

## **THE CHRONIC MIASMS – OUR INHERITED PRE-DISPOSITION TO DISEASE**

**What lies at the root of the multitude of chronic debilitating diseases that have plagued humanity in the past and continue to remain unresolved and "incurable" today?**

A quick flipping through the pages of textbook on Medical Pathology would leave us disconcerted at the repetition of the phrase, "cause unknown," with respect to all modern pathologies. How, then, are we to find the cures of our maladies if we are in the dark about their cause?

Unable to find constructive solutions to this fundamental problem, contemporary medicine has had to restrict its scope to the palliation and suppression of symptoms in a desperate attempt to delude the patient that s/he has been cured, while at the same time keeping at bay the nagging suspicion that something was not quite right when the seemingly "cured" patients returned again and again with more symptoms, usually of a different nature, and with a visibly worsened state of overall health.

We all are familiar with the fact that one is prone to contract the diseases that run in the family. If our parents and grandparents were prone to circulatory problems and heart disease, we accept the possibility that this may well be a problem area for ourselves. And it is not about having a bad gene and being doomed to get a certain disease, but rather the fact that we were born with, say, a weakness in the lungs, making us prone to bronchitis, wheezing and asthma or allergies, when we have a history of tuberculosis in the family background. We call this a susceptibility or pre-disposition to disease that is not a guarantee, but is certainly a potential.

This inherited predisposition to disease is due to our miasmatic load, the disease(s) passed on to us from previous generations. It lies latent within us all and slowly grows throughout our lifetime, manifesting in specific symptoms or disease conditions sooner or later in life, depending on several factors. These include general constitutional strength, lifestyle and mental/emotional stability, the amount and acuteness of shocks and traumas of our system.

### **Miasms – what are they and how did they come about?**

"Miasma" is a Greek word. It means stain, pollution, defilement. It was the word loosely used in Dr. Hahnemann's time to express the morbid emanations from putrescent organic matter, animal or vegetable, and sometimes the effluvia arising from the bodies of those affected by certain diseases, some of which were regarded as infectious and others not.

When they first manifested, miasms were infectious diseases that quickly spread and were easily passed on from one generation to another, repeatedly, over time. It is characteristic for all of them to have a characteristic skin eruption whose natural purpose is to keep the disease on the surface, thus protecting the vital organs. The attempted cures at that time were mostly directed at removing the skin condition, the only visible symptom of what otherwise was an invisible internal mistunement of the whole organism.

This suppression of the miasmatic skin condition drove the disease inward in search of other areas where it could grow and evolve. Over time this affected the functions of the more vital organs, creating deeper and more serious damage, while the initial disease was left to grow and flourish, taking over more and more of the body and mind.

These suppressed diseases then were passed on from one generation to another, yet no longer in their original infectious form, but in a hidden, latent form – yet still a very real disease. Every new generation was born with flaws and weaknesses in certain areas arising out of that initial miasmatic disease, but no longer attributed to that cause. They were considered individual diseases, and treated accordingly through suppression, again not resolving the initial problem and allowing the miasm to continue growing and to be passed on to the next in line... all the way to the present.

## **Some History:**

Samuel Hahnemann (1755–1843), the father of Homeopathic Medicine and Heilkunst as we know it today, was also the first to observe that there was an underlying disease, a hidden constant disease ("arch malady") that could not be detected by the presenting symptoms of the patient. He also had been confounded by the discovery that patients who were "cured" by appropriate homeopathic treatment would return over time with other complaints and a return of their old symptoms. Where he and his students originally had been treating the chronic diseases as if they were stand-alone diseases, he discovered that they were but fragments of a deeper disease, a chronic miasm.

Hahnemann's book "Chronic Diseases" best documents the whole process of the discovery of the miasms and their significance to our health. There he explains that under the various chronic diseases existed more fundamental, primary chronic maladies of a constant nature, called chronic miasms. These could be cured in their early stage easily by a specific remedy, and if not so cured or if suppressed by allopathic treatment, they would give rise to all manner of other diseases.

In addition to the understanding of the existence of miasms, we now have knowledge of how to treat them – which remedies to give and in what order - to be most effective at permanently eradicating these inherited flaws from the person affected. We owe much to the findings and contribution of Dr. Jean Elmiger of Switzerland, who first conceived of the sequential direction of treatment of diseases, which lies at the foundation of the therapeutic approach of Heilkunst for the removal of shocks and traumas and generally for case management.

