



International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences

E-ISSN: 2616-4493
P-ISSN: 2616-4485
www.homoeopathicjournal.com
IJHS 2024; 8(1): 403-406
Received: 22-01-2024
Accepted: 26-02-2024

Gottemukkala VM Virajitha
Post Graduate, Department of
Organon of Medicine and
Homoeopathic Philosophy,
HKES Dr. Maalakaraddy
Homoeopathic Medical College,
Kalaburgi, Karnataka, India

Unlocking the homoeopathic potential in the treatment of canker sores

Gottemukkala VM Virajitha

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33545/26164485.2024.v8.i1f.1098>

Abstract

Canker sores, medically referred to as aphthous ulcers, are characterized by small yet painful lesions that develop on the soft tissues inside the mouth, including the gums, tongue, and inner cheeks. While they typically resolve on their own within one to two weeks, their presence can cause considerable discomfort, making everyday activities like eating, drinking, and speaking challenging.

Traditional treatments often focus on providing temporary relief from the symptoms, without addressing the underlying cause of the ulcers. However, homeopathy offers a more comprehensive approach by delving into the patient's mental and emotional state to understand the root cause of the ulcer formation. By prioritizing a holistic understanding of the individual, homeopathy aims to identify the most suitable remedy, known as the similimum, which addresses not only the physical symptoms but also the mental and emotional aspects contributing to the ailment. This personalized approach holds promise in providing lasting relief and preventing recurrent outbreaks of canker sores.

Keywords: Canker sores, homoeopathy, aphthous ulcers, similimum, recurrent aphthous stomatitis, stress

Introduction

Aphthous ulcers, colloquially known as canker sores, pose a prevalent oral concern affecting about 20-25% of the population. Unlike cold sores, these ulcers manifest as painful white or yellow sores inside the mouth and are non-contagious. Termed oral aphthous, this condition involves a painful inflammatory process of the oral mucosa.

When these ulcers recur frequently, they are diagnosed as recurrent aphthous stomatitis (RAS). Stressful life events have been shown to significantly increase the likelihood of RAS episodes, nearly tripling the odds of occurrence.

Although aphthous ulcers represent the most common form of oral mucosal disease, a less common subtype known as major aphthous ulcers exists. These ulcers are particularly troublesome as they are refractory, often persisting for weeks to months, and can profoundly impact an individual's overall well-being. The aetiology of major aphthous ulcers is multifactorial, and treatment approaches likewise vary^[1].

Etiology

Ulcers can be triggered by various factors, including

Emotional stress and sleep deprivation: Psychological stress and inadequate sleep can compromise the body's immune response, increasing susceptibility to ulcers.

Mechanical trauma: Accidental injuries to the mouth lining, such as self-inflicted bites, can lead to ulcer formation.

Nutritional deficiencies: Inadequate intake of essential nutrients like vitamin B, iron, and folic acid can impair mucosal health, contributing to ulcer development.

Certain foods: Some individuals may experience oral irritation and ulceration after consuming specific foods, such as chocolate.

Toothpaste ingredients: Ingredients like sodium laureth sulfate found in certain toothpaste formulations can potentially irritate the oral mucosa, leading to ulcers in susceptible individuals.

Menstruation: Hormonal fluctuations during menstruation can influence oral health and contribute to ulcer outbreaks.

Medications: Certain medications, including nicorandil used for angina, may have oral ulceration listed as a side effect.

Corresponding Author:
Gottemukkala VM Virajitha
Post Graduate, Department of
Organon of Medicine and
Homoeopathic Philosophy,
HKES Dr. Maalakaraddy
Homoeopathic Medical College,
Kalaburgi, Karnataka, India

Viral infections: Viruses can directly or indirectly affect the oral mucosa, increasing the risk of ulcer formation [2].

