

Review Article

Study of Sulphur and Its Utility in Clinical Practice

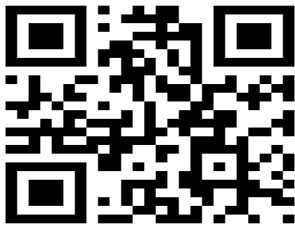
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ABSTRACT

Sulphur is chemical element with atomic weight 32.07. Symbol 'S' Source from 'mineral kingdom' (13). Through the great vegetative nervous system, sulphur acts upon every organ & tissues in body but selects more especially the nine following tissues: 1) Venous system 2) Portal system 3) Lymphatics 4) Serous membrane 5) Mucous membrane 6) Skin 7) Sympathetic nervous system 8) Blood 9) Sulphur fumes.

Sulphur a well proven homoeopathic remedy from the mineral kingdom can act upon multiple organs along with skin was marked by Dr. S. Hahnemann and also other stalwarts.

Keywords: Bach flower remedies, tension, anxiety, emotional disorder, depression and complementary role



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INTRODUCTION

Sulphur is a chemical element.(13) Sulphur is a non-metallic, yellow, brittle substance. It is found plentifully in Sicily and Italy. In the organic world we meet with sulphur everywhere, this element forming an essential component of albuminoids, a class of compounds contained in all vegetable animal structures. Of organic material rich in sulphur we may mention animal hair and essential oil of onion , garlic and mustard. (12)

Chemical symbol : S Atomic weight. : 32.07 (13)

Place in periodic table : Group- 16th Period- 3rd (14)

Synonyms: Brimstone; flowers of sulphur; sublimed sulphur.

Source : mineral kingdom. (11)

Through the great vegetative nervous system, sulphur acts upon every organ and

tissue in body , but selects more especially the nine following tissues :

Venous System-. Chronic capillary congest. Exudation; suppur.

Portal system – chronic congest. Hemorrhoids; constipation.

Lymphatics. - Secretion excess. Acrid , excoriating All parts

Serous membrane -serous effusions; Exudative inflammation.

Mucous membrane – excessively excoriating Mucorrhoea.

Skin – Vesicular and Pustular inflammation; Alopecia.

Sympathetic Nervous system - Defective Assimila, Hot flashes.

Blood – fibrin increased; rheumatoid affections.

Sulphur fumes – disinfectant, deodorizing. No animal life can live in sulphurous acid

gas. (4)

Hypothesis -

Homoeopathic remedy Sulphur is very useful in day to day practice.

Review of literature –

Sulphur is one of the 'biggest' or rather the 'most prescribed' remedies in homoeopathy. The symptomatology is very extensive, sulphur is the most frequently mentioned remedy in the repertory. However, the mental picture is not always same.

•Dr. Hahnemann said in his book *Materia medica pura* (vol II) by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann that, Though sulphur has been employed for many centuries, by medical and non-medical persons, in the itch of workers in wool, yet none of them ever observed that the beneficial effects they saw from its use in the eruptions of itch was effected by sulphur by similarity of action & homoeopathy. The first proving of sulphur contained 151 symptoms in *Materia medica pura* by Dr. Hahnemann.

•Dr. William Boericke said in his book *Pocket manual of homoeopathic Materia medica & repertory* that “this is the great Hahnemannian antisporic. Its action is centrifugal –from within outward –having an elective affinity for skin, where it produced heat and burning, with itching; made worse by heat of bed. Inertia and relaxation of fiber; hence feebleness of tone characterizes its symptoms. Ebullition of heat, dislike of water, dry and hard hair and skin, red orifices sinking feeling at stomach about 11 am and cat-nap sleep; always indicate sulphur homeopathically.

•Dr. J. H. Clarke has said in his book *A Dictionary of Practical Materia Medica* (all vol.3) by Clark J.H. that sulphur is elementary substance, occurring in nature as a brittle crystalline solid, burning in the air with blue flame, being oxidized to sulphur dioxide (sulphurous acid). The reputation of sulphur as a remedy is perhaps as old as medicine.

•Sulphur frequently produces in healthy persons burning itching pimples and vesicles, and especially itching in joints, and in night. Hahnemann found in sul.

•The homoeopathic counterpart of the

peculiar constitutional dyscrasia which tends to manifest in itch like eruptions, and which named Psora. Sul. is the main antisporic remedies. Also has antisporic action independently of its power of bringing out rashes.

