

The Reason for Variable Results in the Allopathic Application of Herbs

It is the common but unfortunate and perplexing experience of most health practitioners that the allopathic application of herbs produces wondrous results in some cases, little to no effect in others, and at times, adverse — totally unexpected and seemingly unexplainable — results in many cases. It has even been observed in rare instances that the very condition for which a given herb was prescribed can actually be made worse by the application of the herb which was known to be effective in previous applications!

Actually, this phenomena is not limited to just herbal therapy. This same syndrome — what works for one, has no effect on another, and can worsen a third — is also evident in the application of vitamins, minerals, dietetics, homeopathic formulas, and even prescription drugs, and is the essence of Healthexcel's concept of metabolic typing. There is nothing more confounding to the practitioner or disheartening to the patient than such mystifying "backfirings". Yet, from the perspective afforded through the proper understanding of metabolic typing, the reason for the phenomena can be clearly and easily understood. More important, the application of herbs (or *any* biochemical constituents) can be made systematically more effective through the proper application of the knowledge afforded by metabolic typing.

The short answer is that "one man's medicine is another's poison." But, the understanding of this concept in its practical application takes a little explaining. To do so, we'll draw on a few of the core premises of our system of metabolic typing:

- ✘ The complex we refer to as the human body is comprised of and organized through many different levels (systemic, glandular, tissue, cell, nuclear, sub-nuclear, etc.)
- ✘ Nutrients behave differently on different levels (on one level a nutrient can be catabolic, on another it can be anabolic)
- ✘ Any given nutrient has virtually opposite effects in different metabolic types (catabolic or anabolic, stimulating or sedating, acidifying in one type or alkalinizing in another)
- ✘ Any given disease, problem or symptom can arise due to virtually opposite biochemical imbalances in different metabolic types
therefore . . .
- ✘ . . . Diseases or adverse conditions and symptoms are not the *problem*, they are the "*symptom*", the outer expression or manifestation of the deeper, underlying imbalances
thus . . .
- ✘ . . . One man's medicine is another's poison. What can correct a problem in one person can worsen it in another. (For example, it has been our experience that in the proper metabolic type, a high protein, high fat diet can bring about weight *loss* and *lower* cholesterol, just as in the wrong type, the same diet can bring about obesity and hypercholesterolemia.)

It should be clear, even from this extremely brief discussion of metabolic typing that any symptom-treatment "cookbook" approach, whether with vitamins, foods or herbs is ludicrous. Any success achieved with such methods will only be the result of chance — not scientific predictability.

Generally speaking, herbs are employed on the basis of their symptom-specific effects. However, the desired symptom-specific effects are not always seen as a result. It is interesting to note that for any specific condition, there is always more than one herb available that can be employed. It is our belief that not every herb known to be beneficial for a given condition is appropriate for every person with that condition. We believe that just as Mother Nature has created differences in metabolism (that we term metabolic types), she has also provided a number of different herbs to address any given condition. What is necessary for the achievement of the desired result is to match the appropriate herb to the appropriate constitution (metabolic type).

Everything that exists in this physical universe of ours is comprised of various elements in various combinations. The various combinations of the various elements determines the nature, character and qualities of these objects. The same goes for human beings . . . and herbs. Different human beings — different metabolic types — manifest different qualities due to the various combinations of elements that make up their constitutions. Herbs, also, aside from their known symptom-specific effects, have different natures, combinations of elements, vitamins, minerals, intrinsic factors, etc. In short, herbs have different qualities, characters and constitutions, just like human beings.

If the nature and the constitution of an herb runs contrary to the nature of the human metabolism on whom it is employed, it will have an aggravating influence on the constitution that will override the symptom specific nature of the herb, contributing to existing imbalances or creating new ones, even to the point of worsening the very symptom for which it was employed. For example, Valerian, Hops and Skullcap are commonly employed in formulas for insomnia. But, it is a frequent complaint that they "don't work." It so happens that 2 of these herbs actually have a stimulatory influence on certain qualities in certain types. Used in these types, the calming aspects of the herb are offset by their metabolically stimulatory action, effectively neutralizing their desired result.

Just as the natures, qualities, nutrient content, etc., of the various foods must be matched to one's metabolic constitution, so too must the nature and qualities of herbs be matched to one's metabolic constitution for predictable, reliable and desired effects to be achieved. If the same disease can occur in different constitutions, does it not follow that the same herb/food/nutrient will not work effectively in every case of a problem?

CONCLUSION

Successful, predictable and reliable application of herbs (or any therapy) requires the presence of three essential factors:

1. Knowledge of the symptom-specific influences of herbs
2. Knowledge of the individual constitution (metabolic type) on whom they are to be applied
3. Knowledge of the constitutional nature of the herbs

Armed with this knowledge, one has a systematic, reliable means of selecting the most efficacious herb(s) on the basis of their symptom-specific effect by matching the constitution of the herb to the constitution of the individual.