Pathology

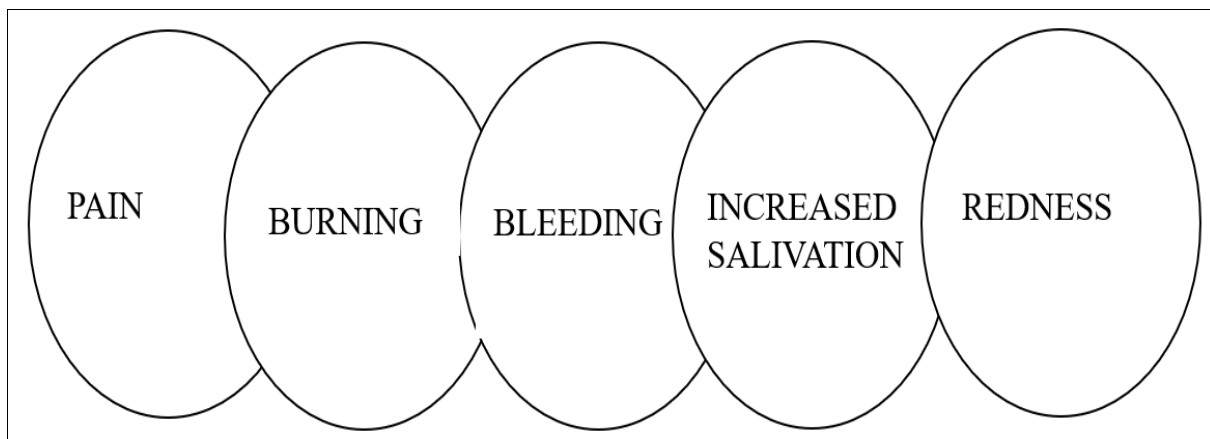
Recurrent aphthous stomatitis (RAS) is indeed a condition characterized by recurrent ulcers or sores in the mouth, but its exact cause or pathogenesis is not fully understood. While there are several theories regarding its aetiology, it is generally believed to involve a combination of genetic, immunological, and environmental factors.

One prominent theory suggests that RAS is related to an immune-mediated inflammatory response. This response involves activation of T-cells and the release of inflammatory cytokines, including tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-α). TNF-α is a pro-inflammatory cytokine that plays a crucial role in orchestrating the inflammatory response [3].

Types of aphthous ulcers [4]

Types	Description	Characteristic features
Minor aphthous ulcers	Most common type affecting around 80% of RAS patients	Recur at 1 to 4-month intervals-Small (Usually < 5 mm), oval or round lesions-group of 1 to 6 ulcers-Surrounded by erythematous halo-Covered by grey-white pseudo membrane-Mainly on non-keratinized mucosa-typically heals within 2 weeks without scarring
Major aphthous ulcers	Most severe form seen in 10% of RAS patients	Larger (> 10 mm), lasting 5 to 10 weeks-May leave scarring-can affect any area of the mouth, including the oropharynx-Common in AIDS patients-Not cyclical
Herpetiform Ulcers	Least common type found in 1% to 10% of RAS patients	Resemble primary herpetic stomatitis, but no connection to herpes viruses-more common in older females-Painful, small, numerous ulcers-cluster of up to 100 ulcers-typically 2 to 3 mm in diameter-Last 1 to 2 weeks-May fuse into larger irregular ulcer-may heal with scarring

Clinical features of canker sores [5]



Clinical feature	Description
Pain	Increased pain during talking, eating or drinking
Burning	Sensation of burning, particularly when consuming spicy foods
Bleeding	Ulcers may bleed usually in small amounts
Increased salivation	Saliva production tends to increase to keep the affected area moist & lubricated.
Redness	Ulcers & surrounding area may appear red sometimes they will be with increased intensity

Role of homoeopathy in management canker SORES [6-9]

Homeopathy, as a holistic system of medicine, offers a unique approach to managing canker sores, also known as aphthous ulcers. As homoeopathy aims to address the underlying causes of the condition and restore overall balance of the sick individual.

1. Eucalyptus globulus

This potent antiseptic solution is specifically formulated to target mucous membranes. It is highly effective against aphthous conditions observed in the throat and mouth. Symptoms include excessive salivation accompanied by a burning sensation. Inflammation of the throat with enlarged ulcers is also common. Individuals may experience a sensation of phlegm in the throat. This advanced formulation provides superior relief and healing properties for such conditions. The discharge will be acrid & foul in nature. He will be mentally exhilarated with desire to move about.