After working for years on the removal of the barriers caused by life's shocks and traumas, Dr. Elmiger noticed that the chronic condition of his patients returned under new stress. He realized that he had to correct the genetic code through the treatment of the **miasms**. What Dr. Elmiger found was that once the life traumas had been removed, all his patients first exhibited symptoms of psora, even if signs of other miasms were also there. On giving each patient Psorinum, he noticed that the next miasm to emerge was invariably the same. From this he discovered what he calls the Law of Succession of Forces at the genetic level. The order he discerned is: Psora, Tuberculosis, Syphilis, Cancer and Sycosis.

## **Now that we know we have them...what are we to do?**

Nature has all of the solutions to its own riddles. Much as the miasms came from nature to create disease in man, so we have been led to find the treatment to best deal with this problem. Based on Hahnemann's brilliant discovery of miasms and how they affect us, and adding the experience of Jean Elmiger and the remedies used to treat the miasms and when to apply them for best results, the treatment of miasms – or inherited predispositions – is now part of the entire Heilkunst medical system. It is actually a central part, the ultimate goal we seek to reach after the removal of life traumas acquired after birth and related to our experiences in our lives.

Once the life traumas are cleared through appropriate remedies, we are then prepared to tackle the inherited predispositions and through a sequence of remedies given at very specific intervals in specific potencies, which will start the process of removal of the miasms. As with any disease, there can be levels of depth at which it has impacted us, so that one round of treatment may not be sufficient to remove a miasm in its entirety, especially if it is very strong in the family and lies very deep within us. For that reason, more than one round of treatment of the miasms can, and usually is, done in order to cancel out the disease at deeper levels of our system.

Many of the symptoms or conditions that we may have had for years can then finally be released, as they had ultimately been rooted in the miasms. Hence, the removal of the root cause can release the symptoms attached to it as well.

## **THE 5 MIASMS**

*The five known miasms are : Psora, Tuberculosis, Sycosis, Cancer, Syphilis. The sequence in which they appear is based on observation and their natural order. Miasms are chronic diseases on which all other chronic conditions are based and we treat them in the above sequence with appropriate remedies.*

### **Seasons and miasms:**

*Apart of being part of our genetic make-up, miasms have an affinity for specific times of the year when their influence can be felt most. They seem to follow the seasons and to give each season a particular feeling/flavor of its own that reflects the main themes of the miasm. They are best treated with remedies within their own season.*

**Psora** manifests in the fall, with the first chill of autumn, the gray skies and general contractive air, the sense of sadness for a receding sun and the need to hoard for the winter. We all slow down in the fall and we experience a characteristic tiredness and lack of stamina.

**Tuberculosis** comes with the first month of winter – sometime in late November-early December and is characterized by tension and irritability in the air, a charge that is never quite brought to the explosive state so keeps creating “friction” and keeps us on edge. Witness the frenzy of Christmas, with all the expectations and plans for change – New Year’s resolutions, plans for vacations to warmer climates etc. Tuberculinum has a great urge for change – nothing seems to be good enough, our goal eluding us every time we reach to grasp. Also, many of the chest colds and coughs begin at this time of year.

### **Sycosis**

*With the coming of spring, sycosis sets in – an awakening and flowing of juices, a budding and blooming of early flowers. This is a time for growth, expansion, coming to life again. The tension of Tuberculosis can now finally release its charge – oftentimes with a great bang and splash. Emotionally we experience a wide variety of strong emotions from anger and explosive reactions, to drama and vehemence, to suspiciousness and jealousy and a sense of being followed. Our appetites are big – for food, excitement, action.*

### **Cancer**

*One of the most emotional and deeply suppressed states, this lyric time between spring and early summer again finds us moving inward – a time for introspection and tentativeness and insecurity, a time of reviewing family and emotional ties and relationships. We are sensitive and touchy and prone to deep reevaluation.*

