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# *Thuja*

(ARBORVITAE)

**T** *huja* holds a unique position in the gallery of children's archetypes. Quite apart from its own far from simple personality (sometimes gentle, ethereal, otherworldly; at other times harsh, quarrelsome, conniving), in the homoeopathic treatment of children it is the remedy most frequently prescribed "constitutionally" for types other than its own (*Sulphur* and *Tuberculinum* are close contenders). The reasons for this will be examined later in this chapter. Suffice it at this point to recognize the personality picture, which is the same both for inherently *Thuja* children and those who need the remedy due to force of circumstance.

In infancy, the features that stand out and point to the remedy are, first of all, a failure to thrive: poor sleep and poor nursing, often accompanied by much discomfort and crying, as if in protest at landing here on earth. During this stage the child is also distinguished by a fear of and resistance to change. *Thuja* does not respond well to transitions of any kind—either external (a changing environment) or internal (the normal course of

growth and development). The infant screams with terror when carried from one room to the next or when transferred from one pair of caring hands to another; later, a change in diet is occasion for stormy weather. Transitions from sleeping to waking and vice versa are other traumas. The child awakens in a grumpy, petulant mood, ready to cry on the slightest pretext, and then is so wired up before nap time or at night that he is unable to get to sleep—the more tired he is, the more resistant. And every new stage of growth (teething, beginning to sit up, to crawl, or to walk) throws him off balance—as is reflected in his disturbed behavior.

The older child exhibits emotional inflexibility. He is disoriented by fluctuations in the family routine (such as someone usurping his favorite seat in the car or at the table), which other siblings accept with equanimity. He displays a temper when forced to switch activities or is interrupted for meals. He refuses to listen to reason when some fixed idea of his is tampered with (such as an article of clothing he has set his mind on wearing or some particular food he has set his mind on eating), regardless of how inappropriate for the occasion. All of this reflects a lack of ease in this world—an inability to go along with the flow of everyday life, with all its setbacks, changes, and variations.

Afflictions reflecting varying degrees of mental confusion, poor social skills, or lack of social awareness (including immature behavior) can also point to *Thuja*. The type becomes too quickly unhinged when excited or tired and is emotionally too labile or easily upset. At times there is a sense of alienation from the world and the rest of humanity, and the child acts as if he is a stranger to the basic skills of life. For instance, in intellectual skills there might be little order or retention. Some days he will