

Carbo vegetabilis boils over

Case of a five-year old girl

by Lesley Murray BSC RSHom



Lesley graduated from the College of Homeopathy in 1986 and has been in part time practice in Kent for over 20 years. She took time out from homeopathy in the late 1980s to raise twin boys and then completed the Dynamis course in 1996.

After completing the Dynamis course Lesley became interested in the works of Sankaran and Jan Scholten and uses some of their methodology in the case described. What appeared to be a classic *Stramonium* case turned out to be a *Carbo vegetabilis* case on further investigation.

First consultation: 14 November 2006

Presenting complaint

Mary, aged five, middle of three children, presents with dramatic temper tantrums which have resulted in stress for the family and significant management problems at home and at school.

She refuses to go to school and fights, screams, clings to her mother and is generally impossible to control. When Mrs J finally does manage to get her into the classroom, her behaviour can deteriorate even further. There are repeated episodes of screaming, rudeness and disrespect towards her teachers, refusal to attend assembly, clinging to the fence and general disruptive behaviour within the classroom.

There have been three violent episodes at school where she has kicked and punched at whoever is in her way. The tempers are becoming increasingly violent and she appears to be caught up in a frenzy of her own, her eyes glaze and she bites and attacks 'like a wild animal'.

Mary has always been a strong-willed, energetic girl, very loving and hyperactive, especially after teatime; she loves dancing and running around with the dog. She suffers from headaches which are

understandably aggravated during the outbursts. She is an imaginative child who loves drawing rainbows and plays well on her own. Friendships can be very difficult in view of her temper outbursts and tendency when friends come round to play to tie them up to a chair in her bedroom and keep them prisoner! She is violent and uncooperative with her siblings. Mrs J tells me that she is very concerned that Mary will be excluded from school.

So, quite a colourful character with lots of energy and spark!

I asked Mary what was making her behave in this way: 'I love mum so very, very much and don't want to leave her.' She was unable to articulate more than that but what seemed significant to me was that she was well behaved, played well and exhibited no disruptive behaviour during the one-hour consultation. I sensed that whatever was making her behave so violently was operating at a deeply unconscious level within her psyche.

Medical history

Mary was born six weeks early by emergency Caesarean section. She weighed 5lbs and initially slept a lot. Mary fed well and received all the usual vaccinations. She is a warm child. Between the ages

of six and eight months she developed dramatic symptoms of arrested breathing and fainting episodes. Her mother thinks the original cause of the arrested breathing was triggered by injury but over the years these episodes have become closely linked to the temper tantrums. Her family manage these episodes now by laying her flat and keeping her as calm as possible.