2. Iodum

The individual experiences persistent throbbing pain in their molars, accompanied by yellowing of teeth and a mucous coating in the mornings. Additionally, they suffer from inflamed and bleeding gums, along with aphthous ulcers within the mouth. Glandular swelling and pain in the interior of the mouth are also present. Furthermore, they have a dry tongue covered in a thick coating. Mentally, they exhibit a fear of social interaction, displaying suicidal tendencies when left alone, compounded by anxiety during periods of quiet reflection.

3. Lachesis

The patient may present with aphthous ulcers and denuded patches in the oral cavity, leading to a persistent burning and raw feeling, which may necessitate a liquid diet for ease of swallowing. Interestingly, hot beverages provide relief from the discomfort. The throat exhibits a purplish and inflamed appearance, while the tongue appears swollen, tremulous,

with a red, parched tip, accompanied by sensations of burning and rawness. Any taste may induce nausea, indicative of heightened sensitivity. Mentally, there is noticeable loquaciousness, alongside feelings of jealousy and restlessness, often accompanied by a reluctance to engage in tasks.

4. Mercsol

The remedy exhibits a consistent tendency towards ulceration, affecting various parts of the body such as the throat, nose, mouth, and lower limbs. Notably, there is a putrid odor from the mouth, coupled with a bluish discoloration. Within the oral cavity, one observes signs of excoriation, inflammatory swelling, and a burning sensation, alongside the presence of vesicles, blisters, and aphthous ulcers. Ulceration may also occur at the orifices of salivary ducts, leading to heightened salivation. Moreover, there persists a bitter and metallic taste in the mouth, with a preference for cold beverages owing to a more pronounced thirst compared to appetite.

On a mental level, the individual demonstrates a sense of urgency and restlessness, often accompanied by anxiety. Additionally, there is a propensity towards cognitive impairment.

5. Borax

This remedy primarily affects mucous membranes, causing rapid formation of ulcers. It's particularly effective for aphthae of the tongue, which are sensitive and bleed easily. Ulcers develop quickly, accompanied by a wrinkled palate. The mouth feels hot and tender, noticeable even to a mother while nursing. Ulcers in the mouth are hot, tender, and bleed when touched or during eating. The buccal membrane appears highly reddish. It's commonly used as a mouthwash for sore mouths.

Anxiety is pronounced, especially with downward motion, and the individual is excessively nervous and sensitive to noises. Overall, this remedy provides relief for mouth ulcers and associated symptoms, along with calming anxiety and hypersensitivity, especially to downward motion and noises.

6. Acid Nitricum

This remedy is presenting with agonizing mouth ulcers, particularly concentrated on the soft palate and tongue's sides, characterized by sharp, splinter-like pains. Bleeding gums and excessive salivation accompany the putrid breath. These symptoms are prominent in slender individuals with a rigid physique, dark complexion, and black hair and eyes. There's a distinct offensive and corrosive quality to all bodily discharges. Examination reveals a clean, red tongue with a central furrow. The ulcers feature irregular margins with zigzag edges and a raw flesh-like base. Psychologically, the patient exhibits marked irritability, a disposition towards hatred, and an overwhelming sense of despair.

7. Graphites

Easily bleeding & swelling of gums with fetid, putrid urine like odour of mouth. Oral pain due to ulcers, vesicles & their excoriation. Ulcers on the tongue. Profuse salivation & accumulation of mucus in palate & throat. Constant soreness of throat with bitter taste with roughness of throat. Mind is timid, unable to take decision. Music makes her weep.

8. Psorinum

Following a bout of toothache characterized by intense, deep-seated pains, ulceration has developed on the right gum accompanied by a burning sensation. Inflammation and swelling of the gums worsen upon touch. Additionally, there are painful ulcers present inside the lower lips. The tip of the tongue feels dry, almost as if it's been burnt, contributing to discomfort. Alongside these physical symptoms, there's a sensation of burning and discomfort in the throat, akin to being scalded. Despite experiencing no appetite, there's a notable increase in thirst.

