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Successful homoeopathic treatment in a case of alopecia areata

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Abstract

Background: Alopecia areata is an autoimmune condition that causes hair loss and is often difficult to cure. Conventional treatment mostly fails to treat this condition.

Methods: A case of Alopecia areata was treated by Staphysagria 200, and the outcome was measured by ORIDL score, MONARCH score and objective evidences were attached in the favor of positive result.

Result: ORIDL score (+3) evidences subjective improvement and MONARCH score (+9) establishes the relationship between intervention and outcome.

Conclusion: MONARCH score, ORIDL score and objective evidences cumulatively confirms the improvement of case by Homoeopathic treatment.

Keywords: Alopecia areata, autoimmune disorder, homoeopathy, case report

Introduction

Alopecia areata is an autoimmune disease that causes temporary, non-scarring hair loss while maintaining the hair follicle. Hair loss can manifest itself in a variety of ways, affecting all areas of the body that bear hair, from discrete patches of loss to diffuse or complete loss. The most prevalent kind of alopecia areata affects the scalp in patches. Approximately 2% of the general population may experience alopecia areata at some point in their lives. According to modern medicine there is no medicinal treatment for this condition ^[1]. In conventional method Alopecia areata can be treated with a variety of therapeutic treatments, however none of them are curative or preventative, most of them are suppressive ^[2]. On the other hand along with many case reports narrative reviews shows various remedies are there to treat those cases to cure such as Silicea, Lycopodium, Graphytis, Acid flour, phosphorus, Syphylinum, Tuberculinum etc. In narrative study it is seen there is number of reports which confirms at least complete resolution of the alopecia, but still the evidences are less for concluding its effectiveness and efficacy ^[3]. In different homoeopathic literature we found treatment for this condition ^[4, 5, 6]. This case report explores the use of homoeopathy as an alternative treatment for alopecia areata.

Patient information

A 28-year-old male patient came to our Out Patient Department (OPD) on 15/02/2021 with a well-defined, round, hairless patchy area in scalp since one-month.

Clinical finding

Patient had a tendency to conceal everything, this well-defined, round, hairless patchy area in scalp appeared after a state of emotional embarrassment which he was not able to express. Patient's appetite was increased, he had desire for salty as well as sweet things. He had intolerance to sour and his stool was hard. Regarding sleep and dreams everything was normal.

On physical examination, one well-defined, round, hairless patch (5 cm x 2.5 cm) with no signs of inflammation was observed on the patient's scalp.

Diagnostic assessment

Well-defined, round, hairless patch (5 cm x 2.5 cm) in scalp with no signs of inflammation confirms the case clinically as Alopecia areata.

Therapeutic intervention

Medicine was administered orally. Repertorisation sheet is attached. (fig-1) [Repertorisation was done by RADAR 10.5.003(windows)]

Prescription

One dose of Staphysagria 200 was prescribed orally, after that placebo was continued for one year.

Response to the course of treatment

Gradually patient started improving after 15 days of treatment. His improvement included his mental and general symptoms too. Over all his improvement followed the path of Hering’s Law of Cure.

Clinician and patient assessed outcomes

The “outcome related to impact on daily living scale” (ORIDL) [7] was used to assess the subjective differences between main complaints and overall wellbeing of patient after taking the indicated homeopathic medicine. The case significantly improved as the ORIDL score progressively moved in the favorable direction.

Basis of prescription

Repertorisation was the basis for choosing medicines, although Materia Medica was carefully gone through before choosing any of them.

Response to the course of treatment

Follow up is given in the Table-1

Objective evidence

Improvement is observed by photographs. (Figure-2)

Possible causal attribution

“Modified Naranjo Criteria for Homeopathy” (MONARCH) [8] score was assessed +9 after treatment which infers the possible causal attribution between intervention and result. (table-2)

Adverse or unanticipated events

Nothing was reported.

Aggravation

No such Homeopathic aggravation was mentioned.

Table 1: Follow up table with dates

Relevant past and family history (symptoms, diagnosis, interventions)				
Past history		Dog bite		
Family history		Mother suffering from diabetes mellitus		
Present complaints	Date	Intervention	ORIDL MCOWB	
Well-defined, round, hairless patch in superior aspect of the occipital area (5cm x 2.5cm) in scalp with no signs of inflammation was noted. Appetite was increased, there was intolerance to sour, stool was hard. Mentally had a tendency to hide everything, this patchy area in scalp appeared after an emotional embarrassment?	15.02.2021	Staphysagria 200,1 dose followed by 6 doses of placebo	+1	+1
Size of the patchy area seems slightly reduced. Mentally he was slightly better.	04.03.2021	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+2	+2
Size of patchy area reduced noticeably. Mentally the patient was feeling better.	17.03.2021	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+2	+2
Size of patch further reduced. He was mentally better now. His bowel movement was regularised.	07.04.2021	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+2	+2
Marked reduction in size of patch. Stool was normal.	09.07.2021	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+2	+2
There was no intolerance to sour things.	20.09.2021	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+3	+3
No remission was noticed.	14.12.2021	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+3	+3
No remission was noticed.	13.06.2022	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+3	+3
No remission was noticed.	18.11.2022	Placebo 200 For 7 days	+3	+3

ORIDL- outcome related to impact on daily living; MC- main complaints; OWB- overall wellbeing