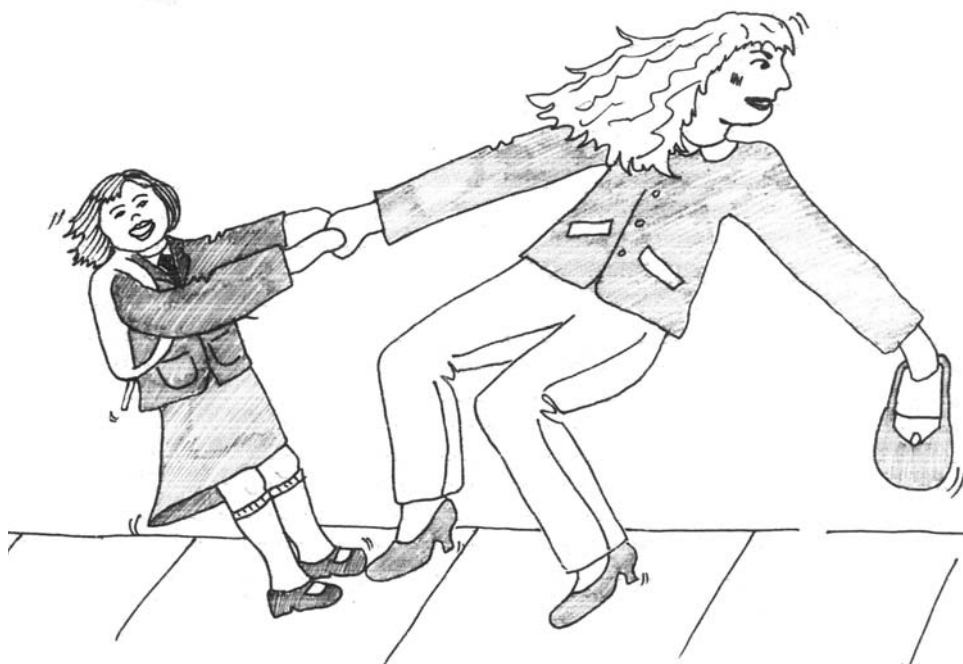
Analysis

This initially appeared to me to be a classic *Stramonium* case with the episodes of violent behaviour, history of constricted breathing, panics, rages and striking-out behaviour. Screaming, biting and fury are keynote symptoms of *Stramonium*.

The main sensation in the Solanaceae plant family is violence, injury, shock, fear and fright. All are significant factors in Mary's case and I decided early on in the case-taking that I really could not avoid giving her *Stramonium*. The above noted keynote symptoms, the rages, excitement, terror, clinging to mother, combined with the intensity of the experiences and her medical history of shock, injury and restricted breathing led me to prescribe *Stramonium* 200 repeated daily for one week.

Telephone consultation: 21 November 2006

There has been a big improvement in Mary's behaviour. She is calmer and happier in herself and there have been no screaming episodes. I advised reducing the *Stramonium* with a view to stopping in a week's time.



Mary refused to go to school.

Telephone consultation: 28 November 2006

Mary's behaviour deteriorated as soon as she stopped taking the *Stramonium*. Her screaming has returned and with it the old fears, violence and clinging behaviour. It was interesting that there had been such a rapid initial improvement and equally rapid deterioration as soon as the remedy was stopped. I decided that my analysis of the whole picture had been too superficial. *Stramonium* was not holding the case and further investigation was needed. I decided to explore Sankaran's method in an attempt to increase my understanding of what was happening.

Analysis

Sankaran tells us in *The Sensation in Homeopathy* that the central disturbance comes first: there can be no affection of the parts without the affection of the whole. There can be no pathology without the central disturbance. Mary's vital force had been affected at a very early stage developmentally. Although the *Stramonium* had seemed to cover the mental and general symptoms in this case, it had clearly not covered the central disturbance or basic expression of the disease. Perhaps a mineral remedy was required in view of the developmental element involved.

In Sankaran's exploration of the kingdoms he describes the mineral kingdom patient as experiencing something that is missing or lost from within themselves. There was a very strong element of feelings of abandonment here and Mary's extreme reaction to the loss of the mother and the security that she represented led me to look at level two in the periodic table. Looking at all the elements contained within level two I decided that carbon was worth further investigation. The key words that apply to row two are 'separation', 'motherly attention', and 'feeling alone and

Some lesser-known *Carbo veg* rubrics from Agrawal's *Materia Medica of the Human Mind*

Single symptoms (unique to *Carbo veg*)

Anger in the forenoon
Anxiety in the afternoon 4-6pm
Restlessness in company
Violence in the forenoon

Common symptoms (shared with other remedies)

Affectionate
Anger, irascibility, violent
Biting
Concentration difficult
Delusions deserted, forsaken
Forsaken feeling in the morning
Shrieking
Striking

helpless'. That seemed to match Mary's experience and her fears about leaving her mother behind. As for the carbon atom, it has a unique ability to bond with other elements to form chains or rings. This property of carbon accounts for the large number of organic compounds. Edward Whitmont in his book *Psyche and Substance* describes the carbons as the main building stones of organic matter. All organic chemistry is based and structured around that one element.

I was drawn to a remedy that had such an ability to bond as I sensed that comparisons could be made between Mary and the immensely strong link she had with her mother. As for which form of carbon to prescribe I decided that *Carbo vegetabilis* with its keynote symptom of breathing difficulties in babies best fitted Mary's case.

