**AUTUMN HOMEOPATHY**

*By Maureen Chapple RSHom*

Autumn..."season of mists and mellow fruitfulness....." to quote John Keats.

As a homeopath I find that Autumn can be a very trying time for some people.

Personally I love this time of year - the beautiful colours of the trees and hedges, the misty mornings and then crisp blue skies, the amazing sunsets, delicious apples, the smell of log fires and the cosiness of closing the curtains and cooking some sweet chestnuts.

However, to many people it is the end of Summer, shorter days, longer night, cold and damp weather, and many people feel much worse in many ways when we put the clocks back an hour at the end of October.

Autumn can affect people emotionally as well as physically. People are much more likely to start to get colds and flu, many people have allergies at this time of the year often due to fungus on trees and plants, and many people start to feel low emotionally due to the darker days and the feeling of the year dying out. S.A.D - Seasonal Affected Disorder is common at this time of year.

Interestingly, there is a Bach Flower Remedy that can be very useful for this feeling of sadness and despair made from the fruit of the Sweet Chestnut tree which is very much present in abundance in Autumn. This is what Dr Bach says about Sweet Chestnut in his book

The Twelve Healers and Other remedies:

"For those moments which happen to some people when anguish is so great as to seem unbearable. When the mind or body feels as if it had borne to the uttermost limit of its endurance, and that now it must give way. When it seems there is nothing but destruction and annihilation left to face."

The Horse Chestnut (The Conker) or Aesculus Hippocastanum is also very abundant at this time. As a school girl I remember the best thing about going back to school for the Autumn term was the number of beautiful shiny conkers we used to collect and play with.

People needing this plant as a remedy often feel worse in the morning on waking, and from any motion including walking, bowel movements and eating. Also worse for standing or in the afternoon. They tend to be better out in the open air.  It is a remedy for sluggish circulation and  venous congestion and a feeling of heaviness and fullness. There may be varicose veins, enlarged veins,

haemorrhoids lower back pain and sciatica. Mood wise this person will feel gloomy and despondent, depressed and irritable.

The changing season often brings about lots of colds, as does returning to school after a Summer break, and the changes of temperature that can happen so rapidly over the day and night in Autumn. There are many, many homeopathic remedies that can be useful for colds. One of the main ones is Gelsemium or Yellow Jasmine. Typically the symptoms indicating this remedy are: achiness and prostration, drowsiness and dullness, trembling and weakness, rough burning throat and dry sore chest. I normally tell my patients to take Echinacea Tincture as soon as they start to feel as if they are getting a cold and to continue for several weeks. I also recommend Vitamin C and D during this time and throughout the Winter months.

I love Pumpkin soup which is ideal as a warming meal in Autumn. The remedy made from the seeds of the pumpkin is called Curcubita Pepo and is great for gastrointestinal problems such as intense nausea immediately after eating, nausea in pregnancy and seasickness. If you make pumpkin soup, don't throw away the seeds. If you eat the entire seed, including the shell, it will provide you with zinc. Whole roasted, unshelled pumpkin seeds contain about 10 milligrams of zinc per 3.5 ounces.

So Autumn is here! Wrap up warm, enjoy the colours, make warming soups and roasted sweet chestnuts and enjoy the delicious apples that are now in season. I hope some of my tips will help those of you that don't enjoy Autumn.

