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Dr. Hetal Thakor
Associate Professor,
Department of Repertory,
Parul University, Vadodara,
Gujarat, India

Dr. Leena Dighe
Director, Dr. V.H. Dave
Homeopathic Medical College,
SP University, Anand,
Gujarat, India

Understanding sodium: A homeopathic perspective

Hetal Thakor and Leena Dighe

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Abstract

The study of materia medica is a continuous journey that requires ongoing learning. Through group study, we can understand materia medica in a more simplified and organized way. Medicines with similar characteristics or belonging to the same family are grouped together for easier study.”

Sodium is the primary component of the body’s extracellular fluid, reminding us that life originated in the ocean, where seawater served as the basis for bodily fluids. As the main element of extracellular fluid, sodium plays a vital role in maintaining balance within the body, or in other words, supporting homeostasis.”

We have about 28 drugs in our material medica, which contain sodium- ‘Natum’.

Keywords: Sodium, homeopathy, natrum, hyponatremia, hypernatremia

Introduction

Sodium is primarily found in the body’s extracellular fluid. It is consumed mainly as common salt and as a component of various foods. The daily requirement is about 1–2 grams, although the usual intake ranges from 8–20 grams. Sodium is easily absorbed along with water in the small intestine and colon. It is excreted mainly through urine, sweat, and stool, and its excretion is regulated by hormones from the adrenal cortex.

The normal plasma sodium concentration ranges from 130–149 mEq/L.

The total sodium content in extracellular fluid is approximately 1600 mEq/L, while the total sodium in an adult body is around 4000 mEq/L.”

Functions of Sodium in a human body

1. Sodium transport is linked to enzymes present on the cell membrane, and normal cellular activity cannot occur without it.
2. It is essential for the contraction of the heart, as well as skeletal and smooth muscles.
3. It is a component of various bodily secretions.
4. It helps maintain a stable blood pH by acting as a buffer in combination with bicarbonates, phosphates, and other elements.
5. The maintenance of water and electrolyte balance and overall homeostasis depends on proper sodium concentration.

Sodium metabolism is not very stable in infants and they are very prone to electrolyte imbalance. In toxemias of pregnancy sodium along with water is retained in excess in the body. Plasma sodium levels are decreased in congestive heart failure, Ascites etc.

Hyponatremia may happen due to decreased sodium intake; increased sodium loss through vomiting, diarrhoea, aldosterone deficiency or taking certain diuretics and excessive water intake.

S/S: Muscular weakness, dizziness, headache, hypotension, tachycardia, shock, mental confusion, stupor coma

Hypernatremia may occur with dehydration, water deprivation or excessive sodium in diet or intravenous fluids, causes hypertonicity of ECF, which pulls water out of body cells into ECF, causing cellular dehydration.

S/S: Intense thirst, hypertension, edema, agitation, convulsions

Discussion

Following drugs in our materia medica contain sodium

Natrum arsenicosum, Natrum biboracicum [borax], Natrum bicarbonicum, Natrum brom, Natrum cacodylicum, Natrum carbonicum, Natrum chloratum, Natrum choleinicum,

Corresponding Author:
Dr. Hetal Thakor
Associate Professor,
Department of Repertory,
Parul University, Vadodara,
Gujarat, India

Natrum fluoratum, Natrum hypochlorosum, Natrum hyposulphurosum, Natrum iodatum, Natrum lacticum, Natrum marinum, Natrum muriaticum, Natrum nitricum, Natrum nitrosum, Natrum phosphoricum, Natrum salicylicum, Natrum selenicum, Natrum silico-fluoricum, Natrum silicum, Natrum succinate, Natrum sulpho-carbolicum, Natrum sulphuricum, Natrum sulphurosum, Natrum taurocholicum, Natrum telluricum.

Conceptualisation of natrums

- Impulsive in starting relationships; may change partners quickly.
- Experience innocent, naïve love with little insight into their own emotions.
- Lack perseverance and maturity in relationships; easily influenced by others.
- Highly vulnerable to rejection and overly sensitive to small remarks.
- Tend to adapt completely to a partner's wishes out of fear of being left.
- After repeated disappointments, withdraw from relationships and prefer to be alone.
- Become closed, silent, and keep their sorrow to themselves.

