Homeopathy for Anxiety  March 2014

Anxiety can be a debilitating condition and limit the ability to enjoy and experience life of the sufferer. Long standing chronic anxiety can often be well managed with individualized homeopathic remedies prescribed by a registered homeopath.

However, for those more minor issues with anxiety which many of us experience such as before getting on a plane, before social events or going to the dentist, just as examples, here are a few remedies which may soothe and calm. As always if you don’t have success with your home prescribing see your homeopath or other healthcare professional.

Aconite can be helpful for panic attacks with fear and strong anxiety which come on suddenly. There may be an intense and irrational fear, including of death (eg prior to getting on a plane) and this may lead to palpitations, breathlessness, dry mouth, dizziness and flushing of the face. Sometimes a frightening experience may be the original cause, with the panic attacks continuing for some time after. The remedy can be taken frequently (every 10 minutes if necessary) or added to a water bottle and sipped.

Argentrum Nitricum (Arg Nit) can be helpful when anxiety arises before an important event such as an exam, an interview, a speaking engagement or social event. Symptoms often include dizziness and diarrhoea. People who need this remedy are often quite impulsive and suggestible, but can be easily reassured. They sometimes have a tendency toward strange impulses and thoughts and may crave sweets and salt, which usually make the symptoms worse.

Arsenicum Album (Ars Alb) People who need this remedy are usually very anxious about their health and have a tendency to be very concerned around things being orderly and secure. They have a great need to control everything and can be obsessive about small details. They will often “sweat the small stuff” around some event outside of their control, like the food or water on a trip overseas. Anxiety can occur any time but between midnight or 2am is a common time for these people, when they may wake feeling anxious and restless and actually get out of bed to pace around. They often have digestive issues (commonly diarrhoea) or asthma attacks related to anxiety.

Calcarea Carbonicum (Calc Carb): Individuals needing this remedy are dependable, solid souls who become easily overwhelmed from working too hard or perhaps as a result of an illness, and start to fear they are losing their mind. They can become foggy and confused when tired and this adds to their anxiety. They don’t cope well with change, worry or bad news and an underlying dread of disaster can develop. These individuals are generally quite fearful, and fear of heights and enclosed spaces are common. They often crave sweets and eggs and are easily fatigued.

Gelsemium becomes paralysed by fear and anxiety, so literally feel like they are rooted to the spot and their brain won’t function. They may become shaky and experience chills and hot flushes, diarrhoea and headaches. Fear of crowds, a fear of falling, and even a fear that the heart might stop are other indications for the remedy. This is a good remedy if the knees turn to jelly and you can’t think, so before an interview or giving a talk, a test, visit to the dentist or other stressful event.

Ignatia: These are sensitive individuals who are often anxious following a grief, disappointment or some kind of criticism or other stressful experience. They are a bit all over the place! Mood swings, frequent sighing, they may burst into tears or laughter, or be uncharacteristically rude or defensive. Headaches like a nail being driven into the side of the head are common, as is the sensation of a lump in the throat or crampy pains in the tummy or back.
**Kali phosphoricum:** This remedy is one of the 12 tissue salts, but it can also be used in a 30c. Symptoms indicating Kali Phos may appear when someone has become exhausted by overwork or illness and feels anxious and unable to cope. This remedy has an affinity for the nervous system so the individual may be jumpy and oversensitive and easily startled. Physical symptoms may include headaches, backaches and digestive upsets. Hearing unpleasant news or thinking about world events can aggravate the problems. Concentration may become a problem, along with insomnia and a sense of nervous dread. Eating, warmth and rest often bring relief.

**Lycopodium:** People needing this remedy often have a great lack of self-confidence – not that you’d know it as they may be domineering and overbearing with people they feel comfortable with. They do however often feel self-conscious and intimidated by their superiors or people they perceive as powerful! They have major issues with taking on responsibility (including marriage or parenthood!) and this can cause anxiety and fear of failure. Having said this once they start the task they usually perform well. Claustrophobia, irritability, digestive problems with major gas and bloating and a craving for sweets are often indicators for Lycopodium.

