

## LATRODECTUS MACTANS "The black widow spider" - A pediatric case. - Dr Patricia Le Roux (January 1999)

I have started taking an interest in this spider after hearing J. Shore speaking in Paris where he gave his very interesting views of the different animal, mineral and vegetable kingdoms.

I join attached to this article a brief synthesis of his ideas (table joined), as it appears to me to be truly artistic approach to the patient.

Being in one of my second lives an artist, I find it very interesting to approach the patient artistically, finding in this way the spirit of his disease and the spirit of his remedy.

This is how I would like to present Latrodectus along with one of my clinical pediatric cases.

Coming back to artistic prescription, I would like to quote the French Dr Demangeat and Kent himself; they both talk about artistic and mechanical prescriptions. They both insist on pointing out that if a prescription remains too mechanical (over using, or staying dependant on the repertory for example), the doctor **cannot** approach the patient as a whole. If he uses his intuition and feelings to understand the meaning of the patient's disease, then his prescription will really be artistic and have results: he will then be practising the "Art of healing"....

So let us come to my subject in this way, and first study a clinical case in my personal practice (with little follow-up but it has given me the opportunity to study the remedy), then give a short review of the materia medica, followed by my personal artistic synthesis of Latrodectus Mactans.

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### 1°) CLINICAL CASE

This patient is a child, brought in by his mother in the autumn of 1998.

He is one of my patients who is really badly **affected** by disease. He is 3 years old. He suffers from a neurological disease (severe epilepsy), treated by neuro-pediatricians in our sick children **teaching** hospital in Marseille (CHU).

His symptoms started when he was 9 months old, with sleeping problems. (Complete, Sleep restless) very quickly diagnosed as convulsions during sleep.

This epilepsy is treated at present with three heavy anti-epileptic drugs: Tegretol, Sabryl, Rivotril..

This child presents important developmental trouble, hardly speaks (Complete, Mind speech hesitating), and a very agitated attitude.

In a few minutes he **tips** upside down, everything that can be moved in my office. He never stops moving... it is exhausting and to add to it all the mother puts in front of me a huge medical dossier.

It is the first time I am seeing this child and I have little time to spare as we are in a very **busy** epidemic season. I feel that if I open this dossier I will be there for the rest of the day. I put it gently aside and try to start with the best of my artistic potential!

The first thing that strikes me is that this child is an "animal"; the way he behaves, he moves (see table).

I start examining him; just to try and keep him still a few moments. He then does what quite a lot of children do me and **is** often a sign of an animal: he pulls violently on the stethoscope, virtually tearing my ears **off**...

The mother immediately says to me: "Sorry Doctor but he loves strings, tubes and pipes..."

It is then obvious to me: this child is a spider.

I then ask about his attitude to music. Not much to say, but she say's he has a passion for birds. She also has a problem with birds. She is phobic about them, and she says she has dreamed of birds a lot while she was pregnant. She wanted to be a pilot as a youngster and had to forget about it, as her eye sight was really bad. This was said to her shortly before the pregnancy (" dreams of flying").

The next thing he does is a sign of Latrodectus and its odd web. He takes hold of the box of paper clips on my desk and starts sliding them into each other. They are now securely fixed **so** that I can take them around and not **lose** any of them. ( I have kept the lot and shown it to a few groups all ready...).

The rest of the consultation is then very calm, as he fixes them all one after the other. ( Complete, Improved sitting down quietly).

The mother then tells me that the heavy **drug** treatment is not well tolerated, that he has really put on weight. She would like to stop some of the drugs and come out of this hell they are both in.

After confirming by repertorisation, I prescribe "LATRODECTUS MACTANS, 9CH, 12CH, 15CH, 30CH and isotherapy of the three remedies he takes.

She phones me 10 days later saying that convulsions have reappeared. I explain to her that it is a homeopathic aggravation, that it shouldn't last and is good sign, and tell her to stop isotherapy and phone me if things get worse . She phones a month later saying that the child is amazingly better and that the neurologists are thinking of stopping one of the drugs.

I am regularly in touch with the neuro-pediatricians. They are slowly decreasing the drugs.

He his actually only on one drug, Sabryl, and his EEG during his sleep **is** slowly coming back to normal. He has had since the first time I saw him 2 **more** doses of LATRODECTUS, one in 1000K, then in 10000K...He is much calmer and can concentrate longer.

Follow up to come....

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## 2°) Materia medica, Vermeulen and Boericke

**Characteristics:** the bite produces tetanic effects that last several days. A typical picture of angina pectoris is presented by the action of the drug. The precordial region seems to be the centre of attack. Constriction of chest muscles, and radiation to shoulders and back. Lowered coagulability; blood becomes thin, watery. Tetanic effects lasting for several days. Restless, cardiac pain, and prostrated. Pain brought on by slight exertion.

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**Mind:** Anxiety, screams fearfully with pain; exclaiming that she should lose her breath and die.

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**Head:** Occipital pain.

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**Stomach:** Nausea followed by pain in the abdomen. Vomiting of black vomit. Transfixation of pain or sinking at epigastrium.

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**Rectum:** Stool, copious and black.

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**Respiratory:** extreme apnoea. Gasping respiration. Fears loosing breath.

