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Insights into the history of homoeopathy in treating post viral illness in light of post COVID Sequelae

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Abstract

Novel corona virus 2019-nCoV-2 infection, also known as COVID-19, has a pandemic outbreak, and recent studies shows the continued existence several symptoms after subsiding the acute phase of the disease. No specific treatment protocol is available till today. Homeopathic system of medicine based primarily on individualized symptoms similarity. Several homeopathic medicines have proven efficacy. This article reviews that homoeopathy has played a promising role in treating post viral illness afflicting the mankind in the past and summarizing the scope of this approach and might guide the physician in treating post COVID-19 sequelae.

Keywords: Post viral illness, homoeopathy, post COVID sequelae, chronic fatigue syndrome, myalgic encephalomyelitis

Introduction

Dated back to history to till date several reviews from the scientific articles showed every epidemic/Pandemic viral disease leaves a challenge to the medical fraternity by leaving certain unexplainable health conditions of the suffered, Likewise this current pandemic COVID-19.

Methods: A literature search was conducted using various bibliographic databases like Pub Med etc, Google search engines to collect all relevant research and review articles, reports, archived texts, webpages etc. in English language published until October 2020 [14].

Some of the examples from the history

- The most devastating epidemic in modern history was the Spanish Flu of 1918, caused by the A(H1N1) influenza virus with high mortality rate, showed complications during recovery. For example, one report stated that 'of 1000 cases of influenza, about 200 patients did not fully recover' and, of these, about 40 remained severely ill.
- 1978-Post-infectious fatigue has also been observed after the onset of other epidemics.
- In 2003, SARS-CoV virus causing an epidemic SARS. Tansey *et al.* assessed the health outcomes of recovered patients 3-, 6-, and 12-months after hospital discharge. The researchers found that more than half of their sample experienced fatigue throughout their recovery: The symptoms often occurred with sleeping difficulties. Additionally, Lam *et al.* 40.3% reported chronic fatigue, and 27.1% qualified for a diagnosis of Myalgic Encephalomyelitis/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (ME/CFS).
- In 2009, the influenza A(H1N1) resulted in a pandemic. Magnus *et al.* [12] studied this pandemic in Norway, Suggesting that a younger population was more at risk to develop ME/CFS post-infection. Reaction to the fever and immune response that was associated with the influenza virus.
- Since the start of the epidemic, enough time has not elapsed to study the long-term trajectory of COVID-19, but reports are emerging about the occurrence of serious potentially longer-term health consequences. For example, several patients in Italy have developed Guillain-Barré. There are reports of children developing Kawasaki disease, and other reports of COVID-19 causing lung scarring, blood clots, renal failure, and neurological complications [12].
- Although there is not yet enough data to definitively establish and characterize a post-COVID-19 syndrome, potential long-term consequences can be inferred from emerging data as well as prior experiences with other serious respiratory illnesses and the broader post-intensive care syndrome (PICS), a constellation of physical, cognitive, and

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- psychological disabilities that can develop in those surviving critical illness^[18].
- Given such evidences, we expect that some survivors of COVID-19 will develop post-infectious fatigue and other complications.
- Particularly severe courses with complicated intensive care stays and longer periods of mechanical ventilation are a plausible risk factor for sequelae or persistent symptoms.
- These symptoms are similar to those reported by people with chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) or post intensive care syndrome.

What are those symptoms?

- Depending on the respective study population in 35% in outpatients treated with COVID and In 87% in hospitalized patients are presenting this sequelae, Several studies showed a high proportion of individuals reported
- Unexplained persistence of symptoms more than 30 days after recovery
 - Fatigue (53.1%),
 - Dyspnoea (43.4%),
 - Joint pain, (27.3%) and chest pain (21.7%).

Minor proportion

- cough
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Neuropsychological symptoms.
- Long term neurodegenerative risk such as Parkinson's disease, GB Syndrome.

Several studies shows

- Exaggeration underlying clinical conditions
- Renal impairment in case of elderly people is more common

Aetiopathogenesis of these symptoms

1. It may be virus related-i.e persistence of infection undetected by commonly used tests.
2. Hyper Inflammation related i.e. cytokine storm alter the immune response function
3. Injury related i.e. alveolar damage or epithelial damage caused by infection
4. Unspecific consequences of hospitalization and social isolation (from diet-related anemia for muscle breakdown).

When do we call it as Sequelae/Syndrome

In most cases of COVID-19, however, it is still too early for such a diagnosis. For this, the symptoms must last at least 6 months. At the moment one can only speak as post COVID sequelae.

How does Indian medical fraternity planning for this?

- The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) is concurrently working on developing a registry of post-COVID-19 sequelae to capture data.
- So far, a total of 8,115,580 people from corona virus infection have recovered in the country, according to government data.
- Experts from AIIMS recently have highlighted the need

to have post-COVID clinics at all tertiary care hospitals where recovered patients facing health issues can be checked to understand the impact of corona virus on various organs of the body.

