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Dr. Deepak KP
Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychiatry
Ram Krishna College of
Homoeopathy and Medical
Sciences, Bhopal, Madhya
Pradesh

Dr. Begari Keerthipriya
Intern, Ram Krishna College
of Homoeopathy and Medical
Sciences, Bhopal, Madhya
Pradesh

Role of homoeopathy in the management of Alcohol Used Disorders (AUDs)

Deepak KP and Begari Keerthipriya

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Abstract

Alcohol Use Disorder is a growing problem that affects people of all ages and backgrounds. It leads to physical, emotional, and social difficulties that slowly disturb a person's daily life, work, and relationships. Many individuals turn to alcohol for stress relief, pleasure, or social reasons, but over time it becomes a habit that is hard to control. This article explains the nature of Alcohol Used Disorder's in simple terms, including why people develop cravings, how the body reacts to regular drinking, and what symptoms commonly appear when someone tries to stop. It also highlights how homeopathic care can support people during this journey by focusing on the person as a whole—mind and body together. Homeopathic remedies are chosen based on each person's unique signs, feelings, and reactions, such as anxiety, gastric problems, irritability, weakness, or emotional stress linked with alcohol use. With regular guidance, supportive counselling, and lifestyle changes, homeopathy may help reduce cravings, improve sleep, calm the mind, and strengthen overall health. These abstract aims to give a clear and simple understanding of Alcohol Used Disorder's and how a holistic homeopathic approach may assist individuals in their recovery process.

Keywords: Alcoholism, homoeopathy, holistic treatment, individualization, craving

Introduction

Alcohol dependence was previously called as "Alcoholism" ^[1]. Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a medical condition characterized by an impaired ability to stop or control alcohol use despite adverse social, occupational, or health consequences ^[2]. Alcohol is a potent drug that causes both acute and chronic changes in almost all neurochemical systems ^[3]. Persons with alcohol use disorders show impaired social or occupational functioning because of alcohol use (e.g., violence while intoxicated, absence from work, job loss), legal difficulties (e.g., arrest for intoxicated behaviour and traffic accidents while intoxicated), and arguments or difficulties with family members or friends about excessive alcohol consumption ^[3].

The wide spread prevalence of Alcohol Use Disorder's in India alone, is estimated to be around 14.6% among adult males ^[4]. Alcohol is the most commonly used substance in the United States, with 84% of people 18 and older reporting lifetime use, according to data from the 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. Alcohol use exists along a spectrum from low risk to alcohol use disorder (AUD) ^[5].

The prognosis of AUD is variable and in some, the course follows a relapsing-remitting course, while others are abstinent without participating in formal treatment. Factors that increase the risk of relapse include psychiatric comorbidities and other substance use disorders ^[6]. AUD also significantly impacts the healthcare system, contributing to over 200,000 hospitalizations annually and 7.4% of emergency room visits ^[7].

Conventional treatment options include medical detoxification, psychological counselling, group therapies, and pharmacotherapies. However, these interventions often have side effects, poor compliance, and high relapse rates ^[8].

Repertorial rubrics Related to AUDs

Mental and Emotional Rubrics

Kent's Repertory ^[9]

- Mind – Alcoholics – ailments from alcohol
- Mind – Delirium tremens
- Mind – Delusions – sees animals / devils / persecuted – in drunkards

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Deepak KP
Assistant Professor,
Department of Psychiatry
Ram Krishna College of
Homoeopathy and Medical
Sciences, Bhopal, Madhya
Pradesh

- Mind – Anxiety – with trembling – after alcohol
- Mind – Confusion – intoxication, after
- Mind – Irritability – after alcohol
- Mind – Fear – imaginary things, from drinking
- Mind – Memory – weakness – in drunkards
- Mind – Mania – alcoholism, from
- Mind – Speech – incoherent, after alcohol
- Mind – Hilarity – alternating with depression – from alcohol
- Mind – Violence – tendency to, during intoxication
- Mind – Jealousy – drunkards, in
- Mind – Depression – chronic alcoholics

Murphy's Repertory ^[10]

