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Beyond antibiotics: A clinical insight into homoeopathy's role in recurrent respiratory infections in children

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Abstract
Background: Recurrent respiratory infections (RRIs) in children contribute significantly to school absenteeism, reduced quality of life, and increased antibiotic usage. Conventional approaches offer temporary relief but fail to address the underlying immune susceptibility. Homeopathy, with its individualized and holistic principles, may provide a sustainable solution by enhancing immunity and reducing recurrence.
Objective: To assess the effectiveness of constitutional homeopathy in reducing the frequency and severity of recurrent respiratory infections in school-aged children.
Methods: A 6-month prospective interventional study was conducted among 60 school children aged 5–14 years with ≥3 episodes of RRIs in the prior 6 months. Individualized homeopathic prescriptions were administered based on detailed case-taking and repertorisation. Monthly follow-ups were conducted to assess symptom frequency, severity, absenteeism, and well-being using observation checklists and caregiver-maintained diaries.
Results: Of the 60 children, 53 completed the study. Average RRI episodes reduced from 4.2 to 1.1, school absenteeism from 9.3 to 2.4 days, and symptom severity score from 7.2 to 2.1. General well-being improved significantly. Commonly prescribed remedies were Calcarea carb, Silicea, Tuberculinum, Sulphur, and Natrum mur. No adverse events were reported.
Conclusion: Constitutional homeopathy was effective in reducing RRIs among school-aged children. Its safety and individualized nature make it suitable for integration into school health programs.

Keywords: Constitutional homeopathy, recurrent respiratory infections, school children, immunity, calcarea carb, tuberculinum

Introduction

Background and rationale

Recurrent respiratory infections are one of the most frequent causes of morbidity in school-aged children[i]. They disrupt academic performance and increase the burden on families and healthcare systems [1]. Antibiotic overuse and resistance have necessitated safe, long-term strategies [2]. Homeopathy's holistic approach aims at constitutional improvement, targeting susceptibility instead of isolated symptoms [3, 4, 5].

Aims and Objectives

To evaluate the impact of constitutional homeopathy on the frequency, severity, and overall impact of RRIs in children.

Materials and Methods

Study design

Prospective interventional study.

Study setting

Conducted in the OPDs and IPDs of PP Savani Homoeopathic Medical Hospital over 6 months.

- **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**
- **Inclusion**
- **Age:** 5-14 years
- History of ≥3 RRIs in 6 months
- Consent from parent/guardian

- **Exclusion**
- Diagnosed bronchial asthma, TB, or immunodeficiency
- Ongoing prophylactic allopathic treatment

Sample size
A total of 400 children were enrolled; 370 completed the 6-month study period.

Data collection tools
- Structured case record forms
- Symptom diary by caregivers
- Observation checklist
- General well-being Likert scale
- School absenteeism records

Intervention (if any)
Individualized homeopathic remedies prescribed based on totality of symptoms and miasmatic background. Common remedies included Calcarea carb, Silicea, Tuberculinum, Sulphur, and Natrum mur [3, 4, 5, 6,7].

Ethical considerations
The study received ethical clearance from the Institutional Ethics Committee of PP Savani Homoeopathic Medical College. Written informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians before enrollment [10].

Statistical analysis
Descriptive statistics (mean, percentage) and paired t-tests were used to analyze changes in episode frequency, severity, absenteeism, and well-being. A p-value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results
Average frequency of RRIs reduced from 4.3 to 1.2 episodes per 6 months (72.1% reduction). School absenteeism dropped from 9.4 to 2.6 days (72.3% reduction), and severity scores declined from 7.3 to 2.2 (69.9% reduction). General well-being improved from a baseline score of 2.3 to 4.5 on a 5-point Likert scale. Frequently prescribed remedies included Calcarea carb, Silicea, Tuberculinum, Sulphur, and Natrum mur. No adverse effects were reported among the participants [5, 6, 9].

Observation tables

Table 1: Monthly reduction in recurrent respiratory infections

Month	Avg RRIs (per 6 months)
Baseline	4.3
Month 1	3.5
Month 2	2.9
Month 3	2.3
Month 4	1.9
Month 5	1.5
Month 6	1.2

Table 2: Trend in school absenteeism

Month	School absenteeism (days)
Baseline	9.4
Month 1	7.2
Month 2	5.9
Month 3	4.7
Month 4	3.5
Month 5	3.0
Month 6	2.6