Table 2: Modified Naranjo Criteria for Homeopathy

Domains	Modified Naranjo Criteria for Homeopathy	Answered question	Score
1.	Was there an improvement in the main symptom or condition for which the homeopathic medicine was prescribed?	Yes	+2
2.	Did the clinical improvement occur within a plausible timeframe relative to the medicine intake?	Yes	+1
3.	Was there a homeopathic aggravation of symptoms?	No	0
4.	Did the effect encompass more than the main symptom or condition, (i.e. Were other symptoms, not related to the main presenting complaint, improved or changed)?	Yes	+1
5.	Did overall wellbeing improve? (suggest using a validated scale or mention about changes in physical, emotional, and behavioural elements)	Yes	+1
6.	(A) Direction of cure: did some symptoms improve in the opposite order of the development of symptoms of the disease?	Not sure or N/A	+1
	(B) Direction of cure: did at least one of the following aspects apply to the order of improvement of	Not sure or N/A	0

	symptoms: From organs of more importance to those of less importance? From deeper to more superficial aspects of the individual? From the top downwards?		
7.	Did "old symptoms" (defined as non-seasonal and non-cyclical symptoms that were previously thought to have resolved) reappear temporarily during the course of improvement?	No	0
8.	Are there alternate causes (other than the medicine) that – with a high probability- could have caused the improvement? (Consider known course of disease, other forms of treatment, and other clinically relevant interventions)	No	+1
9.	Was the health improvement confirmed by any objective evidence? (e.g., investigations, clinical examination, etc.)	Yes	+2
10.	Did repeat dosing, if conducted, create similar clinical improvement?	Not sure or N/A	0
Total score +9			

Clipboard 1

1. MIND - AILMENTS FROM- embarrassment	(22) 1
2. MIND - HIDING - himself	(33) 1
3. ABDOMEN - SOUR food agg.	(4) 1
4. GENERALS - FOOD and DRINKS - salt - desire	(108) 1
5. GENERALS - FOOD and DRINKS - sweets - desire	(198) 1
6. STOMACH - APPETITE - increased	(308) 1
7. HEAD - HAIR - falling	(170) 1

	staph.	ars.	carb-v.	ign.	nat-m.	op.	sep.	sulph.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
7	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
1	-	-	2	2	2	1	3	
1	1	-	2	-	1	-	-	
2	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	
1	1	3	-	4	-	1	1	
2	1	2	1	1	1	2	3	
2	3	1	2	3	2	2	3	
2	2	3	2	3	1	3	3	

Fig 1: Repertorisation sheet



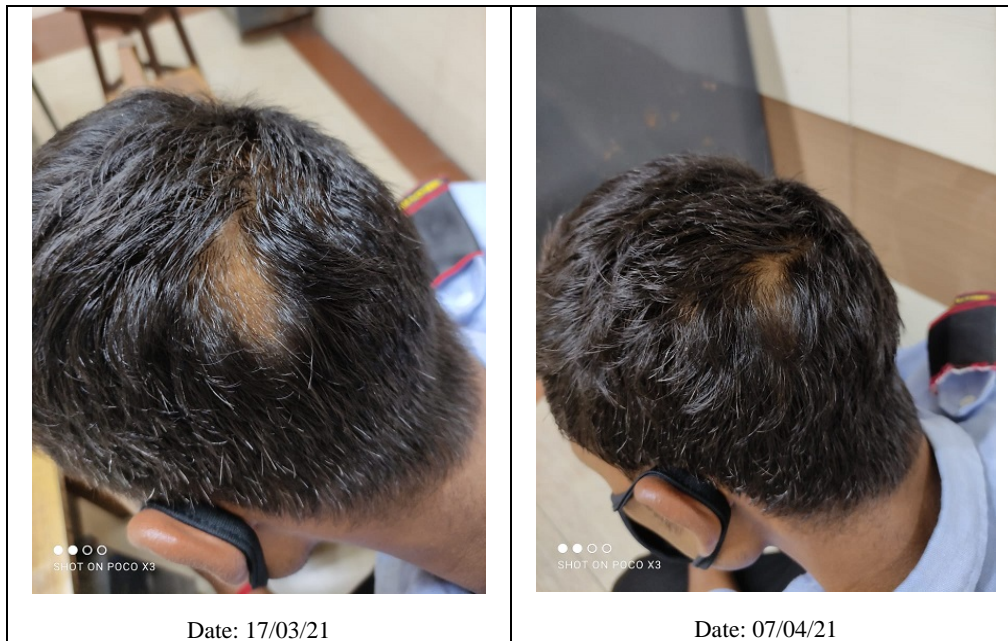


Fig 2: Objective evidences with dates

Discussion

This is a case of male patient with alopecia areata which was persisting for one month. On the basis of totality of symptoms *Staphysagria 200* was prescribed. After medication the well-defined, round, hairless patch along with other complaints of sour intolerance and hardened stool and psychic symptoms were improved markedly. After one year of follow up there was no remission found. The improvement of the complaints of hairless patch was shown by photographs in figure-2. In accordance to *Organon of Medicine*, it is a clear case of local disease. In this type of disease, we have to consider the whole case to know the peculiarity, in order to find prescription towards the purpose of cure. External application or local symptomatic treatment is not the true motto of this science^[9].

Conclusion

As this case study shows, patients with alopecia areata may find that homeopathic treatment is a good and safe alternative. However more studies are required to prove homeopathy's efficacy in treating a wider range of people. The possible advantages of this strategy in the treatment of autoimmune hair diseases are demonstrated by this example. Personalized care and patient well-being are key components of homeopathy's helpful approach in treating the complex nature of alopecia areata.

Conflict of Interest: Not available

Financial Support: Not available

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