•Much more important is it to know the leading features of the drug's action, which are sure guides in any case. •1) A key to many of the sul. conditions is to be found in irregular distribution of the circulation: flushes of heat; rush of blood to head, chest, heart, plethora from suddenly suppressed eruptions, piles, discharges; heat; plethora from suddenly suppressed eruptions, piles, discharges; heat and burning sensation of all the parts or coldness, sweating of many parts. •2) The other side of this feeling of fullness is feeling of emptiness. There is no single symptom that is of greater degree than sul., and there is no single symptom that is of greater value to the homoeopathic prescriber than Faint, sinking, all gone sensation at 11am. The child clutches at all food offered to it as if starved to death. Defective assimilation; hungry yet emaciated. Stopped catarrh; nose obstructed indoors, > out of doors. •3) <By heat” is another keynote of sul., and marks it out as the warmth of the bed. •4) sul. is related to both the sun and the moon, which makes it one of the most important of periodics.

•Dr. Tyler mentioned in her book *Homoeopathic Drug Picture*, that Nash says, Every true homoeopath knows the value of these and many more symptoms of this remedy. No one else appreciates them. Again, none but those who use poetized sulphur can ever know what it is capable of curing.”

•Sulphur has some weird sensations, a band tightly bound round forehead; as if bed too small to hold him; as if swinging, or standing on wavering ground.

•Dr. Guernsey puts sulphur as, fantastic illusions of the intellect, especially if one turns everything into beauty, as an old rag or stick looks to be a beautiful piece of workmanship.

•An intermittent periodic neuralgia with aggravation every 24 hours, generally at

mid-day or mid- night.

•Dr. Kent said in his book Lectures on Homoeopathic Materia medica by Dr. kent , Sulphur is suited to : Lean , stoop-shouldered persons , who walk and sit stooped, standing is the most uncomfortable position.

Persons of angular , lean , lank , hungry , dyspeptic . Also fat, rotund, well – fed people. Persons who lead sedentary lives, confined to their rooms in study , in meditation , in philosophical inquiry. Who take no exercise , soon find out that they must eat only the simplest foods, foods not sufficient to nourish the body , and they end up by going into a philosophical mania. The sulphur patient has all sorts of eruptions. There are vesicular, pustular , furuncular, scaly eruptions , all attended with much itching , and some of them with discharge and suppuration. Crops of boils and little boil like eruptions come out and this makes it useful in impetigo. It is useful in suppuration. It establishes all sorts of suppurating cavities , small abscesses and large abscesses ; abscesses beneath the skin , in the cellular tissues and in internal organs the glands become inflamed and the inflammation goes on to suppuration. Burning in every parts. , where there is congestion. There is a heat here and there , but when the patient describes something especially typical of sulphur says : “ Burning of the soles of the feet , in the palms of the hands, and on the top of the head .” Worse from becoming warm in bed. He wants even temperature ; he is disturbed if the temperature changes much. Emptiness occurring at 11 o'clock in forenoon. When the inflammation is in a vital organ, like the lungs, this infiltration cannot always be endured; it leaves infiltrations after pneumonia called hepatization.

•Allen s Encyclopaedia contains 4083 symptoms. it is a deep acting antipsoric , constitutional , & specific remedy.

•Dr. Hering in his book The Guiding symptoms of our Materia medica (vol-X) by C. Hering explained sulphur under 48 different headings , including stages of life ,constitution in which he explained utility of sulphur in different diseased conditions at different age groups. After meals congestion

to head , with throbbing and forgetfulness ; feels as if crazy. Vertigo while sitting or standing ; with nosebleed, in morning ; stupor. Sensitiveness of eyes to daylight ; intolerance of sunlight ; photophobia , with stitching <in sultry weather , shuns light during sweat . Deafness ; surgical noise in rt. Ear <on excitement or moving. Coldness of penis ; weak sexual power; impotence. Sore feeling of vagina during an embrace. Pain alternating between eye and ovary ; pains from ovarian region to back. Rumbling and gurgling in bowels; painless diarrhea, driving patient out of bed at 5am. Sensation as if heart were enlarged. Curvature of spine , vertebrae softened . Cold hands and feet. Eczema under toes. Spasm after suppressed eruptions; often removes tendency to convulsion. Fever with chill. Violent pain; in shoulders flying to head; in left eye; in stomach. Itching: all over body ; spots painful after scratching . Stages of life , constitution: Lean , stoop shouldered persons who walk and sit stooped ; standing is the most uncomfortable position.

•Dr. Phatak said in his book, Sulph.is a product of volcanic eruptions, found free in nature and was used from remote times to remove skin affections ; therefore it is great antipsoric remedy.

