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Successful homeopathic treatment of pityriasis amiantacea

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Abstract

Pityriasis amiantacea is a rare scalp condition characterized by thick, adherent scales and significant hair loss, often linked to underlying issues like psoriasis. Globally, its prevalence is low, and conventional treatments offer limited relief. This paper discusses a case of a 45-year-old female who developed severe scalp scabs and hair loss after experiencing financial stress, leading to the spread of psoriasis across her scalp and face, ultimately requiring her to shave her head. The case highlights the holistic homeopathic approach, focusing on individualized treatment that addresses both physical and emotional aspects to promote healing.

Keywords: Pityriasis amiantacea, individualized, homeopathic approach

Introduction

Pityriasis amiantacea is a rare scalp disorder marked by thick, asbestos-like scales that tightly adhere to the hair shafts, often leading to significant hair loss. It is commonly associated with underlying conditions such as psoriasis, seborrheic dermatitis, or eczema. The exact cause is unclear, but triggers may include infections, stress, or autoimmune responses. Symptoms include itching, flaking, and scaling, which can lead to complications like secondary infections and scarring alopecia if left untreated. Early diagnosis and comprehensive management are crucial to prevent long-term damage.

Case profile

A 46-year-old female presented with a history of scalp psoriasis that had persisted for two months. She had severe dandruff, thick crust-like layers on her scalp, and intense itching, which led to significant hair fall. The condition started after she experienced stress related to family issues and began overthinking. Initially, she sought allopathic treatment, but it provided little relief. Her scalp was covered with thick crusts, and when they fell off, they took hair with them. She also experienced constipation, occasional soft stools, reduced appetite, and normal thirst. She had a history of financial stress, gastric troubles, delayed menses, and mental distress. Over time, she developed additional symptoms, including watery ear discharge, burning and crawling sensations on her skin, pain in her right hand, dry skin, and scaling. Despite some improvement, she continued to suffer from severe itching, especially during the winter, along with dryness of the skin. Her condition was characterized by recurring episodes of itching and scaling, with periods of exacerbation followed by partial improvement.

Physical generals

Diet	Vegetarian and Non-vegetarian
Appetite	Normal
Desire	Spicy food, chilled water, cold things, sour things
Aversion	Milk
Thermal reaction	Chilly patient
Thirst	Normal
Stools	Constipation
Urine	Copious, frequent during the daytime (10-12 times)
Perspiration	Scanty
Sleep	Restless, anxious, mental activity during sleep
Dreams	No significant dreams (NS)

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Mental generals

The patient was a 46-year-old female, a housewife, whose husband was jobless. She had five daughters, four of whom were married, and one son who was still a student. She had experienced a good childhood, with no significant difficulties, a good upbringing, and was well-educated without any specific bullying at school. She had many friends and maintained good relationships with her teachers. Her parents had been lenient, and no high expectations had been placed on her. She shared a strong bond with her siblings and had been more attached to her mother. She had not faced any particularly stressful phase in life until three years ago when the family moved from Mumbai to Kanpur due to financial loss. This move had been stressful for her, particularly because of concerns about her daughter’s illness at the time.

Mentally, she had been an emotional and kind-hearted person who felt deeply for others, especially when she saw underprivileged people. Although she expressed her emotions, she had generally been extroverted and enjoyed socializing. However, she had gotten angry easily,

especially when things did not go as planned or when she was contradicted. When angry, she had preferred to be alone and expressed her anger in words. Consolation had often aggravated her anger, and she had preferred to be left alone when upset. She had also experienced anxiety, though it had not been specific. Occasionally, she had worried about her family and responsibilities, but she generally had not experienced much stress, worry, or insecurity.

Case analysis

Repertorial totality

Repertory used	Rubrics selected
Kent repertory	• Head-dandruff-white
	• Mind-anxiety –children –about his
	• Mind –anxiety-future, about
	• Mind-anxiety –health, about
	• Mind-helplessness, feeling of
	• General-heat –lack of vital heat

Repertory screenshot

Remedy Name	Phos	Calc	Nat-m	Bry	ThuJ	Lach	Nat-c	Nux-v
Totality	8	5	5	4	4	3	3	3
Symptom Covered	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
[KT] [Mind]Anxiety:Children:About his:								
[KT] [Mind]Anxiety:Future,about:	3	3	2	3	1	2	2	2
[KT] [Mind]Anxiety:Health,about:	2	2		1		1	1	1
[KT] [Mind]Helplessness,feeling of:	1							
[KT] [Head]Dandruff.White:	2		3		3			

Selection of remedy

Remedy	Reasons
Phosphorus 200 2 doses monthly	She was a tall woman with a fair complexion and blue eyes, who was sensitive to cold and generally felt chilly. She had a strong preference for cold food and drinks and was notably thirsty. The patient was also highly conscious of her looks and appearance, always striving to look beautiful and presentable. These physical and mental traits, combined with the totality of her symptoms, guided the selection of her homeopathic treatment.

Miasmatic approach

Symptoms	Psora	Sycosis	Syphilis	Tubercular
Head-dandruff-white	✓			
Mind-anxiety-children-about his	✓			✓
Mind-anxiety-future-about	✓		✓	✓
Mind-anxiety-health-about	✓		✓	✓
Mind-helplessness-feeling of	✓		✓	✓
General-heat-lack of, vital heat	✓	✓	✓	

Results

Date	Symptoms
04/08/21	Constant itching, thick dry patches on scalp, ears, and toes, hair fall
27/08/21	Ear watery discharge, sticky discharge, occ. itching, burning, crawling sensation, hair fall
02/11/21	Reduced itching, dry scales on body and scalp, hair fall
19/01/22	Further reduced Itching on scalp and face, redness of the face with scaling, sneezing, nasal blockage, hair fall >>
26/07/23	All lesions cleared, no presence of scales, itching reduced, no hair fall

Discussion & Conclusion

The patient's condition showed substantial improvement over time, with a notable resolution of symptoms. Initially presenting with intense itching, hair fall, and scaling, the patient experienced persistent issues despite treatment. However, with continued intervention, all lesions cleared,

scales disappeared, and itching was significantly reduced. The absence of hair fall further indicates a positive response to treatment, highlighting the efficacy of the therapeutic approach in managing and resolving chronic dermatological issues.

The transformation



Fig 1: Before and after images showing the reduction in cystic swelling on the patient's neck after treatment with Bryonia alba from LM-potencies 0/1 to 0/12.

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I take this opportunity to thank those who have helped and supported me personally and professionally during this case.

Conclusion

The patient with Pityriasis amiantacea, initially presenting with severe scalp scaling and hair loss due to an underlying condition and stress, showed significant improvement following homeopathic treatment with Phosphorus 200. Despite early challenges and persistent symptoms, the comprehensive approach led to the resolution of lesions, reduction in itching, and cessation of hair fall. This outcome underscores the effectiveness of tailored homeopathic therapy in managing complex dermatological conditions, particularly when addressing both physical symptoms and underlying emotional factors. The case highlights the importance of individualized treatment in achieving long-term recovery and symptom relief.

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