

# HOMOEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT OF NEURODERMATITIS WITH ANXIETY NEUROSIS: A CASE REPORT

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## **ABSTRACT:**

**Background:** Neurodermatitis (Lichen Simplex Chronicus) is a chronic psychosomatic dermatological condition characterized by intense pruritus and lichenified skin lesions, often associated with underlying anxiety disorders. Conventional treatment primarily provides symptomatic relief and frequently fails to address the underlying psychosomatic factors, leading to recurrence.

**Case Summary:** This case report presents a 36-year-old male patient suffering from neurodermatitis for 4 years, associated with anxiety neurosis for 5–6 years. The patient exhibited characteristic symptoms including intense itching aggravated at night and during stress, thickened hyperpigmented lesions, fear of darkness, fear of being alone, panic attacks, restlessness, and disturbed sleep with fearful dreams. A detailed homoeopathic case taking was performed with emphasis on mental generals and individualizing characteristics. The totality of symptoms and repertorial analysis indicated Stramonium as the similimum, according to classical homoeopathic principles.

**Outcome:** Following administration of Stramonium 200, the patient showed gradual and sustained improvement in both mental and physical symptoms. Anxiety levels reduced significantly, sleep improved, and dermatological lesions headed progressively. A mild relapse during a stressful period was managed with repetition of single dose of remedy. Over a follow-up period of 6 months, the patient achieved substantial relief with near-complete resolution of symptoms.

**Conclusion:** This case highlights the effectiveness of individualized homoeopathic treatment in managing psychosomatic disorders by addressing the underlying mental state along with physical pathology, emphasizing the importance of constitutional prescribing in chronic psychosomatic illnesses.

**INDEXTERMS:** Homoeopathy, Psychosomatic Disorder, Neurodermatitis, Anxiety Neurosis, Stramonium

## **I. INTRODUCTION:**

### **DEFINITION:**

Lichen simplex chronicus (LSC), also known as neurodermatitis, is a common chronic pruritic dermatosis defined by lichenified plaques resulting from persistent scratching. Though often secondary to underlying dermatologic, systemic, or psychological triggers, LSC represents a distinct clinical entity with significant morbidity.<sup>[1]</sup> It is considered a psychosomatic disorder, where psychological factors such as anxiety, stress, and emotional disturbances significantly influence disease onset and progression. The hallmark itch-scratch cycle<sup>[2][13]</sup> contributes not only to visible skin changes but also to substantial sleep disruption, emotional distress, and functional impairment. Psychological stress, anxiety, and depression are frequent comorbidities and can further perpetuate disease chronicity.<sup>[1]</sup>

### **EPIDEMIOLOGY:**

Lichen simplex chronicus has been estimated to occur in approximately 12% of the population. The highest prevalence is typically from middle to late adulthood and often peaks at 30 to 50 years of age, likely due to the significant increase in stress at this point in one's life. The disorder is more prevalent in females than in males at a ratio of 2:1.<sup>[3]</sup>

### **PSYCHODERMATOLOGY LINK:**

Few studies on psychoneuroimmunology suggest that serum levels of neurotrophins are measurable outcomes in patients suffering from LSC by ELISA assays. It suggests severity of disease and pruritus.<sup>[4]</sup> The involvement of psychological variables and transitory alleviation of pruritus following vigorous scratching appears to be critical in the development and maintenance of its course. Studies and literature have described

the relationship between skin lesions exacerbation and the level of psychopathological conditions in response to stress. Pruritus or itch is the most prominent symptom of LSC, which seems to have a marked psychological component.<sup>[5]</sup> The interplay between skin and mind is well established in psychodermatology, which forms a significant component of psychosomatic medicine, where internal emotional disturbances and conflicts manifest through cutaneous symptoms, and can be considered autoimmune too.

