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Benefits of homeopathic medications amongst patients with rheumatoid arthritis: A clinical survey

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Abstract

Introduction: Rheumatoid arthritis is an inflammatory condition that is chronic in nature and has unknown aetiology with a worldwide prevalence of 1%. The aim of the present study was with to establish the role of homeopathy in rheumatoid arthritis.

Material and method: The present prospective study was conducted in the Homeopathic department for a duration of 2 years. All the chief complaints, treatment history and prognosis were recorded and later interpretation was done by electronic means. In this study all the subjects were above 18 years of age and were diagnosed with rheumatic arthritis past 1 year. A through counselling was done for each subject, covering their well-being, emotional status and their general moral build-up. All the data was arranged in a tabulated form and analysed using SPSS software. Percentage of all the data was obtained.

Results: Out of 60 patients selected for the trial, 36 were males and 24 were females. In the selected group of individuals, 4 patients were in an age group of 18-35 years of age. 20 individuals were under 35-45 years of age. With starting of the treatment protocol nearly 27 patients showed marked relief within 2 months of medication.

Conclusion: It can be concluded that along with homeopathic medicaments, counselling is equally efficacious in managing and reducing the severity of the rheumatoid arthritis.

Keywords: Prognosis, homeopathic, rheumatoid

Introduction

Rheumatoid arthritis is an inflammatory condition that is chronic in nature and has unknown aetiology with a worldwide prevalence of 1%.^[1] For the management of the condition, disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs are given that are mostly toxic and have variable efficacy. Therefore, combination therapy is administered for effectiveness^[2] Homeopathy has emerged as a famous complementary medical intrusion for these chronic conditions. The subjects have shown drastic relief, but their use as main course of treatment is still controversial^[3, 4] The homeopathic intrusions have shown to be clinically helpful for patients affected by rheumatoid arthritis, yet there is no proof of mechanism for ultra-molecular dilutions. It can be clearly seen that any clinical benefit due to the placebo effects is due to the clinical consultations rather than the remedies, but this has never been assessed clinically. It is very much observed that the therapeutic action of the consultation procedures on health outcomes in both conventional medicine and complementary and alternative medicine^[5, 6] Such effects comprise of factors that are not the active portions of the treatment but are inherent within the whole treatment study^[7, 8] Intense study into the homeopathic consultation has shown factors like empathy and empowerment, which might also promote the homeopathic process. Homeopathy consultations also consist of a complete exploration of the patient's emotional, spiritual and physical status to guarantee treatment of the person as a whole but not only the illness^[9] The aim of the present study was with to establish the role of homeopathy in rheumatoid arthritis.

Material and Method

The present prospective study was conducted in the Homeopathic department for a duration of 2 years. The study included subjects with moderate to severe kind of rheumatoid arthritis. Ethical committee clearance was obtained from the institutional ethical board and all the subjects were informed about the study and a written consent was obtained from all in their vernacular language. A total of 60 patients were studied and managed over a period of 1 year. All the chief complaints, treatment history and prognosis were recorded and later interpretation was done by electronic means.

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In this study all the subjects were above 18 severe form of rheumatoid arthritis (stage 4) were not included in the study. Patients taking DMARD were also included in the study. All patients were given same medication for the condition but at varying doses depending on the intensity of the problem. After a duration of 6 months, randomly selected 30 patients were switched over to placebo. Follow up was performed after every 20 days and the subjects were assessed upon the severity of the condition. A through counselling was done for each subject, covering their well-being, emotional status and their general moral build-up. All the data was arranged in a tabulated form and analysed using SPSS software. Percentage of all the data was obtained.