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**Chest:** Cramping pain from chest to abdomen. Hard aching pain in axilla.

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**Heart:** Violent precordial pain drawing towards axilla and down to forearm to fingers. Numbness of the extremities, violent cardiac pains, drawing to shoulders or both arms. Pulse feeble and rapid. Sinking sensation.

**Back:** pain in the neck and back of head.

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<b>Extremities:</b>	pain in left arm, feels paralysed. Weakness of legs followed by cramps in the abdominal muscles. Parasthesia of lower limbs.
<b>Sleep:</b>	dreams of flying.
<b>Skin:</b>	coldness of whole surface. Skin cold as marble.
<b>Modalities:</b>	Worse: least motion, even on hands. Exertion. Talking. Better: sitting quietly.

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### 3°) Synthesis and personal interpretation:

I will briefly recall the habits of this North American spider.

The female can be recognised because of its very black velvet colour and the red mark on its back. This red patch has a shape and size that depends of the age of the spider. The female bite only, is toxic for man, and the female spends her time in her web. The male wanders around looking for females. This spider spins a very untidy and odd looking web. It is not a nice looking web and it is very resistant. The spider spends her time waiting for her victim to come so she can inject it with tetanic poison.

These spiders don't like getting near man and bite when they have to defend themselves. They seem to be more and more found in houses where as they used to prefer garages, or dumps. This of course frightens a lot the North American population.

So now let us try and understand with *Latrodectus mactans*, the symbolism of the spider, who dreams of flying and inversely what he does to his victims: a tetanic wound that goes straight to the heart...

#### The spider:

- In most legends the spider symbolises power: this leads to the notion of creation, world organiser; "the spider spins the web of the world and controls the future".
- In other legends we find the spider a symbol of drop out, of people who try to equate themselves with divinity.
- In the centre of her web, the spider is also significant of introversion, narcissism, absorption of the person from the centre.

If we use the psychoanalytic approach to study the spider, we can also give her a maternal function. This maternal function can be devouring and even cannibalistic (it has been proved by biologists that *Latrodectus Mactans* is a cannibal, especially whilst mating)

This is really the symbol of deep femininity, which men are often very frightened of. The spider then appears like a fatal woman that empties the male of his forces and threatens him with destruction.

#### The dream of flying:

It is a desire to get closer to the sky and divinity. There has always been a desire for mankind to go towards superior forces.

Man has always dreamed of flying and acceding to the highest level of his creativity by going always further into space.

The aim of those artists and others seeking themselves is the research of the absolute.

## Convulsions and precordialgic pains:

These are two vital symptoms of *Latrodectus Mactans*.

The bite affects the heart and the brain and destroys them; this is an effective way to make others capitulate!

Let us now try to interpret the remedy by applying it to my clinical case and artistically understand the situation.

It seems obvious at first sight that my patient was "animal", then very quickly spider. But there are lots of different types of spider in the *Materia Medica*.

Of course it is the repertory that has helped me to confirm his remedy. But what was more interesting was to understand the meaning of this child's symptoms. This is why it seems important to consider the affective background of my patient.

It is obvious that there was a fusional relation between mother and child. The mother had suffered from a really deep frustration just before the pregnancy. In this way it seems to me that this little boy could not leap from his sycotis stage to his luetic stage.

Shortly I will quote Didier Grandgeorge who compares homeopathic miasms, to the different Freudian stages (Psora to the oral stage, Sycosis to the anal stage, and Luesia to the phallic stage). I must say, having worked in this way with Didier, and as a pediatrician, it is **extremely useful** to use this comparison to understand the homeopathic miasms and disease in children.

Coming back to my case, here is the key to the problem: the spider is stuck in her sycosis. She spins her web to control around her, her affective relationships.

She has a real desire to go towards the other. She is stuck in her web, and the only way she has to approach the other is to catch him in her web, to eat him and destroy him.

Still she dreams of flying...

For *Latrodectus Mactans* to fly is to accede to freedom, to others and then to divinity. Her freedom is her healing. She will not have to stay hours in her web waiting for the other to kill him. She will then accede to a superior artistic state, by joining higher sights, instead of hiding in her murderous web in garages and dumps...

My little patient is like this spider. He has spun himself into his state of epilepsy. He does it regularly, with ropes, tubes and even paper clips. He is tied up in his sycosis.

His mother has gone through a period of great frustration just before the pregnancy and has projected on him her desire to fly.

Because of this impossible vocation of his mother and the necessity for the child to break away from maternal fusional love, *Latrodectus Mactans* is going to help him to accede to altruistic love, leaving his web, to go towards the sky and realise his artistic personality and his liberation and of course his healing.

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## Conclusion

We can conclude this way for *Latrodectus Mactans*:

*The Latrodectus patient cannot leave his interior cannibal femininity. He prefers to control and conserve everything (this is masculine side) by staying in his web.*

*He can become paralysed, numb, he stops breathing and his heart stops beating with tetanic effects.*

*When he takes the remedy, the patient will then still want to fly and to rise above the world to enable him to accept with confidence his internal femininity, not like an enemy capable of eating and killing but like a friend who will help him to reveal his creativity by linking up naturally with his masculine side and so help him then to come out of his web...*

*To be followed up artistically .....*

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