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## Cervical spondylosis and its homoeopathic therapeutics

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### Abstract

Cervical Spondylosis is a degenerative disease associated with ageing and also occupation. In today's fast moving stressful life, Man has forgotten himself. His life style is more of sedentary work now a days, Long hours in front of computers, every time using mobile with bending neck, lack of exercise etc., Most commonly computer professionals whose work demands a lot of work sitting on a chair in a bent down posture causing undue strains on the vertebral column tend to be more affected by Cervical Spondylosis. All these activities have given rise to several chronic diseases like HTN, DM, and Spondylosis etc. In every diseased condition, homoeopathic treatment is on the basis of symptoms similarity, after considering patient's physical general and mental generals together and find out the similitum. Homoeopathic medicines are extremely effective in reducing weight by speeding up the metabolic rate. This article emphasis in incidence, etiology, Risk factor, clinical features and management of cervical Spondylosis with discussion on Homoeopathic medicines indicated in this clinical condition.

**Keywords:** Spondylosis, homoeopathic therapeutics, cervical spondylosis

### Introduction

Cervical spondylosis is nothing but the degenerative of the cervical spine. It is becoming increasingly common and as such, there is only conservative and surgical treatment in allopathic system of medicine. The medical treatment available in allopathic system of medicine includes – Analgesics, NSAID, topical analgesics and intra articular steroid injections. Besides the drug given cause more severe adverse effects than the disease such as severe GI bleeding, Gastritis etc. In severe cases surgery is needed but this poses risk particularly in elderly. Cervical Spondylosis is a degenerative disease associated with ageing and also occupation. The growing geriatric population and sedentary occupation, increases the incidence of Cervical Spondylosis. In comparison with uncertainty in result and complication of surgical procedure in most cases of Cervical Spondylosis, the result of conservative treatment is so rewarding that surgery should not be considered unless pain persist for a few months or unless there is progressive neurological deficit <sup>[1]</sup>.

The patient is treated by taking into consideration – the physical constitution, his mental makeup, his desires and aversions, his relation to environment, past history and family history of any chronic disease. Above all, the homoeopathic medicines are given in dynamic form, the minute and diluted doses which do not cause any side effects. This type of treatment boosts the immunity of the patient, helps in the maintaining the harmony of vital force and to get rid of disease condition. In homoeopathy we treat the patient as a whole taking into consideration the role of the body, Mind and spirit. Homeopathy believes in the concept of vital force, which then becomes deranged through disharmonious living, thinking and then manifestation of symptom takes place. Age is the most common risk factor for cervical spondylosis. The condition is extremely common in patients who are middle-aged and older. But in other factor in today's generation computer professionals, smart phone users etc are higher risk for developing cervical spondylosis and neck pain.

- Occupation- Mostly Computer professionals
- People doing work that demands minute concentration
- Persons who constantly work bending their neck
- Depression or Anxiety.
- Previous injury or trauma to the neck.
- Genetics-A family history of neck pain and spondylosis
- Smoking – Clearly linked to increased neck pain.

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**Clinical features****Symptoms-** <sup>[2]</sup>

- Headache
- Grinding or popping noise or sensation when you turn your neck
- In some cases, cervical Spondylosis results in a narrowing of the space needed for the spinal cord, if this occurs, symptom may include numbness and weakness in the arms, hands, and fingers.
- Trouble walking, loss of balance or weakness in the hands or legs.
- Muscles spasms in the neck and shoulders.

**Sign**

- Mild tenderness in posterior neck muscles.
- Restricted neck movements (due to spasm and rigidity of cervical muscles)
- Sensory – Motor changes
- Muscle wasting in upper limbs (late)

**Investigations**

- Clinical diagnosis is confirmed by radiological studies of cervical spine
- X-ray of cervical spine AP and lateral view.

\* Early - Narrowed intervertebral disc space <sup>[3]</sup>

- Loss of normal lordosis.
- Osteophyte formation.

\* Late-Loss of intervertebral disc space <sup>[3]</sup>

Encroachment of Osteophyte intervertebral foramen

**Computed tomography**

It is a golden standard for imaging of cervical spine during evaluation for Spondylosis and disc disease. It provides an excellent definition of herniated discs and Spondylosis ridges and demonstrates their relationships to nerve roots and spinal cord. More detailed than a plain x-ray, a CT scan can help to better view of spinal canal and any bone spurs <sup>[2]</sup>.

**MRI**

Magnetic resonance imaging scan is a noninvasive and radiation-free procedure that provides excellent imaging of the spinal cord and subarachnoid space and is a sensitive method for determining involvement of these by extradural pathology. These studies create better images of the body's soft tissues, such as muscles, disks, nerves, and the spinal cord. An MRI can help determine whether symptom caused by damage to soft tissues – such as a bulging or herniated disk <sup>[2]</sup>.

