

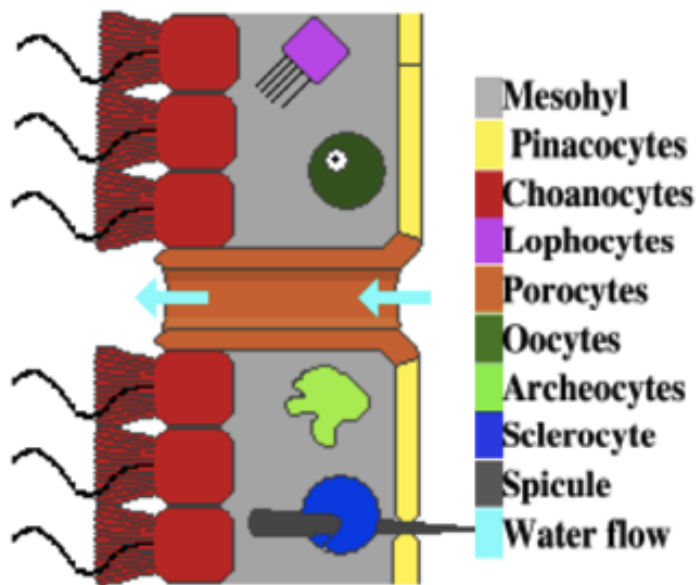
Porifera

Porifera are the first beings we may truly call animals. Porifera are a large, ancient and diverse group of aquatic organisms ranging throughout most shallow aquatic habitats on the planet. They are commonly referred to as sponges in English.

Sponges are likely the immediate descendants of the choanoflagellates which were the immediate ancestors of the animals. Some cells in fact still bear a striking resemblance to the choanoflagellates, which unfortunately remain homeopathically unproven.

Sponges are relatively simple animals. While in most animals cells lose their ability to change their external forms and functions after their differentiation from stem cells, many sponge cells retain this ability (called totipotency), such as choanocytes or archaeocytes¹. Sponges also lack specialized tissues, and many of the features otherwise universal in animals, such as digestive organs, symmetry of any kind, and nervous systems².

The basic cellular structure of the sponges is relatively simple. It is shown diagrammatically below³ :

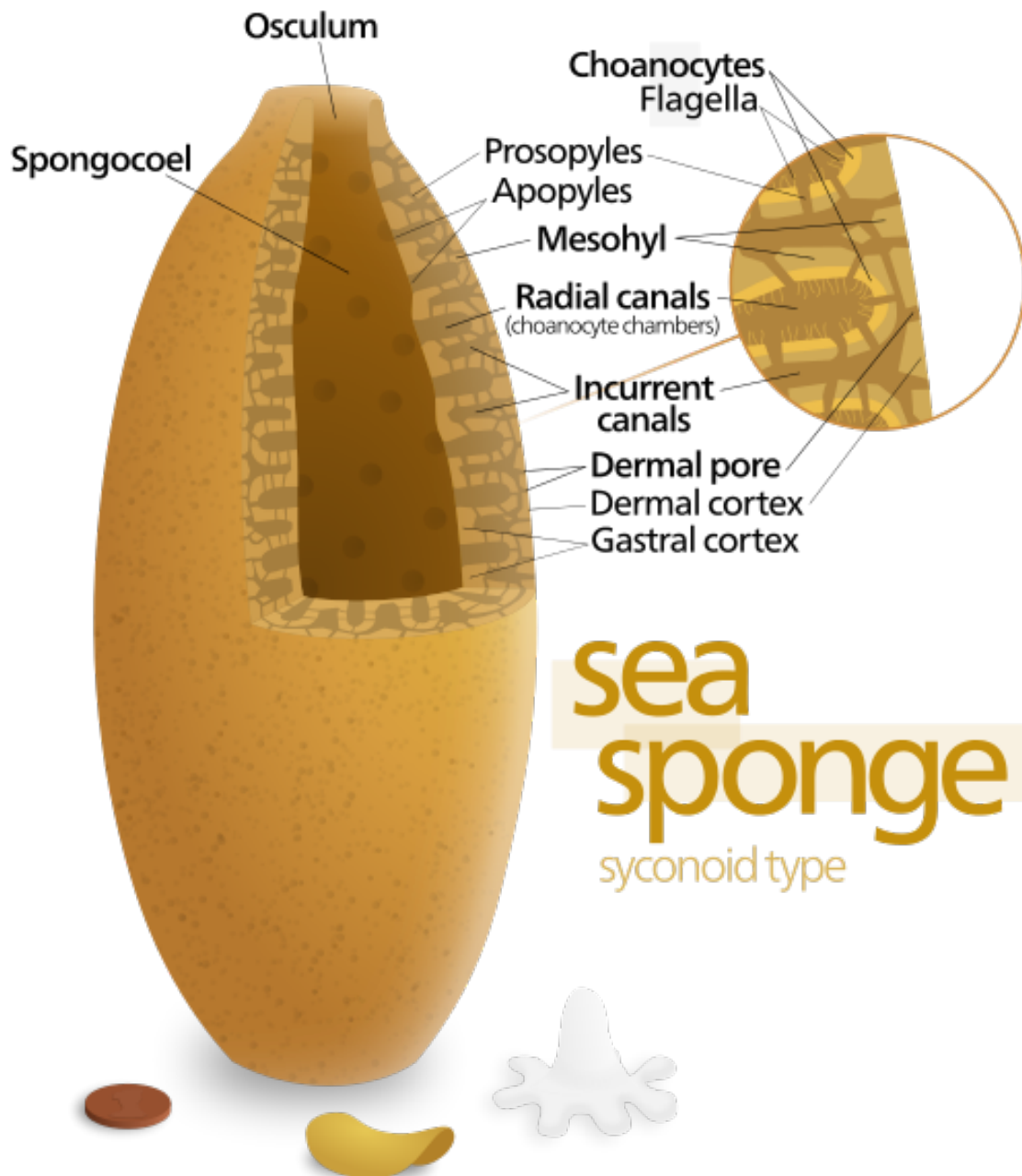


Sponges cellular structure involves two layers of cells linked together by a central protein mesh called a mesohyl or mesenchyme⁴. The outer cells, or Pinacocytes form a skin to protect the external surfaces of the sponge⁵. Inner cells called choanocytes line the inner areas of the sponge, and have flagella with which they move water through the sponge body pores⁶. These cells are also responsible for filtering food out of the water filtered through the sponge, where it is digested by the totipotent

archaeocytes⁷. These cells bear a striking resemblance to Choanoflagellates, leading to the knowledge of the close evolutionary relationship between these two groups of organisms⁸. Other cells called myocytes and porocytes, while not muscle cells, create rudimentary contractile movement⁹.

