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A case study: Acute gouty arthritis treated by individualized homoeopathic medicine *Benzoicum acidum*

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Abstract

Acute gouty arthritis is a painful inflammatory condition characterized by deposition of monosodium urate crystals, commonly affecting the first metatarsophalangeal joint. Homoeopathy offers individualized therapeutic approaches aimed at relieving pain, reducing inflammation, and improving long-term metabolic balance. This case study presents the successful management of a patient with acute gouty arthritis using the individualized homoeopathic medicine *Benzoicum acidum*. Based on the totality of symptoms, characteristic modalities, and constitutional features, *Benzoicum acidum* was selected and administered in an appropriate potency. The patient demonstrated marked improvement in pain, swelling, stiffness, and functional mobility, with follow-up assessments confirming sustained recovery. This case highlights the relevance of individualized prescribing in acute gout presentations.

Keywords: Acute gouty arthritis, hyperuricemia, homoeopathy, *Benzoicum acidum*, case study, individualized prescription, totality of symptoms

Introduction

Gout is a metabolic disorder characterized by elevated serum uric acid levels leading to recurrent attacks of acute monoarticular arthritis. It commonly affects the great toe (podagra) and is associated with intense pain, swelling, redness, and restricted mobility. Conventional treatment focuses on analgesics, NSAIDs, and urate-lowering agents; however, some patients seek complementary systems such as homoeopathy for individualized and holistic care.

Homoeopathy approaches gout not merely through disease diagnosis but through a comprehensive evaluation of the patient's physical, mental, and general symptoms. Medicines like *Benzoicum acidum*, *Colchicum*, *Ledum palustre*, *Lithium carb*, and *Guaiacum* are often used depending on each patient's symptom expression. This case illustrates the effectiveness of *Benzoicum acidum* in a patient with characteristic gout symptoms and elevated uric acid levels.

Case summary

A 39-year-old male presented with acute onset pain and swelling in the right great toe for 3 days. The pain was severe, throbbing, and aggravated at night. Difficulty in walking and disturbed sleep were major concerns. Patient had a history of similar attacks over the last 1 month but reported that the current episode was more intense. Homoeopathic intervention was sought to relieve acute symptoms and prevent further recurrence.

Chief Complaints (C/C)

- Severe pain in the right great toe for 3 days
- Swelling, redness, and tenderness of the affected joint
- Difficulty in walking due to pain
- Pain worse at night and on slightest touch
- Offensive urine odor accompanying the episode

History of Chief Complaints (H/o C/C)

The patient experienced his first gout episode two years earlier, usually triggered by dietary

indiscretion (red meat, alcohol). Episodes were initially mild and self-limiting but gradually became more intense. Current episode started suddenly at night, with severe throbbing pain and marked swelling. Over-the-counter analgesics provided only temporary relief.

General & mental generals

General symptoms

- **Appetite:** Reduced during acute pain
- **Thirst:** Moderate, prefers warm water
- **Perspiration:** Normal
- **Bowel habits:** Regular
- **Sleep:** Disturbed due to pain
- **Urine:** Strong, offensive odor
- **Thermal reaction:** Slightly chilly

Mental generals

- Irritable due to pain
- Anxious about recurrent attacks
- Prefers to remain alone during acute episodes
- Sensitive to strong smells

Local examination of the toes

- Right great toe (first MTP joint) markedly swollen
- Redness and local warmth present
- Severe tenderness on palpation
- Limited range of motion due to pain
- Gait limping due to guarding

Investigations

- **Serum uric acid:** 7.1 mg/dL (elevated)

Path Care
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Regional Laboratory - P. No. 9, 46/2A, 6th Cross, opp - HP Petrol Pump, Basante Road, Azam Nagar, Belgaum, Karnataka
Ph:- 831366234