Anxiety neurosis is a form of anxiety disorder. Anxiety disorders<sup>[14]</sup> are characterized by symptoms that include worry, social and performance fears, unexpected and/or triggered panic attacks, anticipatory anxiety, and avoidance behaviors.<sup>[6]</sup> The concept of generalized anxiety has evolved over many years, from initial descriptions of “anxiety neurosis” to recognition of generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) as a clinical entity included in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III) in 1980.<sup>[7]</sup>

#### CONVENTIONAL TREATMENT:

With respect to evolving understanding of LSC, from its neuroimmune-driven pathogenesis to the wide spectrum of therapeutic strategies currently available. Under conventional treatment, in addition to topical corticosteroids, novel approaches including immunomodulators, neuromodulators, Janus kinase (JAK) inhibitors, and biologics are being increasingly explored. Procedural therapies such as cryotherapy, fractional laser resurfacing, and botulinum toxin injections, have also emerged as valuable tools, particularly in treatment-refractory cases.<sup>[1]</sup> Conventional management includes corticosteroids, antihistamines, and anxiolytics, which often provide temporary relief but fail to address the underlying susceptibility and mental state, leading to recurrence. Lichen simplex chronicus patients are at risk of increased levels of stress, anxiety, depression, and present decreased levels of neurotrophins, that may suggest a role in the pathophysiology of this disorder.<sup>[4]</sup>

#### SCOPE OF HOMOEOPATHY:

Homoeopathy, based on the principle of “Similia Similibus Curentur,” emphasizes individualized and holistic treatment by considering the totality of symptoms, especially mental generals. It aims to treat the patient as a whole rather than focusing solely on the pathology. Homoeopathic literature review explains the role of Hydrocotyle, Thuja, Graphites, Kali bich and Sulphur in the management of Lichenplanus Simplex Chronicus.<sup>[8]</sup> Prurigo nodularis, a chronic benign neurodermatitis have also been evidenced to be managed by Homoeopathy as by literature reviews.<sup>[9]</sup>

Homoeopathy provides a valuable adjunct in the integrative management of anxiety disorders, focusing on holistic healing and long-term resilience.<sup>[10]</sup> Homoeopathic treatment suggests improvements in emotional regulation, somatic symptoms, and quality of life.<sup>[10]</sup> The goal of Homoeopathic treatment is not merely to palliate symptoms but to restore equilibrium of the vital force, thus preventing relapses and recurrence.

#### AIM OF CASE REPORT:

This case report aims to demonstrate the role of individualized homoeopathic treatment<sup>[11]</sup> in managing neurodermatitis associated with anxiety neurosis, highlighting the importance of mental generals in remedy selection and long- term management.

## **II. CASE PRESENTATION:**

### **PATIENT INFORMATION: 12/07/2024**

A 36-year-old male, IT professional, presented with complaints of chronic itching and anxiety.

### **CHIEF COMPLAINTS:**

K/C/O Neurodermatitis since 4 years and Anxiety Neurosis since 5–6 years

- Intense itching over neck, forearms, and legs since 4 years
- Itching aggravation at night and during anxiety episodes
- Scratching leads to thickened, darkened skin lesions (lichenification) since 3 years
- Burning sensation after scratching
- Complaints increase during mental- emotional stress, anxiety, and lack of sleep.

Associated complaints:

- Persistent anxiety, fearfulness without cause since 5 years
- Fear of darkness and being alone since childhood
- Sudden episodes of panic attacks with palpitations
- Restlessness, cannot sit at one place
- Disturbed sleep with fearful dreams

**HISTORY OF PRESENT ILLNESS:**

The patient developed anxiety symptoms initially, especially fear of being alone and insecurity at night, which gradually worsened with work-related stress. After 1–2 years, skin complaints started, itching began and progressed to neurodermatitis with lichenification (thickened skin). Complaints aggravated during stress and at night.

