

Utility of Homoeopathy in the Management of Rheumatoid Arthritis

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ABSTRACT:

BACKGROUND:

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a systemic autoimmune disease characterized by chronic inflammation of synovial joints. It commonly affects adults and presents with pain, swelling, morning stiffness, restricted movement, and fatigue. Persistent inflammation may result in joint deformities and functional disability.

Conventional treatment focuses on reducing inflammation and preventing joint damage, whereas homoeopathy aims at treating the patient as a whole by considering individual symptoms and constitutional factors. This case report highlights the role of individualized homoeopathic treatment in improving symptoms and quality of life in a patient suffering from rheumatoid arthritis.

Introduction

Rheumatoid arthritis is a systemic autoimmune disease characterized by chronic inflammation of synovial joints. years of age. Common symptoms include morning stiffness, joint pain, swelling, restricted movements, and fatigue. Persistent inflammation may result in joint deformities and functional disability.

Homoeopathy follows a holistic method of treatment based on the totality of symptoms, mental and physical constitution, and individual susceptibility. Individualized homoeopathic medicines may help reduce pain, stiffness, and frequency of flare-ups while improving overall wellbeing.

OBJECTIVE:

1. To study the effectiveness of individualized homoeopathic medicine in rheumatoid arthritis.
2. To evaluate improvement in joint pain and stiffness.
3. To assess changes in quality of life after homoeopathic treatment.

TREATMENT:

Treatment duration was 4-5months

PRIMARY OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Reduction in joint pain intensity.
- Decrease in morning stiffness duration.
- Reduction in joint swelling and tenderness.
- Improvement in range of joint movements.
- Improvement in functional ability and daily activities.

SECONDARY OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Improvement in general wellbeing and quality of life.
- Assessment of patient satisfaction after treatment

RESULTS:

The patient showed marked improvement in pain, swelling, and joint stiffness after individualized homoeopathic treatment.

First Follow-Up

- Reduction in morning stiffness
- Mild decrease in pain

Second Follow-Up

- Swelling reduced
- Improved joint mobility

Third Follow-Up

- Significant relief in pain and stiffness
- Improved daily activities
- General wellbeing improved.

CONCLUSION:

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic disabling autoimmune disease affecting joints and overall health. Early diagnosis and proper management are important to prevent complications and joint deformities. Homoeopathy may play a supportive role in improving symptoms and enhancing the patient's general wellbeing through individualized treatment.

INTRODUCTION:

Definition:

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic systemic autoimmune inflammatory disease that mainly affects the synovial joints. It commonly involves small joints of the hands, wrists, and feet in a symmetrical manner. The disease leads to pain, swelling, stiffness, and progressive destruction of joints, resulting in deformity and disability if left untreated.

AETIOLOGY:

1. Autoimmune Factors

The immune system mistakenly attacks the synovial membrane of joints, causing chronic inflammation.

2. Genetic Factors

A family history of rheumatoid arthritis increases the risk of developing the disease.

3. Environmental Factors

Smoking, infections, stress, and exposure to pollutants may trigger RA in genetically susceptible individuals.

4. Hormonal Factors

RA is more common in females, suggesting hormonal influence in the disease process.

PATHOGENESIS :

1. Genetic Predisposition

Certain genetic factors, especially HLA-DR4 and HLA-DR1 genes, increase susceptibility to rheumatoid arthritis. Individuals with a positive family history are at greater risk of developing the disease.

2. Autoimmune Response

The immune system becomes activated and produces autoantibodies such as rheumatoid factor (RF) and anti-cyclic citrullinated peptide (Anti-CCP) antibodies. These antibodies attack the synovial membrane of joints.

3. Synovial Inflammation

Inflammatory cells including T-lymphocytes, B-lymphocytes, macrophages, and cytokines accumulate in the synovial membrane, causing chronic inflammation. Cytokines such as tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF- α), interleukin-1, and interleukin-6 play a major role in joint destruction

CLINICAL FEATURES:

- Articular Manifestations
- Pain and swelling in joints
- Morning stiffness lasting more than one hour
- Tenderness of joints
- Restricted joint movements
- Symmetrical involvement of joints

- Deformities in chronic cases
- Commonly Affected Joints
- Metacarpophalangeal joints
- Proximal interphalangeal joints
- Wrist joints
- Knee joints
- Ankle joints
- Extra-Articular Manifestations
- Fatigue and weakness
- Fever
- Weight loss
- Rheumatoid nodules

DIAGNOSIS:

Diagnosis is based on: clinical examination, laboratory investigations, and imaging studies.

HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH:

Homoeopathy follows the principle of “similia similibus curentur” (like cures like).

Homoeopathy treats rheumatoid arthritis by considering the totality of symptoms, mental and physical constitution, and individual susceptibility. Individualized remedies may help reduce pain, stiffness, swelling, and improve quality of life.

Commonly indicated remedies include:

- Rhus toxicodendron
- Bryonia alba
- Causticum
- Ledum palustre
- Pulsatilla
- Calcarea carbonica

GENERAL MANAGEMENT:

- Adequate rest during acute attacks
- Regular mild exercises and physiotherapy
- Protection of affected joints from strain

Preliminary data:

Name: XYZ

Age: 21 years

Sex: Female

Occupation: Student

Religion: Hindu

Socio-economic status: Middle class

Marital status: Unmarried

Date of admission: 13/02/2026

Address: Navanagar, Bagalkot.

CHIEF COMPLAINTS:

C/o Pain and stiffness of all joints since 2 years.

