

## CHICKENS AND CHILDREN

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### HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

With the onset of winter, we tend to close up our homes and thereby change our atmosphere from a warm and moist one to a dry and cold one. We turn on the furnace or fire up the wood stove causing the air we breathe to have more junk in it. Our tissues become dry. Add more humidity to the home and increase fluid intake. An electrostatic filter in the furnace duct system can be helpful to provide a healthier environment.

Likewise, people used to keep barns and stables too tight. Just because people feel chilly in the horse barn, does not mean that the horse is. Even if water tubs are freezing, the livestock may be perfectly comfortable when there is continuous fresh air. Protection from drafts and a dry bedding surface are more important than a warm barn. However, having said that, untimely winter births usually require heat lamps and other warming devices so that infant livestock do not develop hypothermia. The homeopathic remedy *Carbo vegetabilis* will help to warm a newborn with a low body temperature. Probiotics, hot water bottles and warm fluid therapies are supportive for youngsters born in the winter months.

In the language of 1881, the authors of Homeopathic Veterinary Practice were adamant in empirical experience that homeopathic medicines were effective means of preventing illness. They wrote, "Homeopathy alone can boast the power of averting illness, while it possesses the only direct and certain means of cure when disease has already accrued..."

Thousands of valuable animals are sacrificed every year to the ravages of contagious diseases and the owners never dream of seeking to prevent disease in sound animals, or to modify its virulence should it occur. The homeopath, however, will move in advance of scourge and the most severe of the epidemic diseases of cattle such as abortion yield with astonishing certainty to its precautionary measures. Homeopathy is destined to make a greater stride in the promotion of veterinary science than that which has already signaled its adoption in the treatment of human disease."

The scourge of flu is not a death sentence. Reports of a flu pandemic in the media tend to produce terror rather than treatment options, dread rather than directions for cure, horror rather than homeopathic choices and panic rather than preventive choices. Flu viruses can not be fought with antibiotics or aspirin. No commonly used drugs will kill viruses. When respiratory viruses travel through a herd of animals, a flock of chickens or a family each will respond according to the overall health of the immune system. The immune system is the defense. Keeping it healthy and prepared and ready for action is the goal.

How do we do this?

Feeding whole foods free of chemical preservatives will go a long way toward that goal. Just as important is education, learning to observe the difference between health and sickness in the animals under our care. A low stress environment with lots of daily exercise, fresh air, sunshine and potable water is a plus when possible.

### PREPAREDNESS

All animals and humans are challenged daily with virus exposure. It is always best to be prepared with some basic supplies:

Homeopathic medicine kit – all bottles filled and ready

Homeopathic textbooks stored with your kit - for reference.

A supply of probiotics ready and part of your daily supplement intake

Have the phone number of your holistic practitioner nearby.

### ACONITUM NAPELLUS

Almost every chapter of George McLeod's book starts with the remedy *Aconite*. It is a first line of defense medicine. The homeopathic pharmacy prepares the monk's hood plant to manufacture the remedy *Aconitum napellus*. *Aconite* lends itself for those situations of sudden shock or trauma or acute illness. At the first sign of illness, start with *Aconite*. The medicine is reasonable priced and is well worth it to alleviate the pain and discomfort of flu symptoms. *Aconite* may be administered in the water supply two or three times daily. Dissolving five pellets in a four ounce bottle of clean water followed by 100 strong succussions with the hand against a hard but elastic body (such as a leather-bound book) will be appropriate when frequent repetition of a remedy is prescribed.. When giving fresh water to the foal or dam, succuss the stock solution eight times. This is referred to as PLUSSING. From the stock solution take 15 cc and add that to the bucket.

### CHICKENS

**J. P. Purcell** in his book Poultry Sense admonishes us. "Always be on the lookout for colds and other diseases; if you find such, remove the bird from the pen and place in a hospital...we consider it of utmost importance to have a separate place some distance from the other birds in which you can place all sick fowls...Upon purchasing birds from any source, never place them among your flock until you feel sure they are free from all vermin and disease."

**OBSERVE YOUR CHICKENS.** If they huddle together in one spot, they could be cold. If they run to the water and drink frequently, their throats may be hot or raw. Each drink may be cooling or soothing inflamed tissues. Fevers may increase the thirst in sick birds. Most organic poultry farmers recognize when birds do not feel well. Early homeopathic therapy is necessary!

### PROGRESSION OF AN ILLNESS

Before clinical symptoms appear, energetic disruptions are occurring. The observant farmer and the observant holistic veterinarian sometimes will recognize disease before it becomes obvious to all. Even the untrained eye can see that an animal is unwell by the time symptoms become clinical. A child will look at the chick and say to his grandpa, "That one looks sick."

The earliest indication is one of energy disruption. That is akin to an octogenarian who used to say "I feel like I am going to take the cold." She is not yet clinically sick, yet there is a sense that her vital energy is dropping. This is the right time for *Aconitum napellus* or other acute therapy. At this stage some people increase vitamin C, or probiotics, or Echinacea.

The second stage follows closely after the first. The patient knows that he/she is becoming ill. Perhaps the symptoms are not noticed by people around but the patient is aware that they are becoming sick. The holistic physician/veterinarian will recognize it as well.

