



APIS MELLIFICA

Apis mellifica or *mellifera* is a homeopathic remedy prepared from the honey bee, a well known insect of the Hymenoptera family. The immediate response to honeybee venom is also well known: local stitching pain, inflammation, redness and swelling of the area and anaphylactic reactions. These effects seemingly involve the inhibition of the peripheral cholinergic neurotransmitter system. More recent studies suggest a deeper level of action, reaching even the level of DNA fragmentation.

Signs and symptoms of multiple stings include urticaria (hives), nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, hypotension, confusion, seizures, and renal failure. Mass inoculation of bee venom may induce acute renal failure (ARF), adult respiratory distress syndrome, liver injury, cardiac damage, pancreatitis, skin necrosis, shock hypertension, bleeding, thrombocytopenia, hemolysis, and rhabdomyolysis. Animal studies have shown a decrease in glomerular filtration rate and urinary volume after bee venom infusion. In the same way, venom caused a sharp and immediate decrease in renal blood flow.

Apis in acute conditions

Homeopathically, *Apis* is one of the main remedies for a well-defined picture **inflammatory edema** - mostly, but not necessarily, of allergic nature: light red or pink hues, affecting large surfaces, irradiating heat and usually not pruriginous. Because of its similarity in aspect and pathophysiological processes, *Apis* is probably the most indicated in allergic conditions like angioneurotic, or Quincke edema.

Case illustration of a characteristic *Apis* allergic edema.

The patient, known with an Allergic asthma in childhood, treated with homeopathy, was bitten by an insect and in few minutes he developed a huge edema all over the body, including face, lips, eyelids and ears.



On a red inflammatory surface, he firstly developed spots, then patches of swelling which expanded like “oil patches”, becoming confluent. The swelling patches are of a lighter pink colour than the basis and they are elevated from the skin surface.



