THE FERRUM FAMILY

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ABSTRACT

Study of the Ferrum family, with differential diagnosis between Ferrum iodatum, phosphoricum, silicicum and sulphuricum.

Analysis of four cases: a girl suffering of recurrent ear inflammations and convulsions, cured with Ferrum phosphoricum, a lady with gastroenteric complaints, operated some years ago for breast cancer, treated with Ferrum iodatum; the cases of Ferrum sulphuricum e silicicum are included in an observational study of the Centro di Omeopatia of Milan about the menopausal complaints.

KEYWORDS

Ferrum, Ferrum iodatum, Ferrum phosphoricum, Ferrum silicicum, Ferrum sulphuricum, family, menopause.

INTRODUCTION

We have some symptoms where we can find a lot of Ferrum remedies.

On the mental level, these patients are very conscientious, afraid of the crowd, quarrelsome and restless; this symptom is for Ferrum metallicum, arsenicosum, fluoratum, iodatum, lacticum, muriaticum, nitricum, phosphoricum and silicicum. We find a lot of sensitiveness to noise and to pain. Another important issue is the bulimia.

On the physical level the most important symptoms are linked to the hemorrhages; infact we find 6 Ferrum remedies in the rubric "Generals – Hemorrhage" and 17 remedies in the rubric "Generals – Anemia". Other rubrics on this topic are menses copious, too frequent, metrorrhagia and enlargement of the spleen.

The Ferrum remedies are useful in headache, especially pulsating.

These remedies have a special tropism on the shoulder, especially Ferrum muriaticum. The thyroid is affected in Ferrum metallicum, iodatum, muriaticum, phosphoricum and sulphuricum, with exophthalmic goitre.

On the neurological level we must focus on the chorea and on the epilepsy.

About food we have aversion and aggravation with eggs, aggravation from fat and meat, but also desire or aversion to meat, aggravation with sour food and a special relationship with tomatoes, aversion or, more often, strong desire. An important modality is the amelioration with the slow motion.

Other common and important symptoms are: diarrhea, leukorrhea, amenorrhea, sleeplessness, flushes of heat and the aggravation at 3 am.

I will speak in particular about Ferrum phosphoricum, iodatum, silicicum and sulphuricum. Ferrum phosphoricum retains the leading features of the other Iron preparations: anaemia,

haemorrhages and disorders of the veins. The haemorrhages are of bright red blood and may come from any outlet or orifice of the body. Inflammation, enlargement and inducation of blood-vessels. It is generally indicated in the pale and anaemic subjects, who, in spite of want of blood and exhaustion, are subject to sudden gushes of bleeding.

It is indicated in haemoptysis after concussion or a fall. It relieves expectoration of blood in pneumonia.

Great physical and mental lassitude; indisposed to physical exertion.

The right shoulder is affected as in Ferrum muriaticum. The right-sideness of Ferrum phosphoricum is as marked as that of the other Ferrum preparations.

The morning aggravation is an important indication.

In keeping with its element of Iron, it presents the local congestion tendencies of that remedy and in its Phosphorus element its affinity for the lungs and stomach; in its combination proves as great haemorrhage remedy.

In general, it is not adapted to the full blooded, sanguine subjects, with an overplus of red blood, but rather to pale, anaemic subjects, who with all their weakness are nevertheless subject to sudden and violent local congestions and inflammations, like pneumonia, or sudden congestions to head, bowels or any other part.

It is only useful in the first stage of such attacks, before the stage of exudation appears.

FERRUM PHOSPHORICUM - CASE 1

The patient was born in november 1996. The first consultation was in may 2001.

Since the child was three years old, she started to suffer from otitis (Ear - Inflammation - Media) and she had this problem very often. Between 9 months and 4 years old, she suffered from convulsions during fever (Generals - Convulsions - heat during). From time to time she had also tonsillitis (Throat - Inflammation - Tonsils).

The first tooth at the age of 10 months (Teeth - Dentition - slow). She had often fever during dentition.

She perspires very strongly during sleep (Perspiration - Profuse - night).

About food she likes very much fish, mussels and milk (Generals - Food and Drinks - fish desire; oysters desire; milk desire).

On the mental level she is sympathetic, obstinate and she is afraid of thunderstorm (Mind - Fear - thunderstorm). The father told me that the child has really a comatose sleep (Sleep - Comatose). Never epistaxis, but often little blood in the urine tests (Urine - Bloody). The child is very often pale (Face - Discoloration - pale).

I gave Ferrum phosphoricum 1.000K; since the first consultation she had only two episodes of otitis and she was cured with the remedy. She took the remedy also in case of cough with good results. She took from 1.000K to 50.000K. The night perspiration disappeared; no more convulsions during fever.

If we analyze these symptoms we can see Ferrum phosporicum in position 4; there is an important symptom that the remedy does not cover and it is the slow dentition, but both Ferrum, in second degree and Phosphorus in first degree have this symptom.

15 Symptoms	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	37
	Calc.	Nat-m.	Sulph.	Ferr-p.	Lach.	Phos.	Lyc.	Ferr.
	13	13	13	12	12	12	11	7
Ear - Inflammation - Media	3	2	3	2	1	-	3	1
Generals - Convulsions - heat, during the	1	2	1	2	1	-	-	-
Throat - Inflammation - Tonsils	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1
Teeth - Dentition - slow	3	-	1	-	-	1	1	2
Fever - Dentition, during	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-
Perspiration - Profuse - night	-	2	3	2	I	3	2	-
Generals – F & D - fish - desire	-	2	-	1	1	1	-	-
Generals – F & D - oysters - desire	2	2	1	-	3	1	2	-
Generals – F & D - milk - desire	2	2	1	-	1	2	-	-
Mind - Sympathetic	1	2	-	1	1	3	1	-
Mind - Obstinate, headstrong	3	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
Mind - Fear - thunderstorm, of	1	2	1	1	1	4	2	-
Sleep - Comatose	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	1
Urine - Bloody	3	2	2	1	2	3	2	1
Face - Discoloration - pale	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3

FERRUM IODATUM - CASE 2

The patient is a woman and she was born in april 1948. She come to consultation the first time in september 2001 because of gastric and abdominal troubles. She complaints about abdominal distension after eating, flatulence and she said "immediately after eating I feel so full, also if I eat very little". In the anamnesis often cramps in the feet when she was a child and often headache from 14 to 20 years. When she was 46 years old she was operated for a carcinoma of the right mamma. In the repertory in the rubric "Chest - Cancer - Mammae - right", we find only Ferrum iodatum. On the mental level I was not able to find nothing special.

I gave Ferrum iodatum MK repeating from time to time the remedy when she needed and, up to now, she feels very well with no more gastric and abdominal complaints.

7 Symptoms	1	2	3	4	5	36	38
	Ferr-i.	Lyc.	Nat-m.	Rhus-t.	Sep.	Ferr.	Iod.
	7	6	6	6	6	4	4
Abdomen - Distension - eating - after	1	3	2	2	2	-	-
Abdomen - Flatulence	1	3	2	1	2	1	2
Stomach - Fullness, sensation of - eating - after	2	3	2	1	1	3	-
ever so little; after							
Extremities - Cramps - Foot	1	2	2	2	2	1	1
Head - Pain	2	2	3	2	3	2	2
Chest - Cancer - Mammae	1	2	1	1	2	-	1
Chest - Cancer - Mammae - right	1	-	-	-	-	-	-

Ferrum iodatum, iodide of Iron, is mostly adapted to scrofulous patients with glandular enlargements, tumours and tendency for crops of boils, while such a condition is associated with very distinct anaemia.

Rachitis, exostosis, periostitis and various forms of spinal curvatures with deformity generally call for Ferrum iodatum in preference to the pure metal.

Old homeopaths had good results in prolapsus uteri with amenorrhoea, associated with great itching of vulva and vagina.

Food desires: salt fish and chicken.

Like all the Iodum compounds it acts in exophthalmos (especially after suppressed menses) and in goitre.

The stomach is often full of wind and the patient feels so full after least food. Also the abdomen has problems with colitis and flatulence with distension.

It is a warm-blooded remedy and usually this patient uncovers feet.

Roberts wrote in his book "The rheumatic remedies": "Ferrum iodatum resembles both Ferrum and Iodum in its action".

The bruised paralytic sensation in the limbs, when associated with the scrofulous anaemic conditions, are the outstanding indications for its use in rheumatic conditions.

Sides of neck sore when touched or on motion. Pain in small of back as if broken, at night only.

