrogen (15), fresh *Medicago sativa* is also a nutritive herb. One hundred grams of shoots contain 6 g protein, 0.13 mg thiamine, 0.14 mg riboflavin, 0.5 mg niacin, 3400 IU vitamin A, 6 mg beta-carotene, 160 mg vitamin C, 15 mg vitamin E, 5.4 mg iron, 12 mg calcium, numerous carotenes (lutein, cryptoxanthin, zeaxanthin, etc.), and numerous other nutritional compounds including folic acid, biotin, chlorophyll, bioflavonoids and minerals (16). This herb is a useful adjunct for postmenopausal women who are not on estrogen, especially when their diets are deficient in vegetables.

*Stachys betonica* has little modern research except some Russian work regarding its possible use in nervous system disease (17). It has a reputation in the European tradition as a nervous system strengthener in anxiety, especially

beneficial for headaches (18) and neuralgia. It was added because of the headaches the patient experienced.

*Berberis aquifolium* has interesting anti-inflammatory effects (19). Whether these are related to its liver tonic action is unknown. It is a well known alterative and tonic to digestive processes, being applicable to liver, digestive and skin diseases. In *Potters* it is noted that berberine has some anticonvulsant and uterine stimulant activity (20).

No modern research confirming or denying the use of *Hyssopus officinalis* as a mild nerve was found. It does contain ursolic acid (16) which has anti-inflammatory activity. The volatile oil has antispasmodic properties and European herbalists use it for anxiety and petit mal seizures (21).

*Echinacea spp.* is well known for nonspecific stimulation of the immune system (22). It has also been used specifically to treat cancer, including as an adjunct to chemotherapeutic drugs (23).

There is evidence that *Centella asiatica* activates immunological activity (24), presumably beneficial in a case such as this one. It was included in this formula for these effects as well as anecdotal reports of thyroxine stimulation, but primarily because of its traditional uses for improving mental clarity, revitalizing nerves and brain cells. In Ayurveda it is named *brahmi* (knowledge) and is used for senile loss of memory and to enhance verbal articulation (25). *Centella* was shown in one study to improve the mental function of mentally retarded children (26). This plant medicine is almost worthless in the author's experience unless made from fresh or recently dried plant material.

*Oplopanax horridum* is useful for borderline or more severe blood sugar dysregulation (27). As noted above, this patient had such a tendency. This plant clearly warrants more research.

*Angelica sinensis* root has been shown in several studies to stimulate various components of the immune system (28, 29). It has also been shown to have anti-tumor activity in animal studies (30).

#### HOMEOPATHIC PRESCRIPTION

About three months after coming under care and after significant improvement in her physical symptoms and blood values, her homeo-

pathic case was taken. She rambled on, often changing subjects. She described her marriage as difficult, yet "When he left I wanted to commit suicide". Throughout her life she was unable to ask for what she wanted and always did what her family wanted rather than cause a problem. The rubrics recorded were:

Mind; ailments from love, disappointed-2; Mind; concentration difficult-2; Mind; loquacity-2; Mind; suicidal disposition-2; Mind; will, weakness of-1; Extremities; trembling lower limbs-2 and *Cimicifuga racemosa* was prescribed. The British homeopath Dr. D. Gibson describes this remedy as being specific for meningeal irritation (31). This remedy can also be found in Head pain-2; Vertigo-2; Mind; memory; weakness. Loss of-1; Respirations, difficult-1 and Sleep; restless-2<sup>1</sup> which were noted on her intake. At that point *Cimicifuga* was taken out of her formula in case the material dose might alter the homeopathic effects.

Over the next three months she was able to discontinue the sertraline (Zoloft) and amitriptyline (Elavil) that had been prescribed by the neurologist. She became much happier and stated, "I'm getting my vocabulary back. I feel generally happier and am laughing more; I have seen miracles happen." Soon she was driving herself much longer distances and coping well with finding out that her daughter had lymphoma. She has taken a daily dose of gradually increasing potencies and continues to improve in all ways. "There is not so much of a motor running inside me," she says. "Finally I'm beginning to feel relaxed and I have so much more energy, even when I push myself." More recently she said, "When I first came in here I didn't think of myself as a sexual person." She was significantly more alert, rarely has headaches, is much more active, clearly happier and dramatically better able to handle stress. Consequently she has convinced her neurologist to see her only biannually and to perform CT scans only if she has an increase in symptoms.