- Mind – Alcoholism – acute / chronic
- Mind – Alcoholism – delirium tremens
- Mind – Alcoholism – craving for alcohol
- Mind – Alcoholism – withdrawal symptoms
- Mind – Addiction – alcohol / drugs
- Mind – Delusions – persecuted, pursued – in alcoholics
- Mind – Confusion – chronic alcoholics
- Mind – Depression – after alcohol abuse
- Mind – Violence – after drinking
- Mind – Guilt / remorse – in alcoholics
- Mind – Forgetfulness – in drunkards
- Mind – Confusion of identity / time – from alcohol
- Mind – Hallucinations – visual / auditory – from intoxication
- Mind – Fear – of darkness or being followed – in delirium tremens

Knerr's Repertory ^[11]

- Mind – Alcoholics – mania of drunkards
- Mind – Delirium tremens – trembling, visions, fear
- Mind – Hallucinations – from excessive drinking
- Mind – Hysteria – from alcoholic excess
- Mind – Weakness of intellect – from chronic alcoholism
- Mind – Memory – loss of – from habitual intoxication
- Mind – Delirium – after intoxication
- Mind – Irritability – in chronic drunkards
- Mind – Depression – after long intemperance
- Mind – Delusions – animals / insects – in delirium tremens

Craving/ Aversion/ Effects of alcohol**Kent** ^[9]

- Stomach – Desire – alcohol / wine / brandy
- Stomach – Aversion – alcohol / wine / spirits
- Generalities – Alcohol – aggravates / ameliorates
- Generalities – Convulsions – from withdrawal of alcohol
- Generalities – Alcohol – effects of abuse
- Stomach – Nausea – from alcohol

- Stomach – Vomiting – from alcohol

Murphy ^[10]

- Stomach – Desire – alcohol, for
- Stomach – Aversion – alcohol
- Generalities – Alcoholism – effects of / chronic
- Generalities – Food and drinks – alcohol – aggravates
- Generalities – Convulsions – withdrawal from alcohol
- Generalities – Trembling – after alcohol
- Stomach – Nausea / vomiting – from alcohol
- Stomach – Desire – stimulants – alcohol, coffee, etc.

Knerr ^[11]

- Stomach – Desire – alcoholic drinks – chronic craving
- Stomach – Nausea – after alcohol
- Generalities – Alcohol – aggravates – chronic intoxication
- Generalities – Faintness – from alcohol
- Stomach – Vomiting – after alcohol
- Stomach – Burning – from spirits

Physical / neurological rubrics (Withdrawal & Toxic Effects)**Kent** ^[9]

- Head – Pain – after intoxication
- Head – Confusion – from alcohol
- Vertigo – from alcohol
- Sleep – Sleeplessness – after alcohol
- Stomach – Nausea, vomiting – from alcohol
- Extremities – Trembling – from alcohol withdrawal
- Generalities – Convulsions – from withdrawal of alcohol
- Face – Flushed – after alcohol

Murphy ^[10]

- Nervous system – Tremors – alcoholic
- Head – Vertigo – after alcohol
- Sleep – Insomnia – from alcohol abuse
- Head – Confusion – chronic alcoholics
- Liver – Cirrhosis – from alcohol
- Stomach – Burning / nausea – from alcohol
- Skin – Redness – in habitual drinkers
- Generalities – Weakness – from long drinking
- Nervous system – Convulsions – after stopping alcohol

Knerr ^[11]

- Head – Vertigo – in drunkards
- Liver – Cirrhosis – in alcoholics
- Stomach – Vomiting – after alcohol
- Extremities – Trembling – from withdrawal
- Eyes – Double vision – in intoxication
- Skin – Eruptions – from alcohol abuse
- Sleep – Sleeplessness – habitual drinkers

Miasmatic analysis^[12]

Miasm	Characteristics/ Mental Traits	Clinical Features / Manifestations	Key Rubrics (Repertory)	Common Remedies
Psora	Anxiety, restlessness, low self-esteem, sensitivity, perfectionism	Early-stage alcohol use, stress-relief drinking, mild guilt/remorse, no major organ damage	Mind – Anxiety; Mind – Restlessness; Mind – Guilt; Sleep – Insomnia	Nux vomica, Arsenicum album, Avena sativa, Lycopodium
Sycosis	Secretiveness, denial, dependency, compulsive habits	Repeated relapses, secret drinking, slow organ involvement, social adaptation while drinking	Mind – Alcoholism – craving; Mind – Confusion; Stomach – Desire – alcohol; Generalities – Alcohol – aggravates	Sulphur, Capsicum, Lachesis, Phosphorus
Syphilis	Destructiveness, recklessness, aggression, self-harm	Chronic AUD, organ degeneration (liver, pancreas, heart), psychosis, delirium tremens, social/familial destruction	Mind – Delirium; Mind – Hallucinations; Liver – Cirrhosis; Nervous System – Tremors Extremities – Weakness	Arsenicum album, Hyoscyamus, Stramonium, Belladonna, Phosphorus
Mixed Patterns	Combination of traits from above miasms	Early or moderate AUD: psoro-sycotic; Chronic destructive AUD: psoro-syphilitic or sycotic-syphilitic	Combination of relevant rubrics above	Tailored according to predominant miasm and totality of symptoms