•It causes irregular distribution of circulation;causing local burning;throbbing; or congestion; flushes of heat; rush of blood to heat, chest, heart.

•Redness of orifices or of single parts is another prominent feature due to irregular circulation; lips, ears, nose, eyes, vulva.

•Nutrition is affected on account of defective assimilation, in spite of voracious appetite, the patient emaciates. (esp. children)

•Mucous discharges and exhalation are acrid, blood streaked, offensive and cause itching.

•It has elective affinity for skin where it produces heat and burning with itching.

•Foolish happiness and pride; thinks himself in possession of beautiful things,everything looks pretty which the patient takes a fancy to; even rags seem beautiful , or immensely wealthy.

•Dr. N. M. Chaudhary has mentioned in his book , A Study on Materia Medica , the

Sulphur patient frequently suffers from morning diarrhoea. It drives him out of bed in early hours of the morning (5a.m.) with a feeling as if his bowels were too weak to retain their contents.

Sulphur is important remedy in epilepsy. There is some ultra-religious and are conceited with a sense of their own importance. The aura seems to proceed from the extremities up the back as a creeping sensation or up the leg to the right side of the abdomen. The patient is apt to fall on the left side.

On the female sexual system, the influence of Sulphur is quite marked. There is a great congestion to these parts and consequently she complains of a sense of fullness with bearing down in pelvic towards genitals.

This pressing down is felt more acutely when she stands up and as a consequence she is very reluctant to assume that posture. Over and above this, she suffers from leucorrhoea. It is yellow and corroding. The menses too are dark, thick and acrid.

Intense, persistent, long continued fever; skin dry, hot and burning; temperature 103-105°F., little or no remission day and night; patient literally consumed with fever.

Sulphur acts on the eyes. It is used in retinitis, cataract, keratitis, marginal blepharitis and innumerable other affections. Sulphur is useful in deafness with humming or hissing in the ears.

Dr. J. H. Allen said in his book, *Chronic Miasms* that Sulphur skin hands very hard, thick, thick, dry, rough, and fissured. Vicarious haemorrhage from nose or spitting of blood in place of menses, or bleeding piles, very copious at times.

Sometimes there is a burning sensation on the vertex or on the soles of the feet during menses.

Dr. H.C. Allen in his book *Keynotes Rearranged & Classified* explained drug picture of Sulphur as: when carefully selected remedies fail to produce a favourable effect. Complaints that continually relapsing (menses leucorrhoea, etc). Adapted to scrofulous diathesis. Standing is the worst position; they cannot stand. Children; cannot bear to be washed or bathed. Burning soles at night. Cramps in

calves and soles at night.

Aggravation :at rest, when standing, changeable weather

Amelioration : dry, warm weather; lying on right side

Dr. W.H. Burt has mentioned in his book, *Physiological Materia Medica*, under heading *General Indication* The Sulphur patient is a lymphatic, scrofulous temperament, subject to venous congestion.

The skin is excessively sensitive and most powerfully affected by changes of temperature; full blooded, nervous hasty, in tempoer and motion.

Scrofulous chronic diseases that have been caused by some eruptive disease repelled from the surface, seem to get almost well, when they return again and again. Dirty, filthy people of ulcers.

Lean people who walk stooped, with congestion of blood to single parts. Children who are much emaciated, with big bellies do not like to be covered, kick off the clothes, and dread to be washed.

Clinical Materia medica, by Dr. E. A. Farrington, has mentioned that Sulphur is especially adapted to persons of rather light complexion who are easily angered, although dark-complexed persons.

the peculiar disagreeable odor or exhalation from the skin is not removed by washing; hence you must consider it to be for the most part an abnormality arising from impure excretions from the skin.

Dr. Rajan Sankaran has mentioned in his book, *The Soul Of Remedies* that the main feeling of sulphur is that of being scorned, suppressed, put down, criticized. The person is made to feel humiliated, his pride hurt.

Ego is the one of the biggest themes in Sulphur and effort one of the main actions. The effort and the feeling are both psoric, in a sense that there is kind of hopefulness in Sulphur patients.

There exists in sulphur patients the desire for business, the desire to make money and to be financially sound. There is the feeling of being poor, and consequently an effort to make money so as to overcome the situation of poverty. In the failed state however there

is indolence, a lack of effort, hence the symptom : Delusion , old rags are as fine as silk .

There is contentment ; there is no try and get out of the situation . These symptoms of sulphur which reflect the indolence are very well known.

Physical symptoms : Among the well-known physical symptoms of sulphur are : - Intolerance of hunger which is especially marked in the forenoon .