Group symptoms

- 1) **Mind:** Timidity, weeping, dullness, sadness, melancholy, hysterical, forgetful, indifference, fearsome, fear of impending disease, anxiety in the evening
- 2) **Head:** Sensation of dullness, fullness, confusion, Congestion of head (nat ars, Nat carb, borax), throbbing pain < morning, < heat (sun), < warmth
- 3) **Concomitant:** nausea, vomiting, sensitiveness of scalp, pain in scalp, vertigo.
- 4) **Face:** Sensation of heat, Puffiness of face, Yellowish, pale complexion
- 5) **Eye:** Dimness of sight, Burning in eye, Yellowness of Conjunctiva [Nat Phos, Nat Sulph]
- 6) **Ear:** Otalgia esp. of right side, Shooting pain, Noises in ear
- 7) **Mouth:** Dryness of mouth, Ulcers in mouth, Difficult speech, Taste- bitter
- 8) **Appetite:** Increased (Nat carb, Nat mur), Decreased (Nat mur, Nat Sulph, Nat salicylic)
- 9) **Thirst:** Increased
- 10) **Stomach:** Nausea, vomiting, Sour eructations, Dyspnoea
- 11) **Abdomen:** Heaviness of abdomen, Sharp, shooting pain, Flatulent colic
- 12) **Stool and anus:** Constipation [Nat ars, Nat carb, Nat mur, Nat Phos, Nat Sulph, Nat hypophos, Nat nitricum] ; Diarrhoea [Nat ars, Nat carb, Nat mur, Nat Phos, Nat Sulph, Nat nitrosum, Nat salicylic, Nat sulphurosum, borax]; Sharp, shooting pain; Itching at anus

13) Tongue

Nat ars⇒furred, yellowish coating, deep red, corrugated, anterior part is fissured

Flabby, fissured, large, moist.

Nat carb ⇒ thick coated.

Nat Mur ⇒ clean, shiny, bubbles of frothy saliva along sides; clean in front, dirty in back.

Nat Phos ⇒ coated dirty white, brown centre.

Nat Sulph ⇒ Dirty greenish grey/ greenish brown coating

Nat hypochlorosum ⇒white shriveled at sides, furred in morning

Nat nitricum ⇒whitish tongue

Nat nitrosum ⇒ protruded dark colour, heavily coated.

14) Nose: Dryness, scab formation, epistaxis, obstruction of nose, fluent coryza with sneezing, discharge: watery, yellowish, offensive (nat phos), postnasal catarrh

15) Throat: Hoarseness, dryness, feeling of constriction, expectoration tastes salty

16) Respiratory system: Oppressed feeling in chest, Dyspnoea, Sharp, shooting pain in chest

17) Skin: Dryness of skin, erythematous rashes, urticaria eruptions (nat mur, nat phos, nat salicylic)

18) Neck: Pain in nape of neck, rigidity

19) Back: Pain in back esp. in sacral region

20) Extremities: Pain in joints and muscles, numbness in upper extremities, corns in feet (nat ars, nat mur)

21) Male: Pain in testes, absolute but temporary impotence (nat salicylic)

22) Female: Menses: Early, profuse; sterility (nat carb, nat mur, borax)

23) Urine: Frequent desire to micturate

24) Sleep: Sleepiness during the day

A truly healthy person free from emotional wounds and full of confidence and love is rare in any constitution. A healthy Natrum is not emotionally closed; she understands and expresses her feelings, yet remains naturally private. She guards her inner world out of sensitivity to others and self-respect. Her affection is warm, and the healthier she is, the less dependent or clingy her love becomes.

Materials and Methods

Following books are used for the formation of group symptoms

- 1) New manual of Homoeopathic Materia Medica and repertory: by W. Boericke
- 2) Allen's keynotes by H.C. Allen
- 3) The dictionary of Practical Materia Medica by J.H. Clarke
- 4) Materia Medica by S.R. Phatak

For each particular, symptoms from all books are collected for all drugs. Those symptoms that appeared in most of the drugs are considered. Those symptoms that appeared in major drugs are considered.

Conclusion

Natrum is essential in both physiology and homeopathy, influencing key bodily functions as well as emotional patterns. While it supports neurological, muscular, and cardiovascular balance, its disturbance can cause significant health problems. In homeopathy, Natrum remedies often relate to sensitivity, grief, and withdrawal. Understanding Natrum from both scientific and holistic perspectives helps create better therapeutic approaches that support both physical balance and emotional resilience.

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