### **CHUCKERS WITH FLU LIKE FEVER**

Steven called to ask about his young chuckers (domesticated Quail). The flock had been at his place for three weeks and after the weather became cold and damp, they suddenly became ill. Steven described the symptoms:

- Clear eye discharge with sneezing
- Many have chills and fever
- Birds are anxious and huddling together
- Sudden onset with sneezing and diarrhea
- 10% have died in four days

The first prescription – *Aconitum napellus* 30C: the sickest birds being dosed directly orally and the rest via the drinking water. Chuckers drink more often than regular poultry chicks so you cannot medicate the water for more than one or two days. I often medicate the water of regular chickens for three to seven days with homeopathic medications.

I heard from Steven again two days later. Since yesterday about 1% of the young chuckers had died. The survivors were eating again and looked a bit better. Steven listed today's symptoms:

- Thirst for frequent drinks
- Most birds still have diarrhea
- Discharge from eyes and nose staining the beak
- Some birds still sneezing with acrid coryza

Second prescription – *Arsenicum album* 30C: dosed in the drinking water of all young birds for three days. Complementary therapy – Probiotic dispersible included in ration for next 30 days. Extra attention was given to controlling ventilation, fresh air, dry bedding, temperature and humidity within the henhouse.

### **FLU REMEDIES GELSEMIUM SEMPIVERA**

The patient is slow moving, dull and drowsy with a poor appetite and no thirst. He is chilly and weak with aches in his joints, back and head, as if a tight band were around it. His eyelids are heavy and he wishes to lie down. Tobacco and tobacco smoke make him worse. Being able to urinate makes him temporarily better. Give him a warm bed and lots of rest.

### **ARSENICUM ALBUM**

Chill, nausea and restlessness characterize this patient. He seeks warmth, may huddle with others and seek out a blanket. Frequent warm drinks soothe the burning pains in his throat, sinuses or intestines. Because of nausea, and offensive diarrhea, he has no interest in food. Give him WARM WEAK tea and a bed with lots of covers.

## PHOSPHORUS

A raw throat and thirst for cold drinks characterize the Phosphorus patient. Even when chilly, they may seek cool places. If too much liquid is consumed it will surely come up. Small animals lie on cold floors; large animals lie in the cool grass or stand in cold water and prefer the shade. Patients needing Phosphorus want to be with friends and fear loud noises like thunder and fireworks.

## CHILDREN

Children who have a tendency for sore throats and earaches need to avoid sugar and those products that contain high fructose corn syrup. Sugar in all forms tends to decrease the activity of phagocytes. These hungry little white blood cells love to eat up bacteria and viruses that invade our bodies. They are like little “Pac-Men”.

A sugar solution containing both WBC’s phagocytes and bacteria was prepared to determine phagocyte activity. The phagocytes, our natural internal “Pac-Men” acted like they had been drugged. They were doing nothing – showing no sign of pursuing the bacteria present. Our “WWF” guys had become wimps. Normally, the phagocytes will actually pursue and surround bacteria to destroy the invaders.

Do things that will increase WBC activity. Decrease TV time and substitute exercise instead. For those of you on farms that is not a problem but you represent a very small number. For your non-farm friends, encourage the children to get outside and play even on cold days weather permitting.

Choose drinks that are free from artificial flavors, colors and preservatives. Watch the high fructose corn syrup intake. Read labels. Avoid these kinds of additives as much as possible. Support the local producer of grass fed foods. Support the local whole foods market. The extra coins spent on quality foods will reap healthy rewards in the child’s body.

## INFLUENCING FOOD PREFERENCES

Start early in a child’s life to introduce a variety of foods. One can steam vegetables so that they are soft and easily managed. Show the child by your example that a variety of foods is beneficial. Children will go through phases. That is natural. Maintain your choice of quality whole foods and they will get the message.

It will help the future generation for pregnant mom to eat the whole foods that she wants her children to enjoy. Grazing livestock are likely to produce future grazers. Grain fed livestock will parent a generation of livestock more adapted to a high grain diet. Many sustainable farmers have learned the hard way that it takes two or more generations to convert herds of livestock from a high grain diet to a grass based system. The transition is especially difficult for the Holstein breed which has been fed high concentrates (grain and silage) for at least the last sixty years. The first generation will become quite thin when transitioned to an all forage diet. The second and third generation adapt better than the first.

### **BENEFITS OF MASSAGE**

Massage the lymph gland of the neck by gently stroking from behind the ear down to the middle of the neck. Use warm olive oil or natural massage castor oil to facilitate this therapy. The lymph system will be stimulated and the body will increase its elimination process. Similar massage techniques can be utilized in foals with lymph system congestion.

### **HANDLING AND SANITATION**

Viruses are highly contagious. Most have an incubation period of three to 14 days. Therefore, anyone attempting to control the spread of viruses will have to isolate or quarantine all new arrivals. If you want to go a step further, let friends and family and other folk who come to your farm know that for the duration of the flu season, the chicken house is off limits except to those who absolutely have to go there.

Never close buildings too tightly. Fresh air is as important as dry bedding.

Whether you are caring for kids, foals, chicks, or other young livestock, knowledge and resources are invaluable. The wise natural practitioner will act 'in advance of the scourge' preventing disease before it becomes epidemic. Homeopathic medications prescribed according to the Simillimum are useful for prevention and treatment of patients of any age.

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