What is our Role? As a Homeopath

The advantage of Homeopathy lies in the fact that the diagnosis of the indicated remedy is based on the individual symptoms not in the pathology. We need not to wait until they have found the cause for the pathology before that we can start treating a case. (vitholkus)

- Homeopathic medicine has a long history of criticism in lacking scientific explanation. However, acceptance and application of our medicine are not unethical when conventional medicine is facing difficulties.
- We acknowledge the limitations of both clinical and *in vitro* research of homeopathic medicines. Moreover, we are able to explain the action of several homeopathic medicines with the help of advances in nanotechnology and showing evidences by changes in biomarkers. Ex: role of *Ars alb* as an immunity booster showing changes in cytokine system^[13].

Is there any history in treating post viral syndromes?

1. 1990-Louis Klein treated Three cases of post-influenza chronic fatigue syndrome - treated with SCUTELLARIA, Silicea, stramonium, he also added a note on CURARE, which is an important remedy to be considered in post-viral states (even Guillain-Barre) and neurological disorders progressing to paralysis, especially where the respiratory organs are involved (International Foundation for Homeopathy: Case Conference Proceedings) (~Int_Found_Hom)
2. Vermeulen, 1997-homeopathic medicine Silicea and Arsenicum iodatum have a prospect in resolving symptoms like pulmonary fibrosis, Folliculinum- especially in those patients who are not responding to the corticosteroids.
3. 1998-Homoeolinks summer issue-Germenium met and stannum from its spring issue
4. 1999-homoeolinks-millennium issue- treated a case with Phaseolus vulgaris
5. A group of researchers shown the tincture of Cassia sophera, prepared from powdered leaves, significantly helps in respiratory distress-nagore *et al.* 2009
6. Joseph E. Pizzorno, 2016 -Lobelia is being used as a respiratory stimulator and possess an effective anti-dyspnoeic agent and aqueous extracts of Zingiber officinale can serve a suitable chemotherapeutics for the treatment of respiratory distress which is also supported by our Ayurvedic colleagues
7. from the book perceiving the rubrics of mind- From Master FJ-treated a case with Onosmodium
8. George vitholkus treated several cases of CFS with Calcaria Caustica

What is the approach we need to arrive at similimum?

As post COVID sequelae mostly having 2 or 3 symptoms which comes under chronic one sided disease- because they display only one or two principal symptoms which obscure almost all the others. They belong chiefly to the class of chronic disease from 173aph.

We have many references to this in our older materia medica and repertories. This specific homeopathic

information can be used as part of our strategy for treating patients with chronic sequelae.

From repertory(complete repertory)-

1. Mind - Anguish - choking, from, in influenza: IP.
2. Mind - Delirium - influenza, in-ANT-T.CHEL.
3. Head - Pain - influenza, with camph.GELS.lob-p.Naja
4. Head - Pain - bursting - influenza, during: naja
5. Eyes - Pain - influenza, during: bry.gels.
6. Kidneys - Inflammation - influenza, after-eucal.
7. Kidneys - Inflammation - suppurative - influenza, after-eucal.
8. Female - Abortion, miscarriage - influenza, during: bapt.camph.GELS.
9. Cough - Influenza - during: all-c.Erio.hyo.s.Kali-BI.kali-s.Kreos.Pixsang.seneg.stann.stry-xyz.
10. Cough - Influenza - after: am-c.atrop-pur.bac.bry.erio.kreos.sang.stict.stry-xyz.
11. Chest - Inflammation - bronchial tubes, bronchitis - influenza, from: sarc-ol-ac.tub-a.
12. Chest - Inflammation - lungs, pneumonia - influenza, with: ant-ar.dig.glyc.
13. Heart & Circulation - WEAKNESS - heart - influenza, during: camph.crat.Iber
14. Extremities - Heat - general - influenza, with:trios.
15. Extremities - Pain - influenza - after, remaining: lycps-v.
16. Extremities - Pain - lower limbs - nerves - sciatic - influenza, after: ars-s-r.mag-p.
17. Sleep - Sleeplessness - general - influenza, after: aven.PASSI.
18. Generalities - Pain - bones - malaria or influenza, in: eup-per.
19. Generalities - Weakness, enervation, exhaustion, prostration, infirmity - influenza, after: abrot.adon.ARS-I.AVEN.bac.cadm-met.carb-ac.Chin.Chinin-AR.con.cypr.eup-per.gels.IBER.kali-p.lac-c.lath.lob-p.macroz.nat-sal.phos.psor.sal-ac.sarc-ol-ac.scut.zinc-o.
20. Toxicity - Drugging, weakness, from- Murphy repertory: aven.carb-v.chin.gels.helon.Nux-v.Phos.
21. Headaches - Drugs, after abuse of: Aven.bell.Cham.coff.dig.gels.graph.hyo.s.lach.lyc.NUX-V.op.puls.sep.valer.
22. Diseases - Viral, infections: acon.ars.bapt.bry.Carc.ferr-p.Gels.merc.nat-m.ph-ac.rhus-t.
23. Diseases - Anemia - exhausting disease, from: acet-ac.alst.Calc-p.Chin.chinin-s.Ferr.helon.kali-c.Nat-m.Ph-ac.Phos.sec.
24. Diseases - Bright's disease, kidneys- pulmonary edema, with, secondary to it: Kali-I.
25. Diseases - Convalescence, ailments, during or since - pneumonia, after: ars.bry.calc.carb-v.Kali-c.lyc.morg.Phos.pneu.sang.sil.sulph.
26. Diseases - Convalescence, ailments, during or since - infectious diseases, after CARC.chin.form-ac.GELS.ph-ac.Psor.puls.sulph.thuj.tub.vario.
27. Diseases - Delirium tremens, mania-a-potu - pneumonia, in: Nux-v.

