

## A Proving Response in an Infant to a Prescription of *Phytolacca* for Mastitis

A lady who had been prescribed *Sepia* at the end of her pregnancy for haemorrhoids needed a repeat of the *Sepia* in the month following the birth for problems with her thyroid. She'd put on several kilos quickly and her milk supply was struggling to meet the demands of the baby.

Two months later with the baby gaining well (about 300 grams a week with 150 being the norm), she presented again at my clinic with mastitis in her left breast.

Her presenting symptoms:

- Red (almost purple) left breast
- Headache especially the left side
- Painful throat; pharynx very red
- Extreme thirst but seemingly not able to hydrate; and, even though urinating frequently, the urine is quite dark
- A feeling of "exhaustion" in the muscles [Gen: weakness]
- Chills ++ "shivers to the bone" alternating with fever
- Eructations; acrid (unusual) ++
- Strong axillary odour. She's just returned to yoga which she enjoys ( exercise >)
- Breath has a putrid odour
- Middle left finger has a red, swollen joint

Rx: *Phytolacca* 200C tds 3 days with succussions

I find that *Phytolacca* is the most commonly chosen medicine for mastitis in women immediately following confinement and this is largely due to lymphatic congestion which may occur in some women when the milk comes in. So the rubric [mastitis; confinement, after] is a bit of a stretch to be used on this occasion as this prescription was made 12 weeks into the lactation.

However, with her having just returned to vigorous exercise and the situation of apparent high uric acid in the urine despite a high water intake, suggests lymphatic congestion so the prescription fits with this causation.

She came back to the clinic two days later to report that the mastitis settled within 24 hours. However she also reported that the following day her baby's urine output had significantly decreased and he had red crystals in his urine with a distinct red stain on his nappy.

He was also “constipated” which was unusual as he normally had at least 2 dirty nappies daily. To go for a day with no stool and seeming discomfort was not his usual pattern.

For the past two nights he’s been unsettled and wanting lots of breastfeeds (2 hourly!). He sounds hoarse and is making a coughing action as if to clear his throat. Also, on the night that his mother began the *Phytolacca*, he threw up his last breastfeed of the day. He never vomits.

With the baby demonstrating such a proving response, I decided to support him by giving his mother *Phytolacca* LM 0/2 to have morning and night for 3 days and gave him three nightly doses of Gaertner Bach 30C.

Within 24 hours the red stain became fainter in the baby’s nappies and he began to sleep better. Urine and stool output were back to normal within three days with no more problems.