### **Syphilis**

*The most destructive of all miasms cancer closes the circle, its season is the peak and end of summer. It is the end stage of a gradual process of growth and deterioration, we are at the stage of decay and decomposition. Fruit has ripened and now rots, flowers are past their bloom, the late summer of a tropical jungle with its humidity and hot darkness under the canopy of trees above. When syphilis season is at its highest we notice the “creeps” coming out, nasty people seem to be everywhere with their odd and invasive behavior. It is a time of aggression and evil, in its most extreme manifestations.*

## **THE CHRONIC MIASMS - A QUICK OVERVIEW**

*For a fuller appreciation of the influence of miasms on the type of diseases we tend to succumb to and how this tendency can be seen running through the family, we offer a brief description of the 5 known miasms, the diseases which started them, their characteristic manifestation both in the realm of the physical and the mental/emotional.*

### **Psora**

***Lack of. Suppression. Itch. Poverty consciousness. Anxiety. Pessimism.***

Hahnemann called the first chronic miasm Psora, from the Hebrew word *tsorat*, which has a multitude of meanings, but in this context the sense of "fault, groove, pollution, stigma." It often was applied to leprous manifestations and the great biblical plagues.

Hahnemann was able to trace this disease far back into history, seeing its origins in an itch disease, manifesting itself in a skin lesion that was relatively minor, but itchy, particularly if scratched.

Psora is mainly a disease of deficiency at all levels – deficiency of knowledge, thought, assimilation of ideas and nutrition. There are a host of conditions identified by the prefix "hypo" (hypotension, hypochondriasis, hypotrophy). It causes little or no structural change, but much disturbance of functions, feelings and sensations.

**How it shows up in families:**

Abscess. Acne. Allergy. Anxiety. Aphthae. Asthma. Boil. Bronchitis. Colds. Connective tissue disease. Depression. Dermatitis. Eczema. Headache. Insomnia. Otitis media. Pharyngitis. Phobic disorders. Psoriasis. Scabies. Sciatica. Skin ulcers. Upper respiratory infection.

A characteristic poor defense mechanism is also reflected in a great tendency for acute illness –to catch every cold and to be slow to recover. In all texts we also find described the tendency to be dirty and offensive, but in today's society with the ease of showers, topical steroids, and other advances, this description is less often accurate. The essence of psora is poverty. There is a California term which describes the personality quite well: "Poverty consciousness". The patient seems to expect poverty and disappointment or is unable to think in more expansive terms. He accepts a limited job and humble living conditions. There is fear and anxiety concerning the health, prosperity and the future in general. This leads to a marked depression and a despairing outlook. Eventually suicidal feelings and thoughts predominate. The main remedy for psora is Psorinum.

**Tuberculosis**

*The grass is greener...Tension. Restless. Malicious. Constant change. Respiratory problems. Romantic longing.*

Tuberculosis as a miasm has its roots in the disease of the same name and has an affinity for the lungs. Although not its only sphere of action (skin eczema and bone pain being also common), bronchial illness is its main focus. Its natural place is between psora and syphilis and it carries some traits of both miasms. Some of its restless searching for something better – a better place, property, person and its propensity for boredom are close to the contractive and deficient psora. The cold maliciousness, bone pains, ulcerations and compulsive behaviors bring it close to syphilis.

**How it shows up in families:**

Adenopathy. Alcoholism. Allergy. Alopecia. Amenorrhea. Arthritis. Asthma. Astigmatism. Autism. Behavior disorder. Bronchitis. Bruxism. Colds. Compulsive disorder. Connective Tissue disease. Croup. Enuresis. Flushes. Headache. Hodgkin's disease. Hyperactivity. Lymphoma. Malignancy. Meningitis. Menopause. Mental retardation. Osteomyelitis. Pneumonia. Respiratory infection. Rheumatoid arthritis. Scoliosis. Sexual disorders. Systemic or discoid lupus. Tinea. Upper respiratory infection.

The Tubercular patient is known for his inner discontentment, romantic and longing nature, and constant need for change and travel. The dress and style often exhibit a romantic and poetic sensitivity. However, though the romanticism is very appealing, it leads to a sense of ennui and boredom with the mundane routine of life. The patient is unable to explain the cause of this dissatisfaction at all and may feel that it is a normal part of life. Frequent changes in the job, in relationships, in homes and the desire to travel are part of this same tendency. Another aspect of the Tubercular miasm to keep in mind is compulsive behavior and ritualism. The patient may return knocking at the office door 3 or 4 times after the interview has ended with some slight detail he wishes to impart. This reflects an inner compulsion which can also be expressed in ritualistic behavior.

