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Exploring rheumatism remedies through the lens of homoeopathic plant families

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Abstract

Rheumatic diseases, also known as musculoskeletal diseases, predominantly affect joints, tendons, ligaments, bones, and muscles. These conditions present clinical symptoms like pain, stiffness, and inflammation, leading to disability and impairment of daily activities. These diseases occur due to a range of factors, including ageing, degenerative issues, and abnormal immune responses. Rheumatic diseases affect more women than men and are often misdiagnosed as symptoms of several endocrine diseases such as diabetes or thyroid disorders. Conventional medications for rheumatism often result in impaired vital organ functions, leading people to search for safer and more effective treatments, such as Homoeopathic medication. This article delves into the use of homeopathic plant family remedies for rheumatism, using Dr. Yakir's chart for a better understanding of these remedies. The classification of Rheumatic remedies according to their kingdom has expanded the possibilities of using previously underutilized treatments with increased accuracy and simplicity.

Keywords: Rheumatic diseases, musculoskeletal diseases, homoeopathic medication, plant kingdom remedies, endocrine diseases, family themes

Introduction

Arthritis and rheumatism are prevalent chronic diseases. With an aging population, their occurrence is expected to increase. Arthritis typically refers to diseases of the joints, while rheumatism pertains to diseases of the soft connective tissues supporting and facilitating joint movements ^[1]. Rheumatism encompasses various disorders characterized by inflammation of connective tissues, pronounced by symptoms such as pain and stiffness ^[2]. The Endocrine system, a network of glands that release hormones, can contribute to a variety of diseases due to hormone imbalances. These imbalances often cause endocrine diseases such as Diabetes, obesity, Hypothyroidism, Hyperthyroidism, PCOS, short height, sexual dysfunction, Infertility, Osteoporosis, etc ^[3]. Musculoskeletal complaints are frequently associated with endocrine diseases and they can often present as rheumatic manifestations. It is important to investigate this link as a way of understanding and treating rheumatism more effectively.

Thyroid Conditions: Both hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism are linked with rheumatic symptoms. With hypothyroidism, it often manifests as symmetrical arthropathy, causing stiffness in the joints, particularly in the hands and knees, as well as myopathy. Sometimes, carpal tunnel syndrome could be the first sign of hypothyroidism. On the other hand, hyperthyroidism is often associated with muscle weakness.

Parathyroid

Conditions: In the case of hypoparathyroidism, the clinical symptoms are primarily from hypocalcemia, which can lead to a variety of health issues.

Diabetes Mellitus: Rheumatic syndromes and diabetes mellitus are long been identified to have co-relation with the severity of the diabetes determining the level of rheumatic manifestations. Over 30% of diabetic patients exhibit hand involvement, which may present as trigger finger, flexor tenosynovitis, Dupuytren's contracture, 'stiff hand' syndrome or frozen shoulder.

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Adrenal Disorders: Adrenal disorders may also lead to several rheumatic conditions including osteoporosis, avascular necrosis, myopathy, and synovitis [4].

Conventional Treatment Methods and Outcomes

1. Non-medical Approaches

- a. **Physical/Occupational Therapies:** Utilize local applications such as heat, ice packs, or wax baths to induce muscle relaxation and offer symptom relief across various rheumatic conditions.
- b. **Weight Management:** Maintaining a healthy body weight can alleviate stress on the joints and reduce symptoms.
- c. **Surgical Intervention:** Different surgical processes can relieve pain and aim to maintain or restore the patient's function.

2. Medical Treatments

- a. Pain Relievers
- b. **Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Drugs (NSAIDs):** Despite their widespread prescription, the use of NSAIDs has declined in recent years due to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease associated with long-term use.
- c. Topical Medications
- d. **Disease-Modifying Anti Rheumatic Drugs (DMARDs):** These small-molecule inhibitors of the immune response form a category of treatment for rheumatic conditions.
- e. **Biological Drugs:** The 'biologics' class includes medications such as monoclonal antibodies, fusion proteins, and decoy receptors, all of which are used to treat various inflammatory rheumatic conditions.
- f. **Glucocorticoids:** Known for their potent anti-inflammatory and immunosuppressive effects, Glucocorticoids are often prescribed for rheumatic conditions.⁵

However, conventional arthritis and rheumatism treatments, like DMARD and biologic therapies, have complications. Suppressing the immune system can theoretically lead to an increased risk of cancer since it may impair the immune system's ability to monitor for and control tumors [6].

