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Low back pain and it's homoeopathic management

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Abstract
Low Back Pain (LBP) is one of the most prevalent musculoskeletal disorders worldwide, significantly contributing to disability and reduced quality of life. The conventional management often relies on analgesics, physiotherapy, and surgical interventions, which may provide only temporary relief and may have side effects and in some cases aggravation of previous symptoms.
Homoeopathy, based on the principle of "Similia similibus curentur," offers individualized treatment aimed at addressing both the underlying cause and the patient's constitution. This paper reviews the etiology, clinical features, and scope of homoeopathy in low back pain, highlighting frequently indicated remedies and their characteristic indications and comprehensive management of cases.

Keywords: Low back pain, homoeopathy, musculoskeletal disorders, individualization, auxiliary management

Introduction
Low back pain is a worldwide health issue, affecting up to 80% of individuals at some point in their life. It is the most common cause of work-related disability and absenteeism, with a substantial socioeconomic burden. Risk factors include sedentary lifestyle, poor posture, overwork, obesity, and degenerative spinal conditions. While conventional management emphasizes symptomatic relief, homoeopathy offers a holistic and individualized approach that considers physical, mental, and constitutional aspects of the patient.

Etiology and pathophysiology
- **Mechanical causes:** Muscular strain, ligamentous sprain, poor ergonomics, injuries.
- **Degenerative conditions:** Osteoarthritis, lumbar spondylosis, intervertebral disc prolapse.
- **Referred pain:** Renal calculi, pelvic pathology, gastrointestinal causes.
- **Predisposing factors:** Obesity, sedentary habits, psychological stress, physical over-exersion.

Clinical features
Patients may present with:
Dull, aching, or sharp lumbar pain. Radiation to thighs or legs (sciatica) Stiffness and restricted movements
Pain modified by posture, rest, exertion, or climatic changes

Associated features: Numbness, weakness, piles, urinary or gynecological complaints

Role of Homoeopathy in LBP
Homoeopathy emphasizes
- **Individualization:** Remedy selection based on modalities (aggravation/amelioration factors), concomitant symptoms, and constitution.
- **Causation:** Identifying precipitating factors such as injury, exposure, or chronic strain.
- **Holistic management:** Addressing mental and emotional aspects alongside physical complaints. Homoeopathic medicines act at a deeper level, aiming not only at symptomatic relief but also at prevention of recurrence.
- **Auxullary management:** Homoeopathic physician focuses on diet and exercise of patient which can be maintaining cause for LBP.

Remedy characteristic indications in LBP

1. Gnaphalium

Intense pain along the sciatic nerve, alternating with numbness Chronic backache in lumbar region > resting on back.

Useful in sciatica pain ass. with numbness of the affected part.

2. Ginseng

Acts on lower part of the spinal cord. Paralytic weakness Lumbago, sciatica, & Rheumatism Coldness in back & spine Stiffness in back.

3. Valeriana

Rheumatic pains in limbs. Constant jerking. Heaviness. Sciatica; pain worse standing and resting on floor (Bell.): better walking. Pain in heels when sitting.

4. Cobaltum met

Pain in back & Sacrum, < while sitting > walking or lying. Backpain with impotency. Weakness in legs & backache after emission.

5. *Boswellia serrata* mother tincture

To treat chronic inflammatory illnesses as well as several other health conditions. It is a health supplement used to improve joint health and flexibility. It is useful in Osteoarthritis, Rheumatoid arthritis and other joint pains.

6. Rhus toxicodendron

Pain and stiffness worse at rest, better by motion and warmth; history of strain, damp exposure.

7. *Bryonia alba*

Stitching, tearing pain, worse from slightest motion, better by absolute rest and lying on painful side.

8. *Arnica montana*

Bruised soreness after trauma, fall, or overexertion.

9. Calcarea fluorica

Chronic lumbar pain from spondylosis/osteophytes; stiffness.

Aesculus hippocastanum Constant dull lumbosacral pain, associated with hemorrhoids; sensation of back breaking.

10. Kali carbonicum

Weakness of back, pain worse at night/early morning; suited to obese, chilly patients. Colocynthis Sciatica with better relief from pressure, bending double, or warmth.

11. *Hypericum perforatum*

Spinal pain from nerve injury; extreme sensitiveness of spine. Injury to parts rich in sentient nerves.

General management

Exercise

1. Cat & Cow position
2. Glute-bridges or Hip bridges
3. Cobra pose
4. Passive SLR test

Diet and nutrition

Here are the main dietary takeaways for managing lower back pain:

Focus on an anti-inflammatory diet

1. **Increase fruits and vegetables:** Aim for a wide variety of colorful fruits and non-starchy vegetables (like leafy greens, broccoli, berries) as they are rich in antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, and fiber, all of which help reduce inflammation.
2. **Fats and Omega-3s:** Focus on sources of anti-inflammatory Omega-3 fatty acids, such as fatty fish (salmon, sardines, mackerel) and plant sources like walnuts, chia seeds, and flax seeds. Use olive oil as a primary cooking and dressing fat.
3. **Lean protein:** Choose healthier protein sources like fish, skinless chicken, eggs in moderation, and plant proteins (beans, nuts, tofu).

Foods to limit or avoid (Pro-inflammatory)

- **Added sugars and refined carbohydrates:** Significantly cut back on soda, juices, cookies, candies, cakes, white bread, white rice, and pastries.
- **Processed and red meats:** Avoid processed meats (bacon, sausage) and limit consumption of red meat, which can promote inflammation.
- **Saturated and unhealthy fats:** Limit saturated fats found in butter, ice cream, and fatty red meat. Reduce the use of vegetable oils high in Omega-6 fatty acids (like soybean, corn, sunflower, and safflower oils).