**Complications**

- Degenerative changes can cause permanent deformity of the spine.
- Paralysis of the hands or legs due to compression of nerve root.
- Lack of bladder or bowel control depending upon the intensity of Spondylosis.
- Muscular weakness and marasmus of hands.
- Herniation of the inter vertebral discs.

**Management****General management**

- Active Exercise <sup>[3]</sup>
- Avoid strenuous activity
- Maintain correct posture at work
- Reduce weight, if Obese

\* Diet:-whole grain cereals, Fruits and vegetables <sup>[4]</sup>.

\* Avoid: - Highly refined foods, salt and Sugar <sup>[4]</sup>.

- Local treatment - Heat -to relieve pain and stiffness.
- -Supportive aids- cervical collar

**Prevention**

- Avoid stretching the neck and lifting heavy weights
- Avoid prolonged driving
- Neck exercise
- Maintaining good posture Avoid sleeping on pillow which is too high <sup>[5]</sup>.

**Therapeutics according to the views of different authors on cervical spondylosis**

'The homoeopathic domestic physician' <sup>[6]</sup> - by Constantine Hering mentioned that, if lifting or carrying heavy loads or any sudden exertion produces pain, give Rhus tox. Bryonia is indicated when pain is <on any motion. If both these drugs do not relieve entirely, try Sulphur. If headache ensues and Rhus tox will not remove it, then give Calcarea carb.

Dr GHG Jhar in his book 'the therapeutic guide. The most important result of more than 40 years of practice'-mentions drug like Acon, Bry, Bell, Kali carb. And Lach for spinal irritation attended with painful rigidity of nape of neck. If the neck at the same time twisted, he suggested Caust, Calc and ARS alb.

'Practical homoeopathic therapeutic' <sup>[7]</sup> by W.A Dewey has given importance to the following medicines. Colchicum, Ledum, AMM phos, Anti crud, Lyco, Picric acid and Rhododendron for arthritis. Phos, Calc carb and silicea for syphilitic carries of vertebrae. Phosphoric acid for carries of spine. Actea, Sulphur, Bell, Gels, Nat mur, Puls, Agar, Zinc, Phos, Cocculus, Nux vom, Oxalic acid, Kali carb etc for spinal affections.

Dr. Richard Hughes in his book 'a manual of pharmacodynamics' <sup>[8]</sup> suggested Aconite, Actea racemosa, Bry, Colch and Dulc for stiffneck.

'Quick bed side prescriber' <sup>[9]</sup> proposes Lach 200 for spondylitis ie-inflammation of vertebrae. Mag phos 30, Kali mur 30 and Calc fl 30X are also important.

Aconite, Bell, Chamomilla, Kalm, Colocynth, Merc, Spig, Ars, Bry, Caust, Lyco, Mezerium, Nux vom, Phos, and Puls are mentioned in the book 'the outline of materia medica'.by Henry Buck for neuralgia.

'knowledge of the physician' <sup>[10]</sup> by Richard Hughes considered Aconite, Kalm, Bry, Propylamine, Rhus tox, Dulc, Rhodo, Spig, Actea, Ledum, Merc, Phyto and Sulph for neck pain.

Drug like Acon, Bry, Cepa, Hyper, kalm, Paris, Phyto, Rhus tox, Merc and Tereb are mentioned for brachial neuralgia in the book 'realistic materia medica with therapeutic hints' <sup>[11]</sup> C. Cowperthwaite in this book, 'a text book of matriamedica and therapeutics, characteristic, analytical and comparitive' he mention drugs like Asafoetida, Aurum, Calc carb, Calc flour, Calc phos, Flouric acid, Kali iod, Nitric acid and

Phos, Agaricus, Hypericum, Phos, Nat mur, Puls, Silicea, Sul, Kali carb, Cocculus, Gels, Arnica etc for spinal irritation. Otto Lesser- 'Text book of materia mdica' [12] suggested plumb met and Zinc met for peripheral nerve affections. Oxalic acid, Ammon mur, Ars, Caust, Heper sul, Kali bich, Kali carb, Mag carb and Mag phos, Merc, Nat mur, Phos, Sulph, and zinc met for neuralgia.

'lesser writing with therapeutic hints' [13] by E.A. Farrington mentions the following medicines, pain, neuralgia, bone and periosteal pains Rhus venera, for tearing from each temple, back to occiput and down neck to shoulders, Silicea for occiput forwards. Aconite, Cimicifuga, Bell, Bryonia, Gels, Mag ur, Mag phos, Naja, Manganum, Nat mur, Phos, Plantago, Prunus spinosa and juglans cathartica for neuralgic pains. Glonoine, Agar, Arg met, Graph, Kali nitr, Spigelia for stiffness and rigidity. For pain extending from neck to occiput, suggested remedies are Nat mur, Kali carb, Kalmia.

