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Homoeopathic treatment of atopic dermatitis with individualized homoeopathic medicine sulphur in LM potency: A case series

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Abstract

Atopic dermatitis (AD) is a chronic inflammatory skin disorder marked by recurrent eczematous lesions, persistent pruritus, and a strong association with emotional and physical stressors. It affects up to 20% of children and 1-3% of adults globally, resulting in substantial morbidity and healthcare costs. Despite advances in research, diagnosis still relies primarily on the classical Hanifin and Rajka criteria, as no pathognomonic laboratory biomarkers have been identified. Intense itching is the hallmark symptom of AD, and repeated scratching often leads to skin excoriation and lichenification. The personal and family history regarding allergies such as allergic rhinitis, and/or asthma is related to AD. Here I present three cases of atopic dermatitis successfully treated with individualized homoeopathic medicine Sulphur in LM potency. The cases were selected from the OPD of the Government Homoeopathic Medical College Hospital, Thiruvananthapuram. The improvement of each patient was assessed using photographic evidence.

Keywords: Atopic dermatitis, sulphur, lm potency, individualized homoeopathic medicine, repertorisation

Introduction

Atopic Dermatitis (AD) is a chronic, relapsing inflammatory skin condition characterized by intense itching, dryness, erythema, and eczematous lesions. It significantly affects the quality of life of patients due to its recurrent nature and association with sleep disturbance, emotional stress, and secondary infections^[1]. Worldwide, Atopic dermatitis affects up to 20% of children and 10% of adults, with an increasing prevalence in India and other developing nations^[2]. Atopy is characterized by a generalized and persistent hypersensitivity to common environmental allergens, such as pollen and house-dust mites, driven by a genetic tendency to produce elevated levels of IgE. Atopic individuals manifest one or more of a group of diseases that includes asthma, hay fever, food and other allergies, and atopic eczema^[3]. Traditional treatments, such as corticosteroids and calcineurin inhibitors, provide symptom relief but may lead to side effects and do not address the underlying predisposition^[4]. Atopic eczema is extremely itchy and scratching accounts for many of the signs. Widespread cutaneous dryness (also known as xeroderma or xerosis) is another feature. The distribution and character of the rash vary with age. Not only patient is affected by the social stigma of a visible skin condition but also the characteristic Itch-scratch cycle often leads to skin trauma and significant sleep disruption^[5].

Homeopathy offers an individualized therapeutic model that considers the person as a whole symptoms, constitution, mental state, and hereditary tendencies. This approach can play a valuable role in managing chronic skin conditions where conventional treatments fall short in preventing recurrences or addressing root causes. The Chronic Diseases, suppression of skin eruptions may lead to more serious internal ailments. Therefore, the skin must be allowed to express this inner imbalance, and the remedy must act from within^[6].

The precise mechanism by which homoeopathy exerts its effects in atopic dermatitis (AD) remains under scientific investigation. However, emerging research and clinical observations suggest that homoeopathic remedies may act through immune modulation, anti-inflammatory pathways, and neuro-immunological effects^[7].

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Three cases of atopic dermatitis were treated on the OPD of Government Homoeopathic Medical College, Trivandrum are discussed here

Case Summaries

Case No-1

Patient information

A 45-year-old male belonging to a middle-class family reported to the Outpatient Department on February 19, 2024. He complained of thick, dry, itching, plaque-like eruptions over the dorsum of his back for the past one week. On scratching, a yellowish watery fluid oozed out from the eruptions. The itching was more intense at night and became worse after perspiration. The patient had applied several ointments before coming to the hospital, but these only provided temporary relief. He is currently taking allopathic medication for hypertension and has a history of allergic tendencies since childhood.

His father suffered from bronchial asthma, and his mother passed away due to pancreatic carcinoma. On general

examination, he weighed 70 kg, his height was 6 feet, and his BMI was 21. There were no signs of anaemia, jaundice, clubbing, cyanosis, or lymphadenopathy. His respiratory rate was 19 breaths per minute, blood pressure 140/80 mmHg, and pulse rate 68 beats per minute.

