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Homoeopathic treatment of fibroadenoma breast: A case report

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Abstract

Fibroadenoma is the most common benign tumor occurring in young to middle aged women which disappear after the menopause. Though few cases remain asymptomatic throughout, but the tumor may progress to carcinoma. The conventional treatment includes surgical excision and cryoblation [1]. Symptomatic treatment through homoeopathy can be effective as seen in previous studies [2, 3]. In this case report, a female aged 33 years of age suffering from fibroadenoma breast, diagnosed in 2015 is given constitutional homoeopathic treatment. After three months of treatment the sonographic report shows normal findings.

Keywords: Fibroadenoma, homoeopathy, breast lump, benign, malignant

Introduction

Fibroadenoma is a common benign neoplasm, which occurs most frequently in young women. The typical fibroadenoma is round or ovoid, rubbery in consistency, discrete, relatively movable, non-tender mass, 1-5 cm in diameter [1]. It usually occurs after puberty, within 20 years of age and often an accidental finding while clinical examination [4]. On examination, fibroadenoma breast is felt as a freely mobile lump with a round smooth margin with a firm consistency except in cases of large intracanalicular variety in which it could be softer [5]. The examination of the breast should be included in any case of neck and axillary lymphadenopathy for symmetry, ulcers, redness, peau d'orange appearance, dimpling of skin and nipple discharge to rule out malignancy [6]. There is a general agreement that fibroadenoma is associated with a certain increase in breast cancer risk. The cumulative risk of invasive breast cancer was 0.7% after 5 years and 2.2% after 12 years following diagnosis of fibroadenoma [7]. Early diagnosis with regular monitoring through clinical examination can help prevent the formation of malignancy.

There are four types of fibroadenoma mentioned as following: [8]

- **Complex Fibroadenoma:** Rapidly growing hyperplastic cells. Diagnosis is confirmed by biopsy of breast tissue. In a cohort study, [9] it was shown that patients with complex fibroadenoma are more likely to suffer from high risk histologic characteristics of breast involution i.e., Incomplete involution and proliferative disease without atypia (PDWA).
- **Juvenile Fibroadenoma:** This fibroadenoma is commonly found in patients between the age group of 10 to 18 years. The growth rate is faster and they disappear consequently [10].
- **Giant Fibroadenoma:** This non-cancerous lesion is larger than other types. As the name suggest it is so giant that it replaces normal breast tissue. Usually, a fibroadenoma more than 5 cm comes under this category. This is one of the rare variety of fibroadenoma in which rapid peak of growth occurs at late adolescence age [11].
- **Phyllodes Tumor:** A stromal tumor of the breast that can be either benign or malignant. Though, women of any age may fall prey to this pre-cancerous growth, but those between 35-55 years are commonly involved [12].
- The diagnosis of fibroadenoma is confirmed by the appearance of hypoechoic and homogeneous echotexture in sonography [13].

Clinical observation and regular monitoring for 2 to 3 months for fibroadenoma breast contributes to the conservative management of the tumor. Any change in the tumor in terms of colour or growth requires further investigation through sonography and FNAC [15]. During the treatment of Breast tumor, the recovery can be assessed by monitoring pain through Visual analogue scale (VAS) [16].

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Repertorial result

Calc carb (13/7), Phos (13/6), Sulph (13/6), sepia (12/5). In concordance chapter of BTPB, under Bryonia, related medicines under the heading ‘gland’, Phosphorus was given in the first grade. Phosphorus 1M was prescribed with

placebo for one month. After three months, the ultrasonography was repeated. On 19th March 2019, the report showed no abnormality in both the breast.

Timeline

| Date | Follow-up | Prescription |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| 18 th Dec, 2018 | Pain in breast better, flatulency better, stools- same, no new complaint | Bryonia 200/one dose Placebo/one month |
| 10 th Jan, 2019 | No improvement in pain in breast, Flatulence was better, stool- same | Bryonia 1M/one dose Placebo/15 days |
| 25 th Jan, 2019 | No improvement in pain in breast, Flatulency same, stool- same | Placebo/15 days |
| 10 th Feb | No improvement, General condition- same | Phosphorus 1M/one dose Placebo/one month |
| 5 March, 2019 | Pain-better, flatulency-better, stools- Normal, satisfactory | Placebo/one month |
| 19 th March 2019 | Pain breast- improved, no flatulency, stool- satisfactory | Placebo/one month |

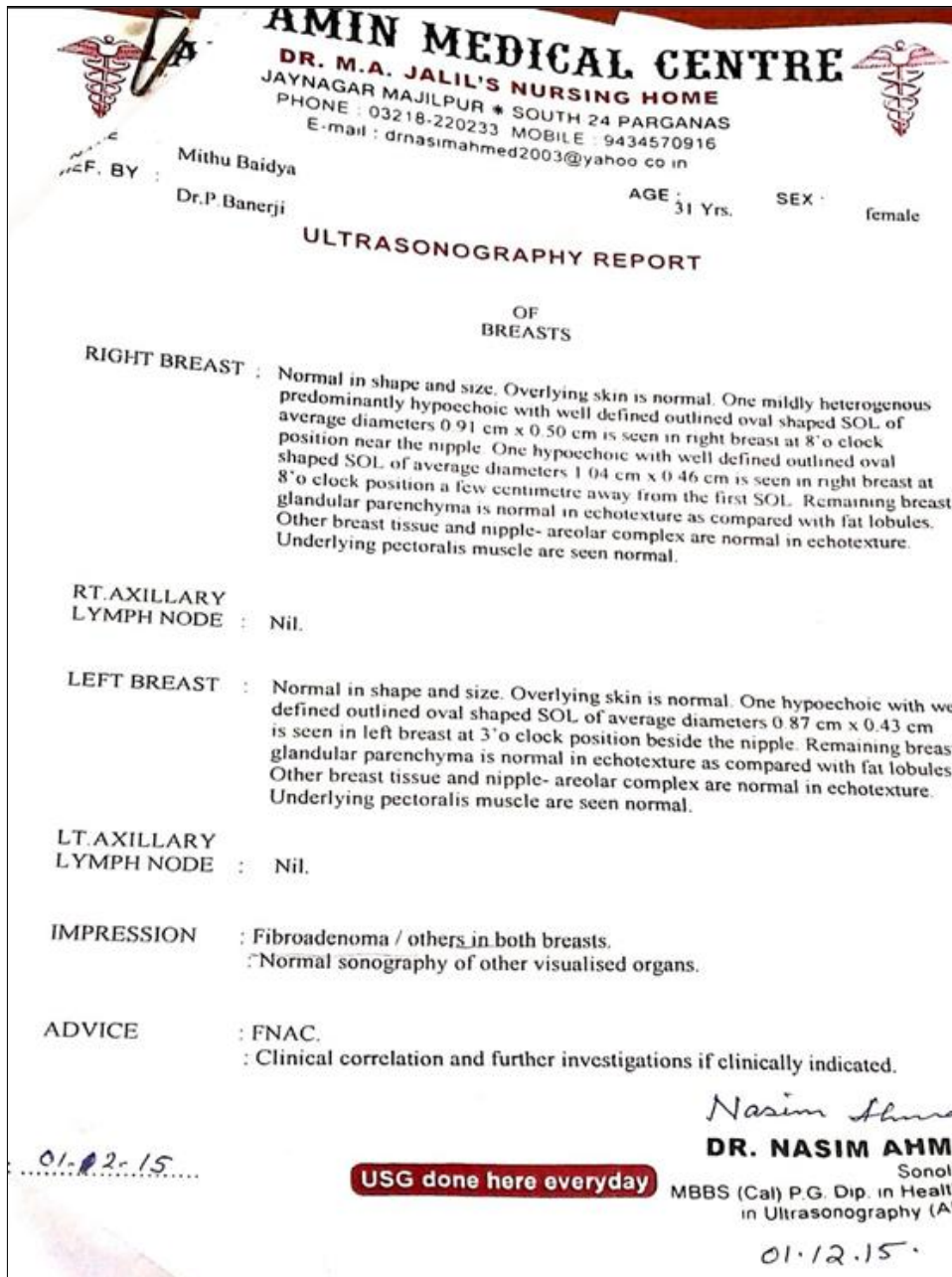



Fig 3: Ultrasound as on 1/12/2015 revealing hypoechoic shadow in left breast


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| | | | |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Name | MITHU BAIDYA | Age / Sex | 33 YRS / FEMALE |
| Ref. Doctor | DR. | Date | 19/03/2019 |
| MRD/Regn. No. | OUTSIDE | Scan No. | |

ULTRASONOGRAPHY REPORT

Real time Ultrasonography of Both Breasts has been performed.

Both breasts show normal fibro-glandular pattern.

The parenchymal echotexture appears normal.

No obvious focal lesion is noted in any quadrant or axillary tails.

The nipple and retroareolar spaces are normal.

The skin and subcutaneous planes are maintained.

IMPRESSION :: USG study of both breasts show no obvious abnormality.

Fig 4: Ultrasound on 19th March 2019 revealing no abnormality in both the breast

Discussion

A case of fibroadenoma breast diagnosed on ultrasonography was managed by Bryonia, based on presenting complaint and its modalities. After initial relief, the medicine stopped acting effectively, even after increasing the potency, so a follow-up remedy was selected using concordance chapter of Boenninghausen's therapeutic pocket book²⁰ which consists of 142 remedies with their relations mentioned under 12 subheadings. The utility of this chapter comes after the first prescription has acted and the case now requires another deep acting remedy in relation with the previous one. In this case, after Bryonia, for completion of the cure, another remedy Phosphorus (in relation to Bryonia), was found under the heading 'glands'. Since Phosphorus was also one of the first four remedies after repertorisation of the totality of the symptoms, the medicine was prescribed with marked improvement and cure of the case.

This case directs the importance of an effective follow-up which should be conscientiously dealt with, using relationships of remedies mentioned in different source books like BTPB and Boenninghausen's characteristics and repertory by C.M. Boger^[21]. Fibroadenoma breast being a chronic benign lesion requires constitutional treatment and should be carefully monitored. Ultrasound and core needle biopsy should be repeated every 3-4 months if there is no

malignancy^[1].

Conclusion

A case of benign solitary mass in the breast, diagnosed as fibroadenoma, on ultrasonography was effectively cured through homoeopathic medicine Bryonia, followed by Phosphorus. Since the size of the mass was small (0.84x0.43cm), the treatment lasted for four months after which ultrasound was repeated which revealed no abnormality in the breast. This case suggests that homoeopathy can prove to have a positive role in not only symptomatic relief but also a complete cure in fibroadenoma breast.

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