

Richard Moskowitz

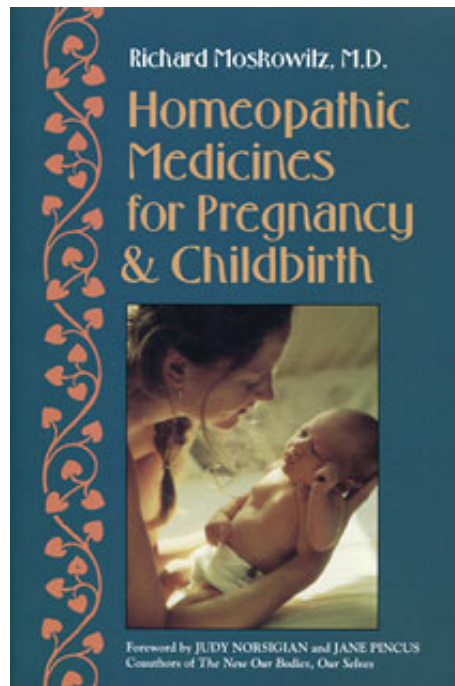
Homeopathic Medicines for Pregnancy & Childbirth

Leseprobe

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CHAPTER 4

Two Female Remedies

Widely useful in the complaints of pregnancy and childbirth and of the female reproductive organs in general, PULSATILLA and SEPIA are remedies of universal scope that may be indicated for almost any condition and are often given to men and children as well. Also regarded as "female" because of traditional gender stereotypes, both remedies will need frequent re-evaluation as contemporary psychosexual attitudes continue to evolve.

PULSATILLA

Tincture prepared from the entire fresh and still-flowering plant, *Pulsatillanigricans*, N. O. Ranunculaceae, the meadow anemone or European windflower.

1. *Easy Changeability*

So named because it sways gracefully in the wind, the windflower corresponds to physical, mental, and emotional symptoms that are excessively changeable and adaptable to any persistent internal or external force. Whatever the symptom, PULSATILLA may be suspected by an almost too-accommodating quality, a tendency to be swayed by the prevailing winds of the moment, whatever their source.

2. Emotional *Sincerity*

This amenable *or* agreeable quality is often immediately apparent in the emotional life. Typically affectionate and eager to please, PULSATILLA patients are also easy to like and openly delighted when their good feelings are reciprocated. Unpleasant or painful emotions are no less readily accessible, just as freely expressed, and just as quickly forgotten. Equally capable of bursting into tears from an unkind word and of taking comfort from the warmth of a friend, such a patient could also fight with courage and tenacity if her loved ones were attacked or threatened.

In general, the emotions of PULSATILLA tend to be appropriate to the situation, or at least to approximate what most people would naturally feel under the circumstances. Thus on a happy occasion the PULSATILLA patient might well respond gaily with laughter or tears of joy, while in a moment of sadness the tears would come easily and straight from the heart. Even when frank and open expression of them would be unwise, the true feelings can usually be sensed through the disguise: the outward appearance and behavior faithfully reflect the inner reality.

Indeed, their emotions may be so close to the surface that many patients wish they were better able to control them. Especially during pregnancy or before the menstrual period, PULSATILLA women complain a lot of being "too emotional," too readily unbalanced by their emotions and too vulnerable to stress-related illnesses as a result. This surplus of free emotional energy can make them feel powerless to resist manipulation by others, or uncentered and irresolute in the face of conflicting pressures and desires

Case 4.1. In the fifth month of her first pregnancy a 23-year-old woman developed a bland, odorless discharge and complained that her vulva and vagina were uncomfortably sore and irritated from sexual activity. Despite having known her lover for only a few months when she became pregnant, she felt sexually alive for the first time and desired physical closeness and affection more than ever before. Far more troubling to her than

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the soreness were the out-of-body experiences and fantasies of depersonalization that she had always had at the moment of sexual union. Even at the pinnacle of her happiness, she felt tormented by feelings of helplessness, confusion, awe, and exaltation in the midst of primal forces that she could not understand or control and that readily brought tears to her eyes whenever she spoke of them. Her vaginitis cleared up rapidly after a few doses of PULSATILLA 200, and her fantasies gradually faded and occasioned less guilt as the pregnancy continued. She gave birth normally five months later.

