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Drug diseases and homoeopathic management

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Abstract

Patients with chronic and recurrent ailments may require prolonged treatment. An increasing number of people are relying on medications, both prescription and over-the-counter ones, to manage chronic ailments such as Non communicable diseases. Medications can present a variety of challenges like drug interactions, side effects and patient not adhering to their prescribed treatment. This can significantly affect an individual's well-being and even lead to death^[1]. Patients with multimorbidity and multiple prescription are also a common thing we usually come across in our daily practice. This makes problems in diagnosis and more medicines are added to overcome the adverse effects of the medicine which is being used. This is an attempt to study the management of cases presenting with drug related symptoms.

Keywords: Drug diseases, multi morbidity, medication adherence

Introduction

Drug diseases are dangerous and can have life-threatening repercussions. They cause extreme symptoms which necessitate the need for medical intervention or hospitalization^[2]. In order to avoid unnecessary investigations and treatment, it is necessary to be able to recognize drug related symptoms.

The potentially harmful side effects of certain medicines or treatments can make diagnosis difficult, as they can affect any part of the body and be mistaken for symptoms of other illnesses. In some cases, adverse reactions to drugs can range from mild to severe: hematologic issues, arrhythmias, skin reactions as well as dysfunction in the liver or kidneys^[3]. Prolonged and improper use of some medicines especially antibiotics may alter the normal bacterial flora of our body resulting in low immunity and repeated infections.

Frequent use of antimicrobials may cause antimicrobial resistance. Antimicrobial resistance is a global health problem and WHO has listed antimicrobial resistance as one of the top 10 greatest global public threats. This is a serious issue that can have devastating consequences for individuals, society, and even to the global population as a whole^[4].

Difficulties in drug diseases management

It is a puzzle for Homoeopathy, and challenge for physician to identify or differentiate drug symptom and disease symptoms. In such cases, perception of case become more difficult as well as to treat those patients. Many patients are continuing the medication once prescribed, without proper medical advice which may lead to many morbid conditions. Excessive use of unwanted medications affect the quality of life of the patients. In some patients, disease symptoms and medicinal symptoms are mixed up together, and it becomes more difficult to manage. It leads to unnecessary investigation and improper management.

Lifestyle diseases are a common cause of increase in mortality and morbidity, and require prolonged treatment. Since lifestyle disease management is expensive, many patients are using over the counter medication for long periods and majority are having symptoms related to excessive and improper usage of medicines^[5].

It is very common that patients on some of the antihypertensive medications are having complaints of cough, breathlessness, ankle edema etc.^[6]. This may be a distressing symptom to an elderly patient and they seek medical advice. It is likely that many patients on statins are having altered liver enzymes and myalgia^[7]. Gastric upset is very common in patients using antibiotics, and more over repeated use of antibiotics may alter the normal bacterial flora of intestine and cause many other systemic diseases^[8].

Many dermatological conditions including simple papular rashes to life threatening blistering eruptions can occur due to improper usage of drugs. Prolonged use of common antihypertensive can trigger papulo squamous lesion like Psoriasis, Lichen planus etc. Some times more acute reaction like acute urticaria and angioedema may occur^[9].

Drug diseases in homoeopathy

Hahnemann was the first physician who studied the action of drugs on living organisms from a synthetic outlook. He was the one who proposed that substances such as natural toxins can cause sickness. As a result, he was the first to realize that prolonged use and large doses of medicines in allopathic treatments could be linked to chronic diseases^[10]. The result may be twofold:

1. If vital energy is significantly reduced, it may be fatal and put the patient's life at risk.
2. If the vital energy is not completely overpowered, it is gradually abnormally deranged in a way that produces gross structural and permanent functional changes in the living body in order to preserve the organism from complete destruction of life^[11].

Hahnemann named these states of the body as non-miasmatic chronic diseases, for which he asserted that even homoeopathy was not sufficient and could only be cured by the vital force itself, if it had not already been too weakened by hurtful therapeutic practices.

How to make out the real picture of a disease

Medication often results in health issues, just as any other kind of disease-causing agent. Therefore, when a patient is receiving medical treatment (even if it's through homeopathy), the symptoms they experience will be a result of their body responding to natural causes, as well as how it reacts to the drugs given.

Obtaining an accurate assessment of a patient's disease can be difficult, as the picture presented can be a mix of contradictory symptoms. To gain a better understanding of the condition, we may choose to adopt two approaches:

1. When examining a patient's condition, only the symptoms present before any treatment was started should be taken into consideration.
2. We could suspend the treatment for some time and observe what symptoms remain, attributing them to the body's natural response to illness.

Many medicines are mentioned in Homoeopathic Material Medical in treating adverse effects of drugs. Sulphur, Nux vom are some of the commonly medicines.

Medicines from synthesis repertory indicated

Generals– Medicine – allopathic, abuse of Agar, Agn, *Aloe*, Ars, Avena, Bap, Bry, Camph, Carb-v, Cham, Chin, Coff, Coloc, Ham, Hep, *Hydr*, Hyper, Kali-i, Lach, Laur, *Lob*, Lycps-v, Mag-s, Mur-ac, Nat-m, Nit-ac, Nux-v, Op, *Ph-ac*, *Puls*, Sec, *Sulph*, Teucr, Thuj, Tub, Verat.

Generals - Weakness - medicine; from abuse of allopathic CARB-V. HELON. NUX-V. URAN-MET.

Mind - Sensitive - drugs; from:

Acon. Ars. Cham. Coff. Lyc. Nux-v. Puls. Sep. Sil. Sulph.

Stomach - Indigestion - abuse of drugs, after: NUX-V^[12]

Murphy Repertory

Toxicity - Drugs, general - allopathic, drugs, side effects from: ACON. ARN. ARS. CARC. CHAM. CHEL. CHIN. COFF. *GELS*. IGN. LYC. MED. MERC. NAT-P. NIT-AC. NUX-V. *PHOS*. PULS. SEP. SIL. SULPH.

Toxicity - Antibiotics, poisoning, ailments, from: APIS ARS. BORX. CALAD. *CHIN*. CHININ-AR. *CHININ-S*. FL-AC. *GELS*. LYC. MERC. NAT-P. *NIT-AC*. *NUX-V*. *PEN*. PODO. *SUL-AC*. *Sulfa*. Thuj^[13].

Conclusion

Drug diseases and antimicrobial resistance are the problem in health care sector which makes treatment more complex. To tackle the problem people should be made aware of factors leading to cause drug disease and antimicrobial resistance^[14].

So make the people aware of proper usage of drugs and to give more importance to diet and exercise^[15]. Personal hygiene is very important to reduce recurrent infections and thereby reducing frequent use of antibiotics. Cases requiring prolonged treatment including antimicrobials can seek treatment from alternative system, including Homoeopathy which is safe, simple and cost effective. Noncompliance to medication may not be a problem with Homoeopathic treatment in cases requiring prolonged treatment.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

Financial Support

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