- Desire for sweets and fats.
- Heat in the feet , hands and vertex.
- Offensive odour of discharges.
- An almost mandatory history of skin eruptions which itch voluptuously.
- Intolerance of heat and closed rooms.

Single rubrics from Kent repertory :

- Vertigo from high places.
- Cataract in the left eye.
- Desires meat.
- Desires fat
- Desires highly seasoned food.
- Desires raw food.
- Skin, cracks, winter , in.



Sulphur crystals

Sulphur stones

Sulphur as a Homoeopathy



common name: Flower of Sulphur; Brimstone

Prover : Dr. Samuel Hanhemann

Kingdom : 'S' the element (mineral kingdom)⁽¹⁷⁾

Introduction: Sulphur is one of the greatest ' POLYCHRESTS' .

It is a central remedy of Homoeopathic Materia medica. It is the king of antipsoric having wide range in Homoeopathic prescribing. Hanhemann says that Sulphur has reputation as a remedy against itch perhaps as old as medicine; as early as 2000 years ago. Sulphur is prepared for homoeopathic use in two different ways, firstly the flowers of sulphur washed and cleaned, are mixed with alcohol to form the tincture; secondly by triturating flowers of sulphur with sugar of milk.⁽¹⁷⁾

Sulphur is an elementary substance, occurring in nature as a brittle crystalline solid, burning in the air with a blue flame, being oxidized to sulphur dioxide. When the system refuse to respond to the well selected remedy, it matters not what the disease may be , whether it is disease which corresponds characteristically with the symptomatology of sulphur or not , it will often be the remedy to clear up the case and bring about reaction. Particularly it is applicable after the suppression of itch. The great **utility** of the sulphur arises from this peculiarity, it is our mainstay in defective reaction.

Flowers of sulphur burnt in a closed room may be used as a disinfectant.

Sphere of action: Its action is centrifugal, from within outwards. It has great affinity for the skin. No remedy has more general, positive and persistent action upon the skin than Sulphur. It acts as pre-eminently on the nervous system, also affecting venous capillary system and through it affecting profoundly the entire vegetative sphere .Mucous membranes also feel most severely the influence of Sulphur. Especially of eyes, bronchi urethra and rectum.⁽¹⁷⁾

The portal system also comes under its special influence. It has action on:

- circulatory system
- Lymphatic system
- Serous membrane
- mucous membrane

It has main action on Genital organs.

Pathogenesis : Subjected to venous plethora

. It has portal stasis manifesting as redness at the muco-cutaneous junctions; eg., nostrils, lips, anus, etc. Affecting the skin, it produces heat and burning with severe itching.⁽¹⁷⁾

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Sympathetic Nervous system - defective Assimila. Hot flashes.

Blood – fibrin increased; rheumatoid affections.

Sulphur fumes – disinfectant, deodorizing. No animal life can live in sulphurous acid gas.⁽⁴⁾

Constitution:

1) Physical makeup: Sulphur is especially suited to lean, stoop shouldered persons who walk and sit stopping, walk stooping like an old man.

STANDING IS THE WORST POSITION FOR A SULPHUR PATIENT. Dirty, filthy look of the body, prone to skin affections. this type of people have redness of all the external orifices.

2) Temperament: nervous temperament.

3) Relation with hot and cold : Sulphur is very much sensitive to atmospheric changes. yet he is accepted as a HOT patient.

4) Miasm: It is the king of anti-psoric remedies.

5) Diathesis: Scrofulous diathesis.⁽¹⁷⁾

Mind: Ragged philosopher. Even rags seems beautiful when the patient takes a fancy for it. Everything seems full of beauty. He dresses himself in the most filthy rags but considers them to be the most elegant of decorations. There is great weakness of memory. cannot find the proper word during conversation. Sulphur is

indifferent and disinclined to work of any and every description. work, pleasure, talking, exercise, etc. afford him no enjoyment. There is feeling of movement of abdomen, as of a child (crocus, thuja). Happy dreams wake up him singing at night.⁽¹⁷⁾

He is of a nervous temperament and hypochondriacal in nature. Melancholy and sadness with grieving ideas. Uneasiness respecting patient's own condition and prospects, and about business affairs. So as to become exceedingly unhappy, disgust with life and even to despair of eternal salvation.⁽¹²⁾

Misplaces or cannot find proper word when he speaks. Forgetfulness of that which is about to uttered. Incoherent speech. Mania with a settled idea of having all things in abundance, possessing beautiful things. Melancholia and epilepsy, with strong impulsive tendency to suicide by drowning or leaping from window. Peevishness. Strong tendency to weep, alternating sometimes with involuntary laughter. Indecision, awkwardness.

