

SOUVENIR



13th ALL INDIA HOMOEOPATHIC CONGRESS, PATNA
2nd & 3rd February - 2003

Organised by : The Homoeopathic Medical Association of India
Host : Bihar State Branch

SCOPE & LIMITATION OF SPECIFIC MEDICINES OF HOMOEOPATHY IN CERVICAL SPONDYLOSIS

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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE :

Cervical Spondylosis is a disease affecting 4.6% of adults in population. Limitation of conventional medical management of this condition indicate a real need for safe and effective treatment of cervical spondylosis patients. Homoeopathic treatment for cervical spondylosis is used in many parts of the world adopting different types of prescription. This study was performed to determine the importance of rare and specific drugs, in other words drugs prescribed basing on their specific site of action on cervical spondylosis patient.

METHODOLOGY :

A clinical trial of Homoeopathic medicines in the treatment of cervical spondylosis was conducted from 1994 to 2002. 1000 patients from different age group were included in the study. An individualized homoeopathic medicine was prescribed for each patient for 6 months.

(Because in homeopathic practice the selection of the appropriate remedy depends on the patients symptoms and signs and his reaction to his total exterior and interior environment, the patients were divided into two groups : those with good prescribing symptoms and those patients with poor prescribing symptoms. Patients with good prescribing symptoms were prescribed constitutional deep acting medicine in single dose considering

their totality and patients with poor prescribing symptoms were prescribed rare drugs or specific drugs selected mainly basing on affinity of drug for specific site of action.)

RESULT :

Both the groups had a statistically significant decrease in clinical symptoms as regards pain, tenderness, mobility, stiffness. 70% improvement obtained in constitutional treated cases where as 60% improvement marked in patients who took medicines selected only basing on site of action of the drug.

CONCLUSION :

Though homoeopathy believes in single medicine without frequent repetition but the present study reveals that medicines prescribed only basing on its sphere of action are statistically equally significant in their action with constitutional medicines. So, organopathic medicines are also to be given more importance in patients with paucity of constitutional symptoms whenever indicated. As different regions in head, neck, shoulder, upper arm and scapular area are innervated by specific cervical nerve roots, the medicines found to be effective for specific region can also be prescribed directly for the corresponding spinal nerve involvement revealed from X-ray cervical spine.

INTRODUCTION :

In one recent epidemiology survey, the 6 month prevalence of disabling neck pain was 4.6% among adults. Neck pain commonly arises from diseases of the cervical spine and osteoarthritis of the cervical spine is termed as cervical spondylosis. It is the most common cause of neck pain in middle aged and elderly persons/ Pain, tenderness, stiffness of neck with tingling, numbness of upper extremity are common symptoms of cervical spondylosis, while constitutional symptoms such as malaise, fatigue, anxiety, depression

are associated with this condition.

MATERIAL & METHODS :

A clinical trial of Homoeopathic medicines in the treatment of cervical spondylosis was conducted at Dr. A.C. Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Bhubaneshwar, Orissa, from 1999 to 2002. All the patients selected for trial satisfied the diagnostic criteria of the American Rheumatism Association for definite diseases of cervical spondylosis.

Because in Homoeopathic practice the selection of appropriate remedy depends on the patients symptoms and signs and his reaction to his total exterior and interior environment, the patients were divided into two groups : those with good prescribing symptoms and those with poor prescribing symptoms.

Good prescribing symptoms are onset of symptoms following a definite causative factor such as physical trauma emotional trauma etc., complaint affected by climactic conditions, for instance damp or dry weather, heat, frost or wind; complaint markedly affected by other factors such as movement, rest or time of the day, outstanding factors affecting the patient, not necessarily associated with the disease, such as marked craving or aversion for certain foods. In case of female patient, emotional, mental and physical changes before, during or after the menstrual period may be of importance. Weighing is given to marked mental or emotional peculiarities such as abnormalities in will, understanding, memory, fear, affection etc.