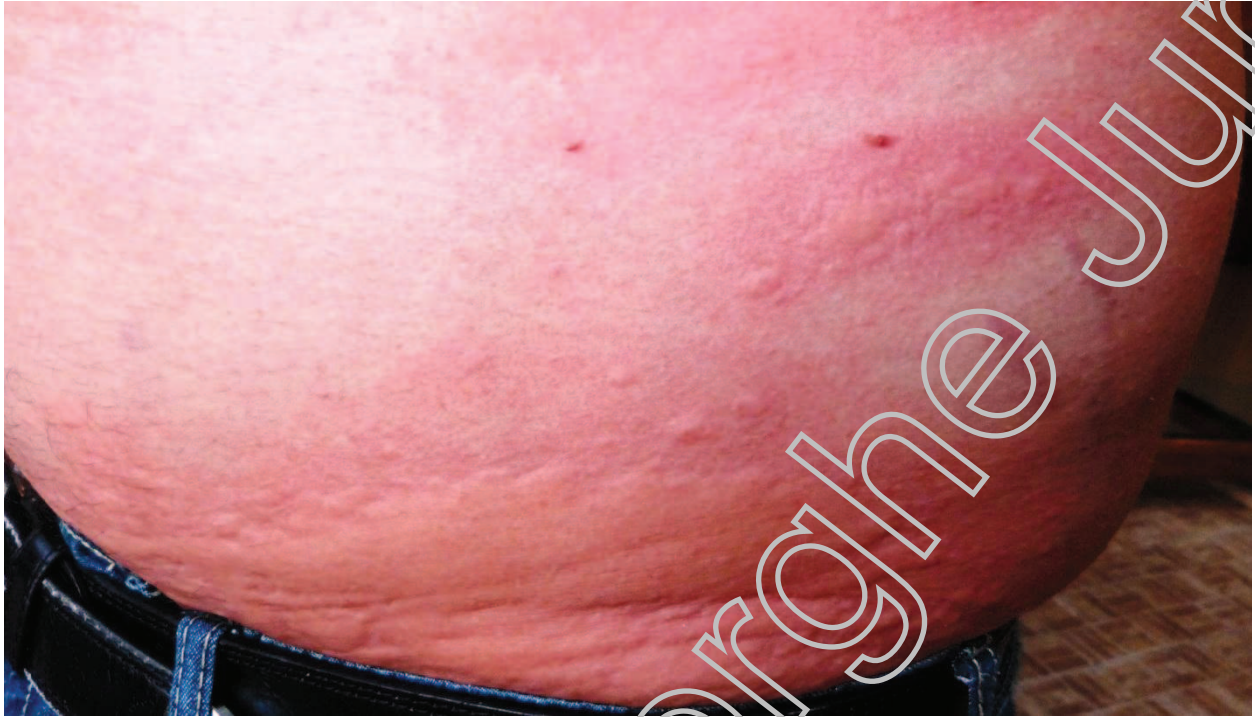


The image could be confounded with an initial phase of vesiculation, but on a closer look, we can see that the whole dermis is swollen, without acantholysis.





Local edema is more expressed on contact or pressure surfaces



But also on parts which can swollen freely because of soft tissues, like eyelids or ears



The overall sensation is of heat and swelling. There is a need for cold and wet applications, which ameliorates both sensations and local swelling. The cold wet applications must be removed fast, as

long as they become warmed (as in fever, therefor Apis can be a valuable remedy for certain specific kinds of fever, with swelling in different parts, congestion and need for cold wet applications).



After application, the swelling parts became less congestive and whitish in colour.

In these cases , homeopathic *Apis* is a precious remedy, as fast in action and effects as the allopathic antihistaminic drugs.





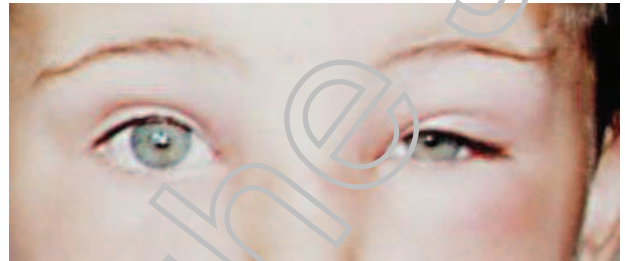
Characteristically, it is ameliorated by cold applications; however when these are applied for too long a time chills may appear.



In some cases, swelling appears as puffy, angioneurotic edema of allergic nature, affecting the face as a whole, more noticeable in the lips and the cheeks.



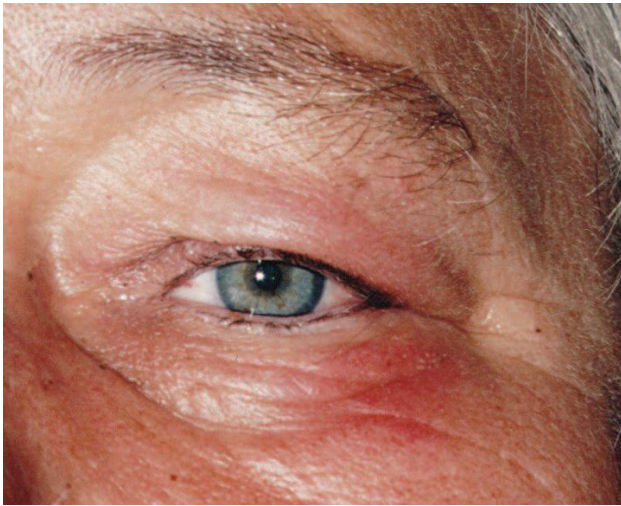
A typical localization is on the upper lid; to notice: one-sided pink-red edema of the upper lid, concomitant with red shiny lips,



Urticarian eruption on the trunk, with vesicular-papular red elements on a large erythematous basis. To notice, the tendency to obesity:



Edema can be definitely red, affecting both lids and both sides, associated with blepharoconjunctivitis:



Or other conditions, such as erythrasma:



Or febrile, infectious or allergic conditions or insect bites. In any of such states, Apis must be considered in differential diagnosis when edema extends all around the eye.