**PAST HISTORY:** Chickenpox in childhood

**FAMILY HISTORY:** Father: Hypertension  
 Mother: Anxiety disorder

**PERSONAL HISTORY:**

Appetite: Irregular	Thirst: Increased
Craving: Spicy food	Aversion: Not specific
Stools: Satisfactory	Urine: Normal- 5- 6 times/day
Perspiration: Profuse during anxiety	Habits: No any addictions
Sleep: Disturbed	Dreams: Fearful, being chased or attacked

**MENTAL GENERALS:**

- Patient describes himself as highly anxious, fearful, and insecure.
- Since childhood, had fear of darkness and being alone, which increased in adulthood. He reports: “I feel something bad will happen if I am alone.”
- Becomes extremely restless during anxiety episodes
- He also reports sudden panic attacks, with sweating, palpitations, and urge to escape.
- Feeling of presence of someone at night, he says “At night, I feel someone is around me.
- Due to work stress and competitive environment, anxiety worsened.
- Skin complaints worsen during these periods.

**PHYSICAL (LOCAL) EXAMINATION:**

- Thickened hyperpigmented plaques
- Marked lichenification
- Excoriation marks due to scratching
- No discharge

**INVESTIGATIONS:**

- CBC, LFT, RFT: Normal
- ESR: Mildly raised
- Blood Sugar: Normal
- IgE: Slightly elevated
- Thyroid Profile: Normal

**CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS:** Neurodermatitis (Lichen simplex chronicus) with Anxiety Neurosis

**HOMOEOPATHIC ANALYSIS:**

**Miasmatic Analysis:** Fundamental miasm: Psora  
 Dominant miasm: Syphilis

**Totality of Symptoms:**

- Fear of darkness
- Fear of being alone
- Anxiety and restlessness
- Panic attacks
- Disturbed sleep with fearful dreams
- Itching with thickened skin

**Repertorial Totality:**

- MIND – ANXIETY – night
- MIND – FEAR – alone, of being

- MIND – FEAR – dark; of
- MIND – FEAR – sudden
- MIND – RESTLESSNESS
- DREAMS – FRIGHTFUL
- SKIN – ERUPTIONS – itching
- SKIN – THICK – scratching; skin becomes thick after

Repertorial Sheet:

Remedies	ΣSym	ΣDeg	Symptoms
ars.	8	19	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
sil.	8	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
rhus-t.	7	14	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8
kali-c.	7	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
phos.	7	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
stram.	7	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
acon.	7	12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
carb-v.	7	12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
merc.	7	12	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
sep.	7	12	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8
ant-c.	7	9	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8
puls.	6	15	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7

Repertorial Result:

NO.	NAME OF REMEDY	TOTAL MARKS	SYMPTOMS COVERED	SCORE
1	Arsenic album	19	8	19/8
2	Silicea	13	8	13/8
3	Kali carbonica	13	7	13/7
4	Phosphorus	13	7	13/7
5	Stramonium	13	7	13/7

**SELECTION OF REMEDY: STRAMONIUM**

Reason For Selection Of Remedy:

- Intense fear of darkness and solitude
- Anxiety with panic states
- Restlessness and disturbed sleep with fearful dreams
- Psychosomatic skin involvement
- Neurotic behavior with hypersensitivity

**PRESCRIPTION:**

Stramonium 200 – Single dose

Placebo for 15 days

**DIET AND REGIMEN:**

- Avoid stress triggers
- Maintain proper sleep schedule
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Avoid excessive spicy food

**FOLLOW-UP AND OUTCOME:**

NO.	DATE	STATUS OF COMPLAINTS	MANAGEMENT
1.	1st FOLLOW UP (15 days) 28/07/2024	Anxiety slightly reduced Sleep improved mildly Itching persists	Prescription: Placebo
2.	2nd FOLLOW UP (1 month) 14/08/2024	Panic attacks reduced Sleep better Skin lesions slightly reduced	Prescription: Placebo
3.	3rd FOLLOW UP (2 months) 15/09/2024	Marked improvement in anxiety Itching reduced by 40% Skin still thickened	Prescription: Placebo
4.	4th FOLLOW UP (3 months) 14/10/2024	Temporary relapse after work stress Increased itching and anxiety	Prescription: Stramonium 200/ single dose
5.	5th FOLLOW UP (4 months) 16/11/2024	Symptoms reduced again Skin healing, thickness reduced Sleep normal	Prescription: Placebo
6.	6th FOLLOW UP (6 months) 18/12/2024	Anxiety significantly reduced No anxiety episodes No fear of darkness Skin lesions almost healed Itching reduced by ~60–70% Occasional mild itching only Sleep normalized	No medicine required