The above structure is anchored upon a hard skeleton which is secreted by Sclerocytes¹⁰. Several different variation of skeletons are known among sponges, leading to their major classifications, discussed below.

Sponges external morphology is also very simple, diagrammed below¹¹:



Sponges have a generally round tube shaped bodies, which contain many small pores. Choanocytes using their flagella create a flow of water through these pores, and filter out bacteria and small organisms which float within their reach. The filtered water collects in an internal cavity, known as a Spongoceol, and is discharged out an orifice, called an Osculum.

Sponges can reproduce both sexually and asexually, through budding. Sexually reproducing sponges usually are hermaphroditic, and produce eggs and sperm at different times¹². Some sponges actually capture sperm, and allow their eggs to be fertilized internally and either release or maintain the resulting larvae¹³. Once released, larvae find a spot to settle, and mature into juvenile sponges¹⁴.

Sponges are divided into three major classes by most modern biologists¹⁵. Each type has a distinct type of skeletal framework, and some biological changes. Extant sponges are divided into three main divisions: The calcareous sponges, the Hexactinellid or glass sponges, and the Desmosponges¹⁶. Three extinct divisions are also noted, known as the Archaeocyatha and Stromatoporids which went extinct in the Cambrian and the Carboniferous respectively, and the Sphinctozoans which went extinct at the end of the Cretaceous¹⁷.

Arguably the earliest group of Sponges is the Hexactinellid or Glass Sponges. These sponges have skeletons composed largely of 6 pointed silica spicules. They are largely cup or glass shaped and their silica skeletons are very rigid¹⁸. They tend to live at greater depth than other sponge classes, being found often several hundred meters below the surface. Their cells tend to form large syncytia, or large giant cells with many nuclei formed by the merging together of several small individual nucleated cells¹⁹. A photo of a representative species (*Aphrocallistes vastus*) is given below ²⁰.



A second class of sponges are the Desmosponges, This group is the largest in terms of species, containing approximately 90% of all sponges. This subphyla is relatively diverse, including many large sponge species. These sponges have single nucleated cells, and have skeletons made out of silica, spongin or a combination of the two²¹. They reproduce both sexually and asexually and tend to live in shallower waters. An example is shown below of the Red Volcano Sponge (*Acanus erithacus*)²²:



The final, and most advanced class of Sponges are the Calcareous sponges. Their skeletons are composed of Calcium carbonate and their cells have single nuclei²³. According to genetic analysis, these sponges are very closely related to Cnidaria, and are the probable ancestors of the other animal phyla²⁴. An example is given below, of the species *Clathrina clathrus*, which has been potentised²⁵.



The extant sponges are differentiated in the chart below:

Sponge Class	Defining Characteristics
Calcareous	Skeletons made of Calcium Carbonate ²⁶ . Very closely related to Cnidarians, probable ancestors of more advanced animal life.
Desmosponges	Skeletons composed of Spongin (a protein) or Silica. If silica skeleton is present, the structure has 1-4 rays, which are not at right angles to one another ²⁷ . Largest and most diverse group of sponges.
Glass Sponges (Hexactinillids)	Skeletons made of silica with 6 rays. Thought to be the most primitive of the sponges. Many of their tissues are syncytia (large cellular masses formed by many cells combining together in large multinucleated bodies, composed of many formerly individual cells combining themselves into one undifferentiated mass). Lack of some cell types (such as archaeocytes). No specific motility cells. Are able to move via electrical conductivity systems ²⁸ .

Sponges are extremely ancient life forms. The earliest fossils have been identified or occurring in the Vendian era²⁹. They achieved fantastic diversity during the Cambrian and Cretaceous eras, of which the fossil record is only poorly reflective of³⁰. In many eras, sponges were in fact responsible for most of the reef building activity, despite that ecological niche being primarily filled by Cnidarians today. The first known sponge is called *Paleophragmodictya*, and is dated from 650-543 million years ago³¹.

A number of biological forms appear to have originated in the sponge. The contractile ability of the sponge appears to function systematically, giving the sponge the ability to in effect, cough and remove obstructions from its pores³². Sponges were also described by Dr. Helan Jaworski as presenting precursors to both lymphatic and glandular tissues³³. Jaworski also likens the skeletal structures of Sponges to our own bones. Other structures, like the flagella, are still clearly used in our reproductive tracts, such as in sperm and in the flagella lining the fallopian tubes.

