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## Prophylactic precautions and treatment of COVID-19 symptomatic occurrences in Siddharthnagar district, Uttar Pradesh: An empirical study

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### Abstract

India has the largest number of homeopathic physicians, institutions and users. The Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) under the Government of India had released an advisory of using homeopathic medicine *Arsenicum album 30*, even before the outbreak of COVID-19. In the Clinical Trial Registry-India, about 14 trials are already registered till date and the number is likely to increase. On April, 2021, extramural Research (EMR) section of AYUSH Ministry issued a notification to support short-term research projects for evaluating the impact of AYUSH interventions/medicines for the prophylaxis and clinical management of COVID-19, which many institutions/organizations are likely to proceed to collaborate. This paper is a step towards active understanding of the homeopathic generating evidence generation to help our health care system to continue caring for all patients and populations. Like many other countries, homeopathy in India is also facing various obstacles. In future, evidence from active interventions of homeopathy with help to combat this situation.

**Keywords:** Homeopathy, COVID-19, treatment, therapeutic, prophylactic, impact

### Introduction

India has the largest number of homeopathic physicians, institutions and users. The Ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) under the Government of India had released an advisory of using homeopathic medicine *Arsenicum album 30*, even before the outbreak of COVID-19.

Dutta & Ghosh (2021) <sup>[1]</sup> studied the relationship of the Corona virus infection (COVID-19/SARS/CoV2) invaded the globe and panic resulting from it has put the whole medical fraternity in a state of emergency. History has rarely seen such rapidity in the development of therapies for any epidemic. Starting from Hydroxychloroquin, Remdesivir to Plasma therapy, have been used. Homeopathy has the advantage of having due clinics across the country symptom-based approach. As the situation demands better therapeutic modalities due to the spread of the virus, many of the homeopathic have advised the way of using homeopathic medicines in this situation. These criticisms cannot stand because it was not a 'claim' by Ministry rather only an advisory based on expert consensus and empiric evidence. On March, 28, Honourable Prime Minister of India also conducted a meeting regarding how the AYUSH workforce could be used in this situation. In the first few months of 2020, many parts of the country were provided homeopathic medicines as a preventive measure. Different states adopted this policy for active interference in the community. In some of the institutions, homeopathy is used for treating active cases. In the Clinical Trial Registry-India, about 14 trials are already registered till date and the number is likely to increase. On April, 2021, extramural Research (EMR) section of AYUSH Ministry issued a notification to support short-term research projects for evaluating the impact of AYUSH interventions/medicines for the prophylaxis and clinical management of COVID-19, which many institutions/organizations are likely to proceed to collaborate.

### Demographic details of Siddharthnagar

As per Population (2011)-Census, Siddharthnagar has 2,559,297 and total area is 2,895 Km<sup>2</sup> and further population Density (2011) is 884.0/Km<sup>2</sup>. There are 1295095 males and 1264202 females with the population. The rural area is 2398606 and in the urban area being 160691. The social categorization of the population in Siddharthnagar is as follows:

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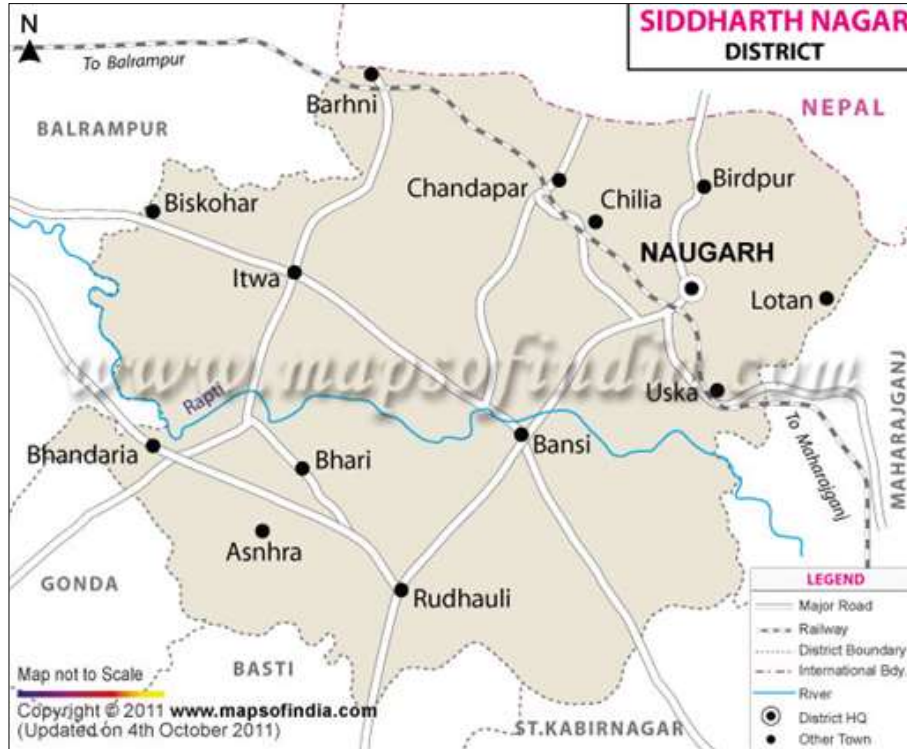
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**Table 1:** District Status on Population Categories

