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In this issue I want to address one of the diseases against which many people get vaccinated: tetanus. I know that many of my clients have decided not to vaccinate. So what can one do instead? First, it is important to be well informed about how you can get tetanus and then what needs to be done should you be at risk, including which remedy to take. And even if you do vaccinate, it is important to know what you need to do to avoid infection, as being vaccinated does not guarantee immunity.

With best wishes, *Raewyn*

Tetanus

The reason for conventional medicine's developing the practice of vaccination is that it cannot offer an effective way to treat many of the diseases that have brought untold suffering, as well as death and grief. When I was considering the whole issue, I began to look for something I could use to help my children or myself should any of us contract one of these diseases. That led me to homoeopathy. Historically, homoeopathic treatment has had much better results in epidemics than conventional medicine.

The conventional epidemiology is that the organism *Clostridium tetani* is the causative organism. It is often found in soil and animal faeces and is a gram negative and anaerobic bacterium. That means that it grows and thrives only where there is low or no oxygen. The ideal conditions for it to thrive in the human body are where the blood supply is poor and where the *C. tetani* organism is well away from oxygen or fresh air. Puncture wounds are a typical place for tetanus bacteria to begin to grow. The proverbial rusty nail as a cause has, in fact, nothing to do with the rust per se, but to do with the probability of its being contaminated with the *C. tetani* organism and being an instrument that may create a puncture wound.

If the bacteria enter the body and find a place free of oxygen, they may multiply and then produce a toxin, which affects skeletal muscles. The toxin travels around the body causing the stiffness and spasms and resulting pains that are the symptoms of the disease. The incubation period is between three and fourteen days. Tetanus was also called “lockjaw” because the muscles of the jaw would spasm and make eating and swallowing difficult or impossible. Tetanus is a disease that cannot be cured with

antibiotics because once the toxin is released into the body and lodges in the nerves, killing the bacteria only stops more being released. Tetanus is not a communicable disease passed from one person to another. Full-blown tetanus is a life threatening disease that requires hospitalisation in an Intensive Care Unit.

Those at highest risk of contracting this disease are those who have compromised immune systems and compromised circulation. As one becomes older the circulation often slows down, so the tissues are not as well oxygenated. The statistics on tetanus tend to support this, showing that it occurs more often in older people.

So, what do you do to protect yourself and your children from this disease? The first thing to do is to make sure **all wounds are thoroughly cleaned and made to bleed**. This may mean that you have to seek medical help to clean the wound. Once a wound bleeds, you will know that it has oxygen supplied to it and this will inhibit the growth of *C. tetani* if there are any lingering there. The next thing to do is to give the relevant homeopathic remedy: Ledum.

Remedy: Ledum palustre

Ledum palustre is a member of the large botanical family Ericaceae. Ericas and Rhododendrons are also in this family. Ledum is a marshland plant and likes cool, lime-free conditions to thrive. The honey made by bees visiting the flowers of this plant contains a toxin produced by the plant. If the honey is ingested it causes intoxication, madness, vomiting, progressive paralysis and death if much is eaten.



So, already we have the themes of toxins, cool conditions and a sense of intoxication in this remedy. We can apply the 'like cures like' principle of homoeopathy to suggest where Ledum can be used as a remedy.

As a first aid remedy, Ledum is used for puncture wounds where the affected area is cold to the touch but does not feel cold to the patient, when having something cold applied to the area brings relief, and when the affected part is painful to move. The person may feel cold/chilly. They may feel intoxicated. These symptoms can come as a result of insect bites/stings (marshland, where this plant grows, is the breeding ground of mosquitoes as well as other stinging insects), and Ledum can be used here.

Ledum is also a remedy to give for a black eye that feels better for having cold applied to it, or where bruises remain and turn green a long time after an injury.

Giving Ledum immediately after a cut will help to prevent tetanus, because it will improve the circulation of blood to a wound. It may also be given if tetanus has begun and muscles are twitching near the wound.

I would never hesitate to give Ledum 30c after a puncture wound, but always remember this is **not** instead of cleaning the wound properly. **Always seek medical advice when you need it, and if any of the symptoms of tetanus appear call the emergency services.**