Anthropophobia with feeling of giddiness. Moaning and complaining with wringing of hands day and night, much thirst, little appetite, swallows food hastily. Sentimental changing mood. Indisposed to everything, work, pleasure, talking or motion; indolence of mind and body. Great obstinacy; dislikes to have any one near him.

Disgust to nausea, about any effluvia arising from his own body. Numerous morbid ideas, extremely disagreeable, causing rancor. Neglect business <in evening in bed, when ideas prevent falling asleep. Involuntary haste when taking hold of anything and when walking. Too lazy to rouse himself up, and too unhappy to live. Hypochondriac mood through day, merry in evening. Irritable mood; easily excited and always absorbed in himself. Ill-humored; vexed with herself; everything makes her impatient.

Child is intolerably violent and difficult to quiet. So obstinate to morose that he answers no one, and will tolerate no one about him; he cannot obtain quickly enough what he wants. Has no rest, anywhere day or night.⁽⁹⁾

Ailments from: Alcohol, suppression of skin diseases, sun's heat, over exertion., etc. (17)

Perticulars:

1) Gastrointestinal system -

Abdomen -There is WEAK, EMPTY, ALL GONE OR FAINT FEELING IN THE ABDOMEN AT ABOUT 11 A.M. Cannot wait for lunch. Frequent, weak, faint spells during the day with burning sensation.

There is great desire for sweets. Aggravation from milk and meat. movement in abdomen as of a foetus, is felt by patient.

Constipation- Causation: Alcoholism and suppression of skin eruption. Character of stool: Hard knotty stool. dry as if burnt. afraid to pass the stool. Difficult and painful defecation. Constipation alternates with diarrhoea.

Piles- Piles are very painful. it may be blind or bleeding. the blood is venous with itching and burning in anus. Anus is red and sore.

Diarrhoea- Causation: suppression of skin diseases and alcoholism. Time: Early in the morning; as there is lack of power in sphincter ani. runs to the closet as soon as the desire is felt. Character: Involuntary and painless diarrhoea. with stools there is Redness of Anal Orific Modality: Aggravation in early morning. concomitants: Diarrhoea alternates with constipation. (17)

2) Respiratory symptoms-

Oppression and burning sensation in chest.; Difficult respiration; wants window open. Loose cough; worse talking, morning, greenish, purulent, sweetish expectoration. Chest feels heavy heavy; stitches, with heart feeling too large and palpitating. Dryness in middle of night, relieved by sitting up. Pulse more rapid in middle than in evening. (2)

3) Female Genital organs:

Menses too late, short, scanty, and difficult; thick, black, acrid, making parts sore. Menses preceded by headache or suddenly stopped. Nipple cracked; smart and burn. □ Vaginal burning. Pudenda itches. (2)

4) Skin - Sulphur is indicated in all sorts of skin eruptions, vesicular, pustular etc. especially in the skin affections that have been treated by medicated soaps and

washes, suppressed by ointment and local medication. Dirty, filthy look of the skin, with filthy odour. The skin is very much sensitive to atmospheric changes. There is severe itching, voluptuous itching; goes on scratching. it followed by severe burning, rawness, soreness of the parts. Every little injury suppurates. the boils come crops or a single boil is succeeded by another. Suppression of skin diseases causes diarrhoea. Modalities: Aggravation: By warmth of bed, washing, covering and at night.

Amelioration: in open air, uncovering, by putting the feet out of bed. (17)

5) Baby: Sulphur is especially suited to psoric Scrofulous Babies who are emaciated and pot bellied. These type of babies suffer from morning diarrhoea which is painless and involuntary and acrid, causes REDNESS OF THE ANAL ORIFICE. □ The babies are prone to have worm infestations with intense craving for Sweets. The cries before stool. (17)

6) General modalities :

Aggravation : standing , at rest , warmth of Bed , washing , bathing , from alcoholic stimulants and changeable weather.

Amelioration: Dry warm weather and lying on right side. (17)

7) Relations :

Complementary to: Aloes; Psorinum; Acon.; when Sulphur fails , think of Psorinum and tuberculinum.

Compare: Acon.; Mercur and calcarea are frequently useful after Sulphur, not before. Lyco.; Sep.; Puls.;

Follows well: Calcarea, Lyco.; Sarsaparilla, Sepia. (17)

Duration: 40 - 60 days. (2)

Objectives : 1)- Thorough study of sulphur
2)- study of the applicability in various disease conditions

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