Shortly after these excellent results, one of her daughters became severely ill with lymphoma. She was able to accompany her to a clinic in Mexico for treatments and did not become significantly depressed again even when her daughter died.

**CASE B**

A 41 year old woman sought help in preparation for getting pregnant with a new husband. At intake she had intermittent chronic **gall bladder symptoms** including right upper quadrant (RUQ) burning pain radiating to the right shoulder, especially after fatty foods, off and on for the past two years. For a while acupuncture, Chinese herbs (Lidan tablets) and strict diet had kept her symptoms to a minimum. Then over the next few months, the Lidan tablets (*Scutellaria baicalensis* (huang qin), *Saussureae lappa* (mu hsiang), *Lysimachia christinae* (jin qian cao), *Lonicera japonica* (ren dong teng), *Artemisia capillaris* (yin chen hao), *Bupleurum spp.* (chai hu), *Isatis tinctoria* (ban lan gen), *Rheum palmatum* (da huang)) stopped helping and in the end were making the epigastric and RUQ pain and burning clearly worse so she had stopped taking them. Within a few days she had an acute episode of nausea, vomiting and intense burping, then hematemesis. She initially improved while drinking *Matricaria recutita* (German chamomile) tea and then while taking modified Gall Bladder Remedial formula without the chologogues *Chelidonium majus* (greater celandine), *Artemisia absinthium* (wormwood) and *Leptandra virginica* (black root). These were found to be much too strong during the acute phase of her symptoms. *Mentha piperita* (peppermint), which is both a chologogue and an infamous homeopathic antidote, was also excluded.

Her **Acute Gall Bladder Formula** was as follows:

Parts

- 2.5 *Fumaria officinalis* 1:5  
(Fumitory herb Tincture)
- 1.5 *Petasites frigidus* 1:3  
(fresh Butterbur herb, flower & root Tincture)
- 1 *Taraxacum officinale radix* 1:2  
(fresh Dandelion root Tincture)
- 1 *Chionanthus virginicus* 1:2  
(fresh Fringe Tree bark Tincture)
- 1 *Dioscorea villosa* 1:2.5  
(fresh Wild Yam root Tincture)
- 0.5 *Taraxacum officinale folium* 1:2  
(fresh Dandelion leaf Glycerite)

*Fumaria officinalis* has been investigated in Germany and shown to both decrease and increase bile secretion (32). There is some clinical information on its effectiveness as well (33). It is also spasmolytic. Thus we can see how beneficial this plant can be in any sort of gall bladder problem including biliary colic and chronic dyskinesia; it has a special indication in biliary migraine.

*Petasites frigidus* is mentioned in Weiss for neurodystonic syndrome of the biliary system. He mentions research by Hoerhammer and Wagner that describes a spasmolytic active principle called petasin (12). Then Anedda et al. found an extract of the plant beneficial in acute and chronic gastroduodenitis and what the Europeans call gastro-cardiac syndrome (12). North American physicians are usually much less descriptive and say that indigestion has put pressure on the heart, exacerbating preexisting cardiac pathology. A spasmolytic effect has been demonstrated on the stomach, intestines and in painful spasms of the biliary tract. In chromatography of the European species, the highest content of active constituents was found in a fresh plant extract of the whole plant including roots, stems, leaves and flower buds (i.e., gathered only in the spring). Weiss notes that *Petasites* is also useful in migraine headaches and herniated discs (12).

*Taraxacum officinale* root, long reputed to stimulate bile production (13), is traditionally known as a tonic for the gall bladder. Weiss describes modern research confirming its empirical benefits in biliary complaints, especially a disposition to form gallstones (12). *Taraxacum* leaf is supportive of the action of the root and, as mentioned above, helps patients with a tendency to fluid retention, which was common for this patient, especially premenstrually.

No citations were found in the literature regarding *Chionanthus virginica*. Scudder describes it as a specific for the liver in jaundice, where there is an uneasiness in the right hypochondrium or in any kind of colic, particularly that associated with gallstones or liver inflammation (6). It is an important Eclectic alternative, regarded as most effective in conveying morbid materials out of the body especially when there is liver or gall bladder inflammation or obstruction. King says it relieves

congestion by stimulating the abdominal glands and circulation and improving digestion and assimilation (7).