A particular sign of *Apis* is the apparition of this type of erythema on the throat and the upper part of the chest: uniformly distributed on relatively large areas and presenting small pimples rising from the surface of this skin. This manifestation must be distinguished from the marbled and polymorphic erythema – mostly of emotional origin – present in other remedies, such as *Lachesis*, *Pulsatilla* and *Staphisagria*.

Edema can also be associated with lymphatic disturbs or inflammatory diseases, such as erysipelas, in any part of the body. On the right, lymphedema of the lower limb, hot to touch.



Apis is one of the most effective homeopathic remedies in lymphedema of the arms after surgery for breast cancer, when the clinical features are compatible: cellulitic infiltration, orange hue of the skin, hot light-red edema and aggravation by heat.



On a closer look, diffuse papules on the swollen arm.

***Apis* as a Constitutional Remedy**

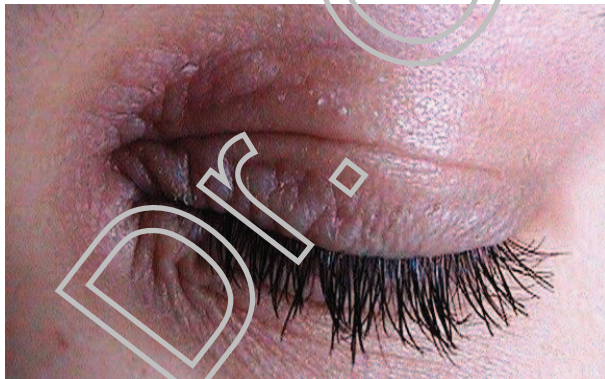
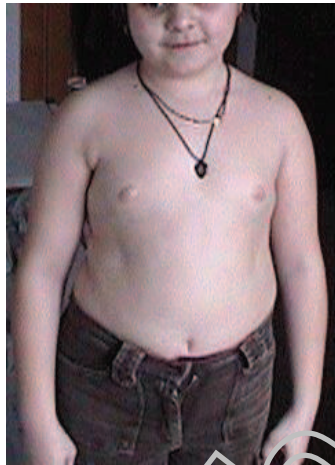
Apis is not only a conjuncture remedy, indicated in allergic or edematous disorders, but it can also be a typological remedy with deep action.

Case illustration: 40 year-old woman, presenting with hemicranias, urinary infections and allergy to antibiotics. The sign that started the active inquiry for *Apis* were the characteristics of the swelling of the lower right lid.



The lower limbs were infiltrated, showing cellulitis; the patient complained of swelling of the limbs in the evening.

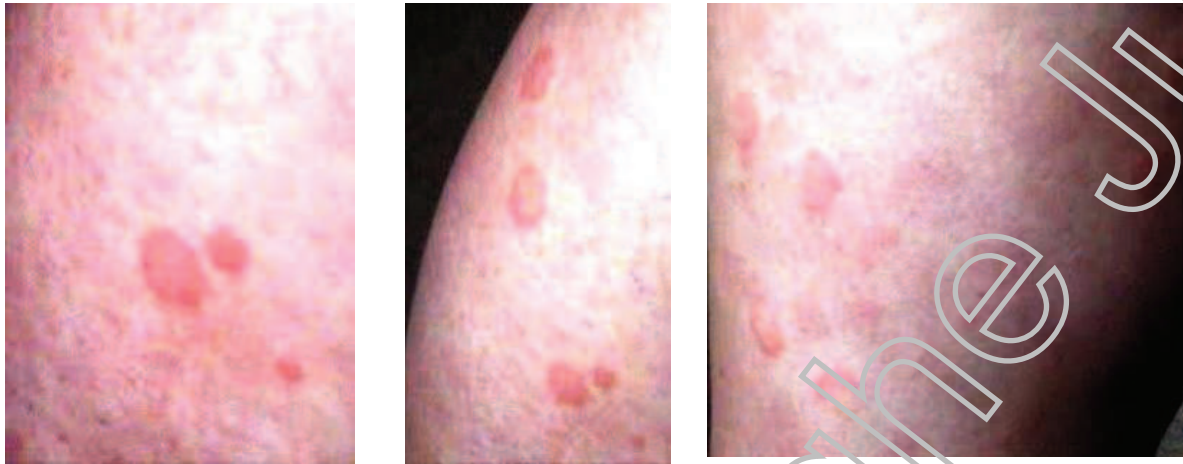
Case illustration: association of recurrent urinary infections in alternation with erythematous tonsillitis in a corpulent girl; infiltrated hands; marbled skin.



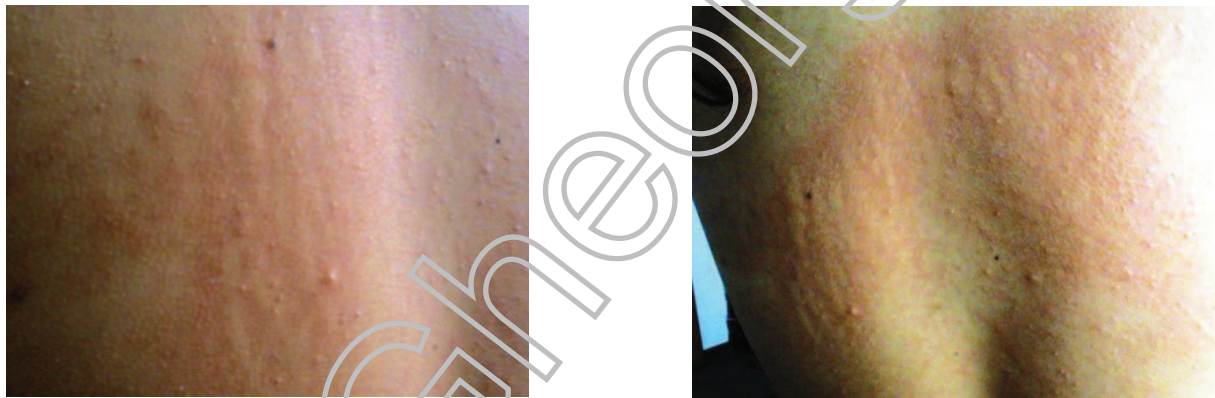
On a closer look, edematous and scaling blepharitis; the tongue is large and clean. The pillars of the throat are slightly congested, but in acute inflammation, the tonsils may enlarge enormously, until uniting in the middle line and the uvula might hang like a bag, due to edema.



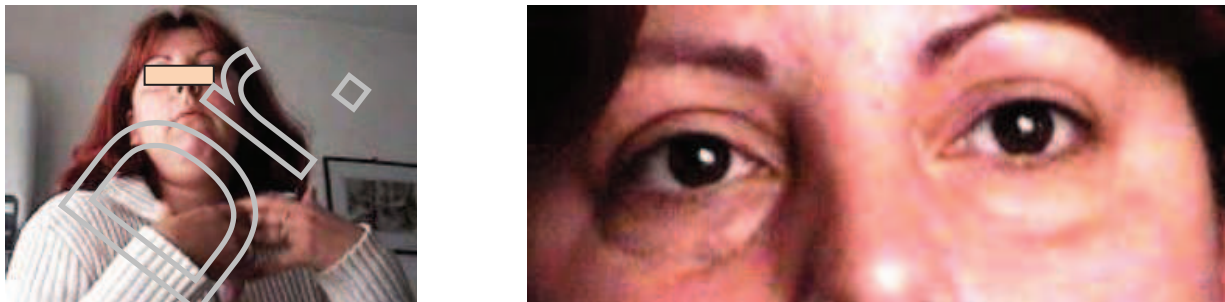
Case illustration: an instance of severe Quincke's edema, allows following the progression of the lesions. They first appear as red delimited papillae, eventually surrounded by a paler area.