Homoeopathic therapeutics^[13, 14, 15, 16]

Medicine	Indications and Dose
Arsenicum album	Indicated when drinking leads to intense anxiety, restlessness, and fearfulness, especially at night. Alcohol causes burning gastric pains, vomiting, diarrhoea, and marked exhaustion. Gastric derangements; after sour beer Dose: 3 rd to 30 th potency. The very highest potencies often yield brilliant results.
Kalium carbonium	Indicated when alcohol worsens breathing difficulty, producing chest tightness, stitching pains, and weakness. Alcohol may trigger gastric bloating, acidity, and burning in stomach with a heavy, sinking feeling. Dose: 30 th and higher. 6 th trituration. Do not repeat too often.
Nux vomica	Indicated after effects of alcohol, marked by irritability and high nervous tension. It suits individuals who show extreme over sensitive to noise, light and odours after drinking. Alcohol typically provokes nausea, sour vomiting, heart burn and ineffectual retching. Dose: 1 st to 30 th potency and higher. It is said to act best when given in the evening.
Phosphorus	Indicated when alcohol leads to gastric burning, easy vomiting, and a craving for cold drinks that are vomited. The person tends to be sensitive, emotional, affectionate and becomes easily exhausted after drinking. Dose: 3 rd to 330 th potency. Should not be given too low or in too continuous doses.
Sulphur	Chronic Alcoholism. Indicated when alcohol aggravates digestive troubles, causing acidity, heat, and burning sensation in the stomach. Drinking may trigger loose stools, skin itching, or a general aggravation of chronic complaints. Dose: Acts in all potencies from lowest to highest. Some of the best results are obtained from the higher and not too frequent doses. The 12 th potency is a good one to begin treatment with, going higher or lower according to the susceptibility of the patient.
Asarum Europaeum	A remedy of nervous affection, loss of energy. Always feels cold. Desire for alcohol drinking. Dose: Give 3x, 2 drops 4 times a day.
Avena Sativa	Has a selective action on brain and nervous system, favourably influencing their nutritive function. Nervous exhaustion, and Alcoholism. Sleeplessness, especially of alcoholics. Bad effects of Morphine habit. Nervous states of many female troubles. Dose-Tincture ten to twenty drop doses, preferably in hot water.
Quercus Glandium spiritus	Antidotes effects of Alcohol. Takes away craving for alcoholics; give dose as below for several months. Dose- Ten drops to a teaspoonful of the distilled spirit three to four times a day. A passing diarrhoea often appears for a times a day. A passing diarrhoea often appears for a time when using it. Curative effect. Quercus acts well in trituration of the acorn 3x in splenic cases, flatulence, old malaria and alcoholic history (Clark).
Sterculia acuminata	The remedy for the drinking habit. It promotes the appetite and digestion, and lessens the craving for liquor. Gives power to endure prolonged physical exertion without taking food and without feeling fatigued. Dose-Three to ten drops, even one drachm doses, three times a day.
Strophanthus Hispidus	Indicated for alcohol craving. Diminishes the craving for spiritus liquor slowly but surely. Dose: Give Q, 10 drops, thrice a daily
Angelica atropurpurea	Dose: In tincture, five drops, three times daily, produces disgust for liquor

Conclusion

The homoeopathic approach to Alcohol Use Disorders (AUD) emphasizes individualized treatment, focusing on the patient's physical symptoms, emotional state, and underlying susceptibilities rather than the addiction alone. Remedies such as Nux vomica, Sulphur, Arsenicum album, and others are selected based on the totality of symptoms to reduce cravings, improve withdrawal tolerance, and restore overall constitutional balance. When combined with proper counselling, lifestyle regulation, and supportive care, homoeopathy can contribute meaningfully to improving

recovery outcomes and enhancing quality of life. Although clinical experience supports its value, there remains a need for more systematic research to validate its effectiveness in AUD management.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

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