

Fear of Monsters

A mother comes with her eight year old, Philip, for consultation, as he is afraid in the dark of octopus-like monsters, since he saw them in a Donald Duck comic book. Although he shares his room with his younger brother, he has great fear at night. The mother says one could almost speak of panic. At three years old he suffered from severe attacks of night terrors, which could last up to 40 minutes.

Philip appears robust, but is very sensitive. Because he is sensitive to noise, he sometimes wears noise cancelling headphones in school. He is sympathetic, helpful, caring, and very social. Sometimes he can be stubborn. He is very susceptible to strong mood swings, and especially when he is tired he easily starts to cry. When he is angry, he goes to bed or climbs up on a tree. He rarely has temper tantrums. In his free time he likes to play with Lego, does puzzles, or plays chess. He loves music and water. In the summer he can splash about in the lake for hours. Dirt doesn't bother him. As a small child it was easy to put him down. It is noticeable that he is not very sensitive to pain. He is a slow eater, as he is always talking at mealtimes. He learnt to speak early, but teething was late at 15 months old. His molars are brittle.

Philip was a very much wanted child. The mother became immediately pregnant. During the course of pregnancy, it was discovered that his umbilical cord had only two, instead of three, blood vessels. For two weeks this created great excitement, until the doctors were able to clarify that everything else was normal. Other than that, the mother was in excellent health during the pregnancy. She even gave concerts as a singer in an amateur band. Ten days before the due date her contractions started, which quickly became strong, and in hospital heightened into a veritable storm of contractions. When it was discovered that Philip was suffering from a drop in oxygen, they did an episiotomy, so that his birth could be speeded up. The mother was overjoyed when she had him laid on her breast. For the next two days she was virtually overrun with congratulating visitors, who all wanted to get to hold the baby. Breastfeeding initially went well, but soon her nipples turned into open sores, so that it became associated with hellish pain. From day to day the mother's condition worsened, so that after a month, completely enervated and in tears, she stopped breastfeeding.

The mother's own birth was also dramatic. During the 36th week of pregnancy her mother suddenly developed a fever of 40°C and was taken to hospital in an ambulance, with sirens blaring. There, labour was immediately induced. After delivery the infant girl was taken to another department for further examination, without the mother having had a chance to even hold her.

Finding the Remedy

Indications for a matridonal remedy

- sympathetic, helpful, caring and very sociable (*Lanthanide quality*)
- susceptible to strong mood swings (*Instability, alternating and opposing moods*)
- pregnancy marred by fear of malformation, as the umbilical cord only consisted of two blood vessels (*ailments from trauma during pregnancy*)
- birth was dramatic (violent contractions, episiotomy) (*ailments from trauma during birth*)
- already the mother's own birth was dramatic (taken to hospital in an ambulance) (*ailments from trauma during pregnancy*)

Indications for a remedy

- sensitive to noise, wears noise cancelling headphones in school > Vern-c.
- seldom has temper tantrums > Amn-l., Vern-c., Foll.
- learnt to speak early > Oxyt.
- violent contractions > Oxyt.
- everything became too much for the mother after the birth > Vern-c.
- mother suffered severe pain during breastfeeding > Oxyt., Lac-h.

Commentary

With respect to the symptoms indicative for selecting a remedy, Oxytocinum and Vernix-c. are about equal. As Philip is a more gentle boy, not inclined to aggression, the choice falls on Vernix caseosa. Because he loves water, one could also think of the gentle Amnii liquor. But, as he is not bothered by dirt, and it was easy to put him down as an infant, this speaks against this remedy.

Prescription

Vernix caseosa C₂₀₀ (one dose each today and tomorrow)

Progress

After one month and two weeks

- very good response; has never again had fear or panic at night
- was very tired at the end of the school year: only once said that he was afraid of intruders (without panic, said in a normal voice)

> **Vernix caseosa** C₂₀₀

After one year

- it's going well, no more fears at night