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Dr. Mayuri Mahale

PG Scholar, Department of
Repertory, Guru Mishri
Homoeopathy Medical College
and Hospital, Jalna,
Maharashtra, India

Dr. Kishor Kasodekar

Professor, Department of
Repertory, Guru Mishri
Homoeopathy Medical College
and Hospital, Jalna,
Maharashtra, India

Corresponding Author:

Dr. Mayuri Mahale

PG Scholar, Department of
Repertory, Guru Mishri
Homoeopathy Medical College
and Hospital, Jalna,
Maharashtra, India

Homoeopathic management of herpes zoster: A case study

Dr. Mayuri Mahale and Dr. Kishor Kasodekar

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Abstract

The only known human reservoir for VZV is chickenpox. With an attack incidence of at least 90% among susceptible (seronegative) people, chickenpox is a highly contagious disease. All racial groups and both sexes are equally affected. The virus is widespread in the general population, but in the temperate zone, it peaks seasonally in late winter and early spring, when susceptible individuals become infected^[1].

Herpes zoster (shingles) is caused by reactivation of varicella-zoster virus (VZV), which has been latent inside dorsal root ganglia for many years after the patient was first exposed to the virus as varicella (chickenpox). Although it typically manifests as a self-limiting rash with discomfort, it can sometimes be significantly more serious. Acute cases also frequently result in post herpetic neuralgia (PHN), which has a significant economic impact^[2].

A prospective observational study with patient suffering from Herpes Zoster has shown evidence that under classical Homoeopathic treatment patient with Herpes Zoster had improvement of symptoms and quality of life. Despite these homeopathic medicines play a very effective role in case of Shingles. Homeopathic medicines play a major role not only treatment but also to reduce post complication.

Keywords: Herpes zoster, shingles, homoeopathy

Introduction

The varicella-zoster virus (VZV) is the cause of both the herpes zoster (shingles) and varicella (chickenpox) clinical syndromes. A common and highly contagious infection, chickenpox typically presents as a benign paediatric sickness with an exanthemata's vesicular rash. With reactivation of latent VZV (which is most common after the sixth decade of life), herpes zoster presents as a dermatomal vesicular rash and is usually associated with severe pain^[3].

A painful vesicular dermatitis dermatomal pattern is caused by herpes zoster, which is caused by the reactivation of the latent varicella (chickenpox) virus^[4]. Similar to chickenpox, immunocompromised people have a more severe case of herpes zoster than immunocompetent people. More than a week passes while lesions continue to grow, and most patients do not finish scabbing until three weeks into the illness.^[5] Clinical diagnosis of herpes zoster is based on the presence of burning sensation, typical distribution, and characteristic morphology. Sometimes the herpes simplex virus will cause a rash known as zosteriform herpes simplex^[6].

Steroids, analgesics, and antivirals are treatments that, while they may not be very helpful for some individuals, are unable to completely eradicate this horrible infection internally. The antiviral or analgesic medications may cause the body to become resistant to the same dosage. It is thus necessary to boost the antiviral medications' potency. Once more, resistance grows, and so on, until the patient begins to experience serious adverse effects. The side effects of steroids on blood pressure, body weight, bone mass, and blood sugar are unique. Steroids have their own set of side effects on Blood sugar, blood pressure, bone mass, bodyweight, etc.

Herpes zoster can be effectively treated with homeopathy. There is no external or local medication in homeopathy. After a thorough examination of the body and mind, constitutional medications are administered. Constitutional medications reduce the severity of pain and burning, which in turn decreases infection and shortens the duration of it. Homeopathy also prevents relapses. Additionally, homeopathy proves effective for post-herpetic neuralgia patients.

Homeopathy is highly recommended for the treatment of herpes zoster.

Case History

A 60 years old Female patient come with complaints as follows:

- Severe burning below right scapular region in the last 2 days
- Multiple blisters with pain
- Itching around the blisters
- Redness on blisters
- Itching increased at night
- Burning after taking bath
- Disturbed sleep due to burning and itching

Patient suffered with condition from last 2 days and at initial stage multiple reddish spots with severe burning appear on below the right scapular region and then developed further to front side. He had received topical steroids and antiviral with temporary relief in burning for some time, but after reducing effect of these medication burning start again.

Clinical Observations

- H/O Diabetes mellitus in the last 4 years on medication
- No H/O Hypertension
- Weight 72 Kg
- Pulse – 80/Min
- Occupation – Housewife

Past History

- H/O Dengue fever 6 years back
- H/O Typhoid fever 2 years back

Family History

Mother had Diabetes mellitus

Physical General

- **Appearance:** Obese
- **Appetite:** Good
- **Taste:** Normal
- **Diet:** Vegetarian
- **Thirst:** Thirsty
- **Aversion:** Not Specific
- **Desire:** Sweet
- **Bowel:** Constipation some times
- **Urine:** 5-6 times/day
- **Sleep:** Disturbed due to Burning
- **Dreams:** Not Remember
- **Thermal:** CHILLY Patient

Mental General

- Mentally restlessness
- Irritable nature
- Anger

Totality of Symptoms

- Mentally Restlessness
- Irritable nature
- Thirsty
- Cold air aggravation
- War, covering ameliation
- Right side affected

- Burning pain on blistered skin rash
- Chilly patient

Remedy Selection

After repertorisation and comparing the Materia Medica, Rhus tox was selected and prescribed on 20/07/2021.

Remedies	ΣSym	ΣDeg	Symptoms
rhus-t.	7	17	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
merc.	6	14	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
ran-b.	6	10	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7
carb-v.	6	9	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
phos.	6	8	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7

Treatment

Rhus tox 200 TDS for 3 days

Sac Lac 30 TDS for 3 days

Advise

1. Keep the affected area clean, dry, and exposed to air as much as possible.
2. The itching can be maddening at times, but try not to scratch or burst the blisters.
3. Try to reduce the amount of stress in your life

Follow Ups

Date	Complaints	Prescription
28/07/2021	Relief in Itching and scaling but dryness and patches size were not reduced	Rhus tax 200 TDS for 3 days
11/08/2021	Relief in Itching, scaling and dryness. Patches thickness reduced up to 50%.	Rhus tax 200 TDS for 2 days Sac Lac 30 TDS For 7 Days.
31/08/2021	Itching reduced up to 80%, No burning. Sleep – Normal Mentally Feel – Relax Patches Thickness reduced up to 80%.	Sac Lac 30 TDS For 8 Days

Clinical Images**Before Treatment****During Treatment****After Treatment****Conclusion**

On the basis of this single case study, it is concluded that Homoeopathic medicine is effective in acute condition of herpes zoster with long term effect without any side effects and recurrency.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

Not available

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