Then, lesions spread in extension and multiply, becoming large edematous, pink-red elevated patches, sometimes with paler striped and keeping the imprint of the clothes:

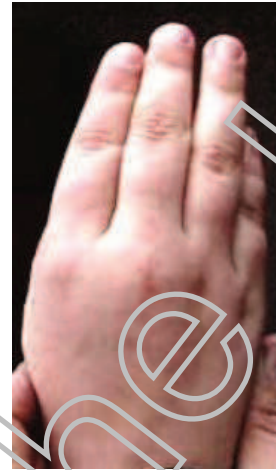
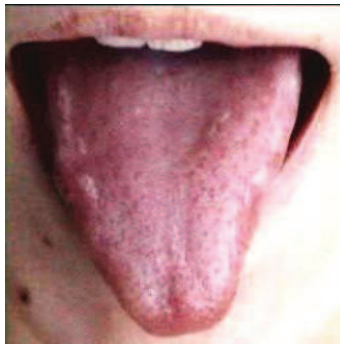
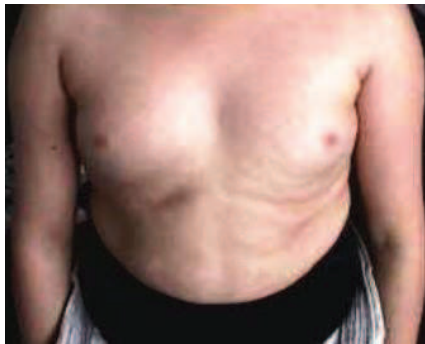


At the same time, difficult respiration, swelling of lips; on a closer look, the same discrete subocular edema on the right side

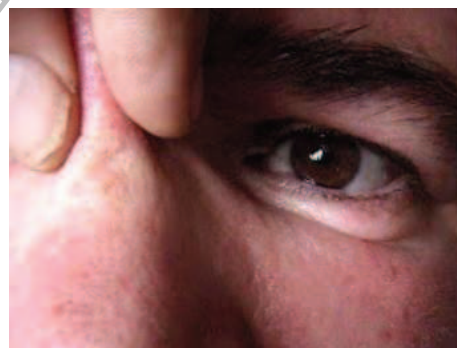
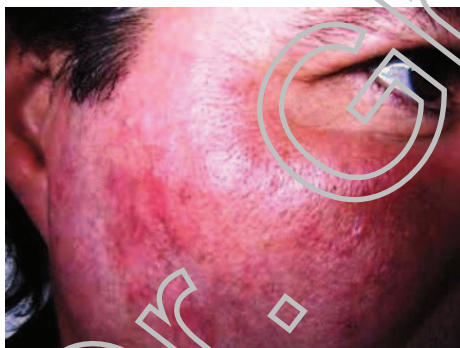


When signs and symptoms indicate it, *Apis* is one of the main homeopathic remedies for glomerulonephritis, especially the clinical forms associated with edema. Here, the case of a 7 year-old girl with recurrent glomerulonephritis with nephrotic syndrome. To notice, the configuration of

signs: corpulence, infiltration, dry lips, erected papillae on the tongue, the tongue is deviated to the left; hands are infiltrated and the skin is marbled.



Case illustration: rosacea in a 45 year-old man, aggravating by exposure to dust and odors. Red papular elements on an erythematous – edematous basis – acne in *Apis* also presents these traits. Edema infiltrated the eyelids, the root of the nose and also the forehead.



On digital pressure, a long-lasting white imprint can be found in most cases of *Apis* edema.



