

**Homeopathic Healthcare**  
George Guess, MD

**The Treatment of Hives**

Homeopathic medicine can act very rapidly to terminate a case of acute hives; furthermore, constitutional homeopathic treatment can very frequently cure cases of chronic recurring hives. Any new case of recurrent hives lasting longer than about six weeks should be evaluated medically for hidden diseases that can predispose one to hives. Hidden allergies to a number of substances may be the cause of the hives; common offenders can include, among others: saccharin, BHA, BHT, sulfites, food colorings, menthol, medications (penicillin, aspirin, sulfa drugs, etc.), fluoride products, iodine preparations. Alcohol, sweets and caffeine may also aggravate hives and are best avoided.

Herbal stinging nettle capsules or tea (6 capsules per day) and vitamin C (about 3-5 grams per day) may be useful. For some, a teaspoon of baking soda dissolved in a glass of water can be helpful for acute hives. As topical treatment, cornstarch or colloidal oatmeal added to a tepid bath can alleviate itching.

**Homeopathic Remedies**

**Apis** (honey bee): This remedy is far and away the most commonly effective for generalized hives. The skin lesions (hives) are swollen, red, hot, and either itchy or burning/stinging. The condition is aggravated by warmth — becoming overheated, hot baths, warm rooms; and ameliorated by cold or cold applications. Hives due to bee stings are an indication for Apis. At times there is associated swelling of the lips and face, about the eyes, resembling an anaphylactic reaction (a medical emergency, though one may find that the allergic reaction subsides under the influence of Apis before medical help can be obtained).

**Urtica urens** (stinging nettle): Violent itching with a strong desire to rub the hives, stinging and burning are typical of the Urtica urens case. The hives are white or pale raised wheals with a surrounding red area. Heat aggravates. Swelling is not prominent in Urtica urens as it is in Apis. Chronic Urtica urens cases may also suffer from rheumatism.

**Rhus toxicodendron** (poison ivy): Very large, red, hive-like patches with itching and prickling and great restlessness. The hives are worse from cold and getting wet; scalding hot water provides some relief. Rhus-tox also may be helpful for hives associated with chills and fever, and joint stiffness. Chronic Rhus-tox cases are also often associated with rheumatic/arthritis complaints or recurrent fevers.

**Natrum muriaticum** (sodium chloride): Homeopathic salt is more often a remedy for chronic hives associated with emotional stress and/or grief. Overheating (from exertion, the heat of the sun, etc.) aggravates, as can being at the seashore and the menstrual period.

**Chloralum** (chloral hydrate): The combination of hives and marked insomnia suggest Chloralum.

**Arsenicum album** (arsenic oxide): Burning hives with chills, worse at night and from cold air; better from warmth. Nausea or diarrhea may be associated.

**Astacus** (crawfish): This is the first remedy to consider for hives from shellfish.

**Belladonna** (deadly nightshade): Violent, sudden outbreaks of red, hot, painful hives.

**Dosage:** Try one dose of 30C potency of the indicated remedy every 4-6 hours until improvement begins; then decrease frequency, taking the remedy only as needed for a relapse of symptoms.

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