Plant-derived rheumatism treatments

Our understanding of remedy classification within their respective kingdoms has broadened, allowing us to utilize many previously overlooked treatments with increased precision and simplicity. The initial step would involve identifying the kingdom, followed by the subkingdom, and then determining the patient's correlating source [as well as looking into the speed, intensity, and level of perceived desperation (The Miasm)]. We delve into the case, arriving at its core, heart, and central aspect, which subsequently directs us towards whether it's an issue related to structure, survival, or sensitivity. Patients who require plant-based treatments predominantly have concerns related to sensitivity; those needing animal-based remedies are dealing with issues of survival; and those requiring mineral-based treatments are grappling with themes around structure, relationships, and performance [7].

Plant kingdom and homoeopathy

The Plant Theory simplifies homoeopathy by illustrating the impact of plant species on living organisms, inclusive of their physical and emotional states. This theory, based on the modified botanical Angiosperm Phylogeny Group III

(APG III) classification, emphasizes on sensitivity and reactivity as inherent characteristics of plant families. Individuals requiring plant remedies often exhibit features of gentleness, sensitivity, adaptability to people and circumstances, emotional susceptibility, and fluctuating moods. Each plant family is defined by a unique type of sensitivity. Consequently, remedies derived from a specific plant family share a common sensation or pain-type, which could be manifested as the sensation itself, a passive reaction, an active reaction or as a compensation. The sensation, however, does not limit the individual characteristics of each remedy within the family. This variance is attributable to the unique miasmatic association of each remedy. To simplify the understanding of innumerable plant remedies in homoeopathy, Dr. Yakir has formulated a plant chart, which is instrumental for a systematic study [8].

Rheumatic remedies of plant families and their themes [9]

1. **Magnolianaes:** The state of confusion and withdrawal, paired with an experience of isolation. Applicable remedy - *Nux Moschata*.
2. **Ranunculaceae:** Characterized by an easily excited state, sensitivity, and irritability. It involves experiencing distress along with sharp, stabbing pains. Effective remedies include *Aconite*, *Actea Spicata*, *Actaea racemosa*, *Adonis ver*, *Pulsatilla*, *Ranunculus bulbosus* *staphysagrea*.
3. **Berberidaceae:** Involves sudden and intense changes at both mental and physical levels. *Berberis vulgaris* and *Caulophyllum* serve as potential treatments.
4. **Menispermaceae:** This involves a sense of responsibility, often leading to exhaustion from overwork. *Cocculus indicus* serves as a remedy.
5. **Papaveraceae:** This is characterized by an experience of intense, intolerable pain, leads to being in a hellish state. Remedies include *Argemone Mexicana*, *Chelidonium*, *Fumarin*, *Morphinum*, *Opium*, *Sanguinaria can*.
6. **Urticaceae:** This involves feelings of separation and piercing, burning pains. *Urtica Ureans* serves as an effective treatment.
7. **Hamamelidaceae:** This state has feeling of heaviness and confinement. *Hamamelis* is a suitable remedy.
8. **Cactaceae:** Identified by feelings of constriction, oppression, and being weighed down. *Cactus.G* can offer relief from those symptoms.
9. **Phytolaccaceae:** Issues involving a lack of care or nurturing towards children and emotional dryness. *Phytolacca. D* and *Phytolacca B* are effective treatments.
10. **Theales:** This state is related to nerve injuries, penetrating wounds, and shock. *Hypericum* and *Thea* are possible remedies.
11. **Ericaceae:** Characterized by a sensation of restlessness, changes in location, compulsion to move - examples of Homoeopathic remedies in this family are *Gaultheria*, *Kalmia Lat*, *Ledumpal*, *Rhododendron*.
12. **Cucurbitaceae:** Represents a state of business, intense activity, monetary focus, irritability, and a strong disdain to disturbances - *Bryonia alba*, *Cephalandra Indica*, *Colocynthis* come under this.
13. **Primulaceae:** Indicates a condition of immobility due to paralysis, pressure, and lameness - *Anagalis* and *Cyclamen* are respective examples.
14. **Rosaceae:** Manifests as pressure both internally and externally, suffocation, oppression - with *Crataegus* as a