In children we see simple recurring infectious illness of childhood such as otitis media and recurring bronchitis, but also more advanced pathology such as failure to thrive, developmental defects, mental retardation and attention deficit disorders and hyperactivity. The child is unable to remain long in one place, is loud and very demanding and capricious. We especially think of Tuberculinum when the parents tell us that the child is coldly and deliberately destructive and malicious. He breaks his mother's favorite vase right in front of her if contradicted. The child may have great anger, even violence and tendency to strike others. He seems completely indifferent to punishment or reprimand. This miasm is also at the root of such conditions as mental retardation and even autism. In these cases, ritualistic behavior and head-banging are common expressions of the pathology.

Especially we think of the Tubercular miasm when there are strong allergic tendencies and respiratory disorders. Recurring, even unexplained fevers, connective tissue diseases and rheumatic conditions are also among the more common disorders found in tubercular cases.

The main remedy for the removal of Tuberculosis is Tuberculinum.

## Sycosis

*“Drugs, sex and rock’n’roll”. Hyper. Excess. Growths and discharges. Inflammation. Extremes.*

This chronic miasm is identified by the characteristic small genital warts, which reminded Hahnemann of figs in their shape and texture. The Greek word for fig is *sycosis*. It originally comes from a gonorrheal infection, which had its sources in ancient times, and leads to various excesses in mind and body function. Most of the conditions with the prefix "hyper" are involved (hypertension, hyperactive), as well as inflammatory conditions (various conditions with the suffix "itis").

We can see mind and tissue excess, providing the foundation for later tissue degeneration. People who have sycosis are more susceptible to vaccine shock, to the ill-effects of any suppression of morbid discharges (nasal secretions, vaginal discharges, etc.) and to the shock of the surgical removal of various skin manifestations (warts, cysts, fibroids, moles), which can lead to the activation of any latent sycosis.

It seems to involve mainly the blood and circulatory systems, with sycotics being highly susceptible to heart attacks, blood disorders, the ill-effects of blood transfusions, arteriosclerosis, etc.

The main remedy for the removal of Sycosis is Medorrhinum.

### How it shows up in families:

Allergy. Angina. Anxiety. Arthritis. Asthma. Behavior disorder. Eczema. Herpes. Hypertension. Interstitial cystitis. Leukorrhea. Manic-depression. Migraine. Otitis. Peptic ulcer. Pulmonary fibrosis. Reiter's syndrome. Sinusitis. Urethritis. Vaginitis. Warts.

The sycotic patient can be described as an extremist. In his physical pathologies, in his mental state, in almost all aspects of his life the patient bounces between extremes. He is erratic and seems to have a compulsive need to experience more passion until he is driven to extremes of sexual conduct, drug or alcohol use, physical violence, etc. There is often a hardness apparent in the patient. He can be aggressive and violent. He seems to have little connection to those around him; not from withdrawal but from an inner hardness and self-centeredness. At other times or in other patients we see an opposite state with great sensitivity. In this type of patient, there may be introversion and shyness, even to the point of being unable to speak in the interview.

Mental processes can be both dull and too intense. A person may be forgetful of what he is about to say or loses his train of thought mid-sentence. He can be a workaholic type. At other times he feels a type of anxious, hurried feeling which not only causes the patient to rush around but also gives him a wild feeling in his head.

The child affected by this miasm often comes with behavioral problems or is found to have excessive aggression in addition to his other physical complaints. He is often pale and looks as though he is poorly nourished, often suffering with eczema, rhinitis, or asthma. He may have violent temper and often has an extremely passionate nature. Other Sycotic children are sensitive and may withdraw from the parents and family because of emotional shocks. There is often excessive attachment to animals and also cruel behavior towards animals.

## Cancer

*The life never lived...Sweet and giving. Rebellious. Sexual energy. Suppressed emotions.*

The essence of cancer is sensitivity to the world and criticism and anxiety for others and events generally. It shares some features of Sycosis when it expresses in tumors and growths, and also in the reckless hyperactivity and sexual excess. It also shares some of the traits of Syphillis when it expresses in ulcerations and wasting cancers and in its ultimate self-destructiveness, but also in the particular detachment and inner indifference to their lot in life. People with this miasm tend to suppress their negative emotions like anger, fear, aggression. They tend to exhibit a passivity and hopelessness when faced with stresses of life. Deep emotional withdrawal is covered up by a put on appearance of cheerfulness and dependability, to mask a strong inner sense of lack of worth or feelings of guilt.

