

Abdominal bloating

Date of first consultation: 28th November 2006

Patient - 51 year old male presenting with chronic abdominal bloating

Occupation: clerical work

Married with 4 grown children. Wife is a nurse.

Presenting complaint: severe abdominal bloating and discomfort which has gradually worsened in the last 7 years. It initially began as reflux and he had a burnt oesophagus. Beer aggravates so he has stopped drinking it.

Bread causes cramping, bloating and gurgling in the bowel. About 15 minutes later he will have diarrhoea. Pain, cramping and bloating feels worse on the left side.

<fatty foods – he has noticed that fatty foods cause faeces to float.

Family history of bowel cancer, polyps and diverticulitis.

Bloating started 7 years ago and before that he used to get eczema in the elbows, neck and behind the knees.

7 years ago he had a boss at work who was always harassing people, he abused the patient's work colleagues, setting them up against each other, was dishonest. He felt disappointed about the way the boss treated people so he stood up to him which caused a lot of emotional stress. Felt boss was a traitor who stabbed people in the back, he didn't like the boss' body language. The stress affected his sleep. Patient is now the equal opportunity officer at work - likes to stand up for people's rights, doesn't like to see people treated unfairly.

Childhood memories and mental overview:

He didn't know that he couldn't see properly when he started school. Was supposed to be blind by age of 16 – caused by too much oxygen at birth which damaged the retinas. Age 12 he had many eye operations. Age 14 was sent off to the blind institute but he decided that he didn't want to go there and so he found a job as a carpet layer which he did for a few years but then had to leave because he couldn't drive.

When sent to blind institute he felt out of place in the blind community, he felt normal and didn't want to be blind. He wanted to get out into the world and make a life for himself. He felt he was a hindrance to the family and felt his mother didn't want him to make it in the world. Mother always played favourites – his brother was the favourite. Now she tries to play favourites with the grandchildren and so he doesn't have much contact with her.

His coping mechanism was to just take the pain but determined not to let her actions affect his own family and children. Doesn't like to see or hear others put down. Doesn't like inequality.

When under stress he needs to get away but most of the time he likes to have company, often inviting friends around for a dance, or a BBQ. He built a dance floor into his pergola and is planning a cocktail party next year, just for the fun of it. Plans to retire at 60 and would like to ride a pushbike back from Warrnambool (3hours car drive) along the Great Ocean Road. When his wife retires he would like to travel on cruise ships together.

He loves life now. Loves to keep fit and feels much better for physical exercise. Rides his pushbike to get around as he is unable to get a licence due to his visual impairment.

Top to Toe:

Head: Used to get migraines as a child

Eyes: Retinal bleeds started 5 years ago. Blind in left eye. Has detached retina – found out at age 12. Glaucoma – pressure has been up to 27mmhg. Currently 15-16 mmhg. Had cataracts removed in 1982. Now has tunnel vision. Has frequent retinal bleeds which he can see as dots before his eyes, it goes into a haze and causes shimmering vision. Worse when he is tired.

Used to have Tomoxil which caused rashes, reflux and also Raynaud's syndrome which was worse on the left side. Started new eye drops a few weeks ago.

Nose: sinus approximately 10 years ago when he had asthma

Throat: tonsils removed at age 5

Food: chilli and curry aggravate

Likes cheese and biscuits, pizza, steak, prefers salt to sweet. Prefers chips to chocolate

Cholesterol is 5.8

Likes fruit but not many vegetables

Not very thirsty

Abdomen: tends towards diarrhoea, can be explosive

Bladder: if full it causes abdominal pain

Rectum: haemorrhoids which hurt after a bowel motion

Skin: small amount of eczema, tinea on bottom of foot, used to get heat rash

Sleep – OK – no major dreams

Thermals: prefers warm weather, dislike wind and humidity.

Comments:

Cheerful disposition, wears very thick glasses. Loves to dance and entertain. Always busy doing something, like fixing or building things around the house. Has never used any alternative therapies before so was quite sceptical about homoeopathy. Besides the visual impairment and gastric bloating he is otherwise quite healthy and fit. His build is lean except for the continual "pot belly" caused by the bloating.

Rubrics Chosen

(Taken from Complete Repertory 4.5, using Macrep)

MIND; COMPANY; desire for (104)

MIND; INJUSTICE, cannot support (22)

MIND; ESCAPE, attempts to (76)

GENERALITIES; SIDE; left (243)

GENERALITIES; FOOD and drinks; bread; agg. (46)

GENERALITIES; FOOD and drinks; beer; agg. (50)

VISION; LOSS of vision, blindness (236)

FACIAL ANALYSIS

Yellow (psora) 8	Red (sycosis) 1	Blue (syphilis) 8
lines between eyebrows lips hairline forehead nose eyelids ears forehead lines	mouth	asymmetry – eyes, nose, asymmetry - mouth, chin hairline bridge forehead eyes teeth lines in cheeks

This man has equal dominance of two primary miasms – yellow (psora) and blue (syphilis) so she needs a green remedy (tubercular miasm)

Remedies that repertorised

Nux, Sep, Sulph, Verat, Ign, Lyc, Phos, Puls

Remedy and Dose

The only green (tubercular remedy in this group is Phosphorus. On checking the rubric EYE; DETACHMENT; retina, of (13) Phos was also in this rubric. A 30C potency to be taken once a day for 2 weeks was prescribed, with instructions to decrease the frequency of the dose with improvement.

Follow up

Follow up was on 12th December 2006, two weeks after first consultation.

Patient reported that he had only had stomach cramps once in the two weeks and that was after eating half a donut. He also had some bloating after eating pizza one week ago.

The “windy” pain has gone.

His wife and people at work have commented that he looks like he has lost weight. His bloating was visibly decreased and he looked slim. He admitted to not believing that homoeopathy could have helped him but now he had experienced the evidence for himself and felt sure that it was the remedy which had made the difference.

He commented that his glaucoma pressure reading had also dropped but was not willing to attribute that to homoeopathy. He had changed his eye drops about one month ago and

the pressure had been reducing from 27 to 17 mmHg. The day after the first dose of the remedy the pressure reading was down to 12 mmHg. He was still experiencing some retinal bleeds.

His eczema had also improved and his tinea has gone. He was using an anti-fungal cream but had been using this before the remedy without the same results.

I advised him to gradually reduce the frequency of the dose. If symptoms returned he was to contact me again.

Follow up

Three weeks after the first consultation the patient reported no return of bloating and that he had stopped taking the remedy. As he had only come to me for help with this problem I was unable to confirm the long term outcome with his glaucoma.

Follow up over two years

I have seen this patient on an informal basis regularly since treating him. His abdominal bloating symptoms have never deteriorated back to the level they were when he first came to see me. He will occasionally get a little bloating if he drinks beer or has too many starchy foods but overall he has maintained a healthy state. There has been no return of a "bloated belly".

Case taken by Anne Speirs

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