Any patient with five or more of these marked characteristics would be classed as showing good prescribing symptoms, where as a patient who showed less than three or uncertain in his reactions would be classed as having poor prescribing symptoms. The patients were then assigned to two groups. The patients in the group having good prescribing symptoms were given constitutional medicine selected after a through case taking, evaluation of symptoms and repertorisation.

The patients of the group having poor prescribing symptoms were prescribed medicine considering only the symptoms related to location which is otherwise known as organopathic remedies. Treatment had been administered for a period of 6 months. The patients were seen twice in first month and once in a month thereafter.

Considering the pathogenesis of cervical spondylosis the common symptoms of cervical spondylosis are -

- 1) Degenerative and osteophytic changes in cervical vertebra and upper thoracic vertebra.
- 2) Symptoms are chiefly pain and stiffness of neck.
- 3) Due to nerve root irritation radiating pain shoulders, sides of scapula, upper arm, deltoid muscles, hand, fingers, chest etc.
- 4) Regions affected due to specific nerve root compression or irritation and homoeopathic medicines having action for these specific sites are :

i) C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4 nerve root compression causes :

severe pain in nape of neck and occipital region causing occipital headache. So the medicines having specific site of action on these regions are : *Chin.sulph, Latrodactus mac., Val., Zinc.phos.*

ii) C_5 nerve root compression causes pain in -

Lateral arm, medial scapula

So the medicines having specific site of action on these regions are : *Asarum, Chin ars, Cedron, Chelid, Cheno anth, Cheno Gauci, Cup ars, Jug. c, Nux mosch, Onos, Sticta, Strychnin, Urti uren*

iii) C_6 nerve root compression causes pain in lateral forearm, thumb, index finger.

So the medicines having specific site of action on these regions are

: *Anagalis, Aster rub, Jacaranda, Mag mur, Palladium, Vipera.*

- iv) C₇ nerve root compression causes pain in posterior arm, dorsal forearm, lateral hand.

So the medicines having specific site of action on these regions are : *Sticta, Strych, Osmium.*

- v) C₈ nerve root compression causes pain in medial forearm, and 4th & 5th fingers.

So the medicines having specific site of action on these regions are : *Form rufa, Verat vir, Chin sulph, Coca, Piper methi*

- vi) T₁ nerve root compression causes pain in medial arm, axilla, deep shoulder.

So the medicines having specific site of action on these regions are : *Anag, Asclep tub, Aspar, Aur mur, Comocladia, Copaiva, Daphne, Fago, Ginseng, Hura, Indium, Jug C. Lachnanthes, Myrtus c.*

For the above findings it is observed that the vast number of medicines proved in homoeopathy, medicines can be selected for definite site of action as obtained in proving which indirectly confirms its specific action on the particular nerve root involvement. As a result medicines can also be prescribed seeing the X-ray report which show the damage of particular vertebra compressing the spinal nerve.

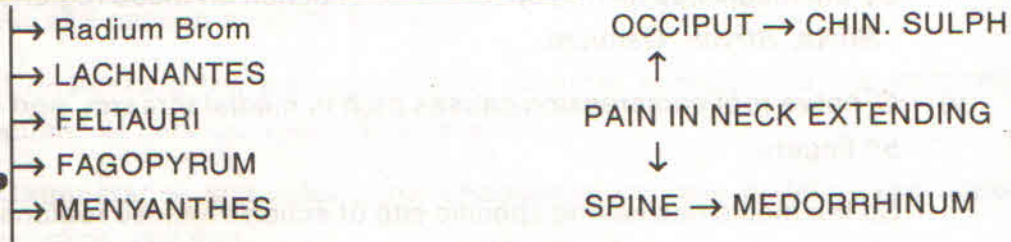
OBSERVATION :

From among the above list of medicines for specific location, patient with poor prescribing symptoms were prescribed drugs accordingly. The list of drugs found effective for location wise prescribing are given in table no.-I. The constitutional drugs found effective in good prescribing symptoms. Cases are given in table no.-II.

TABLE - I

List of found effective in the patients where prescription were made considering the location only.

