

Publications

Elaine Watson, "How can homeopathy support midwifery?"
Midwifery Digest 18:2 2008

Extract:-

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has declared (2005) that homeopathy is the second- most used medical system internationally and our experience as homeopaths has highlighted its contribution in obstetrics and in particular its use alongside conventional midwifery. When the NHS was introduced in 1948 homeopathy stood alongside "conventional medicine" as a system of medicine available free to the population. Since then it has become increasingly popular especially with pregnant women and as a gentle form of medicine for babies and children.

Homeopathy can offer a valuable support system for women through the ante-natal, natal and post-natal processes where it would be considered unwise to treat with conventional pharmaceutical products. In addition homeopathy is invaluable in assisting the newborn whose birth experience may have not been "ideal". Not only does homeopathy treat acute physical problems arising in pregnancy such as morning sickness, insomnia and anaemia but also acute mental-emotional problems such as anxiety, anger or indignation. It has proved invaluable during the birth process in collaboration with midwifery and for post-natal care it is both safe and effective.

The use of homeopathic remedies in the ante-natal period

Treatment during the antenatal period can be either for acute physical disorders such as morning sickness with or without vomiting, anorexia, heartburn, lethargy, insomnia, acute pain caused by the position of the baby in the pelvic cavity or for the re-emergence of chronic physical disorders such as sinusitis, eczema or irritable bowel syndrome where the use of allopathic medication is not recommended in pregnancy. Possibly even more importantly, treatment may be given for the mental-emotional symptoms arising from a new situation such as anxiety, fear and terror. It has been said that the two greatest stresses for human beings are lack of control and lack of predictability and immediately one can see that these two situations may arise in pregnancy and birth. Recent research in psycho-neuro-immunology (PNI) demonstrates the often-detrimental ante-natal effects of cortisol (the stress hormone) on subsequent health both physical and mental-emotional. A study in Bristol (T.G. O'Connor et al. 2005) provided the first human evidence that pre-natal anxiety in the mother might have lasting effects on hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis functioning in the child and that pre-natal anxiety might constitute a mechanism for an increased vulnerability to psychopathology in children and adolescents. They proposed that cortisol may be able to cross the placenta and affect the unborn child. Empirical studies of mothers using homeopathy for stress during pregnancy suggest that remedies are very helpful in this situation with the subsequent birth of "peaceful", well-adjusted babies.

Acute physical treatment.

Pregnancy can be difficult for those women who suffer nausea, vomiting and consequent anorexia during the first trimester. Many familiar remedies such as Nux vomica, Ipecacuanha, Pulsatilla are then invaluable. Ferrum metallicum and Ferrum phosphoricum provide excellent alternatives to iron tonics and do not cause constipation. Treatment is effective for nerve pain associated with the position of the baby (Bellis perennis, Hypericum) and it may be possible to make a baby turn if it has a difficult presentation when the head engages in the pelvis (Pulsatilla). In total there are 18 remedies in a “specifics” birth kit (Helios Homeopathics) and these have been selected to treat most of the common acute symptoms arising during the ante-natal period and birth process. Many midwives may have been trained in the use of the homeopathic remedies in a birth kit.