Sr. No.	Category	Population Group (C 2011)
1	Scheduled Castes	408763
2	Scheduled Tribes	12021
3	Not indigenous	2138513

Source: Compiled by Researcher

**Methodology**



Source: Compiled by Researcher

**Fig 1:** Area of work (Location of Homeopathic Clinic)

The Homeopathic approach to living an ailment free life has gained significance during the COVID-19 pandemic circumstances. This is an evidence-based study of a remote area in District Siddharthnagar of Uttar Pradesh. The patients visiting the ITWA clinic of the Research centre

located at Khumiyan Block Headquarters has been conducted over the period March, 2020 to Feb 2021 with tens of thousands of patients presenting with symptoms of the viral infection pretend to a lesser or greater degree.



Source: Compiled by Researcher

**Map 1:** Catchment area of ITWA Clinic

The clinic at ITWA had patients coming in from the following villages:

- (a) Sangrampur
- (b) Utraula
- (c) Pakdi
- (d) Parasia
- (e) Barhni
- (f) Balrampur
- (g) Pachganwa

As it is a border district there were patients trickling in from Kathmandu and Bhairawan in Nepal as well. It is interesting that patients from these locations have developed faith in the homeopathic form of treatment after having tried several other means as well of obtaining a cure for their symptoms.

### Discussion

The Government of India had launched a special initiative across the country to launch the AYUSH multi-pronged treatment for the benefit of the patients during the COVID-19 pandemic situation. The emphasis was on the prophylactic and the preventive aspects of all medicine systems under AYUSH namely Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani Siddha and Homeopathy. The AYUSH guidelines and interventions were promoted by the government of India on mission mode.

### Treatment Regime

The strategy at the national level in India was focus on prophylactics, immunity boosters and first line of attacks in terms of cure and treatment. In Homeopathy the government initiative was to distribute Arsenic alba across homeopathic clinics located in the remote parts of the country. The present study is based on patients presenting with suspected symptoms of the COVID-19 viral as also symptoms that were thought to be associated with a number of conditions that may be considered or were having considered at the juncture to be strongly indicative of the onset of a viral infection. The study focus has been on the 14,600 patients presenting COVID-19 or suspected symptoms as well as a range of allied ill-health conditions.

**The repertoire of treatment being dispenses in the clinic are listed below:**

- (a) Camphor
- (b) Belladonna
- (c) Brahmini alba

The dosage in the most of the severe cases was increased to half hourly from the usually prescribed hourly. At an estimate everyday there were at least 50 suspected cases of COVID-19 patents in the clinic.

The objective of the treatment was to try giving the patients a multipurpose treatment and cure package that involved:

- (a) Boosting the Immune System
- (b) Building up the immunity
- (c) Providing medical support
- (d) Feedback taken up
- (e) Sustained follow up
- (f) Sustenance through Dietary advocacy and suggested Behaviors

### Study Results

The data has been based on 14,600 OPD patients visiting the

clinic over a period of one year from April 2020 to March, 2021. The patients presenting with suspected COVID-19 symptoms were attended to and treated till their symptoms subsided or totally disappeared and the patient was cured.

#### Age

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	<20	2044	14
2	20-40	876	6
3	40-60	8468	58
4	>60	3212	22
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The distribution of age shows that maximum number of patients (58 percent) belonged to the age group of 48-60 years old. The next larger group (22 percent) was those who were more than 60 years old. The least represented groups (6 percent) was those who were 20 to 40 years old.

#### Caste

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	General	3212	22
2	Schedule Caste	3504	24
3	Schedule Tribe	1022	7
4	Other Backward Class	5110	35
5	Others	1752	12
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The social grouping of the patients visiting the clinic showed that the maximum (35 percent) belonged to the Backward Class while the next group was of the Scheduled Casts (24 percent) and the general category (22 percent). There were just 7 percent representation from the Scheduled Tribe and 12 percent were others that were not identified.

#### Gender

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Male	10366	71
2	Female	4234	29
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

Among the patients visiting the homeopathic clinic the maximum were males (71 percent) and the least were females (29 percent).

Thus, a larger proportion of males were visiting the clinic as compared to their female counterparts.

#### Occupation

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Farmer	4088	28
2	Daily Wager	5110	35
3	Service	1168	8
4	Business	1314	9
5	Self employed	2044	14
6	Others	876	6
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

When distributed on the basis of occupation it was observed that the maximum proportion of patients visiting the clinic were daily wagers (35 percent). They were followed by the

farmers (28 percent) and those who were self employed (14 percent). The lesser representation was from those who were in service (8 percent), had any business (9 percent) and there were 6 percent who had not reported their occupations clearly and were put in the other category.

