Homeopathic Remedies for Back Labour and Posterior Presentation

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Homeopathic remedies are a safe and effective means of treating a woman experiencing back labour. Homeopathic medicine along with comfort measures such as counterpressure, hydrotherapy and positioning are very positive means of assisting the baby to move into the most desirable position for birth and result in more effective contractions with a shorter and a less painful labour for the mother. Homeopathic remedies are easy to administer and act quickly and dynamically to alleviate back pain. They should be given in the following manner:

1. Use a 200C potency of the appropriate remedy.
2. Tip the remedy pellets into the lid of the container and place directly into the woman's mouth; avoid touching with your hands.
3. Use a 1:10 time frame to assess the effectiveness of your remedy. If the woman has been experiencing back labour for three hours you should begin to see a change in the location of the pain within 18-20 minutes. If the remedy does not seem to be reacting in your time frame you may want to continue observing and talking to your client until another remedy picture is clear to you.
4. Administering an incorrect remedy will do no harm; the result will be that there is no effect.

There are several remedies that can be quite effective in alleviating the pain of back labour. They may cause the baby to shift positions or even turn from a posterior presentation.* Following are several remedies that present with pain in the back and the differential diagnosis for each:

**Kali Carbonicum**
Case: "Charlotte" was in labour for four hours. She was experiencing most of the contractions in her lower back. The midwife told me that the baby had been posterior for the entire pregnancy. I gave Charlotte a single dose of Kali Carbonicum 200C. The midwife checked Charlotte's dilation at this point and she was six centimeters. After two contractions the baby had turned and Charlotte began experiencing contractions in her abdomen. One hour later she delivered her daughter.

**Kali Carbonicum (potash)**
- Pains experienced in the lumbar region
- Very severe pains in the back, *as if her back would break*
- Desires constant pressure on her back
- Pain may pass from the back through the gluteal muscles with cutting pain in the abdomen
- Extremely chilly to the point of trembling
- Touchy, both mentally and physically—*is worse from being touched*
- Worse 2-4 a.m.
- Posterior presentations

**Gelsemium (yellow jasmine)**
This is a remedy used for a woman who is about to begin pushing but the baby appears to ascend rather than descend with each contraction.

- Pains from the uterus *up* the back or extending to the back and hips
- Nervous chills *up* the back
- Baby appears to *ascend* rather than descend with each contraction
- May lose her dilation during a pelvic exam
- Weakness
• Dullness—heavy eyelids, flushed and puffy face
• Drowsy and listless—sleepy when she should be pushing
• Performance anxiety—this woman may be feeling pressured to perform

**Cimicifuga (black cohosh)**
Cimicifuga is an excellent remedy when there is lack of progress at any stage of labour. The labour pains of Cimicifuga are present but they are not effective. Cimicifuga will help dilate the cervix.

• Misplaced labour pains felt in the back, hips and thighs instead of the uterus
• Pains may shoot up and down the thighs or across the pelvis from hip to hip
• Cramping in the large muscles
• Fear that something bad will happen
• Talks incessantly to relieve her fear
• Sensitive to noise
• Worse from cold
• May become hysterical with the pain

**Coffea Cruda (unroasted coffee)**

• Faints due to pain and hyper-excitement of the nervous system
• Oversensitivity to pain, despair from pain
• All senses more acute
• Sleeplessness after delivery (great for midwives and doulas after too much coffee and excitement from attending a birth)
• Only pain experienced is in the small of her back
• May cry out or scream with extreme fear

**Nux Vomica (poison nut)**

• Irregular pains when the labour does not progress
• Ineffectual labour pains extend to the back and rectum
• Desire to move the bowels and to urinate—she will comment on this feeling often
• Major remedy for fainting during labour
• Inflammation or fever after labour with a desire to have a bowel movement
• Irritable and impatient
• Oversensitive to all external impressions
• Very chilly

**Postpartum Care**
A woman who has experienced severe back labour or an epidural may have residual pain after delivery. I would strongly recommend that *Hypericum* 200C and *Arnica* 200C be given for three days following labour for women who are experiencing back or neck pain or headaches. They should take the remedies twice a day in alternating doses, to alleviate the discomfort and assist with the healing process. I would also recommend chiropractic adjustments to help the mother recover fully.

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