Results

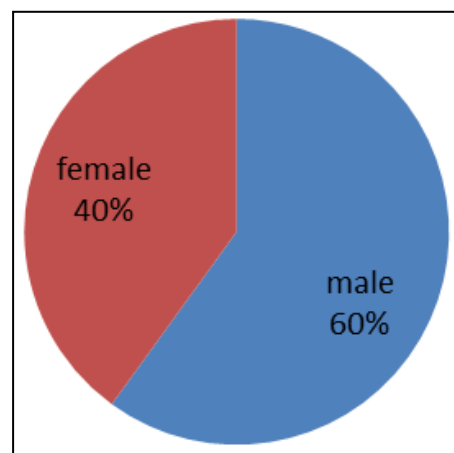
Out of 60 patients selected for the trial, 36 were males and 24 were females. Females were suffering from a more extensive form of rheumatoid arthritis when compared to males. (Graph 1). In the selected group of individuals, 4 patients were in an age group of 18-35 years of age. 20 individuals were under 35-45 years of age. 26 individuals were under 45-55 years of age group and 10 individuals were under 55 and above age group. (table1). With starting of the treatment protocol nearly 27 patients showed marked relief within 2 months of medication. Nearly, 53 patients were satisfied and 41 patients showed marked improvement at the end of 6 months. On beginning with the placebo, a slight hike in the chief complaint was observed in nearly 18 patients within 2 months. So, as to maintain an ethical nature of the study homeopathic medication was again started for all individuals in the study. But counselling still continued as same for every individual in the study (graph 2).

Discussion

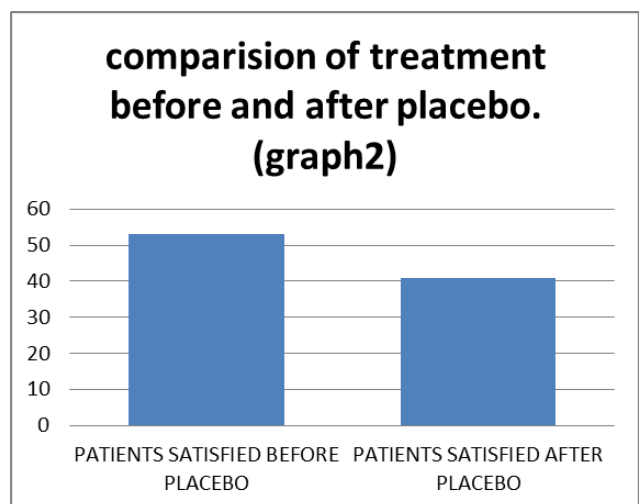
Homeopathic medications amongst patients with chronic, active but stable forms of rheumatoid arthritis has revealed considerable clinical assistances. Similarly, no major group differences in the primary outcomes were observed, statistical and clinically pertinent improvements did occur for those obtaining consultations in some valuable and comparative secondary outcomes. The homeopathic consultation, irrespective of treatment allocation, significantly improves some standard markers and swollen joint in the subjects. The homeopathy did decrease disease activity, radiological evolution and therefore improves long-term functional outcome [10] This study aimed to identify the benefits of homeopathy. The results confirm the previous work that therapeutic benefits also occur from processes of homeopathic consultation that include communication skills, hopefulness, empathy, enablement and narrative competence [11-13] The study showed 4 patients were in an age group of 18-35 years of age. 20 individuals were under 35-45 years of age. 26 individuals were under 45-55 years of age group and 10 individuals were under 55 and above age group. The homeopathic consultation and medicine protocol requires a much elaborated understanding of patient and is a unique and personalized approach. The placebo actions of the homeopathic medicaments are specific to this therapy because of the collaborative and highly individualized consultation necessary to identify a homeopathic remedy and also the associated symbolic meaning response for the individual. Also, the use of

randomized controlled trials to gain the effectiveness of complex interventions has been criticized throughout, as the specific and non-specific effects may not be additive. [14] With starting of the treatment protocol nearly 27 patients showed marked relief within 2 months of medication. Nearly, 53 patients were satisfied and 41 patients showed marked improvement at the end of 6 months. On beginning with the placebo, a slight hike in the chief complaint was observed in nearly 18 patients within 2 months. So, as to maintain an ethical nature of the study homeopathic medication was again started for all individuals in the study. But counselling still continued as same for every individual in the study

The results are enough to show that we can efficiently channel the important portions of clinical interactions and then identify the clinical usefulness which are attributable to each of them using a randomised controlled study. The study is enough to prove whether the methods could be employed by other doctors to maximize patient benefit.



Graph 1: Gender Distribution



Graph 2: Comparison of treatment before and after placebo

Table 1: Gender distribution of subjects

Age Group	n	male	female
18-35	4	3	1
35-45	20	12	8
45-55	26	17	9
55-above	10	4	6
total	60	36	24

Conclusion

The study was intended to evaluate the clinical action of homeopathic medications amongst patients that suffered from rheumatoid arthritis. It can be concluded that along with homeopathic medicaments, counselling is equally efficacious in managing and reducing the severity of the rheumatoid arthritis.

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