REPORT

Patient Name	: Mr. [redacted]	Reg. No.	: 00092508040065
Age and Sex	: 36 Yrs / Male	PCC Code	: PCL-KA-003
Referring Doctor	: Dr. SELF	Sample Drawn Date	: 04-Aug-2025 04:00 PM
Referring Customer	: PATHCARE DIAGNOSTICS - BELGAUM	Registration Date	: 04-Aug-2025 06:37 PM
Vial ID	: R2205132	Report Date	: 04-Aug-2025 07:23 PM
Sample Type	: Serum	Report Status	: Final Report
Client Address	:		

CLINICAL BIOCHEMISTRY

Test Name	Obtained Value	Units	Bio. Ref. Intervals (Age/Gender specific)	Method
*Uric Acid	7.1	mg/dL	3.5 - 7.2	Uricase

Comments:

- Uric acid is the end product of purine metabolism.
- Uric acid is excreted to a large degree by the kidneys and to a smaller degree in the intestinal tract by microbial degradation.
- Increased levels are found in Gout, Arthritis, impaired renal functions and starvation.
- Decreased levels are found in Wilson's Disease, Fanconi Syndrome and Yellow Atrophy of the Liver.

Correlate Clinically.

*** End Of Report ***

Fig 1: Before treatment

Diagnosis

Acute gouty arthritis (right great toe)

Based on clinical presentation and elevated uric acid levels.

Individualization & prescription

Individualization considered:

- Severe toe pain with redness and swelling
- Pain worse at night and on touch
- Offensive urine odor
- History of recurrent gout
- Irritability and desire for solitude during pain
- Constitution chilly, sensitive to strong smells

Prescribed remedy

Benzoicum acidum 200C, single dose, followed by placebo for 3 days.

Rationale: The keynote indication strongly offensive urine, along with wandering or shifting gouty pains, swelling of joints, and constitutional tendencies strongly indicated *Benzoicum acidum*.

Totality of symptoms

1. Severe pain and swelling in the great toe
2. Pain worse at night
3. Pain aggravated by touch
4. Offensive odor of urine
5. Recurrent gout attacks
6. Irritability and solitude-seeking
7. Chilly constitution

Repertorial rubrics (from synthesis repertory)

1. Extremities - Pain - Gouty - toes
 2. Extremities - Swelling - toes - great toe
 3. Generalities - Night - aggravation
 4. Generalities - Touch - aggravates
 5. Urine - Odor - offensive
 6. Mind - Irritability - pain during
- Benzoicum acidum* appeared prominently across multiple relevant rubrics.

Remedy selected: *Benzoicum acidum*

Rationale for remedy

Benzoicum acidum is known for:

- Markedly offensive urine odour
 - Gouty and rheumatic pains shifting from joint to joint
 - Swelling and pain in the great toe
 - Uric acid diathesis
 - Aggravation at night and on touch
- Its clinical relevance to gout and uric acid metabolism justified its selection.

Treatment plan

- *Benzoicum acidum* 200C, one dose on: 04-08-2025
- Placebo TDS for 3 days
- Advise increased warm-water intake
- Avoid red meat, organ meats, alcohol, and high-purine foods
- Follow-up every 3-5 days initially

Follow-up

F/U on 11-08-2025

- Pain reduced by 60-70%

- Swelling significantly reduced
- Sleep improved
- Patient able to walk comfortably
- Local warmth reduced completely
- Urine odor normalized
- Continued placebo

F/U on 4-09-2025

- No recurrence of pain
- No swelling
- General well-being improved
- Serum Uric acid advised
- Continued placebo
- Advised follow-up after 2 months

F/U on 02-11-2025

- Patient remained asymptomatic
- Serum uric acid within Normal limits 6.2 mg/dl

Investigation		Results / Unit	Normal Range
BIOCHEMISTRY REPORT			
SERUM URIC ACID :			
SERUM URIC ACID	:	6.2 mg/dl	2.5 - 7.2
*** End of Report ***			

Fig 2: After treatment

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