'raue's pathology' [14] has given the following suggestions such as, spinal irritation if located in the cervical region causes head and chest symptoms, remedies like Aceta, Asaf, Bell, Cocculus, Hyper, Nat mur, Piper math, Rhus tox, Secale, Tarent are important.

'Quick bed side prescriber with notes on clinical relationships of remedies and homoeopathy in surgery' [15] by J N Singhal has given the following suggestions. Neck stiffness, due to draught or chill, painful worse on moving the neck, then Aconite is the medicine suggested. For neuralgia the medicines are spigelia, Mag phus, Colocynth, Gels and Sangunaria and for stiff neck he mentions Lach, Duls, Acon and Bell.

Some homoeopathic medicines for cervical spondylosis [16] Constitutional medicines can help the patient whole also there are numbers of drugs in our materia medica which we can use therapeutically. Some of these important medicines with their characteristics symptoms are as follows-  
Aconitum napellus Vertigo; worse on rising and on shaking the head. Sensation as if hair were being pulled or were standing on end especially on the vertex. Numb, stiff, painful, crawling and tingling, as if bruised. Stiffness I the nape of neck. Bruised pain between scapulae. Numbness and tingling, shooting pains, icy coldness and insensibility of hands and feet. Arms feel lame, bruised, heavy, and numb. Pain down the left arm. Hot hand and cold feet.

**Actaea racemosa (Cimicifuga racemosa):** Pain like electric shocks here and there. Shooting and throbbing pains in the head after mental worry, over study or as a reflex of uterine disease. Waving sensation or sensation of opening and shutting in the brain. Brain feels too large. Pain pressing outward. Spine very sensitive, especially the upper part (cervical Spondylosis). Stiffness and contraction in the neck and back. Intercostals' rheumatism. Rheumatic pains in muscles f back and neck. Pain in the lumber and sacral region, down the thighs, and through the hips. Crick in the back.

**Belladonna:** Stiff neck. Swelling in the glands of the neck. Pain in the nape, as if it would break (Cervical spondylosis). Pressure maximum in the dorsal region. Lumbago, with pain in hips and thighs. Vertigo, with falling to the left side or backwards. Sensitive to least contact. Severe throbbing and heat. Palpations reverberate in the head with labored breathing. Pain; fullness, especially in the forehead, occiput and temples. Pain worse light, noise, jar, lying down and in

the afternoon. Better by pressure.

**Bellis perennis:** Marked muscular soreness. Lameness, as if sprained. Excellent remedy for sprains and bruises. Rheumatic symptoms. Sprain with great soreness.

**Bryonia alba:** Aching in every muscles. The general character of the pain produced is stitching, tearing; worse by motion, better rest. These characteristic stitching pains, greatly aggravated by any motion. The Bryonia patient is irritable, has vertigo from raising the head, pressive headache. Rheumatic pains and swelling, vertigo, nausea, faintness or rising, confusion. Bursting, splitting headache, as if everything would be pressed out; as if hit by a hammer from within; worse from motion, stooping, opening the eyes. Headache seated in the occiput. Headache and pain in the eyeballs worse on motion. Frontal headache. Painful stiffness in the nape of neck. Stitches and stiffness in the lumber region. From hard water and sudden changes of weather. Joints red, swollen, hot with stitches and tearing; worse on least movement. Every spot is painful on pressure.

**Calc carb:** Sense of weight on top of the head. Headache, with cold hands and feet. Vertigo on ascending and on turning the head. Headache from over lifting, from mental exertion, with nausea. Headache feels hot and heavy with a pale face. Pain as if sprained; can scarcely rise; from over lifting. Pain between the shoulder blades, impeded breathing. Rheumatism in the lumber region; weakness in the lumbosacral region. Curvature of dorsal vertebrae. Nape of neck stiff and rigid (Cervical Spondylosis).

**Causticum:** Manifests its action mainly in chronic rheumatic, arthritic and paralytic affections, indicated by the tearing, drawing pains in the muscular and fibrous tissues with deformities of the joints. Stiffness between the shoulders. Dull pain in the nape of neck. Left sided sciatica, with numbness. Dull, tearing pain in the hands and arm. Heaviness and weakness. Tearing pain in joints. Unsteadiness of the muscles of forearm and hand. Numbness; loss of sensation in the hands. Burning in joints.

**Cocculus indicus:** Cracking of cervical vertebrae on moving head. Paralytic pain in the lumbosacral region. Pain in the shoulder and arms, as if bruised. Pressure in the scapula and nape. Stiffness on moving the shoulders. Vertigo, nausea, especially when riding or sitting up. Sense of emptiness in the head. Headache in the occiput and nape; Worse, lying on the back of head.

