

Arnica In Your Medicine Cabinet

Homeopathy should have a place in every medicine cabinet. We should have remedies on hand to treat those minor conditions that arise in everyday life and we should know how to use them.

Arnica is the perfect remedy for life's little traumas (and bigger ones, too), the first choice for any form of injury causing bleeding, bruising, muscle pain, or shock.

Think of *Arnica* when blood vessels or muscles have been injured. In many cases, you will recognize the need for *Arnica* by the black and blue bruising, which is the result of blood seeping from damaged capillaries. The area feels sore and tender to the touch. Strained or overworked muscles (both skeletal and in the eye) will feel stiff and sore, especially on moving.

When serious injury occurs, you will notice a change in behavior. They become irritable, withdrawn, and fearful of further injury. They don't want to move or even to be touched; they want to lie down but can't find a comfortable place. As if to avoid further pain or discomfort, they will say they are fine even when you can clearly see that they aren't. Their mental clarity is affected, ranging from mild shock to "spaciness" to stupor.

Generally, the more intense the mental symptoms, the more severe the injury, even if the outwards signs don't appear too serious. When you suggest getting medical help, they refuse. In cases like this, it is better to trust your own instincts rather than your patient's assertion that nothing is wrong. In the meantime, though, a dose or two of *Arnica* will help stabilize your patient

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or even the pillow, feels too hard, so they are restless, moving from place to place in search of a soft spot to find relief.

Offensiveness, with a putrid, "rotten-egg" odour, is another feature of *Arnica*, as is a flushed face and heat of the upper body, with coldness of the lower half. Skin complaints are characterized by a symmetrical distribution.

In acute conditions, *Arnica* follows *Aconite* well. It should be repeated and allowed to act until symptoms call for another remedy, such as *Rhus tox*, its natural follower in a sprain.

Dianna Medea, RN, practices in Weyburn and Regina, SK.

until the ambulance arrives or you reach the hospital.

Administer *Arnica* by mouth until improvement occurs, repeating again if symptoms worsen. For physical injuries, you can also dilute the remedy or tincture in water and apply it as a compress to the affected area. Be careful when using *arnica* tincture however – it is poisonous, so should never be ingested or applied directly to broken skin.

Often, when *Arnica* has ceased acting, a new set of symptoms will emerge and a different remedy will need to be selected. More on those remedies in future issues.

To begin with, the best first remedy for your medicine cabinet is *Arnica* 30c. A good second choice is another *Arnica* 30 – this one for the glove compartment of your car, so that this versatile remedy is available for you at all times.

Think of Arnica in the following situations:

- Accidents
- Blows to the eye
- Blunt trauma
- Bruising
- Concussions
- Falls
- Nosebleeds
- Post-surgery
- Shock from any form of trauma
- Sprained joints
- Strained, overused muscles
- Trauma (physical or emotional)

Adapted from handout in Public Education Resource Collection.

To understand Arnica properly as a whole you must know that it affects the blood-vessels. . . . It so affects the walls of the blood-vessels, particularly of the capillaries, that dilatation of the small vessels and extravasation of blood becomes possible. This weakening of the capillary wall, which admits of extravasation of blood, explains the applicability of Arnica to trauma. It also explains the relation of the drug to typhoid conditions. Now if you will keep before your minds this fact, that Arnica so alters the capillaries that blood may ooze through their walls, you will understand its symptoms.

E.A. Farrington, Clinical Materia Medica. 1887.



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