With a built-in tendency to follow the path of least resistance, this emotionally mutable style can also take the form of a flighty instability, a tendency to be carried away by any forceful emotion. PULSATILLA is one of the great remedies for ailments that originate from any emotional stress or upset or from simple emotional *excitement*, such as palpitations from falling in love or insomnia after a heavy date, a birthday party, or a stimulating conversation.

3. Heat, Cold, and Circulatory Instability

Easy changeability in response to internal and external forces is equally characteristic of the physical symptoms. Thus PULSATILLA patients tend to feel overheated and "stuffy" in a warm room or in the absence of fresh air; yet they may also be sensitive to the cold, and prone to cold injury (chilblains or frostbite) or vasospasm (Raynaud's syndrome). PULSATILLA feet may be too cold to get into bed without woolen socks, then too hot to remain covered at all, and fidget all night looking for a compromise.

The remedy's affinity for the small arterioles, venules, and capillaries is illustrated by the phenomenon of "mottling" in the skin, areas of increased and decreased capillary circulation co-existing side by side and blending into each other. The confluent rash of fully developed measles is another example. Even commoner are simple flushes of heat (e.g., blushing, "hot flashes") or sudden chills in the body or some part of it. Whether overheated or chilly,

PULSATILLA patients tend to be intolerant of warm rooms, to bundle up when cold, and to seek relief in the open air for almost any symptom or complaint.

Case 4.2. Seven months pregnant with her first child, a woman of 29 developed a number of complaints in the heat of the summer. Unusually sweaty and "sticky" all over and listless to the point of inaction on the worst days, she found relief only in a daily swim and frequent cold showers. Other problems included stiffness and soreness in her left hip and sacroiliac at work and in bed at night, obliging her to move or fidget around for relief, and persistent heartburn, especially in the evening after a full meal. Rarely thirsty but somewhat better if she reminded herself to drink, she also noticed herself bursting into tears at the least provocation and wanting more display of affection from her husband than ever before. PULSATILLA 30 was quickly effective in this typical situation, and she sailed through the rest of her pregnancy and gave birth at home with no complications.

4. *Restlessness*

Another aspect of the volatile PULSATILLA style is an inability to sit or lie still or a habit of continually moving about, sewing, puttering, or doing chores simply to "keep busy." Indeed, whatever their symptoms, PULSATILLA patients tend to be relieved by gentle movement or exercise such as taking a stroll or simply changing position from time to time. Even its numerous arthritic and rheumatic pains, headaches, cramps, and the like often change location or "wander" from place to place rather than being reliably confined to the same area or part.

5. *Catarrhal Inflammation*

PULSATILLA commonly produces and cures inflammation of the mucous membranes of the eyes, ears, nasopharynx, and respiratory and genitourinary tracts, often with easy and plentiful mucous discharges. These are typically rather thick and yellowish, such

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as would be seen in a "ripe" cold or a full-blown case of the measles, for which PULSATILLA is very nearly specific. When indicated, it is an excellent remedy for simple colds, URI's, ear infections, and conjunctivitis in babies, children, and adults of both sexes. When the symptoms agree, it is splendid for acute and chronic cystitis and vaginitis as well.

Case 4.3. A six-month-old girl had had a cold for almost a week, with a fever of 104°E, restlessness, and a slight yellow discharge from the right ear. Yet in the midst of her illness she played contentedly, was easily comforted by her mother when in distress, and rewarded me with a big smile when I looked at her. PULSATILLA 30 worked like magic in this typical case.

6. Indigestion

The digestion and bowels are easily disordered and prone to symptoms of every description, from nausea, heartburn, indigestion, and gas to abdominal pain, hemorrhoids, constipation, or diarrhea. With a definite preference for small meals and a marked intolerance of overeating, PULSATILLA patients are especially sensitive to rich or heavy foods (meat, fat, gravies, sauces, desserts) but may react badly to milk, bread, fruit, onions, or raw vegetables as well. Frequently thirstless, even with fever, they tend to do better when reminded or encouraged to drink plenty of fluids.