Investigations

16/2/24-Serum Ig E-1147 IU/ml

Absolute eosinophil count-100 cells/cu.mm Totality of symptoms

Easily get angry and throws the things around when getting angry

1. Frightful dreams
2. Desire spicy food and beef
3. Intolerance to farinaceous food
4. Profuse perspiration all over the body
5. Sneezing < cold season, dust exposure
6. Headache on exposure to sun

Repertorial sheet^[8]

Remedy	Puls	Sep	Sulph	Nat-m	Bry	Sil	Chin	Phos	Ant-c	Nit-ac
Totality	29	27	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20
Symptoms Covered	8	9	7	8	7	8	7	6	7	8
Kingdom	Plants	Animals, Sarcodes	Minerals	Minerals	Plants	Minerals	Plants	Minerals	Minerals	Minerals
[Complete] [Mind]ANGER:Throws things: (47)		1								
[Complete] [Dreams]FRIGHTFUL, NIGHTMARE: (587)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3
[Complete] [Generalities]FOOD AND DRINKS:Spices, condiments, piquant, highly seasoned:Desires: (141)	3	1	4	3	3		4	4	1	1
[Complete] [Generalities]FOOD AND DRINKS:Farinaceous food, carbohydrates:Agg.: (138)	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	3
[Complete] [Perspiration]PROFUSE: (502)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	2	4
[Complete] [Nose]SNEEZING:Air:Cold, in: (28)						1	1			1
[Complete] [Head]PAIN, HEADACHE:Sun, exposure to:Agg.: (104)	4	3	3	3	4	1	3		4	1
[Complete] [Back]ERUPTIONS:Itching: (74)	2	3		2	3	3				
[Complete] [Skin]ERUPTIONS:Discharging, moist:Yellow: (43)	4	4	4	3		4		4	4	4
[Complete] [Generalities]AIR:Warm:Agg.: (92)	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	3

Case analysis

The case was analysed symptomatically, considering physical and mental status of the patient. After the repertorisation process with complete repertory and correlating with Materia Medica, Sulphur was selected. Repertorization software used was Homopath Zomeo Version 15.0.25^[9].

Remedial Analysis: Pulsatilla (29/8), Sepia (29/7), Sulphur (27/7), Natrum mur (26/8). Pulsatilla covered all the

symptoms but considering the selfish nature and constitution of the patient Sulphur in LM potency was given. LM potency was selected to avoid unwanted aggravations and for frequent repetition.

Remedy Selection and Administration

Sulphur 0/3 was prescribed to be taken once daily, on alternate days, in the early morning on an empty stomach.

Follow up of the case with the timeline

Sl. No	Date	Medicine	Follow up
1.	15/3/2024	Sulphur 0/3/ 10dose, alternate days	
2.	20/4/24	Placebo	Discharge of yellowish fluid reduced with decreased severity of itching
3.	2/5/24	Sulphur 0/6 3doses, weekly once	Itching reduced. slight scaling of skin persists and dryness of the parts. Generals-good Bowels -regular says now he could manage his anger issues
4.	12/6/24	Placebo	Amelioration of the complaints
5.	24/8/24	Placebo	Complaints relieved with slight dryness of the back

**Fig 1:** Before treatment**Fig 2:** After treatment**Case No-2****Patient information**

A 38-year-old female from an upper-class family presented to the Outpatient Department, on August 10, 2023. She complained of very dry, thick, scaly, and itchy eruptions on the big toes of both feet for the past month. The itching was more intense at night and worsened after bathing and perspiration. She has been using a nasal spray for allergic rhinitis.

Her father has hyperthyroidism, and her mother is on medication for hypertension. On general examination, the patient weighed 50 kg, her height was 5.3 feet, and her BMI was 21. She appeared lean and thin, with no signs of anaemia, jaundice, clubbing, cyanosis, or lymphadenopathy. Her respiratory rate was 20 breaths per minute, blood pressure was 130/80 mmHg, and pulse rate was 70 beats per

minute.