Emotionally, there's a sense of sudden vanishing thoughts and a weakened memory. Feelings of sadness, depression, and even suicidal ideation persist, accompanied by anxiety and a sense of impending doom. These symptoms exacerbate following even slight emotional triggers.

9. Muriatic Acid

Aphthous mouth with pale, swollen tongue leathery dry paralysed tongue. Deep ulcers on tongue. Fetid breath with soreness of teeth. Ulcers & false membranes which are oedematous, dark & raw in nature. He is irritable, peevish natured person, he mostly suffers in silence. Ulcers will be with black base.

10. Dulcamara

Pimples & ulcers in the mouth. Gums are loosed & fungous. Paralysis of tongue with itching of tongue. Tongue loaded with thick mucus. Burning thirst for cold drinks & increased flow of saliva. Sore throat with elongation of uvula especially after getting chill. Mind-impatience & restlessness is marked with inclination to scold without being anger. Nocturnal delirium with < pains.

11. ARS Album

Unhealthy easily bleeding gums. Ulceration of mouth with dryness & burning heat. Epithelioma of lips tongue dry, clean & red with stitching burning pain. Ulcers are with blue colour, bloody saliva. Metallic taste with neuralgia of teeth < after midnight > warmth the person will be with great anguish & restless he changes place continually fears of death, being left alone thinks it is useless to take the medicine.

12. Sulphuric Acid

Aphthae with bleeding gums offensive breath dryness of mouth. Tongue is horribly swollen with swallowing difficulty. Ulcers on inflamed tongue with difficulty in talking profuse salivation. Haemorrhage from mouth. Aphthous ulcers especially in children. Loss of appetite with great debility. Mentally excitability & exaltation, melancholy dejection with inclination to weep. Dullness of intellect. Aversion to conversation with extraordinary absence of mind.

Conclusions

Homeopathy sets itself apart from conventional medicine with its holistic approach to healing. Rather than simply addressing isolated symptoms or organs, it views the individual as a unified whole, considering mental, emotional, and physical aspects in tandem.

At the heart of homeopathic philosophy lies the pursuit of the "Simillimum" the remedy that most closely aligns with the entirety of an individual's symptoms, considering not

just the surface ailment but also their unique constitution and internal imbalances. Take, for example, the case of canker sores (Apthous Ulcers), which may appear straightforward but often indicate deeper disturbances within the body.

Rather than treating apthous ulcers as isolated issues, homeopathy delves into the underlying disharmony of the individual. This approach requires a thorough evaluation of their overall condition, taking into account both physical symptoms and mental well-being. By addressing these interconnected aspects, homeopathy aims not only to alleviate the immediate discomfort but also to restore balance and promote holistic healing.

Conflict of Interest

Not available.

Financial Support

Not available.

Reference

1. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8126288>
2. Vanessa Ngan, Staff Writer, 2003. Updated by A/Prof Amanda Oakley, Chief Editor, January 2016. DermNet NZ Revision April 2021
3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8934078>
4. Plewa MC, Chatterjee K. Recurrent Apthous Stomatitis. [Updated 2023 Nov 13]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2024 Jan
5. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK431059/>
6. Sharma H. Homeopathic medicines for mouth ulcer Dec 20, 2023.
7. William B. Pocket Manual of Homoeopathic Materia Medica & Repertory, New Delhi: B. Jain Publishers (P) Ltd; c2016
8. Allen HC. Keynotes Rearranged and Classified with Leading Remedies of the Materia Medica and Bowel Nosodes, 10th Edition, New Delhi: B. Jain Publishers (P) Ltd.; c2013.
9. Kent JT. Lectures on Homoeopathic Materia Medica New Delhi: B. Jain Publishers (P) Ltd.; c2017.
10. Clarke JH, A dictionary of practical Materia Medica.
11. Phatak SR Concise Materia medica of homoeopathic medicines. B Jain Publishers Pvt Ltd; Standard Edition. (1 June 2007).

How to Cite This Article

Gottemukkala VM, Virajitha. Unlocking the homoeopathic potential in the treatment of canker sores. International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences. 2024;8(1):403-406.

Creative Commons (CC) License

This is an open-access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-Share Alike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0) License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work non-commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.