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A case report on individualized homoeopathic treatment of allergic rhinitis

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Abstract

The prevalence of allergic rhinitis, a common and frequently crippling condition characterised by rhinorrhea, nose congestion, nasal itching, and sneezing, is rising globally. Over-the-counter (prescription-free) medications are available to treat mild allergies. Even common people are familiar with antihistamines, nasal decongestants, and nasal sprays, which doctors typically prescribe. However, these medications do not diminish the body's inclination to overreact to harmless internal or external stimuli; rather, they only help to control discomfort and alleviate symptoms during an acute episode. This case study demonstrates the effective use of an individualised homoeopathic medication to treat acute paroxysms of allergic rhinitis. The Sino-Nasal Outcome Test "Snot-22" was used to assess the severity before treatment and improvement after treatment (before and after SNOT 22 score scale). Following in-depth case analysis, repertorization, and Materia Medica consultation, Individualized homoeopathic medicine has been prescribed decreasing the symptom severity and patients tendency of manifestation of symptoms of allergic rhinitis. This case report demonstrates that the patient received excellent therapy with individualised homoeopathic medication without the need for antihistamines or nasal sprays, supporting the claim that homoeopathy is a successful treatment for allergic rhinitis.

Keywords: Allergic Rhinitis (AR), Homoeopathy, Individualized homoeopathic medicine, Allergy, SNOT 22

Introduction

Allergic rhinitis (AR) refers to an inflammatory condition in which nasal mucosa is affected and this effect is due to indoor or outdoor allergens ^[1]. Pathophysiologically, immunoglobulin E stimulates the nasal mucosa's mast cells or basophils that releases vasoactive mediators like histamine, which sets off the inflammation ^[2]. This manifests as symptoms of nasal stuffiness and congestion, rhinorrhoea, itching and sneezing and ocular symptoms such as itching, redness and lachrymation ^[2]. WHO and ARIA (Allergic Rhinitis and its impact on Asthma) has classified allergic rhinitis as seasonal (associated to pollen allergy) and perennial allergy (associated to house dust mites). On the basis of duration and intensity of symptoms, ARIA has classified allergic rhinitis into two categories: Intermittent and persistent ^[3]. Intermittent AR has symptoms for 4 days or fewer per week or for no more than 4 weeks in a row while Persistent AR lasts for four days each week and more than 4 consecutive weeks ^[3]. Twenty-five per cent of people worldwide suffer from allergic rhinitis, which is becoming a global health concern ^[4]. Although estimates of its frequency are highly variable, reliable epidemiologic research indicates that up to 40% of children and 20 to 30% of adults may be affected by AR ^[5]. According to Phase III International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood (ISAAC), the prevalence of AR varied between 0.8 to 14.9% in 6-7 years old and 1.4 to 39.7% in 13-14 years old worldwide ^[6]. Compared to asthma, allergic rhinitis appears to be transient and somewhat milder. It can substantially affect various aspects of the quality of life in patients, including work, education, and productivity ^[7]. The 2010 Allergic Rhinitis and Its Impact on Asthma (ARIA) guidelines ^[8] recommend the use of antihistamines, intranasal or sublingual allergen-specific immunotherapy and similar interventions in adults and children with AR, with or without concomitant asthma ^[9]. Antihistamines can pass through the blood-brain barrier, which can have a sedative effect on working memory and alertness. Therefore, this case report was undertaken to initiate and enlighten the benefits of individualized homoeopathic medicine in allergic rhinitis and establish the importance of individualization in homoeopathy and the benefits of individualized repertorisation.

Case Report: A 29 years old female patient residing in Indiranagar, Lucknow came to the outpatient department of State National Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, on 20/06/2022 (OPD NO.54014) with complaints of increased sneezing since 10 days and sneezing on and off last 1-2 years, aggravated in evening and warmth, ameliorated by cold with bland watery, thin, clear nasal discharge. Patient ameliorated by nasal discharge. There were symptoms of nasal obstruction aggravated by lying down, change of weather, morning accompanied by burning and watery eyes which aggravated by sneezing and a sense of loss of smell. There was a concomitant symptom of depressed, dull and sad mood 1 week before menses for 5 months, She had a tendency to catch cold Patient was very anxious during the narration of her symptoms as she was very worried about her health. Patient was diagnosed as allergic rhinitis by an ENT specialist and took allopathic treatment, off and on, for last 1 year, and gets only temporary relief.