Whitmont called cancer the penalty for the un-lived life.

The cancer child has usually had a grim childhood with not much love or care from the parents and that can lead to the lack of involvement and detachment from life to avoid further hurt. The sexual desire of the cancer type is high.

### **How it shows up in families:**

Abscess. Acne. Allergy. Asthma. Chronic fatigue syndrome. Colitis. Constipation. Cough. Developmental delay. Diabetes. Dysmenorrhea. Headache. Immune deficiency. Insomnia. Moles. Nevi. Ovarian cyst. Premenstrual syndrome. Rectal prolapse. Respiratory illness. Sinusitis. Tics.

The cancer miasm is usually suspected in those with a family history of cancer and diabetes.

The personality that is characteristic of this miasm is generally strong and passionate and very intense. The patient often feels a sense of being unfulfilled which drives him to work excessively, push limits, or live dangerously. There is a restlessness and a desire for travel and excitement.

The Carcinosis child is often sensitive and sympathetic and may be rather timid. He is open and easily wounded and can be suppressed. The child is tremendously sensitive to criticism and reprimand. He may dislike or feel intolerant of consolation. As the patient reaches adolescence and puberty, there may be strong sexual instincts and passions which are difficult to contain.

### **Syphilis**

*Self-destructive. Ulceration. Physical degeneration and malformation. Erosion. Obsessive-compulsive.*

Syphilis is represented by the characteristic genital ulcer (chancre) and, in general, involves ulcerative conditions. It is marked by tissue destruction and degeneration, involving various conditions marked by the prefix "dys" (such as dystrophy, dystonia). Here we see the corrosive effects of the syphilitic infection in terms of the mind (suicide, serious mental disorders, addictions) and the body (ulcers, decay, congenital defects).

### **How it shows up in families as:**

Abscess. Acne. Alcoholism. Alopecia. Aneurysm. Anxiety. Anorexia. AIDS. Bone pains. Compulsive disorder. Headache. Insomnia. Leukorrhea. Malignancy. Mouth ulcer. Multiple Sclerosis. Neuralgia. Psoriasis. Scoliosis. Skin ulcer. Astigmatism. "Growing" pains.

In the syphilitic miasm we see a destructiveness on all levels but not a violent destruction - more like an erosion. On the physical level we see erosions of the bone (i.e. the nasal bones, etc.); on the emotional level the patient may have a type of nihilism or a feeling to let everything crash down around him; and on the mental level we see a breakdown into insanity. There is a tendency for lack of strong connection with others in the syphilitic patient. Families with strong hereditary tendency to alcoholism are generally syphilitic.

On the physical level the syphilitic patient is often pale skinned and has the fine texture of skin which allows you to see into the deeper tissue of the skin. They tend to be slender and rather graceful in their movements. There are several characteristics of syphilitic health problems: 1) General aggravation at night, or from sundown to sunup. 2) Bone pains or destruction, especially bone pains at night. 3) Ulceration of the skin or mucous membranes. 4) Distortions of anatomy, often congenital (facial features, cleft palates, strabismus, etc.). 5) Neuralgia.

The mental state is characterized by fear and anxiety. The fear often concerns matters of health or disease.

Especially there is a strong fear of infectious disease or germs. Especially there is a fear of deep infections such as tuberculosis, etc.

There is also a strong tendency to check things: "Did I remember to turn off the stove?" This uncertainty will lead to compulsive neurosis. The patient may wash his hands literally a hundred times a day. Every time he touches a public doorknob, every time he handles money, every time he shakes somebody's hand, he is taken by an irresistible desire to wash.

### **Bibliography:**

*"The Dynamic Legacy" by Rudi Verspoor, available from the author*

*"Chronic Miasms" by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann (available online at [www.homeoint.org](http://www.homeoint.org))*

*"Rediscovering Real Medicine" by Dr. Jean Elmiger*

*"Desktop Guide to Keynotes and Other Symptoms" by Roger Morrison, MD*