Investigations

24/8/2023-Serum Ig E -189 IU/ml

Absolute eosinophil count-160 cells/cu.mm Totality of symptoms

1. Anxious about her health
2. Fastidiousness
3. Only prefer cold drinks
4. Pain during intercourse
5. Constipated hard stool
6. Thick white discharge from vagina with itching
7. Menses is clotted with back pain during menses
8. Nasal polyp in both nostrils

Repertorial sheet

Remedy	Sulph	Lyc	Puls	Graph	Sep	Calc	Merc	Nat-m	Phos	Calc-p
Totality	32	31	29	28	28	27	25	24	24	23
Symptoms Covered	10	9	9	9	9	8	8	8	8	8
Kingdom	Minerals	Plants	Plants	Minerals	Animals, Sarcodes	Minerals	Minerals	Minerals	Minerals	Minerals
[Complete] [Mind]FASTIDIOUS: (146)	3	4	4	3	1			3	1	1
[Complete] [Mind]ANXIETY:Health, about: (325)	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3
[Complete] [Generalities]FOOD AND DRINKS:Cold:Drinks:Desires: (342)	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	
[Complete] [Female Genitalia]COITION:Painful: (64)	4	4	4	1	4	2	1	4		4
[Complete] [Rectum]CONSTIPATION:Difficult stool: (331)	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3
[Complete] [Female Genitalia]LEUCORRHEA, DISCHARGE:White: (179)	3	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3
[Complete] [Female Genitalia]MENSES:Clotted, coagulated: (219)	3	4	4	3	1	4	3	1	1	4
[Complete] [Nose]POLYPS: (80)	3	1	1	3	3	4	3	1	4	4
[Complete] [Extremities]ERUPTIONS:Scaly: (76)	4	4	1	3	4	3	4		3	1
[Complete] [Skin]ERUPTIONS:Itching:Bathing, washing:Agg.: (11)	1									

Case Analysis

The case presented with characteristic physical and mental symptoms, along with relevant female symptoms. After the repertorisation process using the Complete Repertory and consultation with the homoeopathic materia medica, Sulphur was selected as the indicated remedy. The repertorisation Software used for the Analysis Was Homopath Zomeo, Version 15.0.25.

Remedial analysis Sulphur (32/10), Lycopodium (31/9),

Pulsatilla (29/9), Graphites (28/9), Sepia (28/9). Sulphur covered all the symptoms.

Fastidiousness, thick vaginal discharge, pain during coition and nasal polyps were considered while selecting the similimum. Remedy selection and administration Sulphur 0/3 was prescribed to be taken once daily, on alternate days, in the early morning on an empty stomach.

Follow and outcome

Sl. No	Date	Medicine	Follow up
1.	10/8/2023	Sulphur 0/3 10doses, alternate days	
2.	19/8/2023	Placebo	Itching persists with thickening of eruptions. vaginal discharge with itching reduced
3.	16/9/2023	Sulphur 0/6 10doses, alter nate days	Eruptions of right toe appears to be healing and itching also reduced. In left toe eruptions thickened and itching reduced.
4.	25/10/2023	Sulphur 0/6 4doses, weekl y once	Amelioration of complaints. Generals-good Bowels -regular
5.	3/1/2024	Placebo	Complaints relieved.



Fig 3: Before treatment



Fig 4: Left toe during treatment



Fig 5: Right toe during treatment



Fig 6: After treatment

Case No-3

Patient information: A 44-year-old male from a middle-class background reported to the Outpatient Department, on September 20 2023, with complaints of very dry, raised, itchy eruptions on both legs for the past two weeks. Scratching led to scaling of the lesions. The itching was more intense at night and aggravated after bathing, with slight relief from applying external ointments. He has been using saline nasal drops for recurrent nasal obstruction for several years and experiences frequent neck pain, previously diagnosed as cervical spondylosis.

His family history is significant for his father having suffered from breathing difficulties and tuberculosis, while

his mother has hypertension. On general examination, he weighed 64 kg, his height was 6.2 feet, and his BMI was 18. There were no signs of anaemia, jaundice, clubbing, cyanosis, or lymphadenopathy. His respiratory rate was 24 breaths per minute, blood pressure 132/88 mmHg, and pulse rate 71 beats per minute.