PAIN & STIFFNESS CONFINED TO NECK



PAIN EXTENDS

TO

LEFT FRM

RIGHT ARM

↓

PARIS QUAD

↓

SOLANUM LYCO

KALMIA

FERRUM PIC

ASPARGUS

RHODIUM

INDIUM

GRAPHITIS

PAIN

↓

LEFT SCAPULA

↓

RIGHT SCAPULA

↓

CHENO GLAUCI

↓

CHENO ANTEHEL

CURRUM ARS

JUGLANS C.

ONOSMODIUM

CHELIDONIUM

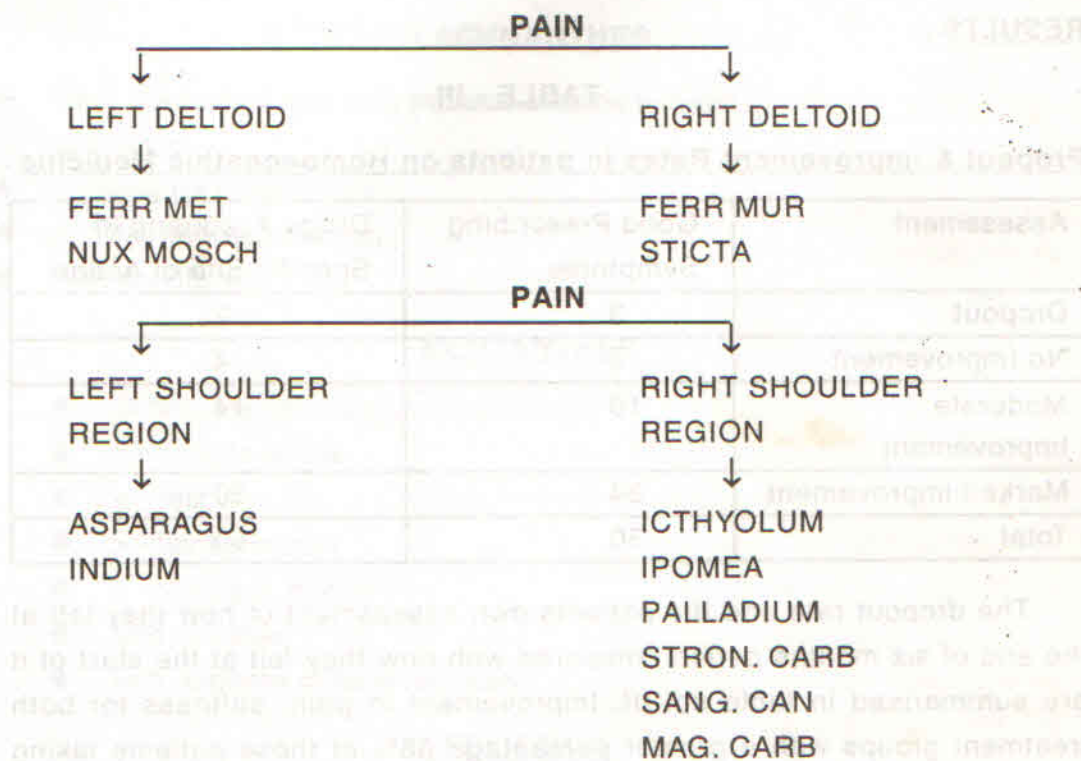


TABLE - II

List of constitutional drugs found effective in this study.

SYCOTIC CO. RUTA MEDORRHINUM HYPERICUM SYPHILLINUM
BACILLUS NO. 7 RHUSTOX BRYONIA ALBA CIMICIFUGA CALC. PHOS

CLINICAL & LABORATORY PARAMETERS

The age & sex of the patients along with the length of the time for which the disease had been present were recorded. The progress was assessed by means of the following tests : pain on visual analogue scale, neck tenderness, duration of morning stiffness with functional index of the patient.