Number of Visits

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	1 <sup>st</sup> Time	1606	11
2	2 <sup>nd</sup> Time	3358	23
3	3 <sup>rd</sup> Time	2336	16
4	Frequently	4380	30
5	Always	2920	20
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

It was found that there were 30 percent who reported that they visited the clinic frequently and 23 percent who were visiting for the second time. There were 20 percent who said they visited always and 16 percent who reported that they were visiting for the third time. There were only 11 percent who reported that they were visiting the homeopathic clinic for the first time.

Thus, the clinic seems to be very popular because most of the patients were coming back for repeat visits. Probably the cure rate was higher in the homeopathy clinic.

Complaint

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Fever	4818	33
2	Pain in Body	3358	23
3	Pain in Knee Joints	2336	16
4	Unable to walk	1898	13
5	Cannot go to work	2190	15
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The common complaints with which the patients were coming to the homeopathic clinic were Fever (33 percent), while 23 percent had some pain in the body. There were 16 percent who had join in the knee joints and 12 percent said they could not even walk. There were 15 percent who were unable to go to work because of their ill-health.

Thus, patients were coming with number of variant complaints which were later tested for and detected as COVID-19 afflictions.

Treatment

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Tried Allopathy	3506	24
2	Tried Homemade Jodi Booti	1898	13
3	Tried other doctors	3066	21
4	Homeopathy from beginning	6130	42
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

When asked the common form of treatment opted for the patients, responses were maximum (42 percent) for homeopathy from the very onset of symptoms. There were 24 percent who tried allopathic treatment first but did not stick with it. There were 21 percent who tried other doctors also but could not find relief. Thus, there were 13 percent who tried home remedies before approaching a doctor. Thus, it can be observed that homeopathy was becoming

popular during COVID-19 pandemic.

Relief Experienced

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	First Day onwards	1314	9
2	Few days later	2482	17
3	Symptoms severity decreased but problems went on	4088	28
4	Long term cure now finished totally	1460	10
5	Total relief always believe in Homeopathy medicine	5256	36
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

When asked about the relief experienced there were 36 percent who said that they obtained total relief after taking homeopathic medicines. There were 28 percent who reported that the symptoms severity decreased but problems went on. Also 17 percent said that the symptoms went within a few days. There were 10 percent who reported that they found long term cure now finished totally. Thus, the least proportion of patients said that they had found relief from first day onwards. Thus, it was observed that there were several patients who had obtained relief from COVID-19 symptoms by following the homeopathic treatment regimen.

Since when are you taking Homeopathy Medicine

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Since childhood	2190	15
2	Since few years	5110	35
3	Just recently	5840	40
4	First time	1460	10
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The patients were asked since when they were taking homeopathic medicines. The responses show that 40 percent had been taking medicine in the homeopathy stream just recently. There were 35 percent who reportedly were taking it since for just a few years. There were 15 percent who were taking it since childhood. There were 10 percent who said that they were taking it for the first time.

Thus, it could be observed that there were several persons who were being attracted to the homeopathic form of treatment especially during the COVID-19 threat time.

How long was the Treatment

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	One week	2190	15
2	15 days	1168	8
3	One month	876	6
4	3 months	4526	31
5	6 months	2628	18
6	Continuing for a year	3212	22
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

When asked about the duration of the treatment there were 31 percent who were taking it regularly for three months. Also 22 percent had been continuing it for a year and 18 percent had been taking it for 6 months. There were 15 percent who had been taking it for just a week and 8 percent had been taking it for 15 days. There were 6 percent who

had been taking the treatment for a month. Thus, patients were finding relief and continuing the treatment.

#### Most Effective Cure Experienced

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Allopathy	1752	12
2	Homeopathy	6716	46
3	Ayurveda	438	3
4	Mix of all	2336	16
5	Homemade concoction	1460	10
6	Special Baba's Medicine	1898	13
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The patients were asked to discuss the most effective care practice experienced. There were 46 percent who said they had utmost faith in homeopathy while 16 percent were using a mix of various treatment methods. There were 13 percent who were taking some form of Baba's concoctions as he was promising total immunity from COVID virus. There were 12 percent who were taking allopathic medicines earlier. There were a small proportion of 3 percent who reportedly used Ayurvedic cures for fighting COVID-19. Thus, it can be observed that maximum number of patients had converged on homeopathy only after having experimented with other treatment forms of COVID-19.

Where do you go for cure?

Sr. No.	Parameters	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Here always	6132	42
2	Big Hospital	2190	15
3	Local Clinic	2920	20
4	Big City	3358	23
	Total	14,600	100

Source: Compiled by Researcher

The patients were asked where they went usually for seeking a cure. There were 42 percent who said they came to the present clinic itself while 23 percent said they went to the Big City and 15 percent said they went to the big Hospital. Also there were 20 percent who said they usually went to the local clinic.

Thus, the patients believed this clinic was the best place for treatment of symptoms of COVID-19 afflictions.

#### Conclusion

This paper is a step towards active understanding of the homeopathic generating evidence generation to help our health care system to continue caring for all patients and populations. Like many other countries, homeopathy in India is also facing various obstacles. In future, evidence from active interventions of homeopathy with help to combat this situation.

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