No modern research was located regarding the antispasmodic activity of *Dioscorea spp.* Its popularity is due to the fact that its steroidal saponins (diosgenin, dioscorin and others) are a corticoid precursor and it is used industrially in the production of natural estrogens, progestones and other steroids.

The patient's symptoms were quickly relieved and she didn't have another episode of acute pain or burning for almost a year when she was again under tremendous emotional stress. She was also relieved of her indigestion and burping and only had a vague full feeling when she ate a fatty meal.

**HOMEOPATHIC PRESCRIPTION**

Her emotional distress, however, continued. She repeatedly complained about irritability and feeling confined. "I have no place to go but to give birth to this feeling; it's the only way to get it out of me. Sometimes I feel like I can't breathe." She works as a clairvoyant who channels a Tibetan sage. She was convinced that the remedy was what would heal her. The rubrics in her case were:

Mind; irritability-2; Mind; clairvoyant-1; Respiration; difficult; open, wants door & windows-3; Mind; confusion, identity, as to his-1; Abdomen; pain, burning-1 and Abdomen; Liver & region of, ailments of-3.<sup>1</sup>

Lachesis was chosen, but even before she took it she said, "I feel like I'm aligned with the remedy and it's already working." And, in fact, the remedy has now begun to heal her in deep ways. She stopped the botanicals and has continued on the homeopathic alone.

More recently she did have another episode of burning RUQ pain that almost took her to the emergency room. She was instructed that if it was so severe that she might be inclined to go to the hospital that she could try just *Fumaria* tincture for its amphicholeretic effect as noted above. She was so dedicated to her healing at that point that she didn't need to take anything besides her homeopathic remedy.

**CASE C**

A 35 year old woman sought care for huge **leiomyomata** described by a gynecologist as 12-16 week

pregnancy size. The prior autumn she was told she had two small fibroids and by the spring six separate intramural fibroids were described, the largest 8 cm. She alternated between shortness of breath, pain shooting down her legs and up into her ribcage or vague abdominal pressure and awareness of the large growth in her pelvis that sometimes protruded significantly.

When constipated her hemorrhoids enlarged. When stressed she had genital herpes outbreaks. She was concerned about losing hair. Sometimes she had panic attacks, usually associated with stress around a relationship with a male partner. Shortly after the initial consultation she weaned her four year old daughter. The patient's prior history was significant for being born two months premature with syndactyly of the right hand, acute appendicitis at age 17, a small nodule above thyroid persistent since age 21 and benign cyst of the right breast also at age 21 while taking thyroid medications which were discontinued five years later. During the first visit she was using a tremendous number of botanicals, both Chinese and Western. She had two homeopathic practitioners and was not sure of the effects of most of her natural prescriptions.

She began botanical formulas about two weeks before the homeopathic, which was agreed upon because she was taking so many things already and had been frightened into thinking she might need a hysterectomy immediately.

Her botanical formulas were biphasic, an approach the author has found beneficial in almost all chronic female reproductive problems. The follicular formula was begun at the onset of bleeding and continued until ovulation. In addition, **Angelica sinensis 2 ml TID was added to the follicular formula from the end of bleeding until ovulation.** Though seemingly a minor issue, *Angelica sinensis* is a common and often misprescribed botanical during menses. From the perspective of Western medicine the presence of coumarins can increase menstrual bleeding (34). In traditional Chinese medicine it moves blood which is contraindicated during menses when blood is already moving (35). The luteal formula continued from ovulation until the onset of menses. Both formulas were dosed at 5 ml TID (1/2 H ac or 2 H pc).