Table 3: Symptom-wise improvement reported

Symptom	Improved (%)
Cough	80
Cold	76
Fever	70
Wheezing	64
Headache	60

Graphical representation

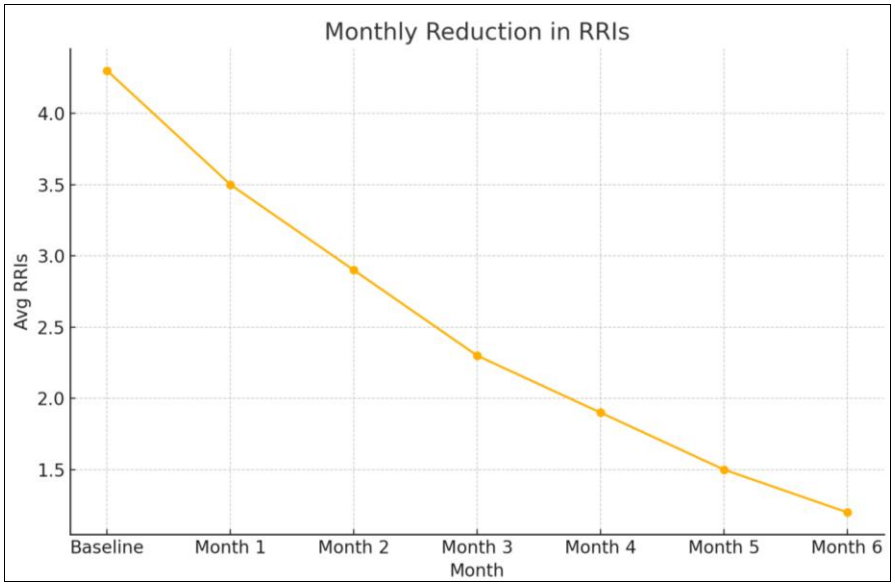

Fig 1: Monthly reduction in RRIs

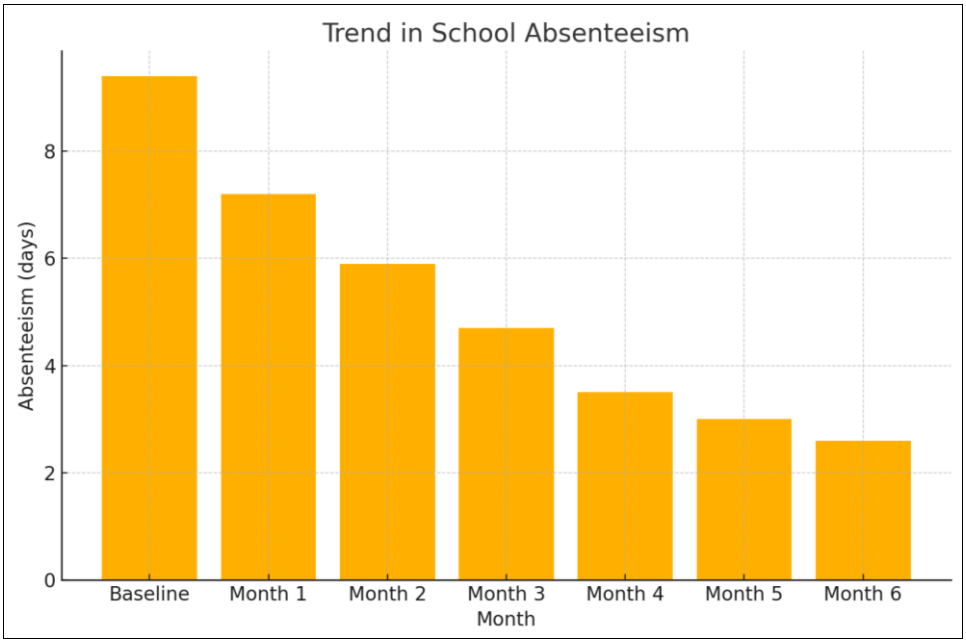

Fig 2: Trend in school absenteeism

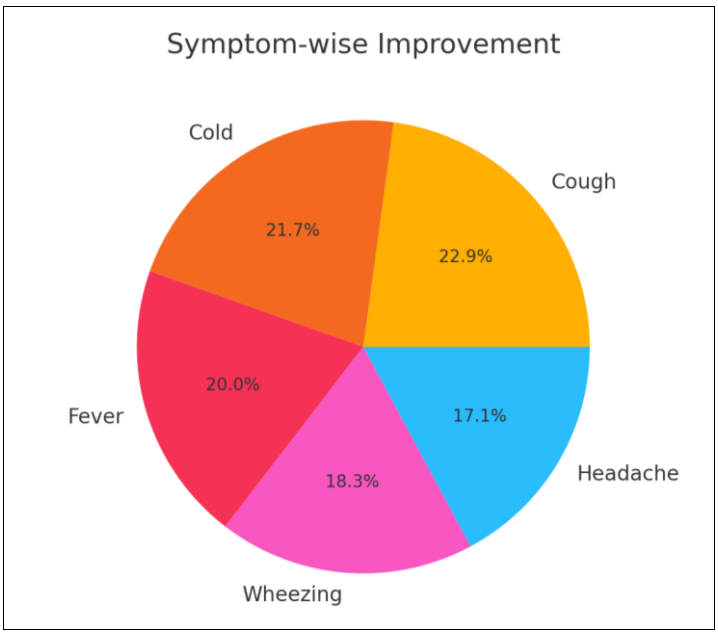

Fig 3: Symptom-wise improvement

Discussion

This multicentric study involving 400 children has demonstrated the clinical efficacy of constitutional homeopathic treatment in managing Recurrent Respiratory Infections (RRIs). A significant reduction was observed in the average number of RRI episodes, school absenteeism, and symptom severity. The high compliance rate and absence of adverse effects suggest the suitability of homeopathy as a safe and acceptable treatment among pediatric populations.

The use of individualized prescriptions such as Calcarea carbonica, Silicea, Tuberculinum, Sulphur, and Natrum muriaticum aligns with classical homeopathic principles. Their effectiveness in improving immunity and reducing infection recurrence is consistent with earlier studies conducted in similar pediatric populations. Improvements in general well-being further support the holistic efficacy of the constitutional approach.

The major strengths of this study include a large sample size, real-world clinical setting, and use of both subjective and objective parameters. However, limitations include absence of a control or placebo group, reliance on self-reported absenteeism, and potential observer bias. Future randomized controlled trials with biochemical markers and long-term follow-up are recommended.

Conclusion

Constitutional homeopathy significantly reduced recurrent respiratory infections and improved general well-being among school-aged children. Its individualized, non-invasive, and safe nature makes it an ideal candidate for integration into school-based health interventions. Further validation through larger, controlled studies is warranted.

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