



## Homeopathy in Labour and Childbirth

**H**omeopathy, in common with other complementary therapies, can have an extremely practical and positive role to play in childbirth and delivery, as well as providing essential support in speeding up recovery after the birth. During each stage of labour a homeopathic remedy can be used to reduce feelings of anxiety and panic, give a boost to flagging energy levels and take the edge of the pain so it is far more manageable.

Although some midwifery courses offer introductory sessions in the use of alternative and complementary medicines, it can still be difficult to obtain the services of a midwife who is fully qualified in homeopathy. You can use a childbirth kit designed to give you a range of some of the most commonly used remedies in labour, and the post-natal period.

If your partner is happy to select the appropriate remedy for labour it would be useful for both of you to attend one of the classes I run for labour and childbirth on the 2nd Saturday in the month from 10 am to 12 noon.

The following list includes the most commonly indicated remedies used in labour and the postnatal period.

### ACONITE

Used for threatened miscarriages or premature labour after severe frights/violent experiences such as car accidents. Feeling distressed, anxious, and fearful before or during labour. May predict their own or baby's death.

Restless, tossing in agony. Skin dry, red, and hot. May scream out; have glassy staring eyes; dilated pupils. Symptoms have sudden onset. **LABOUR TOO QUICK.** Pains extreme, violent, terrifying, mother feels panicky, distressed, despairing. Heartbeat rapid or uncomfortably strong. Newborns in shock, colour normal but not crying or moving. Patient feels worse at night, (especially around midnight), worse for touch and noise.

### ARNICA

N°1 trauma remedy. Encourages healing, controls bleeding, reduces swelling and likelihood of pus formation. Nearly all women benefit from Arnica during and after labour. Reduces exhaustion, gives

'second wind' particularly during long, slow, painful labours, where tiredness makes contractions weak and ineffectual – in this case give *caulophyllum* as well. Give routinely after birth to reduce the effects of bruising and speed up recovery and alleviate battered and bruised feeling. Use for shock, when someone claims to be all right but clearly isn't. Reduces excessive bleeding where birth was traumatic, very long or very short. Patient feels worse for being touched or examined, any jarring movement, lying or sitting on injured parts (bed feels too hard).

### BELLADONNA

Breasts engorged, hard, hot, inflamed with sudden onset. Painful, red streaks that radiate out from the nipple in a segment. Pains are throbbing. This is the sudden mastitis with full breasts and a baby that does not yet feed efficiently. Treat this kind of mastitis quickly and within hours there will be relief, converting all those to homeopathy forever. (*Bryonia* is also dramatic in its cure despite its sudden onset.)

### BELLIS PERENNIS

Before birth remedy for sciatica, insomnia when patient wakes in the early hours and can't return to sleep. Reduces pain of over-stretched uterine ligaments, injury to deep tissues after Caesarean section or forceps delivery.

### BRYONIA

N°1 remedy for engorgement of breasts and mastitis. Breasts hard and hot. To differentiate between Bell and Bry, breast is pale with Bry and red with Bell. Restlessness and worse any movement, even the bed being knocked. With mastitis there will be raised temperature and low spirits. This is not in the Helios childbirth kit but is in the Ainsworth mother and baby kit.

### CALENDULA

Remedy to speed up the healing process of cuts, wounds, lacerations. Use as a healing balm for the perineum, after birth to treat episiotomy wounds, take internally if pus is present. Use in tincture form with *Hypericum*, called *Hypercal*, can be purchased from Boots in cream form or *Helios* in Tincture form.



### **CARBO VEG**

This remedy has saved many lives. Symptoms at their most extreme are complete state of collapse due to oxygen starvation, body cold, limp, pale or blue. Use in conjunction with other efforts to revive respiration. Hold one pill inside lower lip. In fetal distress give remedy to the mother, then make sure she is not dehydrated. Extreme sluggishness during or after birth especially if mother has lost a lot of blood. Intense air hunger, face pale and sallow. Very good remedy for pain after caesarean due to trapped wind.

### **CAULOPHYLLUM**

Used to establish strong productive contractions in first stage, do not use routinely. If needed the contractions will be centered in the lower half of the uterus, whilst top half feels flabby. Contractions are short, spasmodic, unstable, moving around the bladder, groin, thighs. Sometimes they will stop or slow down. Cervix fails to dilate. Maybe thirsty during contractions, if thirstless and Caulophyllum fails, try Gelsemium.

### **CHAMOMILLA**

Extreme over-sensitivity and violent bad temper. May demand help one moment and refuse it the next. Abusive and argumentative, especially with loved ones. Finds PAINS UNBEARABLE. May scream frequently or say 'I want to die'. Feels and looks over-heated. Feels better for being uncovered. Feels worse for fresh air, company, being spoken to or stared at.

### **CIMICAFUGA**

Very similar to Caulophyllum; contractions in lower half of uterus, painful, sharp, spasmodic. Cervix fails to dilate, remains rigid. The difference is contractions move from side to side, or down into hips and thighs. Gestures, speech and actions become distorted, disjointed. Feels full of dread, fearful, maybe due to previous experience. I can't carry on.

### **GELSEMIUM**

Next best choice if caulophyllum fails. Useful if labour SLOW AND SLUGGISH. Heaviness, even eyelids droop, dazed and stupefied. Paralysed by exhaustion or stage fright, Muscular weakness leads to trembling. THIRSTLESS. Worse physical exertion, over excitement, receiving bad news. Better for being alone, urinating, sweating.

### **HYPERICUM**

Excellent first aid remedy for damage to nerve rich areas such as perineum, lower back after epidural. Pains shoot along nerves. Good post natal remedy

### **IPECAC**

Violent nausea in labour, maybe with bright red haemorrhage.

### **KALI CARB**

Back ache labours with nagging pain felt in lower back, buttocks or thighs. Irritable yet needs company. Posterior presentation.

### **KALI PHOS**

Exhaustion in labour with no other strong symptoms. Take between contractions. Use often in long tiring labours.

### **PHYTOLACCA**

Cracked nipples, blocked ducts hard and lumpy, mastitis, pain intense may radiate out from nipple especially upwards. Mother feels stiff, exhausted and worn out. This is a toxic state with smelly breath and a red tipped tongue. This may take 12 – 24 hours to be curative rather than the fast acting Belladonna.

### **PULSATILLA**

Take daily from 36 weeks to help turn a breech baby. Labour; Patient feels very clingy and weepy, 'don't leave me alone'. Contractions short, weak or stop altogether. Exhaustion, weakness, faintness, nausea, thirstless, vomiting. Worse stuffy room. Better fresh air

### **SECALE**

Use in third stage to expel placenta if not coming out and threatened with management of third stage or even theatre. Placenta stuck.

### **SEPIA**

Good post natal remedy for depression, feeling like you want to be left alone, not coping, angry or indifferent with partner and older children. Remedy for piles.

### **STAPHISAGRIA**

Good remedy to take if you have had a traumatic labour and you feel angry and violated, eg forceps and ventouse.