#### LEIMOMYATA REDUCTION FORMULAS

Follicular Parts	Luteal Parts	
2	2	<i>Trillium erectum</i> 1:2 (fresh Beth root Tincture)
2	2	<i>Fraxinus americana</i> 1:3.5 (White Ash bark Tincture)
1.5	0	<i>Medicago sativa</i> 1:3.5 (fresh Alfalfa Glycerite)
0	1.5	<i>Alchemilla vulgaris</i> 1:4.5 (fresh Lady's Mantle Tincture)
1.5	1.5	<i>Oplopanax horridum</i> 1:4 (fresh Devil's Club bark of root Tincture)
1	1.5	<i>Ceanothus greggii</i> 1:2 (fresh Red root Tincture)
1	1	<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i> 1:1 (Chasteberry Fluid Extract)
1	0	<i>Achillea millefolium</i> 1:4 (fresh Yarrow flower Tincture)
1	1	<i>Fouquieria splendens</i> 1:2 (fresh Ocotilla bark Tincture)
1	1	<i>Urtica dioica</i> 1:2.5 (fresh Nettles leaf Glycerite)
0	1	<i>Eleutherococcus senticosus</i> 1:1 (Siberian Ginseng root Tincture)
0.5	0.5	<i>Fucus vesiculosus</i> 1:4 (Bladderwrack thallus Glycerite)
0.5	0.5	<i>Phytolacca decandra</i> 1:2 (fresh Poke root Tincture)

No scientific research was located on the effects of *Trillium erectum*. It is used traditionally as an astringent and antihemorrhagic with special benefit in childbirth, hence its common name, birthroot. Being an astringent for all forms of bleeding including hemoptysis and hematuria, with an affinity for the uterus, one would expect it likely to be of benefit in fibroids.

*Fraxinus americana* has been investigated along with *Populus tremuloides* and *Solidago canadensis* for anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects (36-38). King describes it as tonic and astringent, useful in dropsy and the *Fraxinus* for some types of constipation (7). The current naturopathic use in fibroids probably arose with an Eclectic physician named Dr. Schafer and was further popularized by Dr. Ellingwood. He considers it "indicated in uterine tumors of somewhat speedy growth. . . . It influences cell proliferation in hypertrophy, assisting in the reduction of size and function (39)." He describes a case of an injured young woman whose uterus was six times normal size that was completely cured by this remedy alone.

*Medicago sativa* is a phytoestrogen and nutritive as noted in Case A above. Its antiestrogenic effect is the reason for it being only in the follicular part of the formula.

*Alchemilla vulgaris* has been reported useful for the treatment of menstrual bleeding disorders (40). It is traditionally considered to have progesterone-like activity.

Root and stem extracts of *Oplopanax horridum* have been found to be anti-estrogenic in rat ovaries (41). It is more widely known for its use with glucose metabolism dysregulation which was an issue for this patient. The blood sugar application is noted above and the anti-estrogenic research can shed new light on application of this herb in conditions where there is hyperestrogenism.

*Ceanothus greggii* is traditionally considered a spleen and liver remedy with special influence on the portal circulation. In addition the saponins in the berries were used as a gargle in malignant diphtheria with excellent results as described in Ellingwood (39). Michael Moore has much more specific information from his experiments with dark-field microscopy on live blood. "(*Ceanothus*) improved transport of blood fluid into the interstitial colloids and uptake of lymph into the veins..." because they help the red blood cells (RBCs) adhere less and improve interstitial and lymph movement (42). Thus this herb is appropriate when patients ignore the suggestions of their naturopathic physicians who caution them not to eat fried foods and the like. For those

patients who continue to eat these foods, *Ceanothus* can facilitate the body's own mechanism to detoxify dietary excess, improve portal circulation and promote drainage from congested tissues drained by lymphatics. Thus it is helpful in all cysts, varicose veins, hemorrhoids, uterine or prostate congestion.

Extensive modern research has been carried out on *Vitex agnus-castus*, primarily in Germany (43, 44). It has been effective for hyperprolactinemia, premenstrual syndrome, and other disorders of menstruation. It acts primarily in the pituitary and hypothalamus, increasing luteinizing hormone (LH) and inhibiting the the release of follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH). Thus it is a hormone regulator, promoting the corpus luteum and diminishing any condition associated with too much estrogen, including fibroids.

*Achillea millefolium* has been shown in vitro to be anti-inflammatory (45, 46), carminative, spasmolytic and a tonic bitter, as described by Weiss (12). These properties, along with others not so easily described, are likely to be responsible for its reputation as a perfectly balanced emmenagogue. In clinical practice *Achillea* is used for all manner of excess bleeding with great success in significantly decreasing blood flow. As an ideal gynecological amphoteric, it will help promote flow when menstruation is suppressed.