**OUTCOME ASSESSMENT:** Marked Improvement → Functional Cure



**III. DISCUSSION:**

Lichen simplex chronicus may represent the end stage of a variety of pruritic and eczematous disorders, including AD. It consists of a circumscribed plaque or plaques of lichenified skin due to chronic scratching or rubbing. Common areas involved include the posterior nuchal region, dorsum of the feet, and ankles. Treatment of lichen simplex chronicus centers on breaking the cycle of chronic itching and scratching.<sup>[12]</sup> The present case illustrates a classical psychosomatic presentation, where chronic neurodermatitis was closely linked with underlying anxiety neurosis. The patient exhibited characteristic features such as intense itching aggravated by stress, along with marked mental symptoms including fear of darkness, fear of being alone, panic attacks, restlessness, and disturbed sleep.

With respect to the above case report and Organon point of view, the disease is the fourth type of mental disease (§210- §230) :- Mental diseases arising from prolonged emotional causes - Psycho-somatic type (§225), which Dr. Samuel Hahnemann describes in his 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Organon of Medicine.<sup>[15]</sup>

The man is prior to the organs.<sup>[16]</sup> That is, the mind is first affected—the tissue changes at the physical level come very late in the disease process. This paves the way for causation of the Psycho-somatic diseases. From a homoeopathic perspective, the case was approached through totality of symptoms, giving higher importance to mental generals as per Hahnemannian philosophy.

The peculiar and characteristic symptoms—especially the intense fear states, anxiety at night, and restlessness—played a decisive role in remedy selection.

The repertorial analysis suggested Stramonium as the most suitable remedy. Stramonium is well known in homoeopathic materia medica for its action on the nervous system, particularly in conditions involving terror, fear of darkness, fear of solitude, and violent anxiety states. The characteristic symptoms as mentioned in Homoeopathic Materia Medica:- Cannot bear to be alone, worse in the dark and solitude.<sup>[17][18]</sup> The remedy also covers hypersensitivity and neurocutaneous manifestations, making it highly relevant in this case.

The prescription of Stramonium 200 in a single dose was based on the chronicity, intensity of symptoms, and predominance of mental generals. The patient showed gradual improvement in both mental and physical planes, confirming the correctness of remedy selection.

An important observation in this case was the occurrence of a mild relapse during a stressful period, which was managed conservatively with repetition of single dose of the remedy. This reflects the dynamic action of the similimum and the importance of avoiding excessive repetition, allowing the remedy to act at a deeper level.

The improvement was holistic:

1. Mental symptoms improved first (reduction in fear and anxiety)
2. Followed by improvement in sleep and general well-being
3. Finally, the skin lesions healed gradually
4. This sequence of cure aligns with Hering's Law of Cure, indicating movement from within outward and from more vital to less vital organs.

The case also highlights the importance of understanding the miasmatic background, where psoric and syphilitic tendencies were evident, contributing to chronicity and structural skin changes. Overall, this case reinforces the effectiveness of homoeopathy in treating chronic psychosomatic disorders by addressing the root cause rather than suppressing symptoms

#### **IV. CONCLUSION:**

This case demonstrates that individualized homoeopathic treatment can provide significant and long-lasting relief in chronic conditions like neurodermatitis associated with anxiety neurosis.

The use of Stramonium, selected on the basis of totality with emphasis on mental generals, resulted in marked improvement in both psychological and dermatological symptoms. The case highlights the importance of a holistic approach, careful case taking, and adherence to classical homoeopathic principles.

Homoeopathy not only alleviates physical symptoms but also restores mental balance, thereby preventing recurrence and promoting overall well-being. This case supports the role of homoeopathy as an effective therapeutic modality in psychosomatic disorders.

Further studies with larger sample sizes are recommended to validate these findings and strengthen the evidence base for homoeopathic management of such conditions.

#### **V. PATIENT CONSENT:**

Informed consent was obtained from the patient for publication of this case.

#### **VI. CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

None declared.

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