**Natrum Muriaticum (Nat Mur)** individuals have deep emotions and can appear aloof and reserved which is really a protective mechanism. They are not comfortable in social situations so are often lonely and can be easily hurt and offended. They tend to dwell on what may be minor offences to others, refusing to be consoled even though they may want it. They are, however, good listeners! They can often be fearful with anxiety at night, fear of robbers or intruders and fear of enclosed spaces. Migraines and insomnia are symptoms that may arise as part of their anxiety picture and may come on after a loss or grief. The anxiety may not be obvious as most things can tend to be hidden in Nat Mur people.

**Phosphorus** people, on the other hand, are outgoing, excitable, generous, and open hearted. Because they are so open they can also be jumpy and full of vivid fears and imaginations. Anxiety can be triggered by almost anything as they lack the boundaries necessary for modern life. They are over-sympathetic and when they become worn out from overdoing it or over-caring they suffer exhaustion, get spacey or even become ill. They are better for company and reassurance, as well as conversation and a massage or back rub. They have strong thirst and desire for cold and refreshing foods (such as fruit and salad).

**Pulsatilla** patients may be weepy, whiny and clingy when sick, needing support and comfort. This is quite a hormonal remedy so anxiety can be worse at time of hormonal changes such as puberty (in both boys and girls), periods or menopause. They are easily overheated which can aggravate the anxiety and are intolerant of stuffy rooms, often being better for fresh air and gentle exercise.

**Silica:** People needing Silica are often shy and nervous, although can be very capable and quietly strong minded. They tend to be a little OCD when anxious or given responsibility and can get stuck in the minor details, aggravating their anxiety. They can suffer extreme anxiety when doing something new, having to speak in public, going for an interview or doing an exam. Headaches can result from worry and overwork, as well as difficult concentration, exhaustion and general oversensitivity. They do generally lack stamina and if overworked or exhausted have a tendency to come down with colds, styes, sore throats and similar.

Don’t forget our **Anticipation Combination** which includes remedies traditionally indicated for a variety of situations where anxiety or anticipation may be an issue.

Some of the **WyldChyld Essences** have an affinity for anxiety and are applicable to adults and children alike.

It is also important to give a good multi vitamins & mineral supplement at this time. Blackmores Executive Stress Formula has high levels of the vitamin B family which is helpful during periods of anxiety and stress or ask your healthfood shop for a practitioner brand.
Exam Stress/Anxiety

Homeopathy has a great range of remedies you can use at home to help your child (or yourself!), and I frequently treat these stresses in the clinic when they don’t respond to home prescribing. While the remedies are similar to those above, I’ve included them under a separate heading.

**Arg Nit** students are extremely anxious about their exams, and suffer from excess mental exertion in their efforts to do well. Symptoms may include weakness and trembling, and they may be nervous, restless and impulsive. They may crave sugar to keep them going, but are worse for it producing diarrhoea, which may also appear as the exams loom.

**Gelsemium** is dull, apathetic, withdrawn and wants to be left alone. They want to stay in bed, feel heavy and depressed - basically they’re paralysed with fear! Physically and mentally exhausted from overwork and anxiety with anticipation of what’s to come.

**Lycopodium** has great anxiety and fear of failure around forthcoming exams - tries to bolster self-confidence by bragging and general poor behaviour. They are pretty bossy with their peers and inferiors, but look up to their superiors. They are overwhelmed by too much to do, but usually do extremely well once they get doing. Symptoms may present as indigestion, loose stool, tummy aches and headaches from low blood sugar. Like Arg Nit they also crave sugar.

**Kali Phos** is a nerve tonic and helps with mental and physical depression from excitement, overwork or worry. There may be headaches, weak sight and humming or buzzing in the ears.

**Nux Vomica** students are usually very irritable, very focused and very competitive. They don’t tend to have emotional issues around the exams, but will over-do the coffee, sugar, cigarettes, etc in an effort to cram. They can make life miserable for the rest of the family, suffering also from indigestion, headaches and constipation!

**SOS** is an all-round emotional saviour! Put in a water bottle with one of the above on the day of the exam and sip as required. If fear or anxiety is very extreme on the day, consider Aconite!

*Homeopathy is a traditional medicine. It may be used in conjunction with other medicines. For any ongoing chronic condition, it is important to be assessed or examined by your healthcare professional or specialist. Always seek medical advice in emergencies. The information in this article does not constitute medical advice. It is referenced from the texts approved by Therapeutic Goods Administration and is for information only. If in doubt as to the appropriateness of a treatment seek advice from your homeopath.*