*Fouquieria splendens* is a plant promoted by Michael Moore. He writes that *Fouquieria* "is absorbed into the mesenteric lymph system by way of the lacteals of the small-intestinal lining; this stimulates better visceral lymph drainage into the thoracic duct and improves dietary fat absorption into the lymph system. With fewer dietary lipids going into the liver by the portal blood there is less . . . portal hypertension and less stagnation in the upper thighs (47)." This plant is very useful in all chronic pelvic conditions because of its lymph stimulating action. In order to facilitate recognition of this exotic desert plant, the author has described it metaphorically as the "*Phytolacca* of the pelvis." *Phytolacca americana* is a well-known stimulant for the lymphatics of the breast and neck while *Fouquieria* has a similar effect on the pelvis and thighs. The tincture is best made from fresh bark.

*Urtica dioica* is considered diuretic (48). It also has been shown

to alter binding of 5-alpha-dihydro-testosterone with sex hormones binding proteins (49) and to interfere with production of harmful inflammatory cytokines (50). In one study in men with benign prostatic hyperplasia, *Serenoa serrulata* combined with *Urtica* decreased serum levels of estrone and estradiol (51); its effects on women in this regard are unknown. One hundred grams of preflowering young *Urtica* plants contain 30 g protein, 3000 mg calcium, 680 mg phosphorus, 32 mg iron, 650 mg magnesium, 3400 mg potassium, 4 mg manganese, 20 mg beta-carotene, and small amounts of thiamine (16). Thus it has wide application in fibroids, both to build the blood after so much loss during bleeding and for its favorable hormonal effects.

*Eleutherococcus senticosus* has been researched mostly in Russia. It was found to simulate growth hormone (GH) and luteinizing hormone releasing hormone (LHRH) in one investigation (52). The classic review of adaptogens such as *Eleutherococcus* notes their benefits for people under stress of all kinds (53). It has found extensive use in Russia to stimulate the immune system, particularly in cancer patients (54).

*Fucus vesiculosus* contains mucopolysaccharides including algin that stimulate lymphocytes and have other immune system effects. It has also shown some antibiotic activity. There are a number of trace minerals including iodine which are found clinically to be quite beneficial in all gonadal cysts and breast tenderness. It also activates the thyroid gland. Since seaweeds can accumulate toxic waste metals, finding a non-polluted source is very important.

*Phytolacca decandra* has a long reputation as specific for hard enlarged lymph glands and also for breast inflammations. It stimulates lymphatic flow, has significant anti-inflammatory effects and also contains mitogenic lectins. This is a strong and potentially toxic botanical and was the first herb removed from this patient's formula.

#### HOMEOPATHIC PRESCRIPTION

She was very dramatic in describing herself: "I was the princess and then I was abused. It has to be someone real good looking or real cocky to get my attention. I should have settled down with one of the scum-bags I dated and had four kids." She alternately complained about everything in her life not work-

ing and feeling like everything was wonderful with her spiritual life. She had horses that she rode regularly and made light of two episodes when she fell off her horse. The rubrics that were taken in her case were:

Mind; despair, recovery-3; Mind-lamenting-2; Mind;obstinate, headstrong-1; Abdomen; enlarged-1 and Extremities; emaciation; upper limbs-1<sup>1</sup> because of her right sided syndactyly. She also was concerned about some loss of hair. She described the paternal side of her family as "pretty promiscuous, even though they go to Church. It would be nothing for him to show up with an 18 year old with a bottle of Jack Daniels between her legs." Homeopathic Syphilinum was prescribed.

After five months of treatment the fibroids apparently shrunk. Unfortunately the patient did not have an ultrasound just prior to the above treatment, but the three month ultrasound reported the fibroids to be the same size as the previous autumn. Her gynecologist was amazed and the issue of hysterectomy is no longer discussed. The patient reported that on abdominal palpation it felt "50-70% smaller" and the intensity of the pain and shortness of breath is "80% improved." She also believes that the remedy was helping her sleep and decreasing the intensity of her anxiety attacks. Her herpes outbreaks have continued and her relationships still appear pathological. She is, however, beginning to see the difficulties in her relationship with men at an earlier stage. She will continue with the daily homeopathic remedy and her botanical formula will be simplified.

In combining botanicals and homeopathy I have attempted to honor the strengths of each type of prescribing and to offer patients a deeper understanding of their illnesses and more options for treatment.

#### ENDNOTES

1. All repertory references used were included in the computer software MacRep, version 5.3, Kent Homeopathic Associates.

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## BIOGRAPHY

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