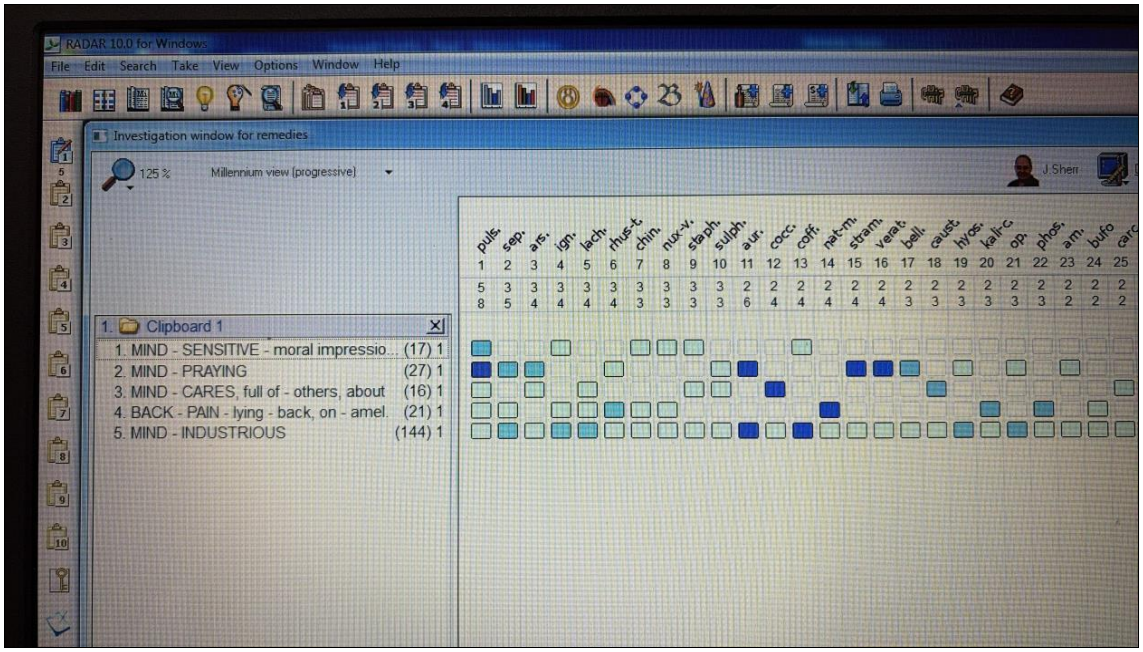
Key nutrients

- **Vitamin D:** Often studied for its anti-inflammatory and neuromodulating properties, and its role in bone health. Optimizing Vitamin D levels may be beneficial.
- **Fiber:** Found in whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts, and beans, fiber is important for overall health and may indirectly help manage pain.
- **Water:** Adequate hydration is essential, especially for the discs in the spine.
- **Ergonomic corrections:** Proper posture, supportive mattress, correct lifting techniques. Physical activity: stretching, strengthening, yoga.
- **Lifestyle modifications:** Weight management, balanced diet, stress reduction.
- **Preventive care:** Avoid prolonged sitting/standing, regular exercise, avoid sleeping on the floor.

Clinical case

A 70-year-old female farmer, weighing 32 kg, came on March 26, 2024, with severe lower back pain, difficulty for walking and bending her legs, and tingling sensation in both legs since 1 yr. Backache & tingling better when she lying on her back. She also experienced shortness of breath during exertion, had disturbed sleep and a reduced appetite and she has H/O chewing tobacco since many years. The patient was afraid of surgery and wanted to be cured without surgery. Her MRI showed disc bulging at L1 to L5 levels with nerve root compression and her X-ray revealed osteoarthritis. Her blood work up showed a hemoglobin level of 11.9 gm%, a white blood cell count of 12,900 with normal uric acid and kidney function. The patient is thermally Hot, had normal bowel and urinary function, thirstless and dislikes sour things. She was very worried about her alcoholic son who lost his property due to alcohol addiction. She has a lean,

thin build, worked continuously since many years. Based on symptom similarity and repertorization, the first prescription was Pulsatilla 0/2 water potency TID and Passiflora mother tincture 15 drops in one glass of water BID for 15 days.



During the first follow-up on April 8, 2024, her weight was 32.5 kg, and her lower back pain had improved by 50-60%. She felt better and could walk, and her appetite had improved, but her sleep was still disturbed. The same remedies were prescribed for another 15 days.

On the Second follow-up on April 24, 2024, she weighed 33.5 kg. She complained of pain in her right hip joint. About 10 days prior, she has started the trouble of sleeplessness again, but her appetite was normal. Prescribed Pulsatilla 0/3, Calcarea Phos 6X 4 tb. BID, and Passiflora mother tincture for a month.

On the Third follow-up on May 14, 2024, she weighed 34.5 kg, had no tingling, mild right hip pain, improved sleep and appetite, and had stopped chewing tobacco. Prescribed Pulsatilla 0/3 and Passiflora mother tincture for another month.

On the fourth follow-up on June 22, 2024, she weighed 36 kg, felt better, had no pain, and was mentally fresh. She has started working in the farm again and has been happy since then.

Conclusion

Low back pain is a multifactorial disorder with significant impact on individual and community health.

Homoeopathy, with its holistic and individualized therapeutic approach, offers promising results in the management of LBP.

Remedies such as Rhus toxicodendron, *Bryonia alba*, *Arnica montana*, and others, when prescribed on the basis of symptom similarity, can provide safe, effective, and long-lasting relief.

Integration of homoeopathic treatment with lifestyle modification may improve prognosis and prevent recurrence.

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