History of presenting complaints: Patient was apparently well 2 years back but her complaints started when she joined back her office after COVID and also moved back alone and had to travel in traffic for 4 to 5 hours after that she started episodes of frequent sneezing, nasal discharge and burning in eyes. History of allopathic treatment without any remarkable improvement.

Past History: Patient suffers from deviated nasal septum since birth. History of throat infection October 2019, took allopathic treatment for 6 months with improvement, and later on, the complaints subsided. History of viral fever in May 2021, took allopathic treatment for 15 days with improvement, and later on, the complaints subsided. But after these episodes of infection she started having recurrent cold and cough at change of weather and aggravation in winters, took allopathic treatment for 12 months with partial improvement, and temporary relief.

Family history: Mother had allergic rhinitis. She took homoeopathic treatment for it and relieved completely.

Physical generals

Appetite: Adequate, two times/day, can tolerate hunger.

Thirst: 5-6 litres/day

Desire: Sweet things

Stool: Normal

Urine: Normal

Follow up

Date	Complaints	Prescription
20/06/2022	Sneezing since 10 days aggravation-morning, warmth amelioration-cold Nasal obstruction both nostrils aggravation-morning, lying down+++ , change of weather Burning Eyes with watery eyes aggravation-sneezing Nasal discharge, thin and clear amelioration-by nasal discharge, steam inhalation Loss of smell Depressed, dull mood 1 week before menses	Sulphur 1M /OD x 3 days Sac Lac 30/ TDS x 7days
28/06/2022	Sneezing better 30% Nasal obstruction better 30% Smell sensation better Burning eyes better No changes in mood before menses	Sac Lac 30/ TDS x 15 days
13/07/2022	Sneezing better 60%	Sac Lac 30/ TDS x 15 days

Perspiration: Moderate

Thermal reaction: Hot patient.

Sleep: 7-8 hours/day, refreshing, sound sleep.

Sleep position: Right sided.

Smell: Diminished but can recognize only strong smell

Sound: Gets irritable in loud noise.

Fear: Fear of reptiles-lizards, snakes, Faints on seeing snakes.

Menstrual History: Regular, flow for 5 days, depressed, dull, sad mood, 1 week before menses since 5 months

Mental generals: Patient had anxiety about her health, fear of snakes, depressed, dull and sad mood before menstruation.

Totality of symptoms

1. Sneezing < evening, warmth > cold.
2. Nasal obstruction both nostrils < morning, change of weather, lying down+++
3. Burning and watery eyes < sneezing.
4. Bland, watery, thin, clear nasal discharge.
5. Depressed, dull and sad mood before menses.
6. Sweet things desire.
7. Deviated Nasal Septum complaints.
8. Fear of snakes.

Investigations

To assess improvement of cases of Allergic Rhinitis.

SINO-Nasal Outcome Test-SNOT22 Questionnaire is used and based on score improvement is assessed.

SNOT 22 score

Before treatment SNOT 22 score-17 (Figure 1).

After treatment SNOT 22 score-2 (Figure 2).

Clinical diagnosis: Allergic rhinitis

Selection of remedy: Medicine was selected and prescribed to the patient on the basis of repertorisation (Figure 3) as the case was repertorised with the RADAR 10.5 Synthesis 8.1V (English) ^[10].

Selection of potency: Sulphur 1M was prescribed to the patient, due to marked symptoms both mental and physical.

Prescription: Sulphur 1M/ OD for 3 days followed by Placebo 30.

	No Nasal obstruction Now can recognised all Smell No Burning eyes Depressed Mood better before menses	
25/07/2022	Sneezing better No Nasal obstruction Now can recognize all Smell No Burning eyes Depressed mood before menses better	Sac Lac 30/ TDS x 15 days
16/08/2022	All Symptoms Better	Sac Lac 30/ TDS x 15 days

SNOT-22 score before and after allergic rhinitis

I.D.: 54014 SINO-NASAL OUTCOME TEST (SNOT-22) DATE: 20/06/22

Below you will find a list of symptoms and social/emotional consequences of your rhinosinusitis. We would like to know more about these problems and would appreciate your answering the following questions to the best of your ability. There are no right or wrong answers, and only you can provide us with this information. Please rate your problems as they have been over the past two weeks. Thank you for your participation. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance if necessary.