STATISTICS :

The result were analysed by the X² test

RESULTS :

TABLE - III

Propout & improvement Rates in patients on Homoeopathic Medicine

Assessment	Good Prescribing Symptoms	Drugs According to Specific Site of Action
Dropout	3	2
No Improvement	3	4
Moderate Improvement	10	14
Marked improvement	34	30
Total	50	50

The dropout rate and the patients own assessment of how they left at the end of six months period compared with how they felt at the start of it are summarised in table no. III. Improvement in pain, stiffness for both treatment groups with a greater percentage 68% of those patients taking constitutional medicine are compared to those received specific drugs prescribed basing on site of affection (60%). However this difference was not statistically significant. A list of drugs along with their indications on which the present study based are as follows.

RATE DRUG VERY OFTEN USED IN THE PRESENT CLINICAL TRIAL & THEIR PECULIAR SYMPTOMS

PAIN & STIFFNESS CONFINED TO NECK

RADIUM BROM

- ♣ Pain & lameness
- ♣ < - drooping head forward, getting up.
- ♣ > - Standing or sitting erect, open air, motion, lying.
- ♣ With pain & heaviness felt in arms.

LACHNANTHES

- ♣ Neck drawn to rt. side with stiffness extends to head upto nose.
- ♣ < - turning to side & back.
- ♣ > - Chill between scapula.
- ♣ With sorethroat.

MENYANTHES

- ♣ Stiffness, pressive pain-nape of neck
- ♣ Extends to vertex
- ♣ < - rest
- ♣ > - hard pressure
- ♣ > - stooping, motion
- ♣ with diabates
- ♣ with coldness of hand and feet.

FEL TAURI

- ♣ Pain nape of neck.
- ♣ Dirrhoea
- ♣ Indigestion
- λ Due to gall stone

FAGOPYRUM

- ♣ Stiffness, bruised sensation in neck shoulder & fingers.
- ♣ Sensation as if neck could not support the head.
- ♣ Especially for aged peoples.
- ♣ Pruritus > - bathing in cold water.
- ♣ < - afternoon, > - coffee
- ♣ Cerebral hyperemia with Occipital headache.

PAIN NECK EXTENDS UP & DOWN

CHIN. SULPH

- ♣ Sensitive C₇ & T₁,
- ♣ Pain radiates up
- ♣ Acute cases
- ♣ H/o = Malaria
- ♣ Agg. - Touch

MEDORRHINUM

- ♣ When indicated drugs fail with Sycotic history.
- ♣ > - Sea shore, damp weather.
- ♣ Craves alcohol.
- ♣ Desire - salt, sweet, ice.
- ♣ Intense thirst.
- ♣ Forgetful, weeping, hurried.
- ♣ Intense burning heat in C_{vt} radiating down.

PAIN NECK EXTENDS TO LEFT HAND

PARIS QUADRIFOLIA

- ♣ Painful & weight feeling in the nape of the neck.
- ♣ In neck, Lt. Intercostal region extending to Lt. arm.
- ♣ Numbness of fingers & arms.
- ♣ < - exertion, evening, touch.
- ♣ > - Open air, rest.
- ♣ Garrulous.
- ♣ Dry tongue.

KALMIA

- ♣ Pain in neck extends to fingers.
- ♣ Affects C₅, C₆, C₇, & T₁, T₂, T₃

- ♣ Pain along the ulnar nerve.
- ♣ Numbness of the fingers.
- ♣ Vertigo < - Stooping
- ♣ Pulse - 30 - - 45 per minute
- ♣ < - Leaning forward, looking down, motion, open air.

RHODIUM

- λ Intol.-to sweet
- λ Diabetes; < - 4 - 7 P.M.
mental exertion

PAIN NECK EXTENDS TO RIGHT HAND

SOLANUM LYCOPERSICUM

- Rheumatic pain in Rt. elbow, wrist and hand of both sides.
- < open air, motion, jar, noise.
- > warm room, tobacco
- Continuous sneezing

FERRUM PICRIC

- ♣ Diseases due to over exertion in the aged-
Spondylosis, hoarseness, biliousness.
- ♣ Pain in Rt.side of neck extends down to Rt.arm.
- ♣ Dark haired plethoric person.
- ♣ Old persons with B.H.P. causing frequent
urination at night.
- ♣ Impaired liver function

PAIN IN LEFT DELTOID

FERRUM MET.