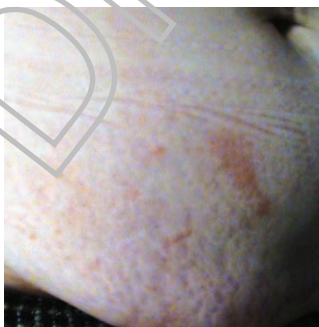
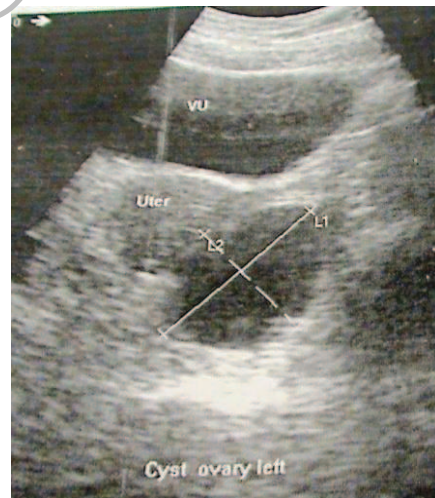
Apis



Other elements in configuration included a large and clean throat; slightly erythematous throat without subjective complaints, but with enlarged uvula and pillars.



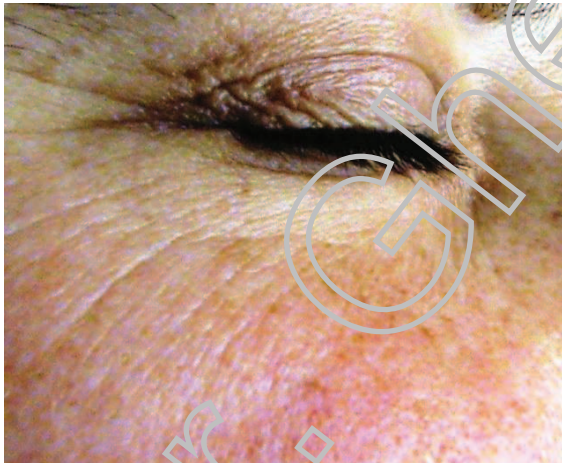
However, indications of *Apis* do not necessarily require the presence of patent edema. The following is the case of a 35 year-old female patient, consulting for menstrual disturbs and a cyst in the left ovary. The skin of the abdomen shows a mild erythema, due to the pressure of the ultrasound instrument. Similarly, it may also be seen the imprint of the clothes on the skin "as if" it was edematous.



Localized redness in the throat, that the patient says it is almost constant. There is also redness on the cheeks, with slight venectasis and accentuated design of the upper lip; lips are dry.



Large, clear tongue, distinct papillae; crack in the middle line and asymmetry.



Only on a closer look edema is visible in the eyelids.

Also the hands are infiltrated; to notice the accentuation of the skin folds on the fingers' joints;



“*Ring sign*”: the patient cannot remove easily the ring on her finger due to the infiltration of the skin.



***Apis* and dermographism**

An important sign frequently found in *Apis* patients is dermographism, leaving red, swollen stripes. This sign – an accentuated reaction of the skin to scratching and external pressure – can also be found in other typologies and constitutions (*Calcarea carbonica*, *Pulsatilla*, *Sulphur*, etc.), but presenting different qualities.

In *Apis* patients is dermographism: a first phase of redness on the scratch lines and diffuse erythema between them is followed by light red edema.