1. Considering how severe the problem is when you experience it and how often it happens, please rate each item below on how "bad" it is by circling the number that corresponds with how you feel using this scale: →	No Problem	Very Mild Problem	Mild or slight Problem	Moderate Problem	Severe Problem	Problem as bad as it can be	5 Most Important Items
1. Need to blow nose	0	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
2. Nasal Blockage	0	1	<u>2</u>	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
3. Sneezing	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4. Runny nose	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
5. Cough	0	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
6. Post-nasal discharge	0	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
7. Thick nasal discharge	0	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
8. Ear fullness	<u>0</u>	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
9. Dizziness	0	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
10. Ear pain	<u>0</u>	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
11. Facial pain/pressure	0	1	<u>2</u>	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
12. Decreased Sense of Smell/Taste	0	<u>1</u>	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
13. Difficulty falling asleep	0	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
14. Wake up at night	0	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
15. Lack of a good night's sleep	0	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
16. Wake up tired	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input type="radio"/>
17. Fatigue	0	1	2	<u>3</u>	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
18. Reduced productivity	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input type="radio"/>
19. Reduced concentration	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input type="radio"/>
20. Frustrated/restless/irritable	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input type="radio"/>
21. Sad	0	1	2	3	<u>4</u>	5	<input type="radio"/>
22. Embarrassed	<u>0</u>	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>

2. Please mark the most important items affecting your health (maximum of 5 items) 17

17

SNOT-20 Copyright © 1996 by Jay F. Piccirillo, M.D., Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri
 SNOT-22 Developed from modification of SNOT-20 by National Comparative Audit of Surgery for Nasal Polyposis and Rhinosinusitis
 Royal College of Surgeons of England.

Fig 1: Before treatment SNOT-22 Score

I.D.: 73501 **SINO-NASAL OUTCOME TEST (SNOT-22)** DATE: 16/08/22

Below you will find a list of symptoms and social/emotional consequences of your rhinosinusitis. We would like to know more about these problems and would appreciate your answering the following questions to the best of your ability. There are no right or wrong answers, and only you can provide us with this information. Please rate your problems as they have been over the past two weeks. Thank you for your participation. Do not hesitate to ask for assistance if necessary.

1. Considering how severe the problem is when you experience it and how often it happens, please rate each item below on how "bad" it is by circling the number that corresponds with how you feel using this scale: →	No Problem	Very Mild Problem	Mild or slight Problem	Moderate Problem	Severe Problem	Problem as bad as it can be	5 Most Important Items
1. Need to blow nose	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
2. Nasal Blockage	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
3. Sneezing	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
4. Runny nose	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
5. Cough	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
6. Post-nasal discharge	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
7. Thick nasal discharge	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
8. Ear fullness	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
9. Dizziness	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
10. Ear pain	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
11. Facial pain/pressure	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
12. Decreased Sense of Smell/Taste	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
13. Difficulty falling asleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
14. Wake up at night	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
15. Lack of a good night's sleep	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
16. Wake up tired	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
17. Fatigue	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
18. Reduced productivity	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
19. Reduced concentration	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
20. Frustrated/restless/irritable	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
21. Sad	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>
22. Embarrassed	0	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="radio"/>

2. Please mark the most important items affecting your health (maximum of 5 items) 2 ↑

2

SNOT-20 Copyright © 1996 by Jay F. Piccirillo, M.D., Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri
 SNOT-22 Developed from modification of SNOT-20 by National Comparative Audit of Surgery for Nasal Polyposis and Rhinosinusitis
 Royal College of Surgeons of England.

