

Doctrine of Signature

Dr Geeta Rani Arora, Dr Reshma Dadlani

The Doctrine of Signature is a philosophy existing since the time of Dioscurides and Galen. This doctrine states that herbs that resemble various parts of the body can be used to treat ailments of that part of the body. A theological justification was made for this philosophy: "It was reasoned that the Almighty must have set his sign upon the various means of curing disease which he provided." The concept is still reflected in the common names of some plants whose shapes and colors reminded herbalists of the parts of the body where they were thought to do good. There is no scientific evidence that plant shapes and colors help in the discovery of medical uses of plants. Doctrine of Signature is one of the ways adopted in homeopathic study for studying Materia Medica. Here is a small attempt to understand the snake remedies by the way of Doctrine of Signature.

There are many traits which qualify as typical animal traits and can be seen in personalities of ophidia group. Few traits which are typical of animal and few which are typical of snake remedies are:

Kingdom-Animal

Animal Traits

- Competitiveness
- Aggressiveness
- Attractiveness
- Sexuality
- Revenge
- Energy
- Sexuality

Typical Snake traits

- Clairvoyance
- Deceit
- Suspicious
- Jealousy
- Malicious
- Venomous

The Poison

The poison of a snake is generally held in a little sac behind the fangs, on the undersurface of fangs is a small groove, into which empties a little tube that conveys the poison from the gland.

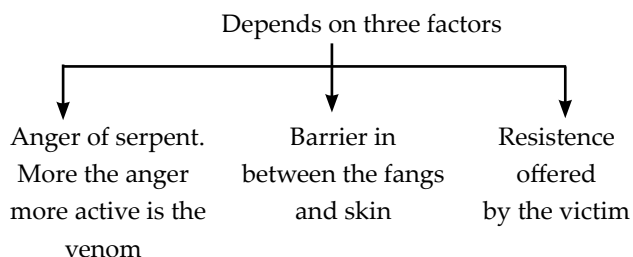
When not in use fangs dies back on the roof of the mouth.

When animal is excited it opens the mouth fangs are

pushed forward, by muscular action and a drop of poison runs down the canal and thereafter its pushed into the penetration wound.

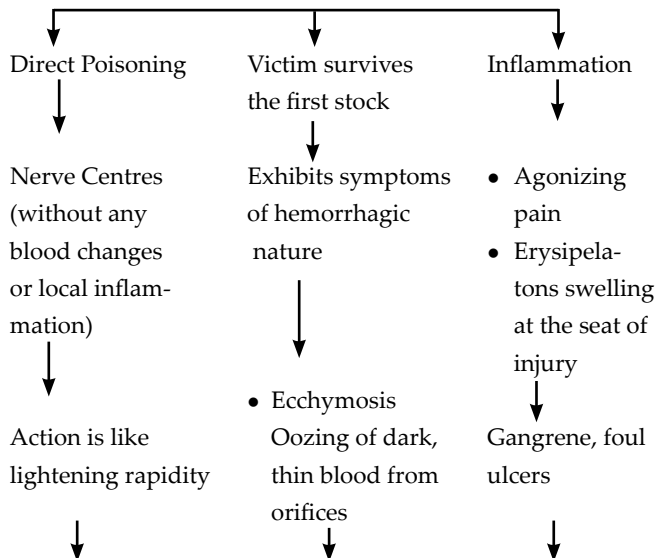


Potency of Poison



Action of a snake poison can be either neurotoxic or haemotoxic. In neurotoxic it especially acts upon pneumogastric and spinal accessory nerves.

Effects of Snake-Bite



Shock is first felt in the Spinal cord then in medulla involving:

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Functional integrity of brain 2. Pneumogastric nerves: Respiratory & cardiac system 3. Finally affects the sympathetic N-System 4. Occasionally convulsion and Death instantly from paralysis of heart | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Haematogenous jaundice • Fever • Flushed face • Injected conjunctiva • Thirst • Anorexia • Sore throat etc. • Bleeding gums | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Venom absorption by lymphatics • Inflammation of lymphatic glands • Veins: Pyaemia |
|--|--|--|

- Septicemia
- Malignant affections
- Dropsy
- Swellings
- Hemorrhages
- Varicosities
- Thromboplebitis
- Nymphomania etc.