Carbo veg is a remedy I would not normally have thought of prescribing for Mary, who is a vivacious, lively little girl. Its picture is very much one of prostration, decay and debility – the opposite of Mary's lively, vibrant nature. However, the significant developmental case history of her episodes of fainting and arrested breathing are very much part of the *Carbo veg* materia medica. As a baby Mary had times when she appeared to be almost lifeless and her recurring faints whenever injury occurs are still very much a part of her life.

On 1 December 2006 I prescribed *Carbo veg* 30.

12 December 2006: telephone call from Mrs J

A few days after the *Carbo veg* Mary developed a high temperature and cough which lasted for four days. Mary is now much improved, able to go into school with her friend P, even willing to have school lunches. There have been no more screaming episodes. She is happy to get herself ready in the mornings and there are no more battles with her mother. Her sleep is calmer and there are no more nightmares.

January 2007: letter from Mrs J

Our Christmas and New Year with Mary was a joy. She is like a changed child. Her schoolwork has improved a great deal. Her teacher says she is like a different child, she goes into >

school perfectly, no crying, fighting, screaming – it's lovely... Mary has got a sense of humour which I have never seen before. She has started horse riding and is really loving it and she has also had friends back for tea and hasn't held them hostage in her bedroom!! So many people have noticed how much happier Mary is.

There has been no need for a further appointment. I contacted Mrs J in November to obtain her permission to write up the case. Apart from one repetition of *Carbo veg* this summer Mary has remained very well. Her mother describes her as 'a much nicer, calmer person'. She is making good progress at school and her school reports have been 'fantastic'. When she does have the occasional shouting episode:

...her apologies are meaningful and her mood soon changes back into the pleasant happy little girl that we know. Mary has been spotted for her gymnastic ability... She loves the hour there on her own without any murmur of 'leaving me'.

The family are delighted with her continued improvement and believe that homeopathy has enabled Mary

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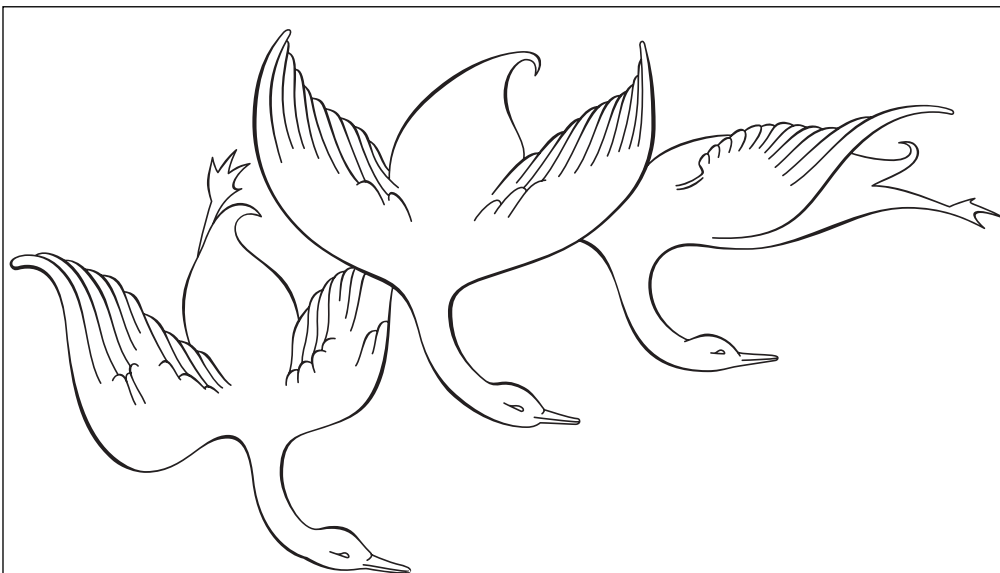
to make 'massive steps' during the past year. Mrs J concluded her recent e-mail to me by saying '... we would like to thank you and your profession for making all our lives better in an amazing way'.

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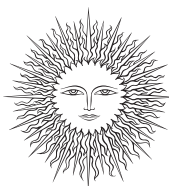
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