Ecological role of Sponges:

Sponges have played a major role in the ecology of earth since their evolution. In many epochs, such as the Cambrian and the Cretaceous, sponges made up a majority of the reefs on earth³⁴. In the contemporary ecosystem, sponges still play an important role. One sponge can filter approximately 20000 times its own volume in a single day, filtering up to 90% of the bacteria present³⁵. Sponges thus play an important role in cleansing and purifying water, and ensuring the resulting health of their ecosystems. Sponges are often some of the first organisms to be adversely affected by water pollution, and now serve as important indicators of the ecological health of their ecosystems. The more primitive Glass sponges are not as efficient at

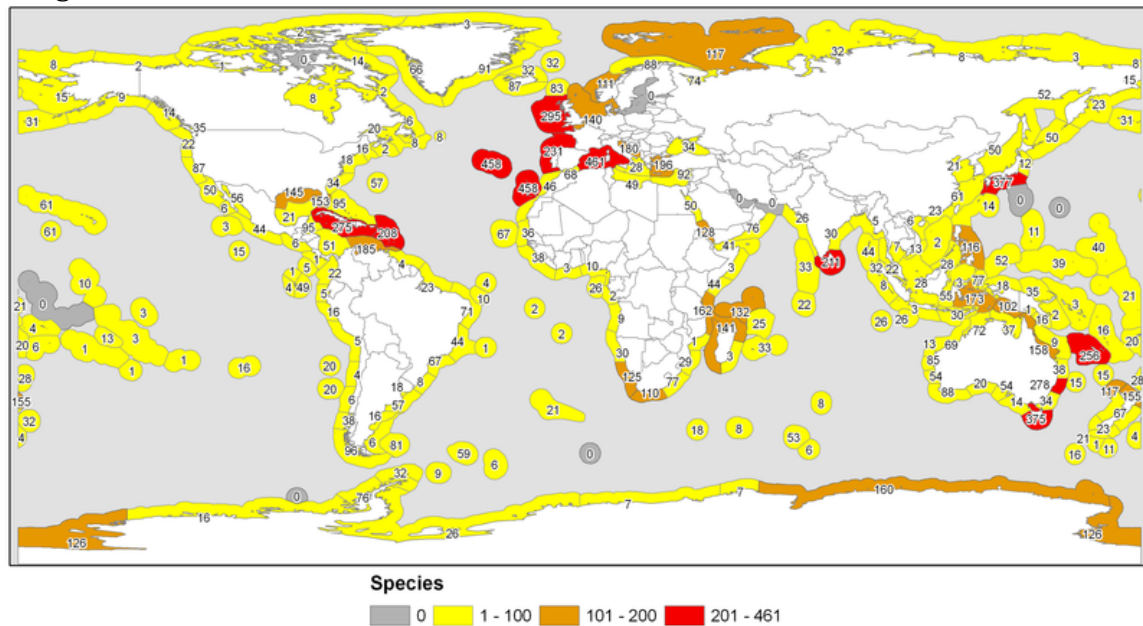
filtering bacteria, and likely have a great reliance on filtering out bits of organic matter³⁶

Sponges also serve as hosts to many other organisms. A large variety of bacteria host within the bodies of sponges in symbiotic, pathogenic or parasitic modes³⁷. Sponge sponges host photosynthetic organisms and may end up producing more oxygen and organic matter than the sponge itself consumes³⁸. Some sponges in fact have a symbiotic relationship with photosynthetic organisms, such as cyanobacteria, and thus derive their nutrition from these symbionts³⁹. Sponges also host a number of other animals, such as small crabs and crustaceans. One of our proved sponges (*Euplectella*) is in fact is venerated in East Asian cultures for providing homes for pairs of mating shrimp.

Sponges also have a complex chemical life, and produce a wide variety of biomolecules which serve defensive purposes, though it remains uncertain whether the sponges themselves or commensal microbes synthesize these compounds⁴⁰.

Some sponges are also carnivorous! A few members of the Cladorhizidae (desmosponges) have small spicules that attach to crustaceans. These crustaceans are then soon engulfed by cells and externally digested in a process resembling immune system functioning in high animals⁴¹.

Sponges are found in almost all shallow aquatic habitats, including both freshwater and marine habitats and in hostile biomes such as the Antarctic and the Arctic oceans. The follow diagram shows the relative concentrations of species throughout the globe⁴²:



Unique Characteristics of Sponges:

Sponges have a number of unique characteristics that interest us within Homeopathy. In terms of their unique characteristics among animals we can examine:

1. Cells remain able to change forms and functions, in effect staying **uncommitted** to their roles. It is as if sponges are groups of single cells, rather than multicellular organisms.
2. Their **lack of differentiation** into separate tissues.
3. Their relative **passivity** compared to other animals.
4. Their ability to contract, which Jo Evans likens to **coughing**⁴³
5. Sponges seem to form a basis for many of the structures of more complex animals, including **glands, lungs, lymphatic tissue, reproductive systems and immune systems**.
6. Their high concentrations of halogens, particularly Iodine, further strengthening their connections to the **glands**, especially the **thyroid**.

History of Sponge use in Homeopathy and Medicine:

Sponges have an extensive history of use within medicine, both Homeopathy, folk medicine and in contemporary allopathy.

Sponges have long been used in folk medicine for their effect on the glands. The sponge is traditionally toasted before use, and has been employed in disorders of hardening glands, bone issues and goiters⁴⁴. It was also used to treat Cancers⁴⁵.

The anti-goiter properties of Sponge were the reasons the remedy was selected by Hahnemann for Proving. *Spongia tosta* is described in the *Materia Medica Pura*. The proving was greatly expanded after Hahnemann's time, and was extensively used by Kent and others.

Modern Allopathic Medicine has also taken a keen interest in Sponges in recent years. Many of the biochemicals within sponges are currently being researched for their applications in immunostimulation and immunomodulation as well as antimicrobial compounds, anticancer compounds, anti-HIV compounds, Anti-Malarials, Anti-Bacterials, Anti-Tuberculars, Antifungals and Anti-Alzheimers compounds⁴⁶. Some of these compounds are now candidates for drug development, and some work is likely to be ongoing, though work remains difficult due to the difficulty of obtaining sufficient volumes of sponge biochemicals for research purposes⁴⁷.

Systematics and Characteristics of Porifera in Homeopathy:

Porifera are the earliest known animals, and thus fall within the first layer of the Homeopathic structure discussed in chapter one. This is confirmed by the available provings and cases. As layer one remedies, an emphasis on incarnational issues, existence or lack thereof, and existential problems are to be expected within this family. Sponges also have large amounts of either Calcium carbonate or Silica in

their skeletons, which will often lead to a Silica or Calcareous flavor to some of these remedies, but within an overall framework of layer one.

