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Homeopathy in action: Addressing atopic dermatitis effectively

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Abstract

Atopic Dermatitis is a type of dermatitis that is chronic in nature and is presented as pruritic eczematous lesions of skin. AD commonly have an early age of onset but can also occur in adult age group. Its diagnosis is made mostly clinically. Local ointments and steroids are used in the treatment. Patients have been seen to experience recurrence and to endure protracted illness, both of which have a severe negative impact on their quality of life. In these situations, homeopathic medication has shown to be extremely beneficial since it shields the patient from the negative consequences of repetitive, long-term steroid use. This case mentioned below proves the efficacy of Homeopathy in successful treatment of cases of atopic dermatitis.

Keywords: Homeopathy, atopic dermatitis, homeopathy, steroids

Introduction

AD is a chronic skin condition presenting as eczematous lesion on skin. A significant cause contributing to its pathophysiology is an impaired epidermal barrier. In most of the patients genetic mutation of a gene encoding for filaggrin protein is responsible. Patients with A.D. display increase serum IgE levels, & impaired delayed type hypersensitivity reaction. Primary lesion consist of erythematous macules, papules or vesicles which may later form plaques and patches. In secondary lesion there is oozing and crusting seen. Whereas in chronic condition lichenification is most commonly seen ^[2].

Causes

Genetic alterations, or mutations.
Issues relating to immunity.
Exposure to specific environmental factors

Complications

These consist of:

- Bacterial skin infections that worsen when scraped. These occur frequently and may make treating the illness more challenging.
- Viral skin diseases, including warts and cold sores.
- Insufficient sleep, which can lead to behavioural issues in children.
- Dermatitis (eczema on the hands).
- Eye disorders such as conjunctivitis, which causes swelling and redness in the inner corner of your eyelid and the white part of your eye.
- Blepharitis, a condition that causes general irritation and redness of the eyelids

Clinical presentation ^[2]

- Lesions
- Pruritus
- Remission and Exacerbation
- Duration-6 weeks
- Dry skin
- Lichenification
- Personal or family history of atopy

Differential diagnosis

- Scabies
- Psoriasis
- Irritant contact dermatitis
- Tinea corporis
- Seborrhic contact dermatitis

Management ^[2]

- Avoidance of irritant
- Moisturisation
- Daily bathing with warm and cool water
- Low to mid potency glucocorticoids are used in its treatment regimen.
- Some non-glucocorticosteroid anti-inflammatory agent used are tacrolimus ointment & pimecrolimus creams.
- For the control of pruritus which is the most significant feature of A.D [anti-histamines] are used.

Homeopathic management ^[3]

Homeopathy acts effectively in cases of dermatitis. Some of the medicines are mentioned below.

Sulphur

Dry, scaly, unhealthy; every little injury suppurates. Itching, burning; worse scratching and washing. Pimples eruption, pustules, rhagades, hang-nails. Excoriation, especially in folds. Skin affections after local medication. Pruritus, especially from warmth, is evening, often recurs in spring-time, in damp weather.

Graphites

Rough, hard, persistent dryness of portions of skin unaffected by eczema. Eruptions, oozing out a sticky exudation. Ulcers discharging a glutinous fluid, thin and sticky.

Rhus tox

Red, swollen; itching intense. Burning eczematous eruptions with tendency to scale formation.

Urtica urens

In acute situations where there is itching and burning.

Bovista

Itching on getting warm. Eczema, moist; formation of thick crusts. The back of the hand has eczema.

Psorinum

Eczema behind ears. Crusty eruptions all over. Intolerable itching. Worse from warmth of bed.

Petroleum

Thick, greenish crusts, burning and itching; redness, raw; cracks bleed easily. Eczema. Rhagades worse in winter.

Case study**Patient information**

A 38 years' male visit the OPD on 27 January 2023 with complaint of dry hard patchy skin of both palms with cuts. There is intense itching on both the palms which aggravates in the winter season. He was suffering from this condition since 2 and a half years. It first started with little red eruptions on hands which would itch intensely later the skin

turn black, with hard patches, itching was still there. He has taken Allopathic treatment for it [specifically steroids] from which he gets temporary relief from itching but the blackness and dryness of skin remains the same and it keeps on recurring. About his family history he told us that his mother and one of his sister suffer from similar condition. His mother has it on her legs and feet, and sister on both her hands and legs. Although his sister has it since a very long time. He has developed the symptoms only 2 and a half years back during winter season.

Modalities: Aggravation in the winter. Amelioration: Nothing specific.

Clinical finding

Skins of both palms have become dry, hard with blackish discoloration. And there is intense itching. It begins with small eruptions which ooze out. And the skin later become dry hard with blackish discoloration. It was provisionally diagnosed Atopic dermatitis on the basis of clinical findings, and presence of family history.

Physical generals

- Diet-Vegetarian
- Appetite-Normal
- Tolerance to hunger-cannot tolerate hunger, needs to have something as soon as he feels hungry.
- Thirst-4 litres/day
- Thermal reaction-hot
- Micturation-nothing specific
- Bowel movements-normal
- Perspiration-normal
- Desire-N.S
- Aversion-NS
- Sleep-sound
- Dreams-of facing problems
- Habits-tea & coffee

Mental generals

The patient is a calm, introverted person. He is an intelligent man but lazy. He is forgetful. He gets angry at least contradiction.