From our materia medica

1. **Baptisia:** The symptoms of this drug are of an asthenic type, simulating low fevers, septic conditions of the blood, extreme prostration, Indescribable sick feeling,

Epidemic influenza. Lungs feel compressed, breathing difficult; seeks open window. Fears going to sleep on account - sense of suffocation

2. **Bryonia :** cough, dry, at night; must sit up; worse after eating or drinking, with vomiting, with stitches in chest, and expectoration of rust-colored sputa. Coming into warm room excites cough. [Nat. carb.] Heaviness beneath the sternum extending towards the right shoulder
3. **Causticum:** much prostration could hardly get out of bed. Nose stopped, coryza free, watery. Hoarseness. Dry hacking cough which is persistent.
4. **Gelsemium:** (anxiety, post-influenzal, frontal headache)
5. **Germanium met:**
6. **Influenzinum :**(post-influenzal, paucity of symptoms)
7. **Kali phos:** it corresponds to states of adynamia and decay, gangrenous conditions.
8. **Mag mur:** Nose stopped and fluent, Loss of smell and taste, following catarrh. Cannot lie down. Spasmodic dry cough; worse forepart of night, with burning and sore chest.
9. **Medorrhinum:** Very great burning in both nostrils when breathing through them. Coldness of end of nose. Entire loss of smell for several days. Soreness of outer wing (inside) of left nostril. Nose constantly running. Difficulty in breathing with oppression of chest. Hoarseness of voice while reading loud. Soreness of larynx dyspnoea during exhalation. Nocturnal cough. Cough> by lying on stomach.
10. **Natrum muriatic:** Violent, fluent coryza, lasting from one to three days, then changing into stoppage of nose, making breathing difficult. Loss of smell and taste. Discharge thin and watery, like raw white of egg.
11. **Natrum salicylicum** (post-influenzal prostration, tinnitus, Meniere's disease):
12. **Phaseolus Vulgaris:** post viral arthralgia, developed rheumatism, worse in arms, occasionally below elbows. Pain so severe he could not lie in bed at nights. Drank much water. Passed much urine,
13. **Pixliquida:** Bronchial irritation after influenza. [Kreosot.; Kali bich.] Offensive odour and taste. Chronic bronchitis.
14. **Scutellaria:** This is a nervous sedative, where nervous fear predominates, Nervous weakness after influenza. Dr Margaret Tyler, author of Homeopathic Drug Pictures, described Scutellaria as her "sheet-anchor in treating post influenza neuroses". As such it can be used in the treatment of CFS especially following flu, where the patient is nervous and forgetful, having frequent dull headaches accompanied by aching and weakness of the limbs and muscle twitching
15. **Silica:** can stimulate the organism to re-absorb fibrotic conditions and scar-tissue. Slow recovery after pneumonia. Cough and sore throat, with expectoration of little granules like shot, which, when broken, smell very offensive.
16. **Stannum met:** Debility is very marked when Stannum is the remedy, especially the debility of chronic bronchial and pulmonary conditions, characterized by profuse muco-purulent discharges upon tuberculosis basis. Talking causes a very weak feeling in the throat and chest. Pains that come and go gradually, call unmistakably for Stannum.

Conclusion

Administration of the specific remedy, derived after careful assessment of the characteristic picture of the disease and treatment with individualized Homoeopathy, can be the most viable, safe, and effective approach in managing COVID-19 sequelae than naming it simply as CFS, hoping that there is immense possibility of further validating the proposed management with Homoeopathy in post COVID care clinics at tertiary care units with suspected cases of COVID-1.

Let us fight together to meet these challenges in this time of need and Hold our head high that we can serve our duty to the suffering.

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