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## Repigmentation in vitiligo: Therapeutic efficacy of arsenic sulph flavum - A detailed case report

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### Abstract

Vitiligo is an acquired pigmentary disorder characterized by the selective loss or dysfunction of epidermal melanocytes, leading to well-defined depigmented macules and patches. It has shown global prevalence from 0.1% to 2%, although higher prevalence rates have been reported in various Indian studies. Conventional therapy can sometimes be limited, but Homoeopathy provides an approach that can treat it as an individual and holistic medical practice. The given case shows an impressive response in a 27-year-old patient with Arsenic Sulphuratum Flavum, as per the constitutional and miasmatic interpretation. Noticeable Re-pigmentation could be achieved within three follow-ups spanning 3 months, indicating its efficacy in some vitiligo patient.

**Keywords:** Vitiligo leucoderma, depigmentation, autoimmune disorder, homeopathy, arsenicum sulphuratum flavum, melanocytes, repigmentation, skin pigmentation disorder case study

### Introduction

It is an acquired pigmentation disorder of the skin due to the absence of pigment-forming cells of the epidermis, which assumes white macules and patches on the body<sup>[1]</sup>.

It is generally believed to accompany a few instances of an autoimmune disease wherein abnormalities of the thyroid are most prevalent. The cause of vitiligo is not yet known but there are several postulations for pathogenesis of each of these conditions. For instance, clinical manifestations of vitiligo include white spots on the body symmetrically more prominent with darker-skinned individuals characterized by well-defined pearly white to hypopigmented macules and patches with an oval to rounded shape with linear configuration being less prominent linear with a rounded perimeter that is convex with varying sizes of a couple of millimeters to centimeters with centrifugal enlargement<sup>[1]</sup>.

Vitiligo or Leucoderma treatment approaches are mainly centered around repigmentation and can be achieved through topical and surgical methods. However, the toxicity and ineffectiveness of conventional treatments have led to a search for alternatives such as homeopathic treatments. Arsenic Sulphur Flavum, a homeopathic medication composed of arsenic and sulfur, has proved beneficial in some leucoderma patients. Pharmacodynamics of Arsenic Sulphur Flavum can be defined as a combination medication designed according to the theory of homeopathy. Arsenic has been recognized for its probable effects on skin, mucous tissues, and overall health, while sulfur has been conventionally used for its detoxifying and anti-inflammatory effects. It can be hypothesized that this medication has been formulated with the intention of treating skin pigmentation disorders at a biological level.

According to the theory of homeopathy, this particular medication works towards normal skin functioning with the help of an individual's body healing capabilities. As far as leucoderma treatment is concerned, Arsenic Sulphur Flavum works towards aiding the body in regenerating pigment-producing cells in those people with a probable tendency towards leucoderma due to some bodily imbalance and immune deficiency<sup>[2]</sup>.

**Prevalence Rate of Vitiligo:** The most common cause of depigmentation is vitiligo. This condition may be observed at all ages, from children to adults; it peaks in the second and third decades. The age at which it occurs normally differs between the two genders. The prevalence rate is 0.1%-2% in people encompassing all ages from children to adults and in all races in equal percentages<sup>[3]</sup>.

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### Indian studies on vitiligo

The prevalence rate of vitiligo in India has invariably ranged between 0.25% and 4% in outdoor patients at dermatology clinics in India and up to 8.8% in Gujarat and Rajasthan. Moreover, it affects both sexes almost evenly in most instances or two times more females than males in exception. The incidence rate of vitiligo observed in this study among outdoor patients belonging to both sexes almost evenly at 0.43% conforms to the above-mentioned epidemiological indices. The mean duration (5.1 years) of vitiligo observed in our patients at the time of consulting us is also in tune with its slow progressiveness and asymptomatic nature<sup>[4]</sup>.

### Etiological factors of vitiligo

- Neural
- Genetic
- Autoimmune
- Oxidative stress
- Production of inflammatory mediators, and other mechanisms for melanocyte separation<sup>[5]</sup>.

### Case Presentation

#### Introduction of patient

A 27 year old Female patient, Occupation- nurse, residing at Ratlam (M.P.) presented to the OPD of GOVT Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital with complaints of

- Depigmented patch behind right ear
- Diagnosed clinically as vitiligo. Vitiligo is an acquired, idiopathic depigmentary disorder characterized by well-defined white macules due to loss of functional melanocytes.

#### History of present illness

- **Onset:** Depigmented patch first noticed behind right ear since 2months.
- **Course:** Gradual increase in size of patch; no associated scaling, itching or burning.

#### Previous treatment

[Allopathic local application] taken for [2 Months] with SLIGHT relief.

- **Associated factors:** History of emotional stress, sun exposure, trauma, or chemical contact, if present.

### Physical generals

#### Physical make-up

- **Build:** Obese chubby look
- **Complexion:** Fair complexion
- **Hair:** Black
- **Head:** Chronic headache
- **Eyes and ear:** Healthy
- **Throat:** Clear
- **Tongue:** Dry tongue
- **Thirst:** +++
- **Desire:** Warm drinks.
- **Desires (likes):** Marked desire for sweet
- **Aversion:** Cold drinks spicy non veg
- **Sleep:** Irregular
- **Dreams:** Dreams of dead ones
- **Urine:** Yellowish sometimes burning present
- **Bowels:** Regular
- **Thermal state:** Chilly pt
- Patient's sensitivity to cold and aggravation from cold weather

### Mental generals

- **Chief mental traits:** Anxiety, restlessness, fastidiousness, fear of disease, insecurity, perfectionist
- The psychosocial impact of vitiligo (low self-esteem, social withdrawal), as vitiligo significantly affects quality of life and mental health<sup>[1]</sup>.

### Miasm

- Predominant miasm is Psora sycosis.

### Temperament

- Nervous sanguine temperament

### Repertorial totality

Summarize the characteristic symptoms selected for repertorisation, such as:

1. Mind – Anxiety about health; fear of death.
2. Skin – White spots, depigmented patches.
3. Generalities – Worse cold; desire for warm drinks; aggravation at night; restlessness.

### Rubrics according to Synthesis Repertory

- Skin – discoloration – white – spots – vitiligo.
- Generalities – food and drinks – warm – desires.
- Mind – anxiety – health, about.

From the repertorial analysis, Arsenicum sulphuratum flavum came up prominently among the leading remedies frequently used in vitiligo and leucoderma.

### Prescription

#### Rx

- 1) **Arsenicum sulphuratum flavum** 30 BD for 7 days
- 2) **Rubrum** 30 BD for 7days
- **Adjuvants:** Avoid local steroid/depigmenting creams; general advice regarding sun protection and balanced diet as followed in vitiligo management

#### First Follow-up:- After 15 days

c/o -Doing Better

- Reduce size of vitiligo patch

### Prescription

#### Rx

- 1) **Arsenicum sulphuratum flavum** 30 BD for 5 days
- 2) **Phytum** 30 BD for days

#### Second follow up- After 15 days

c/o

- Completely repigmented hypopigmented (vitiligo) patch

### Prescription

#### Rx

- **Nihilinum** 200 BD for 7 days





### Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest related to this study.

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