The sponges, based on the research and clinical cases thusfar available, seem to have an emphasis on themes of existing or not existing depending on the outside circumstances, maintaining the activities of daily life, the purpose and meaning of life and distortions of sensation. In my work thusfar I have found the sponges to have a deep insecurity about living and existing in the world. The nature of that insecurity, and the factors which particularly highlight it to the individual patient seem, thusfar, to be characteristic of the individual sponge remedy needed.

As relatively few Sponges have yet been proven, it is likely that our knowledge and understanding of this phylum will change expand as more provings and clinical cases emerge. I do hope, in future editions and updates of this work, to have more sponge remedies to share with you.

As so few sponge remedies exist, it is difficult to differentiate the different evolutionary classes of sponges, as is possible in other animal phyla.

However, based on what we know about sponge evolution and morphology, some tentative themes may be proposed. I stress these themes remain speculative until amore extensive number of provings have been conducted. The themes are arranged from most primitive and basic to most well developed.

Sponge class	Possible themes
Hexactinellids (Glass Sponges)	The formation of syncytia (large multinucleated cells formed from the merging of smaller cells with single nuclei) suggests to me that the process of incarnation may be resisted in this group. They may wish to return and remerge with the divine. I suspect each individual remedy will have a particular issue which causes them the retreat back into the oneness out of which they emerge.
Desmosponges	The being is unsure of whether or not to commit to life. They perceive some of the necessary factors for being alive to be deficient, and thus avoid making a commitment and fully incarnating. Each individual remedy likely has a separate issue that stops them from fully committing to life.
Calcareous	The being feels ready to commit to life, but issues of inadequacy in some respect keep them from doing so. Each individual remedy likely has a separate inadequacy that prevents them from fully incarnating.

I will speculate also that the Calcareous sponges and the Desmosponges may have more of a resemblance to the remedy Calcium carbonate, due to their calcium skeletons. I also will speculate that Hexactinellid sponges will resemble silica in some respects, due to the silicate component of their skeletons.

Proven and Unproven remedies within Porifera:

Unfortunately, very few Sponges have yet been potentised, and fewer still have been proven. They are shown, by class, in the following table^a:

Sponge class	Proven Remedies	Unproven Remedies
Glass(Hexametridid) Sponges	Euplectella aspegillum (euple-a) ^v	None
Desmosponges	Spongia Toasta (spong), Badagia (bad)	Chondosia reniformis (chond-r) ^R
Calcareous Sponges	None	Clathrina clathrus (clath- c) ^R
^R indicates the remedy is available from Remedia Pharmacies ^v indicates the remedy is available from Verfügbarkeit des Mittels bei Enzian Apotheke erfragen All other remedies are available at most pharmacies.		

Proving Suggestions:

Due to the extremely small numbers of sponges that have been homeopathically proven, any sponge provings would be very useful to the homeopathic world.

Due to the fact that two Desmosponges have been proven, more extensive provings of both Hexactinellid and Calcareous sponges are strongly recommended. One remedy, Clathrina clathrus has already been made into a remedy by Remedia, and so would be an excellent candidate for provings.

In terms of sponges which may be particularly fascinating to prove, I would like to suggest both the Carnivorous Sponges and Photosynthetic sponges.

Carniverous sponges are desmosponges of the family Cladorhizidae which passively capture small organisms and actively digest them extracellularly. I cannot even speculate on the homeopathic themes this sponge would have, but would be fascinated to see the results.

A second group of sponges that would be fascinating to prove are the photosynthetic sponges. A diverse group of sponges have evolved symbiotic

^a I would like to thank Jorg Wichmann for his animal systematics developed on his website www.provings.info which greatly simplified my research.

relationships with photosynthetic algae or cyanobacteria (precursors of photosynthetic organelles of plants) bringing them very close to plants in their life modes⁴⁸. This crossover, in the context of a layer one remedy family would be fascinating to observe. These sponges are particularly abundant in Australia, so I do hope my Australian colleagues will take up a proving of these magnificent animals. One genus suggested would be the blue sponges Collosporgia.

Lastly, while not strictly a sponge, another remedy which would be most illuminating is the choanoflagellates. This group of organisms represents the boundary between cells that live as individuals, and cells that begin to work together in organisms. They lie at a crucial point in evolutionary history, and thus would have great significance within homeopathy. A proving of a pure culture of any choanoflagellate species would be most enlightening.

Materia Medica of Sponge Remedies^b:

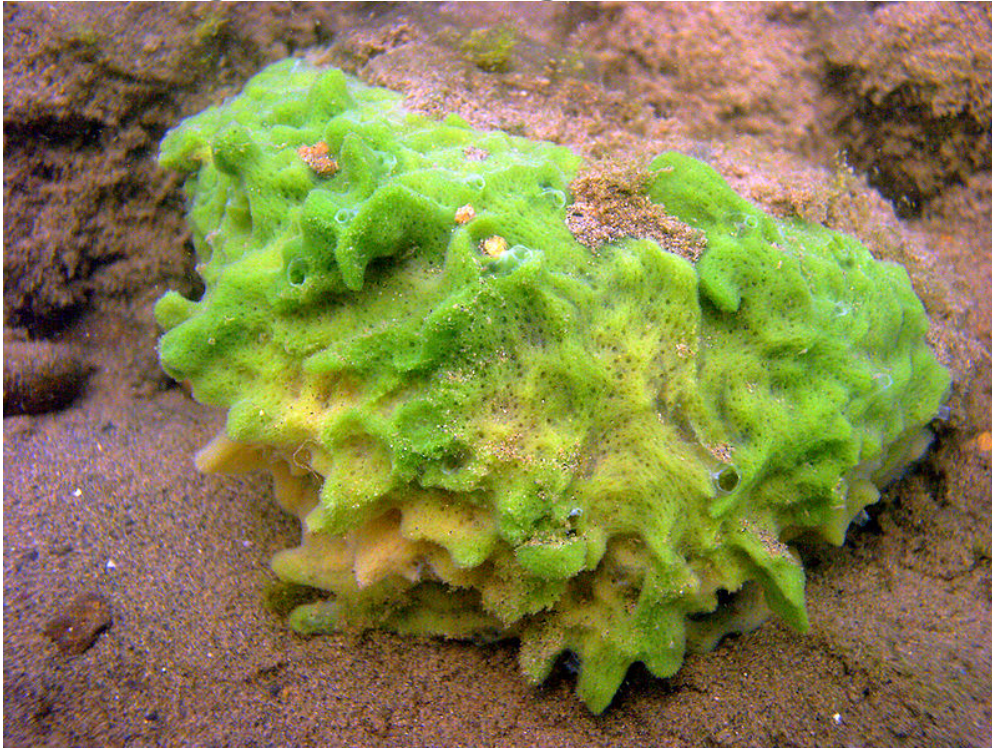
Thusfar in Homeopathy we have some knowledge of at least three sponge remedies. Two desmosponges and one Glass sponge are known to some degree. I have not separated them by category, simply because of their low numbers. Should the number of proven sponges increase, themes of individual families may become more clear and finer differentiation of the sponges may become possible.

^b For Ease of referencing:

^M refers to Murphy's Nature Materia Medica (2007). Accessed on Reference Works.

^A refers to Allen's Keynotes (1898). Accessed on Reference Works.

Badiaga (Bad, Spongilla lacustris)⁴⁹:



Badiaga is a small freshwater Desmosponge native to the Northern hemisphere. Badiaga has been used extensively throughout homeopathy, but it's mental picture remains quite undeveloped. As such I decided to undertake a trituration of this sponge, to more thoroughly explore the mental image of this remedy. The mental image and key issues of this remedy derive mostly from my own trituration. This trituration is given upto C4 at the end of this chapter.

Key Issues: This sponges' key issue is that it lacks the basic security to exist in the world. They perceive the world as a dangerous and terrifying place and thus do not want to become fully incarnate within it. They will often either escape this danger by intellectualizing it, or through escapism to a dream realm of love and universal connection, the spirit realm consciousness exists in before it's incarnation into the physical world.

Mind^M: The Mind picture of this remedy remains quite undeveloped, with only a few mind rubrics, and no extensive mental emotional picture yet developed, aside from my own trituration. The major symptoms identified in Murphy are a desire for mental work, and heart palpitations after pleasurable emotions. I identified a tendency to out of body escapism, and intellectualizing away fears.

Main Physical Issues^M: Muscular pain and soreness, worse motion and Worse motion of clothes^L. Skin Pain and Soreness. Many Issues with the Lung, mucous flies out of the nostrils upon coughing. Corhyza. Pain in forehead that extends to eyeballs. Buboes and other syphilitic symptoms, such as neuralgias and bone Pains. Swollen

Glands.

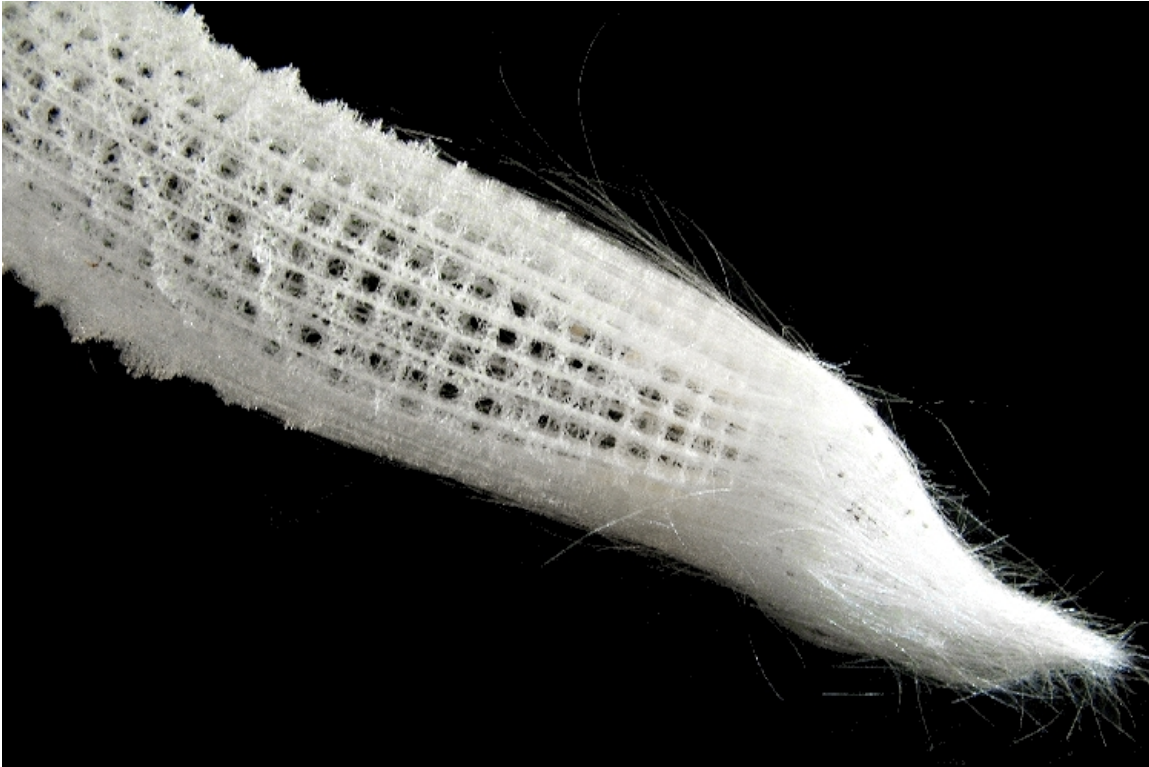
Clinical[™]: Breast Cancer, Coryza, Dandruff, Rheumatism and Muscular pain, Syphilis, Lungs and Chronic coughs.

