

Glonoine

The explosive remedy is profiled by *Keith Souter*

Glonoine is a valuable homeopathic remedy that I would always include in my homeopathic travelling kit or medicine cabinet. It has multiple areas where it is of benefit, but interestingly, it is not as well known as one would expect it to be. I rather suspect it is because people are wary of it, since it is prepared from the explosive nitroglycerine.

Bias is an interesting phenomenon in homeopathy, both for self-prescribers and professional homeopaths alike. Although we may try to be objective in our remedy selection, it can be very difficult not to make a favoured remedy fit the case. At the same time there is often a tendency to ignore or avoid particular remedies, perhaps because they are too obvious, or because they might reflect an aspect of someone's character that may seem pejorative or unpleasant. Nitric acid is one of the remedies that is often neglected for this reason, as I have mentioned in an earlier article.

Glonoine is an under-used medicine which is often written off as merely a sunstroke remedy. In fact, like the nitroglycerine from which it originates, it is a remedy of great power.

An explosive history

Nitroglycerine was discovered in 1847 at the University of Turin by the professor of chemistry, Ascanio Sobrero. The problem was that as a liquid it was highly volatile, unstable and liable to explode. Indeed, in one of his early experiments Sobrero was badly scarred when a preparation exploded in his face. Apparently he agonised over his discovery and kept it secret for a year. When he did make it known he initially called it "pyroglycerine" and actually counselled against producing it, because he considered it to be far too dangerous to be of any practical use.

He was later quoted as saying, "When I think of all the victims killed during nitroglycerine explosions, and

the terrible havoc that has been wreaked, which in all probability will continue to occur in the future, I am almost ashamed to admit to be its discoverer."

In 1862 the Nobel family began experimenting with nitroglycerine. A year later Alfred Nobel, who had worked in the same laboratory as Ascanio Sobrero, patented a process for "Nobel's Blasting Oil", which became available as an industrial explosive. Sadly, in 1864 Nobel's younger brother Emil was killed in an accident during the preparation of some of the explosive.

Four years later Alfred Nobel managed to make the explosive mixture easier to handle by the addition of kieselguhr (a siliceous deposit, also known as diatomaceous earth). He called the mixture "dynamite". From this he made a fabulous fortune, a vast amount of which he left to establish the Nobel Prize.

Nitroglycerine and allopathic medicine

Glyceryl trinitrate was one of the very first drugs that I was taught about at medical school. For generations it has been the mainstay in the management of angina pectoris. This is a condition of tight chest pain associated with underlying myocardial ischaemia, first described by Dr William Heberden in 1768.

The use of nitrates was first advocated by Sir Lauder Brunton in 1867, when he prescribed amyl nitrate to angina sufferers, on the basis that this would dilate the coronary arteries. When glyceryl trinitrate could be made into tablet form in 1879, it revolutionised the treatment of this condition. Nowadays, virtually every family doctor will have either glyceryl trinitrate tablets or spray in their medical bag for emergency use. It is also an extremely useful preparation to use topically in cases of anal fissure, which is an extremely painful condition.

This drug produces a dramatic effect

in angina and relieves severe chest pain in seconds. It does so by virtue of the fact that the nitroglycerine is converted by the body into nitric oxide, through a mechanism that has yet to be fully elucidated. Nitric oxide is a significant natural vasodilator, which means that it widens blood vessels. Thus it eases angina by dilating the coronary arteries, speeding the heart and lowering blood pressure. Unfortunately, it can often produce as side-effects a throbbing headache, flushing and faintness. The side-effects also come about from this vasodilation.

Glonoine

Constantine Hering, one of the great early homeopathic physicians proved nitroglycerine in 1848 and gave it the name of Glonoine, from its chemical formula (Gl O NO_5), thereby denoting its composition. From then its value became established in congestive headaches, the menopause, angina and in many conditions that seem to start suddenly and explosively, especially when the circulation is involved.

Dr Ernest Farrington, an associate of Constantine Hering said that the whole symptomatology of Glonoine could be expressed in one phrase: "a tendency to sudden and violent irregularities of the circulation".

A complex mixture

Glonoine has many features that overlap other remedy profiles. This is worth considering a little further because I think this can give us some insight into the remedy, which will be illuminating when we go on to consider a few cases.

Nitroglycerine is made by mixing sulphuric and nitric acids and glycerine. This has, of course, to be done with phenomenal care, since the reaction is unstable and potentially explosive. The actual chemical reaction results in the nitration of the glycerine, without the sulphuric acid being incorporated in the



product. Sulphuric acid is regenerated in the process, so it is purely a catalyst.

In terms of the homeopathic remedy Glonoine, however, there are similarities between it and both Sulphuric and Nitric acid. All acid remedies have tiredness or some sort of fatigue within their profile, meaning that they are often indicated in fatigue states. Glonoine often seems to come into its own when people complain of great fatigue during and after they have had one of their flushes, headaches or episodes of angina. It is as if there is a time of settling down needed, like the

aftermath of an explosion.

There is also often speed involved when these remedies are indicated. Sulphuric acid is often needed for people who are in a hurry and want everyone around them to hurry up. Nitric acid may help those who are really anxious about their health and who want something doing straight away. Glonoine patients may have both features and when they develop symptoms they come in great surges, as if a fluid is flowing fast into a closed container and the pressure builds up swiftly.