Fig 2: After treatment SNOT-22 Score

Repertorial Sheet

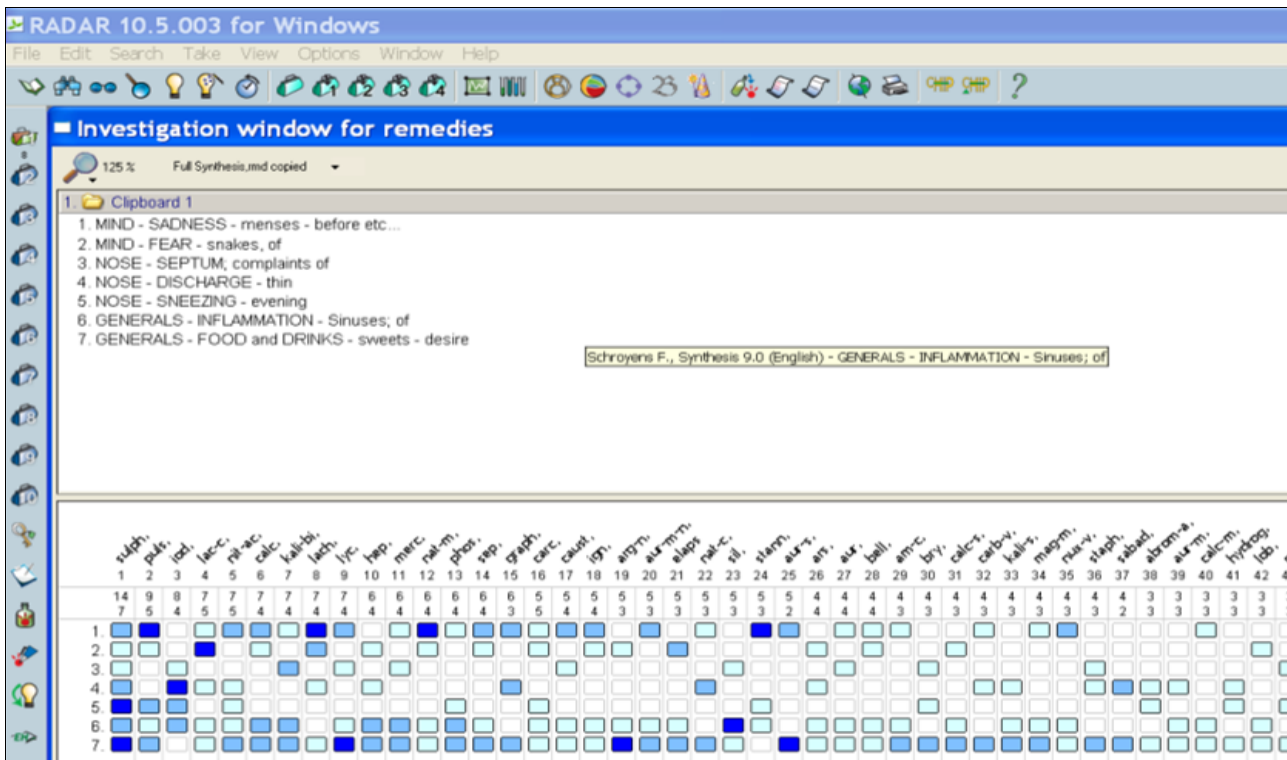


Fig 3: Repertorisation from Synthesis repertory using radar software

Discussion

This case report shows efficacy of individualized homoeopathic Medicine, Sulphur in the case of allergic rhinitis. No Antihistamine, nasal spray and nasal congestants were used. On the basis of presenting symptoms of the patient, repertorisation and referring to the various Materia medica, Sulphur was prescribed to the patient. This Individualized homoeopathic remedy not only improved the allergic symptoms of the patient but it also decreased the pre-menstrual symptom of depressed, sad mood and also decreased anxiety of the patient and the conclusive fact is derived on the basis of SNOT-22 score scale [12]. This scale consists of 22 items, rated from 0 (No Problem At All) to 5 ('worst possible symptom'). Possible SNOT-22 total scores range from 0 to 110, with higher SNOT-22 total scores indicating worse symptoms.

In this case report, SNOT-22 score of the patient at the baseline was 17 and it was reduced to 2 after the continuous follow-up of patient for 2 months.

Homoeopaths contend that the respiratory allergies are best treated by professional homoeopaths who prescribe individually selected homoeopathic constitutional medicines [13].

Thus, in this case report it is concluded that an Individualized homoeopathic remedy is able to annihilate the disease and helps to reduce the intensity and frequency of the episodes of allergic rhinitis and there was no side-effect during and after the treatment.

Conclusion

Allergic rhinitis is one of the most prevalent diseases in young people and is responsible for a significant impairment in quality of life, its control is usually far from satisfactory. Allergic Rhinitis, if ignored, can lead to complications such as asthma, sinusitis, etc. Antihistamines provide some relief

but improvement is only partial. In this case report it can be concluded that Individualized homoeopathic medicines are of importance in managing allergic rhinitis. There is a better scope in homoeopathy for the treatment of allergic rhinitis since the treatment is based on holistic and individualistic approach but to establish their proper effects on system, further proving and verification are required with a long-term trial on large sample size should be carried out in future.

Conflict of Interest: Not available

Financial Support: Not available

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