Miasm: Syphilitic, Tuberculinic. Psoric

Color Preference: Black

Remedy Comparison: Aconite, Spongia, Euplectella, Syphilinum, Tuberculinum, Mercurius

Euplectella aspergillum (euple-a)⁵⁰:



Euplectella , known informally as Venus' Flower Basket, is a Glass sponge native to deep oceans waters in East Asia. It is a well known symbol of marital love in East Asian Cultures due to the behavior of small shrimp, which live in opposite sex pairs within the sponge, raising families within it. The shrimp clean and provide metabolic wasts for the sponge, and the sponge attracts food for the shrimp, creating a true mutualism.

This sponge was proven by a group of trituratorers in Berlin led by Heike Dahl, and published on their blog in German⁵¹. I have used Google Translate to translate the Website and pdf of the proving into English, as no human English translation is yet available. The entirety of the summary section is presented below the main material medica. I have edited the wording of it so that it becomes more comprehensible in English, but cannot guarantee the complete accuracy of the Google translation, being a non German speaker. I eagerly await a better translation.

Key Issues: This glass sponge has the issue of intellectual inadequacy. The being feels unable to cope with the mental aspects of life, and thus wishes to avoid incarnating completely and remerge with the divine. The core problem is feeling completely overwhelmed and wishing to leave life.

Mind⁵²:

Feeling of inadequacy

Feeling of excessive demand

Sense that I'm not doing it right, not perfect enough
Feel simple, low, stupid, stupid, inferior. I do not dare to say anything
Inferiority complexes
Fear of being laughed at because you do not do things so well (and also have the feeling that they could do it better)
I prefer to say nothing on the subject because of fear of feeling inadequate
Feeling of dullness, words do not come in the brain, words are omitted and not understood
Hectic, stressed
Stressed out: as if the schedule was full and there is no time to breathe
I feel like I am running out of time, everything goes too fast
Feeling, one does not create what one will without a rushed connected feeling and breathlessness.
Time seems to fly by
Things are immediately forgotten (Similar feeling to Alzheimer's or dementia), it makes things easier-
I feel as if only mechanical work is worthwhile, and that you do not have to think
Would be to have to act according to the instructions
Would be to have to decide anything
"Always keep beautifully simple, just nothing complicated!" "Just ask!"
If you keep things simple, the stress is less
Complicated technical terms no longer make sense
Complicated sentences must be transformed so that they are understood
To do two things at once is not possible
Hunted feeling, everything seems to be messed up
Lost in thought, sitting there, stares to himself
Sluggish, tired brain
Feels naive in any case complex
Simple type of thinking
Desire to give the responsibility away to others
Image of a straight, simple tube
Dewdrop, drop shape

Main Physical Issues⁵³:

Sensitivity generally increased. Sensitive to noise
Globus sensation in the throat
Hunted feeling settles on the breath, with tightness / heaviness in the chest
Lancinations
Sharp pain
Feeling of a dagger, knife in the body
Strong effect on the brain, memory loss
Blush, to have been caught not knowing something
Allergic symptoms (tearing eyes, nose tingle, scratch throat)
Cold feelings
More feelings of weakness, Overwhelmed
Stiff and uptight after getting up from the chair, better at incipient motion

Headaches during mental effort
Dullness during mental effort
Desire to be left alone

Clinical: ADHD, Autism, Developmental Disabilities, Allergies, Lung and Chest issues, Alzheimers, Dementia

Miasm: ?

Color Preference: ?

Remedy Comparison: Baryta carb, Lepisma saccharina, Alumina, Graphites, Physalia physalis

^c All suggested clinical uses are speculative in Euplectella, based on the Proving.

Spongia toasta (Spong, Euspongia officinalis)⁵⁴:



Spongia toasta was one of the original remedies proved by Hahnemann and given in his *Materia Medica Pura*. The remedy came to his attention due to its use as a folk medicine for the treatment of Goiter⁵⁵. This remedy has been extensively used in acute and chronic disease throughout the history of Homeopathy. Recently its mental picture has been greatly expanded through the work of several key authors, such as Irene Shlingensiepen-Brysch⁵⁶ and Liz Lalor⁵⁷.

Key Issues: The Key issue with Spongia is the need for a secure social environment for them to incarnate into. Spongia feels as if they do not exist, or are not incarnate without their social interactions, however, they are not sure whether they can count on their social contacts to consistently be there to support them. This creates a hesitancy to fully incarnate and commit to life. This can also lead to acceptance of a great deal of abuse, in order to maintain their social network.

Mind^M: Anxiety and difficulty breathing, fear of suffocation, fear of the future. Liz Lalor emphasizes the social difficulties Spongia has, as well as difficulties with trauma, their fear of exposure of their inner weakness, and their ability to see things as if through the eyes of others⁵⁸.

Main Physical Issues^M: Heart valves issues leading to heart hypertrophy. Dry cough of chronic heart disease. Glandular issues, especially thyroid. Dry mucous membranes. Coughing issues, worse with Dry wind. Acute infections, such as diphtheria, whooping cough and croup, as well as other more chronic coughs. Characteristic cough sounding like the sawing of a pine board. Worse midnight. Feels a plug in larynx. Anxiety attacks with heat.

Clinical^M: Coughs, Diphtheria, Whooping cough, Croup, Heart issues, Heart Hypertrophy, Thyroid disorders, Goiter, Orchitis, Asthma, Exhaustion, Bullying, PTSD⁵⁹

Miasm: Tuberculinic^A, Psoric

Color Preference: 15-16E

Remedy Comparisson: Tuberculinum, Aconite, Other Sponges.

Cases:

Patient presents April 4th 2014 with a desire to get her homeopathic case taken.