- known remedy.
15. **Leguminosae/Fabaceae:** Denotes a state of being bound together and separated, holding and separating discrete things - Baptisia, Dolichos, Lathyrus Sativus, Physostigma are some remedies.
 16. **Violaceae:** Characterizes vexation, desire for rest, avoidance of disturbance, sharp physical pains - Viol-o, Viol-t are common remedies.
 17. **Euphorbiaceae:** Depicts states of binding and unbinding, constraints and freedom - Croton Tiglium, Acalypha Indica, Euphorbium Officinatum, Hura belong to this category.
 18. **Anacardiaceae:** Symbolizes stiffness, tension, restriction, cramps, continuous movement - including Anacardium Orientale, Comocladia, Mangifera Ind, Rhus Glabra, Rhus Tox.
 19. **Rutaceae:** Reflects a feeling of being crushed, squeezed, and stretched - Angustura Vera, Ruta.G are prominent remedies.
 20. **Umbelliferae:** Associated with sudden violence or abuse, numbness, stabbing and lancinating pains, convulsions - Aethusa Cyn, Cicuta Virosa, Conium, Oenanthus Croc are some of the remedies.
 21. **Solanaceae:** This family includes plants that provide homeopathic remedies for symptoms such as abrupt acts of violence, anger outbursts, splitting pains, explosive and spasmodic tendencies, and sudden sharp pains. Examples of remedies from the Solanaceae family include Belladonna, *Capsicum annum*, *Stramonium*, *Dulcamara*, *Mandragora*, *Solanum*, and *Tabacum*.
 22. **Loganiaceae:** Shocks which are strong enough to cause paralysis are addressed by plants of the Loganiaceae family. Their remedies help to restore calm in shocking situations and ameliorate feelings of disappointment or ruin. The Loganiaceae family includes Curare, *Gelsemium*, *Ignatia*, *Nux Vomica*, and *Spigelia*.
 23. **Scrophulariaceae:** This family is associated with feelings of insecure bonds and connections, leading to a desire to hold on tightly. Remedies from the Scrophulariaceae family, such as Digitalis, Eupatorium perforatum, and *verbascum*, are used to address these feelings.
 24. **Rubiaceae:** When there is an over-stimulation that brings issues, or an excess of ideas and desires, Rubiaceae provides relief. Included in this family are China Off, Coffea cruda, Ipecac, and Yohimbine.
 25. **Asteraceae/Compositae:** This family offers help for those feeling injured, hurt or shocked, and for those who fear to be touched or approached. Examples of remedies include Abrotanum, Arnica, Belles Per, Calendula, Chamomilla, Cina, and Gnaphalium.
 26. **Coniferaceae:** The feelings of dissociation, fragmentation, and fragility dealt with by remedies like Abies nigra, Pix Liquida, Sabina, and Thuja Occ fall under this family.
 27. **Liliaceae:** Experiences of feeling forced or squeezed out, constricted, neglected, oppressed, or excluded are addressed with remedies from the Liliaceae family such as Aloes, Alliumc, Helonias, Colchicum Aut, Paris q, Sarsaparilla, and Veratrum alb.

Discussion

It is common to see Endocrinological issues in women linked with rheumatic complaints. Plant remedies, which are integral to Homoeopathic practices, are frequently utilized in such cases. To understand this further, it can be beneficial

to use plant family themes from charts for differentiation and comparative analysis of similar sensations.

Conclusion

Homoeopathic practitioners ought to be informed of how various components of the muscular and skeletal system, including muscles, tendons, ligaments and joints, can be influenced by endocrine diseases; this knowledge is critical for differential diagnosis. In the field of Homoeopathy, there is an array of plant remedies with affinity towards rheumatism. The Yakir plant chart is a valuable resource that makes it simpler to determine the indicated Homoeopathic remedy for managing rheumatic conditions, thus uplifting our prescriptive practice.

Conflict of Interest

Not available

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