- Desirè-sour, Intol. - Fat.
- < - siting, mid-night

> - walking slowly

NUX MOSCH.

Desire-coffee,

Intol-warm food & drink.

< - cold wind, motion, jar.

> - warm dry weather.

PAIN IN RIGHT DELTOID

FERRUM MUR

Rt. Shoulder, Rt. Elbow.

Tendency to cramp

Anaemia

Arrested menstruation

STICTA

Shoulder, deltoid, biceps

Atrophic rhinitis

Frontal headache

PAIN IN LEFT SHOULDER REGION

ASPARAGUS

- λ Pain in shoulder, left acromian process, clavicle
down the arm < - motion,
with heart & bladder symptoms.

FERRUM PICRIC

- ♣ Stiff neck & Lt. Shoulder down left arm.
- ♣ With nausea.
- ♣ Violent pain in head when straining at stool.
- ♣ Frequent seminal emission.

- ♣ Horrible offensive urine.
- ♣ Sleepiness

PAIN IN RIGHT SHOULDER REGION

- ♣ Ichthyolum
- ♣ Ipomea
- ♣ Palladium
- ♣ Strontia carb.
- ♣ Sangunaria can.
- ♣ Mag. carb.

PAIN IN RIGHT SCAPULA

CHELIDONIUM

Lower & inner angle

< - change of weather, morn. Motion.

> - Pressure

CHEN. ANTHELMINTICUM

- ❖ Rt. Shoulder near spine
- ❖ Aural Vertigo.

JIGLANS CINEREA

- ♣ Affects muscles of neck & under Rt. Scapula.
- ♣ Faulty elimination, causing jaundice, skin diseases.
- ♣ Impaired liver.
- ♣ Gallstone.
- ♣ Occipital headache.

PAIN MORE FELT IN LEFT SCAPULA

CHEN. GLAUCIAPHIS

λ Lower & inner angle of left shoulder blade.

- λ Aversion meat & bread
- λ Constipation

CUPRUMARS.

- λ Lower left shoulder blade
- λ Dry mouth with thirst
- λ Cramp legs > standing

ONOSMODIUM

CONCLUSION :

The results of this trial confirms the impression obtained from the preliminar study that homoeopathic treatment is effective in the control of patients with cervical spondylosis. Both the constitutionally prescribed drugs and rare or specific drugs manifested significant improvement. Table no. - I & II shows list of two group of drugs found effective in this clinical trial. It is expected that since the selection of a homoeopathic remedy depends on the patients symptoms and his reaction to his environment as a whole, treatment should be more effective in patients with good prescribing symptoms than in those with poor prescribing symptoms. But this study confirms that the difference in the percentage and improvement in two groups are not statistically significant. From this it can be concluded that drugs even if prescribing basing on one or two symptoms if very prominent manifesting a definite site of action those symptoms can be taken as determinative symptoms a drug and can cure patients. From this study it can also be concluded that homoeopathic medicines can also be directly prescribed for cervical spondylosis seeing a X-ray report which shows the osteophytic changes and degeneration of cervical vertebra and the corresponding spinal nerve compression manifesting its pain in the site of innervation in absence of constitutional symptoms of the patient. As for example C₂, C₃, C₄, involvement medicines like *Chin sulph*, *Latro mact*, *Val*, *Zinc phos*; for C₅, C₆, involvement - *Cheno anth*, *Cheno glauci*, *Cup ars*, *Jug c*, *Onos*; for C₆, C₇, involvement - *Anag*, *Jaca*, *Mag mur*, *Pallad*; for C₇, T₁, involvement - *Daphne*, *Hura*, *Indium*, *Osmium*, *Strychnin* can be thought of.