FERRUM SILICICUM - CASE 3

I have the case of a woman born in march of 1947. The first consultation was in January 2002. In our Center we started in 2001 a trial about menopausal syndrome and she was enlisted in it. She complained about flushes of heat with perspiration and dryness of vagina with painful coition (Female - Vaginismus - coition - painful). In the last months a kind of chronic cystitis with urging constant and sense of pressure on the bladder (Bladder - Pain - pressing). In her life no particular complaints except the prolapsus of the uterus and a basalioma on the forehead (Generals -Cancerous affections). The menses were always copious with large clots. She suffered from caries when she was a child. On the mental level, she is very easily offended, she doesn't like company, she is sympathetic, especially for children and she has anxiety from anticipation. I gave Ferrum silicicum 200K; she called after two weeks with strong amelioration of the flushes of heat (90%); no cystitis, the urging and the pressure on the bladder were 80% better.

The last consultation was in june 2002: no more symptoms of cystitis, no more dryness of vagina and now the husband is happy; flushes of heat almost completely disappeared. We called her in september 2002, because we must have a report for this trial and she told us she stopped the homeopathic treatment because she does not need anymore (she said: "I am completely recovered"). It is pity she does not have the most important feature of the remedy: perseverance.

15 Symptoms	1	2	3	4	19	21	121
	Lyc.	Sep.	Nat-m.	Bell.	Ferr.	Sil.	Ferr-sil.
	14	12	12	12	9	8	5
Generals - Heat - flushes of - menopause, during	1	2	1	2	1	-	-
Generals - Heat - flushes of - perspiration - with	1	3	1	1	-	-	-
Female - Dryness - Vagina	3	3	4	2	2	-	-
Female - Vaginismus - coition - painful	2	3	3	1	2	1	-
Bladder - Urging to urinate - constant	2	2	1	2	2	2	-
Bladder - Pain - pressing, pressure in	3	3	2	1	-	1	-
Female - Prolapsus - Uterus	1	3	2	2	2	2	-
Generals - Cancerous affections	3	1	1	1	-	3	-
Female - Menses - copious	2	2	3	3	3	2	2
Female - Menses - clotted - large clots	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Teeth - Caries, decayed, hollow - children	1	-	-	-	-	1	-
Mind - Offended, easily	3	2	2	2	-	2	-
Mind - Company - aversion to	2	3	4	2	2	-	1
Mind - Sympathetic	1	1	2	1	-	-	1
Mind - Anxiety - anticipation; from	3	-	-	-	1	-	1

The only author I found talking about Ferrum silicicum is Jan Scholten. He wrote that the essence of the remedy is the perseverance. They work hard and they want to go to the end of the work. They are very responsible and perfectionist. Although they work hard, it is as if this doesn't come from within, but is only an image they want to present to the world, the image of someone who doesn't give up.

Also the family is very important. They don't want to let the family down, they feel that it is expected of them that they will manage. So they have to carry on to make sure the family image remains intact.

They appear to be very strong, but this is no more than an outward show. Inside they are shy and vulnerable. On this level we can make a differential diagnosis with Lycopodium.

They are also very afraid of failure. For this reason they are precise and punctual.

The menses are profuse, with large clots.

They suffer from periodical headache, usually every 14 days.

Arthritis. Back problems, scoliosis.

Nails brittle, crumbling, ingrowing, white spots.

FERRUM SULPHURICUM - CASES 4

Daniele was born in may 2000. The problem of the child is frequent bronchites (Chest -

Inflammation - Bronchial tubes) with asthma (Respiration - Asthmatic). The last attack was 15 days before the first consultation. He is very warm-blooded child. He has itching from wool. About food he has strong desire for meat and diarrhea from tomatoes (Generals - Food and Drinks - tomatoes - aggravates). On the mental level he is very irritable but only at home (Mind - Irritability - loved ones, to) and he is very jealous. I prescribed Ferrum sulphuricum 1.000K and since that moment he did not have respiratory troubles any more.

