

Miracle for a Migraine Sufferer

No more trips to the ER, no more vomiting, no more pain!

by Andrea S. Kraft

Becky, age 26, had a very high-powered and stressful job as a consultant that took her all over the globe. A self-described “type A personality,” Becky was very aware of the pressure she placed on herself. Even so, the current stresses were overwhelming her, resulting in frequent and severe migraines. She came to me seeking relief.

Becky had begun to experience migraines four years earlier right after she graduated college. The migraines were infrequent then, perhaps one every six months.

Trips to the ER

As Becky landed her first job and took on more responsibilities, the migraines became more frequent. The intensity of her symptoms grew to the point where over the past six months, she was visiting the emergency room once a month with severe dehydration from vomiting; they would treat her with IV fluids.

Ninety-five percent of the time, Becky’s migraines hit first thing in the morning, sometimes even waking her from sleep. They came on suddenly, with sharp pain in her temples and occasionally in the back of her head as well. Within minutes, waves of nausea struck and she would begin vomiting. During these episodes, Becky couldn’t keep anything down, not even water. “It feels like a hurricane runs through me,” she said. “My body feels poisoned.” She had tried Topamax®, an anti-seizure drug aimed at reducing the frequency of migraines, but had discontinued it several months before our visit because it gave her no relief. Migranal®, a nasal spray to be taken during migraines, reduced her pain only slightly. She relied on Phenergan®, a rectal suppository, to suppress nausea and vomiting.

Even so, her pain and vomiting could last as long as ten hours.

When Becky was having a migraine, she would become so upset she would often cry. She also liked to have someone there with her during an episode, rather than suffer through it alone.

Neat, clean, & perfect

“I’m such a perfectionist,” Becky reported, relating an incident in elementary school when she received a “B” on her test and felt like a failure for not getting an “A.” Her anxiety about her grades continued throughout her school years; with tears in her eyes, Becky recounted the one time she received a “C” in high school. The pain of receiving that grade and the demands she put on herself were still evident, now, ten years afterwards.



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Becky maintained an immaculate home—neat and orderly, with the dishes in her cabinet arranged from large to small. Pillows on the couch needed to have a certain arrangement, and she had a tendency to clean everything “until it was spotless.”

Although Becky liked to be with people, she got irritable easily, especially if she did not get enough

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regular exercise. She could “be an emotional wreck,” crying and yelling at her boyfriend or mother; she could also be intensely “snippy.” Afterwards, she was sorry and embarrassed since she realized her reactions were out of proportion to the situation. Becky described herself as restless, with a strong need for vigorous daily exercise. When she was able to exercise, her restlessness and irritability decreased, and she handled interpersonal situations better.

Looking for patterns

When homeopaths analyze a case, they look for patterns to determine if there are any identifiable triggers. If, for example, her migraines were associated with her menstrual cycle, then we would consider a specific set of remedies. If her migraines were triggered by certain foods, that might lead us to other remedies. Becky did not attribute her migraines to food triggers or her hormonal cycle, but to stress.

Excitement, anger, fear, anxiety, and emotional events are known to be significant migraine triggers. Becky recognized that she did not

handle stress well. Even back in elementary school, grades and achievement were so important to her that she became distressed if her output was not perfect. This fastidiousness in her work, school, and home was a guiding factor toward the correct remedy.

Homeopaths also look at a person's physical general symptoms, such as tendencies toward being hot or cold, thirsty or thirstless, to help them find the appropriate remedy. Becky reported that she tended to be cold and thirsty. Wherever she went, her cardigan and water bottle went with her.

A remedy for Becky

Taking all of Becky's symptom patterns into consideration, Arsenicum came immediately to mind. Arsenicum is a very important remedy in the homeopathic toolbox. People who need it are famous for being very orderly and fastidious. They are also anxious and prefer the company of others rather than being alone, especially when they are ill. They are often restless, irritable, and feel better with movement. They tend to be chilly and very thirsty for small sips of cold drinks.

Headaches are also a part of the Arsenicum symptom profile, although Arsenicum is not the first remedy one might think of for migraines. It is, however, a top remedy for cases of intense discharges such as vomiting with severe nausea. It also has a reputation for effectiveness in food poisoning. Although Becky's symptoms did not originate from food poisoning, it's interesting that she reported her body "felt poisoned" with the intense vomiting that she experienced with her migraines.

Considering all options

When analyzing a case, we are not automatically looking for a remedy that is "known" for the chief complaint. For example, if we were

searching for "headache remedies," Natrum muriaticum or Belladonna would come to mind before Arsenicum. But when we look at the totality of symptoms in a case and include the mental state and physical general symptoms as well as the specifics of the chief physical complaint, our remedy prescription can be more precise.

Arsenicum seemed to be the best fit. I gave her one dose of Arsenicum 30c and suggested we follow up in six weeks.



Wow!

Becky arrived in my office six weeks later with a smile on her face. This was a good sign, and I hoped that instead of the expected three migraines and a possible visit to the emergency room, she was about to tell me that she had had maybe one or two incidents that she was able to handle from home. Imagine my surprise when she told me she'd had no migraines in six weeks! None! I have witnessed the power of homeopathy hundreds of times before, but what a miracle this was to have such a dramatic shift with just one dose of Arsenicum 30c.

Becky continued to be migraine free for the next eight months when she needed a repeat of the remedy.

Migraine Morsels

Did you know?

- Migraines affect up to 20% of the U.S. population.
- Women are 4 times more likely than men to get migraines.
- Hospital admissions for migraines are higher on days of higher air pollution.

Source: HealthDay & Reuters Health

Miraculous healing

That was more than six months ago, and Becky is still going strong—no migraines, and no hospital visits.

I hear from Becky through the people she refers to my practice. Her friends are very excited about homeopathy, and knowing Becky's story of healing, they are eager to get started themselves. My challenge with any referral is to educate that person about the individual nature of the healing process. Many people assume that what works for one person should work for them, too, if their issues are "similar." They soon see for themselves, however, that remedies and healing processes vary according to the individual. And although the outcome is not always as quick or dramatic as Becky's, their results with homeopathy are profound!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Andrea Kraft works with adults and children in her homeopathic practice in Fairfax and Alexandria Virginia. She is a graduate of the New England

School of Homeopathy (NESH) with additional studies at Teleosis School of Homeopathy. She can be reached at (703) 425-1264 or www.krafthomeopathy.com