Finally, the essence of the remedy Glonoine seems to be its potential power. By this I mean that there is a sense of the pre-explosion. The sudden build up of pressure, the surging force, the sense that something explosive could happen or that something bad is imminent. The actual explosion may not take place, but the fear is there and it dominates.

So with this in mind, let us look at a few cases which illustrate some of the indicative features of this great remedy.

Mad dogs and Englishmen

Gerald was retired and admitted to me that he had a big problem. He simply would not learn the lesson that life repeatedly taught him. He loved his garden and he loved working in it in the sun. Although he had little hair left, he disliked wearing a hat. He was aware that working out of doors in the sun gave him headaches, yet he had come to accept them as part of his life, even though bad episodes would put him to bed. During these episodes he would be unable to think clearly and he certainly would not feel able to do anything that involved writing or concentrating.

He had, of course, been treated over many years for migraine and had eventually seen a neurologist. It was only when he had retired that he really felt he would like to be rid of the headaches. When I asked him to describe them he told me that they always came on suddenly, even if he had already been out in the sun for an hour or two. He emphasised that they did not come on slowly and gradually build up, but came suddenly, with a pounding sensation that corresponded with his pulse. Sometimes it felt as if blood had suddenly surged into his head and he felt as if it could burst. He reported that you could actually see the pulsation of his neck arteries. When these severe episodes occurred he had to go indoors and seek the solace of a darkened room.

Interestingly, he could not lie flat when he had a headache. Even if he had just recovered from one, if he then lay flat it would recur. He had found that he had to lie well propped up. This is characteristic of Glonoine.

Gerald still likes the sun and still works in it, but at least he can control his headaches instantly with a dose of Glonoine in 30c potency. He no longer has to lie in darkened rooms.

Sally was another sun-worshipper who was frustrated by her tendency to suffer from sunstroke. She was in her early twenties when I first saw her.

A holiday with her boyfriend in Greece had been blighted by admission to hospital with full blown sunstroke. After only a few hours on the beach she had developed a sudden throbbing headache, went clammy and started vomiting profusely. At first, food poisoning had been suspected and she spent a couple of days in hospital having a battery of investigations.

From that point on, she became a sun-reactor, unable to bear the direct sun. The headaches and the sudden nausea were particular trials for her, neither of which responded to prescribed medication. When afflicted with one of these episodes her eyes would go blood-shot and her face would become flushed.

When I took her case one particular symptom stood out. She told me that one of the things she found helped was to bend her head backwards to stretch her neck. I find that this is a characteristic Glonoine feature. And once again, Glonoine 30c has helped her markedly.

It is not just the sun that can cause a problem. Some people experience headaches while working under lamps, in greenhouses or anywhere near heat so that they feel that their head is being over-heated. If they get the surging headache, that feels as if it could burst, then Glonoine may help.

Menstrual and menopausal problems

Gill was another headache sufferer. Her headaches often came on pre-menstrually. These she could deal with. On occasions when her periods were late (she had an irregular cycle) the headaches became debilitating. On several occasions she had lost time from work because of them. The description of the headaches corresponded to the Glonoine profile and the remedy transformed her life.

This is another characteristic indicator for Glonoine, a headache that comes instead of the period.

Carol reached the menopause in her late forties and began to experience menopausal flushes. Hormone Replacement Therapy was contraindicated on medical grounds and she had found no benefit from taking over the counter herbal preparations.

Her description of a flush was of a sudden upflow of heat from the middle of her abdomen to the top of her head. It felt like a surge of heat and an accompanying sensation that blood was being suddenly pumped into her head. Regular Glonoine has controlled her flushes.



Loose collars only

I saw Jim many years ago when he was a schoolboy. It was in the days when a tie was an integral part of a school uniform and having it tied loosely was considered a punishable sin. Poor Jim was forever in trouble for loosening his tie and unbuttoning his collar. He was subject to headaches and retching. When he felt bad, he just could not abide the feel of his tie being too tight and he would retch unless he could relieve the pressure.

We call this symptom tumefaction. It is a sensation of bloating about the neck which produces a choking feeling if there is tightness from clothing. The remedy Lachesis has this feature, which most people are aware of. Glonoine also has it, and if other indicative features are present, it can work wonders. It did for Jim.

Why can't I remember?

Brenda was an excitable, but sprightly 70 year-old lady, who started to react to all sorts of foods and odours. As part of her reaction she experienced sudden headaches, dizziness and on several occasions became confused. She even forgot how to find her way home from the local shop. Inevitably she began to worry that she was starting to manifest Alzheimer's disease.

This feature of being confused in places which are well known to one is

another feature that is recognised in the Glonoine picture. Fortunately, it worked well for Brenda.

Angina and palpitations

Anginal pain should be treated with conventional medicine, in my opinion. Yet there is a role for Glonoine if the symptom pattern matches Glonoine's profile. The chest pain, which comes on suddenly, is in this case usually described as being hot, with a congested sensation in the chest and an awareness of the heart pulsating quickly. The carotid pulsation in the neck is usually visible.

A few modalities

In remedy selection the modalities, those factors which aggravate or alleviate a condition or symptom, are often of great value.

Aggravation in the sun or over-heating of the head are very marked. Stooping, being in motion, being jarred or lying flat will all tend to worsen symptoms. Wine, stimulants and peaches also seem to aggravate.

Interestingly, having a haircut may actually seem to bring a condition on.

Headaches may be eased partially by holding the head in the hands. If forced to bed then the head always has to be uncovered. Paradoxically, a nap will often worsen a symptom, but a good long sleep will alleviate it.



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