9 Symptoms	1	2	3	4	5	65	66
	Sulph.	Nat-m.	Phos.	Merc.	Puls.	Ferr-s.	Ferr.
	7	7	7	7	6	4	4
Chest - Inflammation - Bronchial tubes	2	2	3	2	3	-	-
Respiration - Asthmatic	3	2	2	1	3	-	2
Generals - Warm - agg.	3	3	2	2	3	-	1
Generals - Warm - air - agg.	2	2	2	3	3	1	-
Skin - Itching - wool agg.	1	1	1	1	1	-	-
Generals - Food & Drinks - meat - desire	2	1	1	1	-	1	1
Generals - Food & Drinks - tomatoes - agg.	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Mind - Irritability - loved ones, to	-	-	-	_	-	2	-
Mind - Jealousy	1	1	-	1	2	1	-

FERRUM SULPHURICUM - CASE 5

The child was born in september 1998. She took in the past from another homeopath Pulsatilla, Euphrasia and Lycopodium. Since she was three years old frequent inflammation of the larynx (Larynx & Trachea - Irritation - Larynx) with dry cough day and night.

When she was one year old she often woke up at night screaming (Mind - Shrieking - children - sleep, during). Also now she often wakes up during the night, about 4 am and often she asks for drinking water (Stomach - Thirst - night).

When she was one year old, very often lachrymation from both eyes.

In the beginning of 2000 two episodes of urticaria, without apparent reasons: she was treated with antihistaminics.

Since july of 2000 swelling of the right tonsil.

She has often cough, sometimes loose, sometimes dry.

First tooth at eleven months, so she had a slow dentition.

About three months before the first consultation, she had dry skin on the chest and on the back, with itching. Often flushing of the face, especially in warm room (Face - Discoloration red - warm room agg.)

She likes to eat meat, almost raw, tomatoes, ice-cream and cold milk.

Only one epistaxis. No easy ecchymoses.

She loves the mother very much but she is very independent.

Warm-blooded.

On the mental level the mother said she is very dictatorial.

I gave her Ferrum sulphuricum 1.000K, 3 drops a day. After one week the mother called me and she complained about the skin of the daughter: she had dry skin and itching like a few months ago and the itching is worse when uncovering. She woke up at 3 am screaming because of pain and itching. I gave 3 drops 3 times a day but without reaction, so I prescribed 10.000K 3 times a day and she reacted immediately very well.

Up to now no more skin problems, no more cough, the sleep is good and no more respiratory troubles. The child is very good.

19 Symptoms	1	2	3	4	5	19	143
	Sulph.	Lyc.	Phos.	Merc.	Calc.	Ferr.	Ferr-s.
	18	15	15	14	13	10	5
Larynx & Trachea - Irritation - Larynx	2	3	3	2	2	1	-
Cough - Dry	3	2	3	2	3	2	-
Mind - Shrieking - children, in - sleep, during	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
Sleep - Waking - night - midnight - after - 4 h	2	2	1	1	-	-	-
Stomach - Thirst - night	2	2	2	2	2	-	-
Eye - Lachrymation	3	3	3	3	3	2	-
Skin - Eruptions - urticaria	3	2	2	1	3	-	1
Throat - Swelling - Tonsils	3	3	3	2	3	2	-
Teeth - Dentition - slow	1	1	1	1	3	2	-
Skin - Dry	3	3	3	2	3	2	-
Face - Discoloration - red - warm room	2	-	-	-	-	-	1
Generals – Food & Drinks - meat - desire	2	1	1	1	2	1	1
Generals – Food & Drinks - tomatoes - desire	1	-	-	-	-	2	1
Generals – Food & Drinks - ice cream - desire	2	1	3	-	2	-	-
Generals – Food & Drinks - milk - desire - cold	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
Mind - Independent	2	-	-	-	1	-	-
Generals – Warm - air - agg.	2	2	2	3	1	-	1
Generals - Warm - agg.	3	2	2	2	2	1	-
Mind - Dictatorial	2	3	1	2	-	1	-

FERRUM SULPHURICUM - CASE 6

The last case is a woman, born in november 1950. The first consultation was in november 2001. She also was enlisted in our trial about menopausal syndrome. She came especially for flushes of heat with perspiration and weakness. She has these symptoms from the beginning of menopause two years ago.

She told us that the weakness is all day long, she wakes up in the morning more tired than in the evening (Sleep - Unrefreshing); she suffers also of pain in the lower limbs; the weakness and the pain are better if she goes out in the open air (Generals - Air - open air – amel.) and if she walks slowly (Generals - Weakness - walking - slowly ameliorates / Generals - Motion - slow motion – amel.).

She complaints also about gastric troubles, with eructations of food especially after lunch (Stomach - Eructations; Type of - food) and gastric and abdominal distension. No special desires or aggravations about the food.