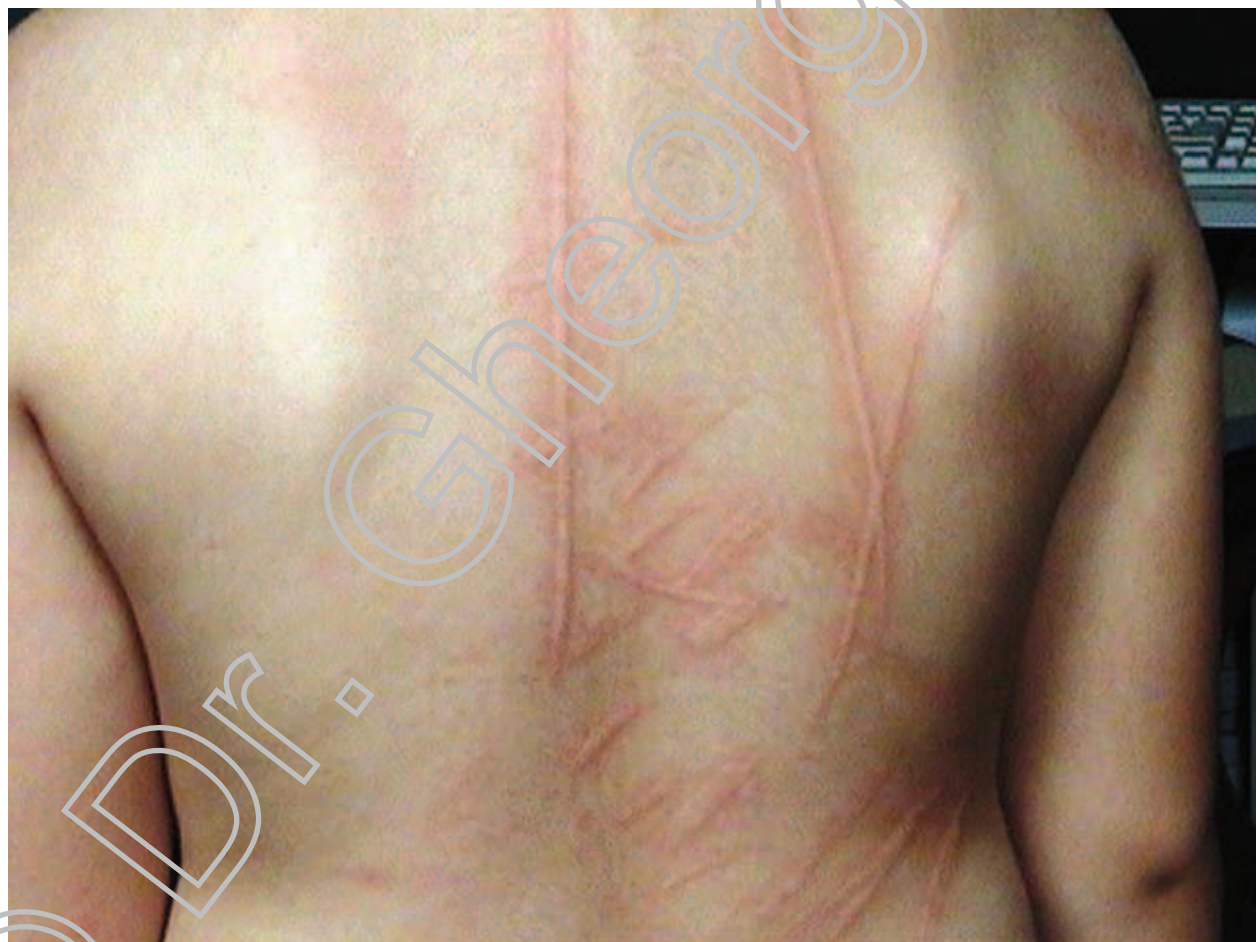
Dermographism is defined as an exaggerated cutaneous reaction on linear stimuli, as eg. Scratching or applied linear pressure, after which appear erythema and a more or less expressed edema (from some millimeters to one centimeter or so, in very reactive cases) Dermographism is usually associated with an overreaction of skin to such stimuli as Histamine, Serotonine and is related with an allergic terrain.

Together with few others remedies (Lach, Vespa, Sulfur, Bryonia, Ledum, Pulsatilla, Sepia) *Apis* is probably the most reactive in what concerns Dermographism.

The characteristic of *Apis* Dermographism: rosaceous (pink) erythema with swelling and local heat, fits well with the general descriptions of local effects of honey bee bite.



In the first phase, the swelling is red, touchable warm on a pink basis



When the marks begun to retreat, after few minutes (more they last more they indicate the remedy), the pink halo becomes whitish, as well as the traces



. In *Apis*, the traces last for a long time (minutes) and end being finally linear skin white-pinkish marks.