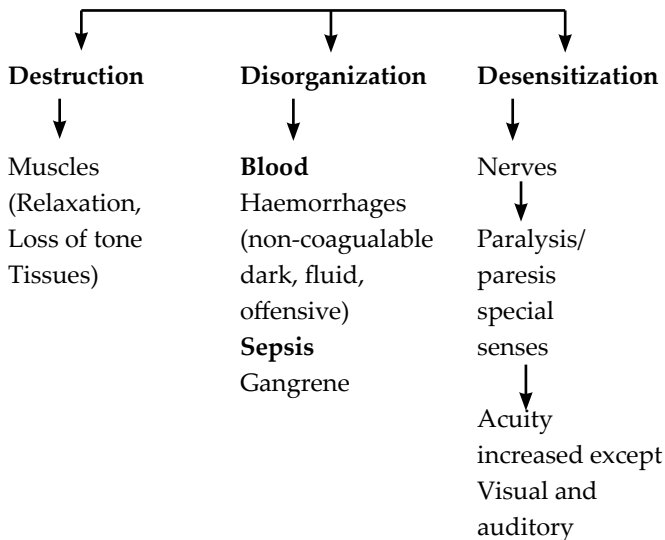
Physical Constitution

Hot, restless and purple and mottled appearance

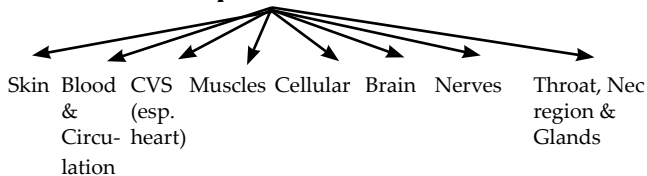
Mentals

1. Loquacity: Irrelevant, continuously changing subjects.
2. Increased sensibility of special senses where we see the manifestation as fear, anxiety, mental excitement, hallucinations etc.
3. Nervous – Depressions
4. Competitiveness
5. Clairvoyance
6. Deceit and Venomous quality
7. Self – consciousness.
8. Impulsive and Religious insanity.
9. Most active at dusk and night, awake all night without exhaustions, cheerful in evening, sluggish in morning and daytime (a feature also seen in snakes).
10. As snakes are worshipped for wisdom and sexuality , in people we find anxiety about salvation.
11. Melancholy, insanity.
12. Isolation: Tendency to lead a Secluded life, isolate themselves (Snakes-hibernation)
13. Intelligence – good comprehension.
14. Secretiveness – Aversion to company, want solitude, forsaken feeling.

Pathogenesis of a snake poison



Sphere of Action



Clinicals

- Gangrene
- Irregularities of Circulation : apoplexy and congestions
- Faintings
- Paralysis

Nature

- Self – conscious
- Greed
- Jealously
- Desire to kill (as snake)
- Quarrelsome
- Intelligent
- Revengeful
- Hatred
- Deceit
- Cruelty
- Brutality

- In human
- Destructive
- Vindictive
- Malicious
- Spiteful
- Venomous

Delusions

- They're under control Super-human power.
- of light weightedness.
- as if they're floating.

Desires

- To wonder & travel (Crawling like snakes)

Memory

- Active
- Quick response
- Good comprehension

Fear

Of water.

Positive traits

- Active
- Quick comprehension
- Competitive
- Clairvoyant
- Preservance
- Intelligent
- Sharp mind

Negative traits

- Haughty
- Lewd
- Rude
- Headless
- Quarrel
- Mock
- Insolent

Generalities

1. Nerves

- Increased sensitivity senses esp.

of special senses except visual and auditory.

- Hypersensitization
- Torpidity, numbness, twitching, formications and pains.
- Continuous motion like always protruding tongue etc.

2. Blood

Hemorrhages:

- Fluid dark
- Non-coagulable offensive
- Decomposed from all orifices.
- Ecchymosis.
- Septic affections
- Effusions, etc.
- Irregularities of circulation : B.P. abnormality, Apoplexy, Congestions etc.

3. Debility

- Prostration
- Trembling
- Collapse

4. Skin

- Inflammations and discoloration.
- Dark, red, purple, mottled
- Gangrene.
- Yellow staining and dryness. Harshness as if dead
- Clammy and dark spots. Perspiration cold, clammy
- Dropsy
- Cold to touch.

5. Putridity

- Rapid
- Decomposition
- Malignant tendencies

6. Glands

- Enlarged
- Inflamed
- Gangrenous

7. Discharge

- Offensive
- Scanty
- Bloody
- Dark
- Putrid

8. Constrictions

Esp. around throat cannot tolerate anything/clothing etc. and throat needs fanning from a far distance, suffocation.

9. Full of nervous energy

10. Pain

- < Sleep
- < Alcohol

11. Oversensitivity

Which is present overall in the person both at mental and physical level. Constantly seeking and outlet for relief, like a boiling pot, needs and outlet.

12. Side affected

Predominantly

Rt.	Lt.
Crotalus	Lachesis
Elaps	Naja
Bathrops.	

13. Modalities

Aggravations	Ameliorations
Sleep	Cold
Alcohol	Hard pressure
Tight clothing	Free discharges
Light	Swallowing solids
Swallowing	
Liquids	
Springs	
(esp. skin)	
Sunlight, heat	

14. Relationships

Antidoted by

- Alcohol
- Radiating heat
- Ammonium and potassium permanganate

Doctrine of Signature

Sleep and Active at Night snakes are usually awake at night	Kill each other ↓ Destructiveness misanthropy	Worshipped ↙ ↘ Wisdom sexuality Anxiety about salvation	<spring snakes shed their skin in this season.	Lt. sided most of the organs/system of snake are on this side.	Aecluded life (hibernation)
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Few typical traits of different members of ophidian group:-

LACHESIS : Lt. sided

- < sleep
- < excessive sensitivity of surface and intolerance to touch.
- > onset of discharges.
- Active loquacity.

NAJA:

- Cerebellum, medulla < sleep.
- Lt. sided.
- Chronic nervous palpitations after public speaking.

CROTALUS:

- Passive Loquacity
- Mental confusion
- Lt. sided
- Less < touch of clothes
- Some c/o < cold air
- < rt. side
- < sleep
- < spring > motion
- Blood
- Heart
- Cerebrospinal-
- Nervous system
- Liver
- Throat

VIPERA:

- Blood: venous side
- Sensation of fullness
- Burning > cold
- > Gentle motion

ELAPS:

- Blood: nose, ear and throat

- < storm
- < cold drink
- < dampness
- < night
- < room

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About the authors

Dr Geeta Rani Arora is a Classical Homeopathic practitioner practicing in Delhi. She is also working as an Editor for "The Homeopathic Heritage" an international journal of Homeopathy. She has done a certificate course from NIH, USA on complementary medicine. She has been involved in Homeopathic research at different levels since past 8 years. She has presented papers at international and National level seminars.

Dr Reshma Dadlani is a homeopathic Practitioner as well as a counselling Psychologist. She is attached with ICR group and practices in Pune, Maharashtra.