**Dulcamara:** Stiff neck. Pain in the small of back, as after stooping for a long time. Stiffness and lameness across the neck and shoulder, after getting cold and wet (Cervical spondylosis). One sided spasms with speechlessness. Congestive headache with neuralgia and dry nose. Occipital pain ascending from the nape of the neck. Headache relieved by conversation. Buzzing in the head.

**Gelsemium:** Headache with muscular soreness of the neck and shoulders (cervical Spondylosis). Headache preceded by blindness; better, profuse, micturition. Dull heavy pain. Complete relaxation of the entire muscular system. Languor, muscles feel bruised. Every little exertion causes fatigue. Pain in the neck, especially in the sternocleidomastoid

muscles.

**Guaiacum officinale:** Pain in the head of neck. Aching in the nape. Stiff neck and sore shoulders (Cervical Spondylosis). Stitches between the scapulae and occiput. Contractive pain between scapulae.

**Kalium carbonicum:** Stitches in region of kidneys and right scapula. Lumbosacral region feels weak. Stiffness and paralytic feeling in the back. Burning in the Spine. Pains are sharp and cutting, nearly all are better by motion. Vertigo on turning. Headache from riding in the cold wind. Headache comes on with yawning. Stitches in the temples; Aching in the occiput, one sided, with nausea, on riding in a carriage.

**Kalmia latifolia:** Pain from the neck radiates down the arm (Cervical Spondylosis), in the upper three dorsal vertebrae extending to the shoulder blade. Pain down the back, as if it would break; in localized regions of the spine; through the shoulders. Lumber pain of nervous origin. A rheumatic remedy. Pains shift rapidly. Neuralgia; pains shooting downwards, with numbness. Vertigo, worse stooping. Confusion of brain. Pain in front and temporal region from the head to the nape and to the teeth; from cardiac origin.

**Lachantes tinctoria:** Chilliness between the shoulder blades; pain and stiffness in the neck. Neck drawn over to one side during a sore throat. Rheumatism (Spondylosis) of the neck. Stiffness of the neck. Pain in the nape, as if dislocated. Rheumatic symptoms of neck. Right sided pain, extending down to the jaw; head feels enlarged; worse, least noise. Scalp painful. Sleepless, circumscribed, red cheeks; scalp feels sore, as if hair was standing on ends.

**Lachesis:** Pain through the head on awaking. Pain at the root of the nose, pressure and burning in the vertex. Waves of pain; worse of pain; worse after moving. Sun headaches, with headache flickering, dim vision, very pale face. Vertigo. Neuralgia of the coccyx worse rising from a sitting posture; must sit perfectly still. Pain in the neck, worse cervical region (cervical Spondylosis) Sensation of threads stretched from the back to the arms, legs, eyes, etc. Niccolum sulphuricum-Stiff, numb sensation, worse in the neck (cervical Spondylosis), spine sore. Wakes up in the morning with burning soles. Spinal pains, legs and arms heavy and weak, cannot lie on the neck. Nervous, uneasy, desire to recline, tired, and cannot settle down to any occupation. Periodic headaches, occipital pain, extending down the spine, worse lying on the back; sore pain in the eyes.

**Paris quadrifolia:** Sense of weight and weariness in the nape of neck and across the shoulder. Neuralgia, beginning in the left intercostals region and extending into the left arm. Arm becomes stiff, fingers clenched. Neuralgia of coccyx; pulsating, sticking, when sitting. Fingers often feel numb. Numbness of the upper limbs. Everything feels rough. Rhus toxicodendron-Pain between the shoulders on swallowing. Pain and stiffness in the lumbosacral region; better, motion or lying on something hard, worse, while sitting. Stiffness in the nape of neck.

**Silicea:** Diseases of bones, caries and necrosis. Vertigo from looking up, better, wrapping up warmly; when lying

on the left side. Pain begins in the occiput and spreads all over the head and settles over the eyes. Weak spine; very susceptible to draughts on back. Pain in coccyx. Spinal irritation after injuries to spine; disease of vertebrae.

**Sulphur:** Drawing pain between shoulders. Stiffness of neck. Sensation as if vertebrae glided over each other. Trembling of hands. Rheumatic pain in left shoulder. Heaviness; paretic feeling. Rheumatic gout, with itching. Drawing and tearing in arms and hands. Constant heat on top of the head. Heaviness and fullness, pressure in the temples. Throbbing headache; worse, stooping, with vertigo. Sick headache, recurring periodically.

### Conclusion

Cervical Spondylosis is a degenerative disease associated with ageing and also occupation. The growing geriatric population and sedentary occupation, increases the incidence of Cervical Spondylosis. Patients who suffer from Cervical Spondylosis often have an impaired quality of life

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