DETAILS OF PRESENTING COMPLAINTS:

C/o pain and stiffness of all joints since 2 years

Insidious in onset

Initially the pain started in left shoulder joint then to right shoulder joint progressed to bilateral upper limbs progressed to bilateral lower limbs and small joints (Proximal Interphalangeal (PIP) Joints)

Morning stiffness -unable to lift the limbs, hardness

Feels as if stony

Swelling of ankles esp in the morning

Stitching type of pain , weeps due to pain

Agg -morning , night, winter season ,2-4 am

Amel - warmth application, summer

Consulted local doctor but didn't cure.

PAST HISTORY:

No any major illness.

FAMILY HISTORY:

All are apparantly healthy.

PERSONAL HISTORY:

Diet: Mixed

Appetite: Adequate

Thirst: 1-2liters/day

Micturition: 4-5/0-1 D/N

B/M: Once daily, satisfactory

Perspiration: Generalised

Sleep: Sound sleep

Thermals: Chilly pt.

VITAL SIGNS:

BP: 130/80mmhg

PR: 79bpm.

RR: 16cpm.

TEMP: 98.6 F

SYSTEMIC EXAMINATION:

CVS: S1, S2 Heard & No murmur.

CNS: Conscious & oriented to time, place & person.

RS: NVBS Heard.

GIT: 2-3 Peristaltic sound heard /10sec.

LOCAL EXAMINATION OF UPPER AND LOWER LIMBS

On Inspection - No discoloration no muscle wasting.

- Slight swelling of ankles joints .

On Palpation - No local rise of temperature

- Tenderness on pressure over B/L shoulder joints and proximal interphalangeal joints of bilateral hands

Rheumatoid nodules - absent

Painful restrictions of movements only during morning

Crepitus - absent

Investigation :



PROVISIONAL DIAGNOSIS: Rheumatoid arthritis

TOTALITY OF SYMPTOMS:

- Pain and stiffness of all joints
- Stitching type of pain
- Limbs feel heavy
- Swelling of ankle joints
- Unable to lift limb in the morning
- Agg-morning , night, winter season ,2-4am
- Amel -warmth application, summer

Receptorial method : complete repertory

Remedy	Kali-c	Rhus-t	Lyc	Act	Ni-ac	Seph	Calc	Rhus	Sep	Caust	Lod	Nux-v	By	Si	Apr
Totally	41	37	34	30	30	28	29	29	28	26	28	27	27	27	26
Symptoms Covered	12	11	10	10	10	10	9	9	9	8	8	8	8	8	8
[Complete][Extremities/Inflammation: Joints, arthritic: Large:	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
[Complete][Extremities/Inflammation: Joints, arthritic: Small:	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
[Complete][Generalities/Sleep: rapidly Waking/Waking, on:	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
[Complete][Extremities/Heaviness, swariness, Weakness, with general:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Rheumatic: Joint:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Sticking Fingers:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Tearing Lower limbs, Joints:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete][Generalities/ Water: Spas:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Legs, Night: Leg:	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Applications, Warm, anal:	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Ankles:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete][Extremities/ Pain: Midnight: After Two am - Three am:	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Repertorial result:

Kalium carbonicum- 41/12

Rhus tox-37/11

Lycopodium -34/10

FINAL REMEDY SELECTED:

Rx-

- **KALIUM CARBONICUM 1M ONE DOSE**

The choice of **KALIUM CARBONICUM** was based on the principle of individualization & totality of symptoms, where both mentals & particulars pointed strongly toward this remedy.

Reason:

- Acts on Fibrous tissues; ligaments of joints; , of lumbar back are particularly affected - producing relaxation; joints give way; back feels as if broken; the patient feels compelled to lie down or lean on something.
- Duration of action of remedy 30-60days
- Weakness is well marked
- Causation: exposure to cold , overstrain
- Stiffness of joints producing stitching type of pain
- Weakness of limbs
- Aggravation -cold , overstrain, morning , winter

- Swelling of ankles
- Weakness in limbs, feel numb
- Legs give out; feel heavy.
- Tips of toes and fingers painful.
- 2-4AM aggravation

FOLLOW UP:

Date	Symptoms & observations	Prescription
13/02/26	Mild decrease in pain Swelling present	Rx- KALIUM CARBONICUM 1M 1dose
15/03/26	Pain reduced Slight reduction in morning stiffness Swelling reduced slightly	Rx- KALIUM CARBONICUM 1M 1 dose
13/04/26	Marked improvement in pain and swelling Reduced morning stiffness Improved joint mobility	Rx- KALIUM CARBONICUM 1M 1dose
27/05/26	Improved joint mobility Significant relief in pain and stiffness Patient feels better	Rx- KALIUM CARBONICUM 1M 1dose

Discussion:

Rheumatoid arthritis is a chronic inflammatory autoimmune disease affecting multiple joints and causing pain, stiffness, and swelling. In this case, the patient presented with characteristic symptoms such as morning stiffness, stitching joint pains, ankle swelling, aggravation in winter, and relief from warmth. Based on the totality of symptoms, Kalium Carbonicum was selected as the constitutional remedy. Follow-up visits showed gradual improvement in pain, stiffness, swelling, and joint mobility, indicating a favorable response to individualized homoeopathic treatment.

CONCLUSION:

This case suggests that individualized homoeopathic treatment may help reduce pain, stiffness, and swelling in patients with rheumatoid arthritis while improving joint mobility and quality of life

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Before treatment :

After treatment:

