

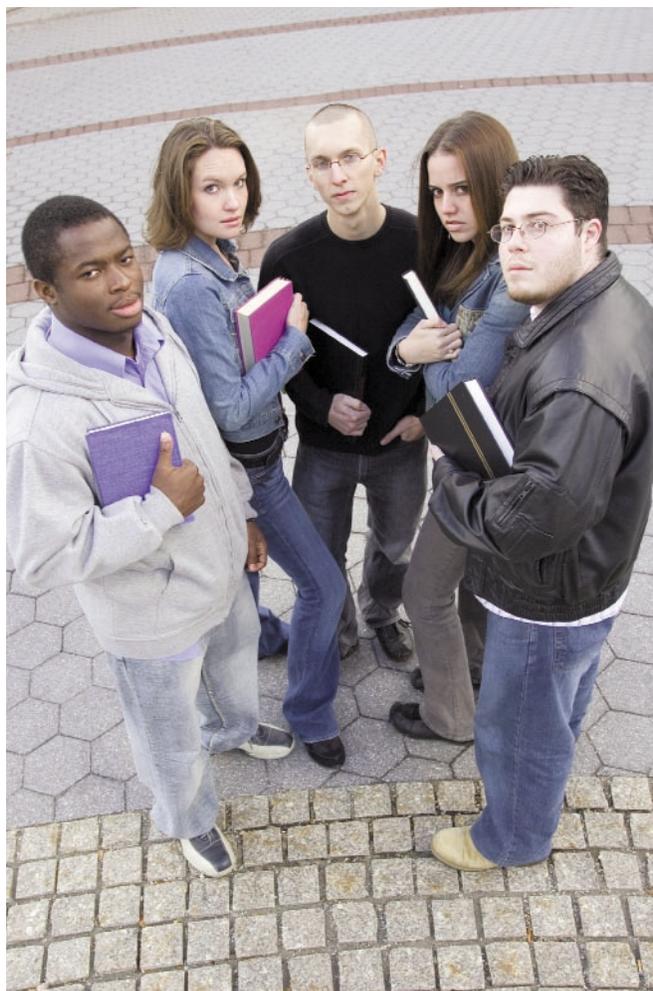


Modern Mumps Strikes Young Adults

An experienced homeopath tells us what works

by FRANCIS TREUHERZ, MA, RSHom, FSHom

A GENERATION AGO, THE CONVENTIONAL TREATMENT FOR MUMPS was a hot kaolin (clay) poultice.



During my last 11 years of intensive practice on an emergency telephone helpline ... mumps patients have all, without exception, responded to what we call a "small remedy" ...

During my first ten years of homeopathic practice, I occasionally saw children with mumps. It was typically a mild illness, affecting early school-age kids, and easily treated with homeopathic remedies and good old-fashioned home care.

In the early 1990s in the U.K., an intensive childhood vaccination program was implemented by the government, amid much controversy. During this time, I was employed by a National Health Service primary care team, working as a homeopath alongside open-minded allopathic doctors and nurses. Many patients were referred to me when they or their parents refused the vaccine intended to prevent measles, mumps, and rubella. My strategy was to provide these patients with a homeopathic family care book, a home remedy kit, and a lesson in how to use them. I would not give any homeopathic remedy unless the patient was actively threatened by mumps, at which time they might receive an indicated epidemic remedy, or failing that, *Parotidinum* (see sidebar on Preventing Mumps). But these were rarely needed.

Traditional mumps remedies

At homeopathic college, I had been taught that there were two main, almost traditional remedies for mumps with the following indications:

Mercurius solubilis. Hard, painful swelling of the salivary glands below the chin, and/or in the cheeks; copious, smelly salivation; sensitivity to temperature changes; offensive breath; swollen lymph nodes; perspiration during sleep.

Phytolacca decandra. Swelling of the parotid gland, which feels sore and tight; the breasts or other glands may also become painful and swollen and may feel hard as stones; person feels tired, dizzy, and sore all over; person feels better from drinking cold drinks, but feels better from warmth in gen-

Illustration: Jaborandi from Köhler's Medicinal Pflanzen, 1885

PREVENTING MUMPS—HOMEOPATHICALLY

According to Hahnemann, homeopathy's founder, the best remedy to use prophylactically during any epidemic is the "*genus epidemicus*"—that is, the remedy that matches the symptoms of the majority of cases. Giving that remedy in advance to those who seem likely to be exposed to the illness may protect them from contracting the illness. This would hold true for any kind of epidemic, including mumps.

J.H. Clarke, MD, in *A Dictionary of Practical Materia Medica*, cites *Parotidinum* (the mumps nosode) for use as a prophylactic against infection by mumps. Clarke suggests giving a 6c or a 30c, two or three times a day to those exposed to infected persons. And in cases where ill health can be traced back to a severe attack of the mumps, Dorothy Shepherd, MD, suggests that *Parotidinum* in 30c or 200c "given at intervals of ten to fourteen days will do a great deal to put these people on the road to recovery."

Dr. Shepherd also mentions *Pilocarpine* 6c (aka *Jaborandi*) as a preventive saying that it prevents mumps "if taken once a day for ten to twelve days by those who have been in contact with the disease."

In researching the literature, Will Taylor, MD, has found that *Trifolium pratense* (red clover) and *Trifolium repens* (white clover) are mentioned as prophylactic for mumps. Boericke's *Materia Medica* states that provers of *Trifolium pratense* experienced a feeling of fullness with congestion of salivary glands followed by copious flow of saliva and a feeling as if the mumps was coming on. These remedies have historically been given in tincture or low potency (e.g., 3c or 6c) doses for this purpose. Accordingly, if prophylaxis is desired, Dr. Taylor said he would consider giving a dose of either *Trifolium pratense* or *Trifolium repens*, once per week for two months, to susceptible individuals in the event of possible exposure to the mumps virus.

—Amy E. Lockwood

eral; ear is painful on swallowing; person may clench their teeth, pull back their lips, and grimace in an artificial smile.

Modern findings

What I have found since that time, especially during my last 11 years of intensive practice on an emergency telephone helpline service and during the recent mumps outbreak in the U.K., is that childhood mumps is rarer than it once was. It is a new generation of young people (or their parents) who are calling for help, often when they are away from home at university. They may have been vaccinated and the vaccine has worn off, or occasionally I receive a call from someone who has not been vaccinated.

In the 18 to 20 age group, mumps is making a comeback as these young people, often living in dorms or shared apartments, have become susceptible. These mumps patients have all, without exception, responded to what we call a "small remedy" which seems well indicated in mumps, as if it is the new epidemic remedy (except that we could not call this an epidemic). The remedy they have all needed is *Jaborandi*. Some books confusingly call this remedy *Pilocarpus* or *Pilocarpine*, which is actually an alkaloid extracted from the South American *Jaborandi* plant. *Jaborandi* is the preferred remedy. Read J.H. Clarke's *Dictionary of Materia Medica* for a full description, but some indications appear below.

Jaborandi. Hot flushes, nausea, profuse salivation, and profuse perspiration. The face, ears, and neck become deeply flushed, and drops of perspiration break out all over the body (or just half of the body) while at the same time the mouth waters and viscid saliva (like egg-white) pours out in an almost continuous stream. Other secretions—lachrymal, nasal, bronchial, and intestinal—also increase but to a lesser degree. *Jaborandi* can help with mumps that have metastasized (i.e., moved) to the testicles, breasts,

and elsewhere. The remedy sometimes exacerbates the patient's salivation before an improvement begins. In my experience, *Jaborandi* seems to limit the duration and intensity of mumps.

More possibilities

Sometimes classic remedies are indicated in mumps cases.

Aconite. At the onset of the fever, when the patient is very restless and fearful.

Belladonna. Severe headache; the person shrinks away from bright light; stupid and drowsy; high fever; right parotid gland more painful than left; red in face; eyes wide and staring; no thirst at all.

Pulsatilla. Clingy and whining, wanting comfort and consolation; little thirst; better outdoors and in fresh air; swelling or pains are changeable and may move from one place to another—ovaries, breasts, or testicles may be affected.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Francis Treuherz, MA, RSHom, FSHom, lives in London with his wife, 2 sons, a library of 7300 volumes on homeopathy, old bottles, medicine cases, portraits, and ephemera. After training, he has practiced homeopathy since 1984 including 13 years in the National Health Service. He has written many historical and clinical articles, a research report, and a book. He has served on the Board of the Society of Homeopaths and is now editor of their journal, *The Homeopath*, for the second time around.

Of course, there are other possible remedies that could be indicated, but the remedies mentioned here have served me well in the mumps cases that I have seen.

Taking a remedy

I usually recommend that patients take the indicated remedy in the 30c potency, 3 times daily for a couple of days, or as needed for relief. You may need to repeat the dose every 2 hours at first, but if it is the right remedy it may not be required very often; be cautious and wait and see after each dose; decrease frequency as you start to improve.

If symptoms do not clear, and you are concerned, call your homeopathic practitioner, and failing that, call your normal health care provider. In the U.K., you can call the Homeopathic Helpline, open 9 a.m. through midnight 365 days, at 09065 34 34 04 (U.K. time zone).