In the anamnesis we have circulatory troubles: varices during pregnancy; the menses were always copious and protracted. Menarche when she was 16 years old (Female - Menses - delayed in girls, first menses).

She has constipation since long time. Only seldom headache. She has distended veins in the face and often cracks in the corners of the mouth. About her character she is quite dictatorial, often irritable especially because of noises. She prefers cold weather.

I gave her Ferrum sulphuricum 1.000K; she called after two weeks: the weakness was better and the intensity of the flushes of heat also better. That day since the morning she had a kind of influenza: I prescribed the remedy more often and the day after the symptoms disappeared completely. She came after one month and she told us "the flushes of heat and the weakness are 50% better, stomach and abdomen 100% better".

In the third consultation, after three months, flushes of heat 90% better, weakness and pains better, but she had an aggravation of the eructations, so we gave her 10.000K.

The last consultation was in december of 2002 and the flushes of heat were almost completely gone, the sleep was very good, no more weakness, she had stools every day, no more gastric problems and no more cracks in the corners of the mouth. We asked her blood examinations and we saw an amelioration of calciuria (from 127 to 86), phosphaturia (from 495 to 344) and hydroxyprolinuria (from 12 to 7).

20 Symptoms	1	2	3	4	5	243
	Sulph.	Ferr.	Lach.	Nat-m.	Calc.	Ferr-s.
	17	16	16	16	16	4
Generals - Heat - flushes of - menopause, during	3	1	3	1	1	-
Generals - Heat - flushes of - perspiration - with	3	-	3	1	1	-
Generals - Weakness - menopause; during	-	-	2	-	-	-
Sleep - Unrefreshing	2	1	3	2	3	-
Extremities - Pain - Lower limbs	2	2	1	2	2	-
Generals - Motion - slow motion - amel.	2	3	-	-	1	1
Generals - Weakness - walking - slowly amel.	-	2	-	-	-	-
Generals - Air - open air - amel.	2	-	2	2	1	1
Stomach - Eructations; Type of - food	2	3	2	2	2	1
Stomach - Eructations; Type of - food - eating - after	3	3	2	2	-	-
Stomach - Distension	3	1	2	2	3	-
Abdomen - Distension	3	1	3	3	3	-
Extremities - Varices - Leg - pregnancy, during	-	3	-	-	-	-
Female - Menses - copious	2	3	2	3	3	1
Female - Menses - protracted	2	3	2	3	3	-
Female - Menses - delayed in girls, first menses	2	2	1	3	2	-
Rectum - Constipation	3	2	3	3	3	-
Face - Veins distended	1	2	3	1	1	-
Face - Cracked - Mouth; corners of	1	-	-	2	1	-
Generals - Cold - amel.	2	1	1	2	1	-

Ferrum sulphuricum is Sulphate of Iron. Clarke wrote: "Ferrum sulphuricum has the leading features of the other Ferrums, but many of the Sulphur characters appear, in the modalities especially".

There is an aggravation from warmth or warm room (toothache); amelioration from cold air or from ice (toothache) or from fresh air. It is like Sulphur also in acidity and eructations of food in particles. Other noteworthy symptoms are: passive haemorrhages, pain in gall-bladder, pallor or flushing, sensation as if all the blood were rushing into head and face, sensation of fermentation or purring in stomach, feeling of general heat and disposition to sweat, with sensation in skin of back as if he wore a stout woollen shirt, muscular pains or contractions, local atony; disposition to congestions; nettlerash; aphthae; eczema, with sluggish liver.

Studying this remedy in the "Guiding symptoms of our materia medica" of Constantine Hering we can find a lot of addictions to the repertory:

Vertigo - Diarrhea - with Head - Heaviness - Forehead - Upper part Head - Pain - Forehead, in - pulsating - accompanied by - ringing in ears and sensation as if all the blood were rushing into head and face Head - Pain - burning - accompanied by - thirst Head - Pain - pressing Head - Pain - pulsating Mouth - Pain - sore - Palate - Soft palate Teeth - Pain - tearing Teeth - Pain - tearing - cold - air - ameliorates Teeth - Pain - tearing - cold - ice; application of ice upon cheek, ameliorates Throat - Taste - salt of Throat - Taste - salt of - smarting in throat, with Generals - Food and Drinks - meat - aversion

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