Provisional Diagnosis-Atopic Dermatitis**Differential diagnosis**

- Scabies
- Psoriasis
- Irritant contact dermatitis
- Tinea corporis
- Seborrhic contact dermatitis

The characteristic symptoms were considered for prescription

- Skin cracked, dry, itching, painful with winter aggravation.
- Mind-intelligent but lazy.
- Mind anger contradiction from

Rubrics ^[4]

- Mind-Anger-Contradiction from
- Mind-Intelligent-Lazy but
- Extremities-Cracked skin-Hands-itching

- Extremities-Cracked Skin-Hands-Painful
- Extremities-Cracked Skin-Hands-Winter aggravation
- Extremities-Eruptions-Hands-Crusty
- Extremities-Eruptions-Hands-Desquamation
- Extremities-Eruptions-Hands-Scales
- Extremities-Itching-Hands

Repertorisation chart

1 MIND - ANGER - contradiction; from	✕	10 SKIN - CHAPPING	✕
2 MIND - INTELLIGENT - lazy; but	✕	Remedies	ΣSym ΣDeg Symptoms
EXTREMITIES		petr.	8 16 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10
3 EXTREMITIES - CRACKED skin - H	✕	graph.	7 14 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10
itching		sulph.	7 13 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10
4 EXTREMITIES - CRACKED skin - H	✕	merc.	7 9 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10
painful		sep.	5 13 1, 5, 7, 8, 10
5 EXTREMITIES - CRACKED skin - H	✕	alum.	4 4 2, 5, 7, 10
winter agg. ●		calc.	3 7 5, 7, 10
6 EXTREMITIES - ERUPTIONS - Han	✕	hep.	3 5 7, 8, 10
crusty		anac.	3 4 1, 7, 8
7 EXTREMITIES - ERUPTIONS - Han	✕	ruta	3 4 1, 7, 10
desquamation		am-c.	3 3 1, 2, 7
8 EXTREMITIES - ERUPTIONS - Han	✕	anthraci.	2 4 6, 8
scales		aur.	2 4 1, 10
9 EXTREMITIES - ITCHING - Hands -	✕	cham.	2 4 1, 10
		dulc.	2 4 1, 7

Remedy selected

On the basis of symptom totality, Petroleum was prescribed.

Prescription-on 27/1/2024

Rx,

1. Petroleum 200 TDS for 7 days
2. Placebo TDS for 15 days

Table 1: Follow-up tabulation

Date	Prescription
27 Jan 2024	Petroleum 200 b.d for 7 days Placebo for 15 days
10 Feb 2024	Petroleum 200 for 7 days Placebo for 10 days
24 Feb 2024	Placebo for 15 days
12 March 2024	Placebo for 10 days



Fig 1: Before treatment

Follow-up and Outcome

On the first day of the visit, Petroleum 200 was prescribed on the basis of totality, for 7 days along with placebo for 15 days. Next follow-up was on 10 February 2024, patient have marked relief in overall complaints. There are visible improvement seen on palms dryness is decreased, itching improves. Most of the cuts and cracked skin got healed. Patient was prescribed Petroleum 200 B.D again for 7 days along-with placebo for 15 days. In the next visit patient have marked relief with no itching, there were no cuts or cracked skin. There is no recurrency also which was seen during allopathic treatment. He was prescribed placebo for 15 days. On the next follow-up his hands were almost clean with no itching and scaling. There was also no episode of recurrency during all these days, hence placebo is prescribed for another 10 days.

On applying Modified Naranjo Criteria for Homeopathy [Monarch] the score was +8 that shows positive result.

Table 2: Shows positive result ^[5]

Domains	Yes	No	Not sure
1. Was there an improvement in the main symptom or condition for which the homoeopathic medicine was prescribed?	✓+2	-1	0
2. Did the clinical improvement occur within a plausible time frame relative to the drug intake?	✓+1	-2	0
3. Was there an initial aggravation of symptoms?	+1	✓0	0
4. Did the effect encompass more than the main symptom or condition (i.e., were other symptoms ultimately improved or changed)?	✓+1	0	0
5. Did overall well-being improve? (suggest using a validated scale)	✓+1	0	0
6. Direction of cure: Did some symptoms improve in the opposite order of the development of symptoms of the disease?	+1	✓0	0
7. Direction of cure: Did at least two of the following aspects apply to the order of improvement of symptoms:- from organs of more importance to those of less importance?-from deeper to more superficial aspects of the individual?-from the top downwards?	+1	✓0	0
8. Did old symptoms (defined as non-seasonal and non-cyclical symptoms that were previously thought to have resolved) reappear temporarily during improvement?	+1	✓0	0
9. Are there alternate causes (other than the medicine) that with a high probability could have caused the improvement? (Consider known course of disease, other forms of treatment, and other clinically relevant interventions)	-3	✓0	0
10. Was the health improvement confirmed by any objective evidence? (e.g., laboratory test, clinical observation, etc.)	✓+2	0	0
11. Did repeat dosing, if conducted, create similar clinical improvement?	+1	0	✓0
Total score	+8		



10/Feb/2024

Fig 2 [a]: Show Right hand **Fig 2 [b]:** Show Left hand**Fig 3:** Show Results 24 Feb 24]**Fig 4:** After treatment

Conclusion

From the above mentioned case we can say that homeopathy acts effectively in the treatment of Atopic dermatitis. It also prevent recurrency and safe patient from the hazardous effects of the continuous use of steroid.

Declaration of parent assent

We certified that the patient had given his consent to provide their image and clinical information to be published in the journal. We assured the patient that the personal details of the patient will not be disclosed in the public domain.

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