Case 4.4. When her first child died of a cerebral hemorrhage in the first hours of life, a 28-year-old woman became pregnant again within a few months and again developed severe heartburn in her second trimester, especially after a full meal. Tolerably well as long as she was doing something, she noticed that her acidity returned in full force whenever she tried to rest or sleep. As always, she cried easily at the slightest disagreement and had to keep the window open to air out the room and reduce the swelling of her feet. With a number of classic indications for the remedy, she responded beautifully to a few doses of PULSATILLA

200 and completed the pregnancy with no further difficulties, giving birth to a healthy baby this time.

7. Genital, Reproductive, and Hormonal Imbalance

With a special affinity for the genitals and the sexual and reproductive life of both sexes, PULSATILLA is one of the principal remedies for acute and chronic prostatitis, epididymitis, orchitis, and inflammations of the male genitalia in general.

In the female, PULSATILLA affects both the internal and external genitalia (vulva, vagina, uterus, tubes, ovaries, breasts) and the hormonal regulation of the reproductive system as a whole. In veterinary practice it often helps to regulate the estrus or mating cycle if abnormal in either direction. Its affinity for the microcirculation and for changeable emotional states suggests a similar locus of action in humans. When the symptoms agree, PULSATILLA may be useful in almost any disorder of menstruation, menopause, fertility, pregnancy, labor, and nursing.

Case 4.5. After a successful pregnancy five years earlier, a woman of 27 needed help with irregular menses. Never regular and sometimes absent for months at a time, her cycles had averaged from 35 to 50 days since the birth, with only two in the past eight months despite breast tenderness each month as her time drew near. Also unusually prone to tears, she shed them in profusion while speaking of her hopes for more children. Her only other complaints were mild indigestion from overeating and a series of colds and earaches in bad weather. She had a normal period two weeks after a dose of PULSATILLA 10M and continued to menstruate normally until I lost contact with her a year later

With typical versatility, PULSATILLA symptoms include everything from scanty or missed periods to excessive bleeding, dysmenorrhea, and premenstrual syndrome. Used to dry up the milk when a baby dies or is given up for adoption, it can also help restore the milk when suppressed or deficient following a breast infection. It has saved many pregnancies threatened by first-trimester

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bleeding, and can also facilitate miscarriage in cases of blighted ovum. Because they can act in either direction, depending on the unique sensitivity of the patient, homeopathic remedies often help a troubled organism clarify which way it is actually going.

With all of its symptoms tending to be at their worst before the period and during pregnancy, PULSATILLA is invaluable in treating a wide variety of complaints at every stage of women's reproductive life. It is one of the truly great and indispensable remedies in homeopathy.

8. *Therapeutics*

When its characteristic indications are present, PULSATILLA is a sovereign remedy for virtually every common complaint of pregnancy. It is excellent for nausea and vomiting, for example, especially when brought on by overeating or rich foods and relieved in the open air.

Case 4.6. Eight weeks pregnant with her third child, a 25-year-old woman was severely nauseated and had to force herself to eat. Especially intolerant of raw vegetables, which would rarely stay down, she felt worse after eating more than a small amount and improved in the cool of the evening. PULSATILLA 30 twice a day was truly miraculous for her: her nausea was gone within a week, her energy revived, and she had no further difficulties.

With the usual indications PULSATILLA is also frequently useful for miscellaneous complaints later in pregnancy, including varicose veins, vaginitis, bleeding, indigestion, and emotional problems, to name only a few.

Case 4.7. In the sixth month of her first pregnancy a 20-year-old woman came to see me for anxiety, shortness of breath, and a tight feeling in her chest that was most intense in the evening and often interfered with sleep. Currently single and living with her parents, who were very supportive, she still received nuisance calls from the

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baby's father, imploring her to take him back even though he had left and proved otherwise unreliable. In addition to feeling "silly" and crying for no reason, she kept her windows open all winter, and often had indigestion from overeating or after fried or greasy foods. PULSATILLA 30 was quickly helpful, and by her next visit she was feeling fine. At about 35 weeks she developed a bad head cold and sinusitis with thick drainage that often awakened her in the night to breathe cold fresh air for relief. Once again PULSATILLA 30 saw good service, and she gave birth normally a month later.