Her major issue is not knowing her own personality. She lives with others, but when she is alone, she feels nothing, and does nothing. When asked to elaborate she states that without the company of others she feels like there is nothing happening, no thought, no feeling, nothing at all. She often will spend entire weekends in bed. She feels removed from what is occurring, and doesn't know what is happening around her.

When she is with others, she feels a distinct change. She feels happy, and very grateful for her life. She has the distinct sensation that she has no right to feel anything besides good feelings, emotions and gratitude.

When prompted to describe her feeling of gratitude she describes it as a feeling of fullness or of bigness, feeling so full that she feels like things are spilling out of her, like sunlight shooting out of her chest region. She feels fuller, taller, and describes it as easier to glide or float through the world. She describes herself as able to enjoy the simply things in life, and to take pleasure in her day to day activities.

She then gets into a distinct source sensation, describing a sort of structure around her. It is a spherical structure with a green tinted edge. It is porous, with a number of small dimples on the outside which do not penetrate to the middle, where she perceives herself. It does not move.

In her case we see a basic state of flatness and nonactivity, characteristic of sponges, combined with a sense of fullness associated with social activity, and taking pleasure in the simple acts of daily living. In my interpretation she was coming out of a state of nondifferentiation and into life, taking pleasure in social interactions and activities of daily living. She however was not yet able to sustain this outside of social interaction, hence the inability to sustain this feeling while by herself.

The remedy prescribed was Spongia 1M I drop per day, succussed with each dose.

We followed up on May 2, 2014. The patient reported feeling a lot of introspection. She realized that she didn't know how to trust others, and that she did not consciously know how to be herself. She reported being very emotional during her menses, and having long discussions with her partner about her lack of trust.

Trust to her was a surrender to someone, **being able to fully count on them being there.**

The patient also was much more assertive with other who were disrespectful towards her. She was able to voice her concerns, rather than simply internalizing them as she had done previously.

When taken into her source again, she reported that the borders of the spongelike object were more blurry than before, that its interaction with the outer world had grown misty.

The patient also reported feeling a lot better for the first week of taking the remedy, but this had stopped soon afterwards.

The emergence of her trust and identity issues into the conscious mind was a very good sign of her exteriorizing her psychic conflicts (unconscious to conscious usually is exteriorization in my experience). The assertiveness and less defined source were also signs we were close. The presence of the same issues, and the lack of a feeling of resolution of the state however led me to suspect that we needed a higher potency.

I prescribed Pascoefem™, 10 drops per day to deal with the PMS, and spongia 10m, 1 drop per day, succussed each time.

At her next followup the patient reported feeling better still. She reported a tonsil infection in the last month, identical to those she had at 12 years old. It last 2-3 days, then resolved spontaneously. Her relationship with her boyfriend had improved, and she was now excited about planning her future together with him.

The patient also reported for the first time, a history of binge eating. She would periodically eat a large amount of junk food, and feel terrible afterwards. She had engaged with a counselor to help her address these issues. Overall she felt wonderful. Her biggest problem was containing her joy at being alive. She did report some residual feelings of her state.

I was very pleased with the progress of her social relationships, and was very pleased that she both felt comfortable in herself enough to tell me about her eating disorder, and that she was healthy enough to begin to address it, without external prompts. I had her shift her remedy upward to 50M, one succussed drop taken daily.

This patients case is continued as Black Hole Case 1 in Chapter 1.

-Dr. Paul Theriault, BSc, ND

Further cases:

Two further cases of sponge are available in other publications. A beautiful case of spongia using the source method, and almost exactly paralleling the language used in Case 1 is available in Irene Schlingensiepen-Brysch's work "The Source in Homeopathy"⁶⁰. This beautiful case is highly recommended. Irene's case, followed over several years emphasizes the patients need for structure, for another person to structure her life around, and the resulting grief she feels when this person become unavailable.

A second excellent case was published by Liz Lalor in Links⁶¹. In this case a woman presents with issues of not being synchronized with the social behaviors of others, and finding others' social perceptions infiltrating her own psyche.

Summary of Key Issues of Sponges:

Remedy	Main Issue within the Table
Badiaga	I cannot incarnate because the world is a terrible place, full of danger and insecurity. I lack the security I need to incarnate.
Euplectella aspergilum	I do not wish to incarnate because I cannot deal with the mental effort required in life.
Spongia Toasta	I lack the social support I need to exist.

Trituration:

Badiaga: Why Do I Need to be Alive anyway?

This remedy was made from a Mother Tincture of Badiaga purchased from Helios.

C1-3:

The first three levels of the trituration present a picture of a being beset by fear of existing. Existence seems uncertain and terrifying. There are no guarantees in life, and anything could potentially happen. On a conscious level the being copes with this fear by either rationalizing it away, or by escaping into an out of body dream state in which love is everywhere, and it has no separation between it and that love.

In both states, reality is so terrifying that the being cannot commit to it. In the words of the triturations itself "I am in life. I'm here in body. I just can't bring myself to commit to it due to fear and uncertainty"

C1:

Preformed September 15th 2014:

- I'm feeling a contraction of my aura. Its like my aura is shriveling up and drying out
 - It's as if my outer aura feels like a sponge. It is rough and has a lot of holes in it
- My energy feels heavier and more childish
- I feel heaviness in my actions. Taking action seems to involve more effort than it normally does
- I feel slow and a bit stupid. I'm less reflective, less smart and much less suspicious. I am more accepting. I just take what comes to me, without a lot of processing
- I feel short of breath. I am a bit anxious because of losing my breath
- I feel a pressure on my chest, pushing down (i.e. a pressure on my anterior chest pushing dorsally)
 - This pressure is not hard or intense, but it is widespread
- I feel timid. I feel generally nervous, afraid and anxious
- I feel like there is a moisture in my lungs
 - The inside of my lungs feels damp
 - This dampness makes it harder to breathe

C2:

Preformed September 18th 2014:

- I feel really happy, but it is a false happiness

- Deep down I am quite uncomfortable
- I feel as if I am wary or nervous about something, and the happiness is just a mask on the surface to conceal my deeper feelings
- Now I am afraid! I'm nervous. I'm not afraid of anything in particular, but I am just generally afraid
 - Life in general seems quite scary
- My right knee hurts. I feel a soreness, stiffness, boring pain and heat [note: this is a chronic symptom for me, and did not resolve greatly after this trituration]
- I'm really anxious. But nothing in particular is bothering me. It's a generalized anxiety
 - I'm afraid
- I want to cover and hide and shrink away!
- I feel fear, and then a contraction inward. It is as if I just want to withdraw into myself and hide!
 - I'm just so unsure and so insecure
 - Everything is just so scary!
- I feel an odd feeling in my head
 - I feel as if my brain is withdrawing from my meninges and stretching them inward
 - The immediate inside of my skull feels as if it is being pulled in
 - It is like a pulsing pain in my head
 - I also feel a kind of bilious feeling in my head as well
- My throat is a bit raw and sore
- I feel wary of my surroundings
- But overtop all of this fear there is a superficial happiness
 - This happiness is almost like a mask, concealing how I really feel
- I look happy and pleasant, but deep down I am worried

C3:

Performed September 19th 2014:

- I feel my neck and shoulder muscles tensing up
- I feel afraid again and again I have a superficial personality that is covering up this fear. Now (as opposed to C2) however this covering up is a bit more sophisticated
 - I feel like I am intellectually justifying everything
 - I'm using my intellect to reassure myself and to convince myself that I am not scared and that the world itself is not scary
- This fear is basic and primal. It is I am afraid of everything outside of myself
 - It's as if I think the entire world is terrifying
 - There is this basic existential insecurity- life is scary!
 - And I can have two strategies
 - I can intellectually justify life to myself
 - Or I can wear a mask of happiness

- I'm afraid of everything. If something pleasing happens I'm less afraid (but not unafraid), but if something bad happens I am terrified!
 - Thinking of bad things gives me a feeling, as if my insides are turning to ice!
- Existential insecurity- just existing is scary and dangerous!
 - Anything could happen!
- Anything could occur. You could get eaten! Anything could go wrong! There are now guarantees in life
 - How do you go about living when there is so much that could go wrong?
 - I feel so afraid that I am not really living life
 - I am unable to commit to life, it is so scary!
 - I look with fear on the whole enterprise of living
- I am having difficulty breathing through my nose- my nasal mucosa are swelling
- I keep getting these odd happy feelings. Mindless Happiness. I still feel the fear, but it is like I am someplace else. I'm outside my mind a bit. I'm experiencing a bit of dreamy escapism from the fear of life
 - It's as if I am a very beautiful place. I see lots of colors, love is everywhere and I feel a lack of personal boundaries between me and this love I'm feeling- its wonderful
 - I only feel this love in my head an upper body. My lower body still feels the fear
 - I am in life. I'm here in body. I just can't bring myself to commit to it due to fear and uncertainty.
- I feel dreamy again. It's so nice to go to that place
 - But I still feel that fear
 - It's like I am between the fear and the bliss of the beyond.
 - I'd just rather stay in the beyond. Why do I need to be alive anyway?

C4

The being now feels a receding of the fear that predominated in C1-3, along with an increased willingness to engage with life. With the fear gone, the being fully enters into their body and feels able to go about the world safely to accomplish something (they're not quite sure yet what that something is however). The being loves the world and what it encounters within it, in a simple and forthright way. No mention was made of the out of body dreamy state, and I do suspect that the being no longer feels the need to escape into that state any longer.

Performed September 20th 2014:

- I feel a sense of peace and relaxation
- I feel inner relaxation. It is as if my inside no longer feel frozen (as they did in C3)

- Strange. Over the last day I have been attacked online a great deal, but it hasn't affected me as it often does
- I'm not as afraid. The fear has receded. Now I just feel an extraordinary exhaustion and fatigue in the absence of that fear
 - I feel sleepy, heavy and grounded as well
- I feel like I am here in my body for the first time. At first being here in a body was very exhausting, but now I feel very clear and levelheaded. I feel very lucid
- I feel as if I am no longer afraid of life!
 - I feel like my fear of what might happen and my fear of getting attacked kept me from fully committing to being alive
- Now I feel happy, lucid and ready to make my way in the world. I have no idea what I am going to do yet, but I am going to do something here!
- I feel happy with life. It definitely doesn't seem as scary as it once did
 - I can do it, I want to be here!
- Instead of fear I feel kindness toward the world. Its not a sophisticated feeling, but it is simple and humble and plain and beautiful. A simple feeling of loving being alive and love of the things I am encountering
 - I'm just experiencing life and the world. There is not a lot of complex thought about that process
- I feel simple, plain, unadorned. It is as if I am a very forthright peasant, or a healthy child
- I feel a flash of fear again which quickly recedes
- I feel a dull headaches just behind my forehead
- I feel a bit of burning in the midback
 - Laterally from the spine to the curve of my ribs
 - This burning is on the surface of my skin

Dream: This dream occurred the night after the C4 trituration. I was homeless and was sleeping outside comfortably, near a bus stop with my dogs. I was quite happy, chatting with everyone who walked by. I saw a big St. Bernard dog, and was under the impression that this dog was guarding me and watching over me, like some sort of spirit guide.

Normally the idea of being so insecure would have terrified me. But under the influence of Badagia C4, I could accept even homelessness, with the knowledge I would be happy and protected.

Trituration Level	Summary
C1-3	A basic existential insecurity. Life is scary and dangerous. The being copes with this either by intellectualizing or by escaping to an out of body state of love and universal connectedness. Physical life in a body is so scary that the being cannot commit to it!
C4	The fear of existing recedes and the being can fully commit to life. It fully enters its body and feel capable of going out into the world and make its way in the world.

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