Investigations

12/9/2023-Serum IgE-420.4 IU/ml

Absolute eosinophil count-350cells/cu.mm Totality of symptoms

1. Hard working and desire to be active always
2. Sensitive and easily weeping tendency

3. Desire salty and spicy++ food
4. Aversion to sweets and milk
5. Chilly patient
6. Pain in right shoulder extending up to hand

1. Foreign body sensation in throat while swallowing

Repertorial sheet

Remedy	Sulph	Lyc	Ars	Calc	Merc	Phos	Sep	Puls	Mag-m	Staph
Totality	35	29	28	28	28	27	26	24	23	23
Symptoms Covered	11	11	11	10	8	10	9	8	9	9
Kingdom	Minerals	Plants	Minerals	Minerals	Minerals	Minerals	Animals, Sarcodes	Plants	Minerals	Plants
[Complete] [Mind]INDUSTRIOUS, MANIA FOR WORK: (331)	2	4	1	4	3	3	4	3	1	1
[Complete] [Mind]WEeping, TEARFUL MOOD:Trifles, about: (161)	3	1	3	3		1	3	4	3	3
[Complete] [Generalities]FOOD AND DRINKS:Spices, condiments, piquant, highly seasoned:Desires: (141)	4	1	3			4	1	3		1
[Complete] [Generalities]FOOD AND DRINKS:Milk, milk products:Aversion: (120)	3	1	1	3	4	3	4	4	3	4
[Complete] [Generalities]FOOD AND DRINKS:Sweets:Aversion: (92)	4	3	3	1	3	3		1	1	
[Complete] [Generalities]COLD:Agg.: (787)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
[Complete] [Extremities]PAIN:Shoulders:Right: (277)	3	3	1	3	2	1	1		2	3
[Complete] [Extremities]PAIN:Shoulders:Extending to:Hands: (84)	1	1	1	1		1	1		3	
[Complete] [Throat]FOREIGN BODIES, AS OF: (417)	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	1
[Complete] [Extremities]ERUPTIONS:Scaly: (76)	4	4	4	3	4	3	4	1		3
[Complete] [Skin]ERUPTIONS:Itching:Night: (51)	3	3	3	2	4				3	3

Case Analysis

The case was presented with specific physical and mental symptoms and the patient was also suffering from cervical spondylosis. After the repertorisation process using the Complete Repertory and consultation with the homoeopathic materia medica, Sulphur was selected as the indicated remedy. The repertorisation software used for the analysis was HOMPAT ZOMEIO, Version 15.0.25.

Remedial Analysis: Sulphur (35/11), Lycopodium (29/11),

Arsenicum album (28/11), Calcarea carbonicum (28/10), Merc solubilis (28/8). Sulphur covered all the symptoms. Right sided sholulder pain and foreign body sensation in throat are also consider for selecting the similimum.

Remedy Selection and Administration

Sulphur 0/3 was prescribed to be taken once daily, on alternate days, in the early morning on an empty stomach.

Follow up and outcome

Sl. No	Date	Medicine	Follow up
1	20/9/2023	Sulphur 0/3 10doses	
2.	17/10/2023	Placebo	Itching aggravated with scaly eruptions. Greyish discoloration of legs
3.	12/11/2023	Placebo	Amelioiration of complaints.Pain in right sholulder reduced.
4	16/12/23	Euphrasia 30/ 2doses	Redness of eyes with itching and lachrymation. itching of legs at night
5.	23/2/2024	Sulphur 0/3 5doses	Complaints relieved

**Fig 7:** Before treatment**Fig 8:** During treatment**Fig 9:** After treatment

Discussion

In this case series, three patients with atopic dermatitis were treated with individualized homoeopathic medicines. Each case was analyzed based on the patient's symptomatology, mental and physical status, and relevant background information. Sulphur was selected as the individualized remedy in all three cases and was prescribed in LM potency to minimize unwanted aggravations and allow for frequent repetition.

Among the three patients, the first presented with prominent anger issues, the second with sexual complaints, and the third with cervical spondylosis in addition to atopic dermatitis. All three patients exhibited significant improvement not only in their dermatological symptoms but also in their overall well-being. Remedy selection in each case was guided by repertorization and confirmed through correlation with the homoeopathic Materia Medica.

Conclusion

Through individualized case-taking, homeopathy often demonstrates positive results in the management of atopic

dermatitis, along with improvement in the patient's general symptoms. When evaluating the totality of symptoms, the constitutional makeup of the patient is also taken into account to identify the most appropriate similimum. Only by addressing the person as a whole—rather than focusing solely on the skin lesions—can long-lasting relief and true healing be achieved.

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