When indicated, PULSATILLA is a superb remedy for difficult labor, and without characteristic symptoms to suggest otherwise it is commonly used for incomplete miscarriage or retained placenta with continuing pain and bleeding. In such cases PULSATILLA 30 may be given up to every 15 to 30 minutes as needed.

Almost always prescribed on the basis of the overall symptom-picture, PULSATILLA has such a wide therapeutic range that detailed consideration of its use in particular conditions is best deferred until the following section. At this point I will limit myself to three special applications that the remedy fits closely enough to be tried almost routinely if there are no other symptoms to go on.

First, PULSATILLA will often help to bring on the period when it is late as a result of simple emotional excitement or the fear of being pregnant. A simple regimen such as PULSATILLA 30 four times daily for three days would also support the pregnancy in the event that fertilization has occurred.

Second, it has a well-deserved reputation for turning babies in breech or transverse presentations during pregnancy. If the patient feels well and gives no indications for other remedies, PULSATILLA 30 may be given three times daily for three days, followed by PULSATILLA 200 one week later if necessary.

Case 4.8. A woman of 32 was enjoying a healthy, uncomplicated first pregnancy. At 34 weeks a routine prenatal exam showed the fetus in a breech presentation, which was confirmed by ultra-sound.

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Two weeks later, still breech and still completely free of symptoms, she tried PULSATILLA 6 three times daily for four days and experienced tumultuous fetal movements, but the baby did not turn. The following week, PULSATILLA 30 was given on the same schedule with the same result. At 39 weeks, after a round of PULSATILLA 200, she reported no movement at all but awoke on the fourth day with the clear sense that the baby had turned. Less than a week later she gave birth in the normal head-down position with absolutely no trouble.

In such cases the remedy should not be given until 35 or 36 weeks, when the baby would be less likely to turn back again and would probably be viable if the remedy did work. On the other hand, it is much less likely to succeed if given after the presenting part becomes engaged and fixed in the pelvis.

Under these circumstances, PULSATILLA given routinely in the absence of specific indications has been effective around 30 to 40% of the time, and in such cases the labor has generally been smooth and easy and tends to follow within a week or two. Although I am much less sure of this, I also have the sense that babies who remain breech after PULSATILLA or the indicated remedy are somewhat more likely to deliver successfully in that position if allowed to do so.

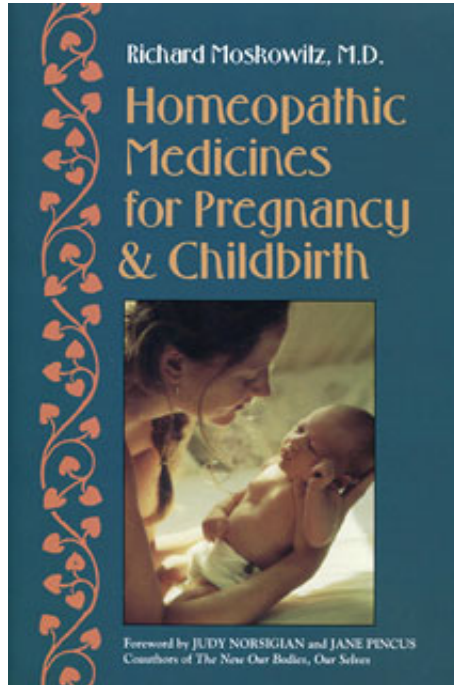
Finally, PULSATILLA is the first remedy to consider to help dry up the milk and prevent breast engorgement after the birth if the patient is not going to nurse or is unable to continue nursing. It should also come to mind when the milk supply wanes after a breast infection. Given four times daily for up to a week, PULSATILLA 30 or 200 will perform very reliably in either circumstance.

Case 4.9. A 24-year-old woman in her first pregnancy went into labor and gave birth normally, but the baby developed congestive heart failure and died at three hours of life. With the help of PULSATILLA 200 three times daily for four days, her breasts dried up shortly with very little swelling or discomfort. A year later she

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became pregnant again and had a healthy daughter at home without any complications.

SULPHUR is complementary to PULSATILLA, i.e., closely related and harmonious when given before or after it and therefore often used to complete or extend its action.



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