

COVID-19 and Homeopathy

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The COVID-19 crisis has become a global scourge and it continues its rampage in India. There are many systems of medicine in India at play and to tackle the COVID-19 virus, bringing in physicians from all the systems of medicine to address the problem will help in checkmating this virus more effectively.

Homeopathy is one such system of medicine which treats a person holistically. In the wake of this pandemic, homeopathic medicines have been widely distributed in many states in India by government as well as private agencies. A large corporate group based in Pune has been distributing homeopathic medicines through their homeopathic medical center to their employees as well as to the general public.

Many questions are being asked on the effectiveness of these medicines, its administration, side effects, whether diabetics can take them and so on. This write-up seeks to address some of these queries and apprehensions.

Introduction

The very basis of homeopathy is individualization, Law of Similia and a holistic approach. Homeopathy believes in treating the patient as a whole. The medicines for optimum effectiveness have to be individual specific, based on the physiology, constitution and mental characteristics of the patient. So, distribution of homeopathic medicines as a general panacea to one and all may not be effective. Individualizing the medicine is critical to its success. It is possible, for instance, in a family of COVID-19 positive members, each may be treated with a different medicine or a few with the same medicine.

Another reason why it is important to prescribe person-specific medicine in the case of COVID-19 is that

the behavior of the virus and its symptomatology has changed and is changing rapidly too. What proliferated in China is not the same in Italy and what spread in Italy is not the same as in India. And even in India there have been variable presentations.

For those who have tested positive for COVID-19 with RT-PCR, treatment is based on the presenting symptoms of the patient and homeopathic treatment could differ from patient to patient with different homeopathic drugs.

This explains the very basis of homeopathy and all homeopaths, treat using the same approach. In fact, one of my professors has developed a quick questionnaire for patients to elicit the clinical symptoms and also the individualistic symptoms from the homeopathic perspective. This makes diagnosis and treatment easier.

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Medicines for COVID-19 under Distribution

Currently, there are two prophylactic medicines that have been majorly doing the rounds. The one suggested by the AYUSH ministry and Central Council of Research in Homeopathy (CCRH) is what is widely being distributed in Maharashtra. The doses are minimum to avoid any side effects. The reference to this medicine is found in homeopathic texts for pandemics like influenza. AYUSH ministry has given directives for its uses. Children and adults have different doses. People with co-morbidities can also take this medicine.

The major medicine that is distributed is Arsenicum Album (ArsAlb), due to the directives from CCRH.

Having said this, I would like to emphasize that constitutional medicine which is based on law of Similia works the best as mentioned before. So those who are under such constitutional medicines need not take these prophylactic medicines. At the same time precautions such as wearing masks, washing hands and social distancing need to be observed.

Scientific Studies

In homeopathy also, now many observational studies are done and data is recorded. Doctors are also maintaining records for those on constitutional medicines. One of the leading homeopathic doctors in Agra who started treating COVID-19 cases right from the onset of this pandemic in India, has been logging data scrupulously from his practice. The collating of such data and studies based on this will throw further light on the effectiveness of homeopathic medicines in the fight against COVID-19.

A Case Study from my Private Practice as a Homeopath

In my private practice, as a homeopathic doctor, I was consulted for a patient who tested positive and had co-morbidities. With IL-6 being high, this patient needed hospitalization. Meanwhile, the patient's wife, and 9 year old daughter showed symptoms of anosmia and breathing difficulty and with loose stools. However, they refused to be tested fearing that they will be taken away if tested positive.

I started treating the mother and daughter with homeopathic medicines while monitoring their vitals closely. On the 7th day the entire family (about 10 more people) all tested positive except for the mother and daughter whom I was treating. One couldn't be sure they had COVID-19 as they had refused testing, though clinically the symptoms were like COVID-19. After a week, I got their serum IgG antibody test done for COVID-19, which tested positive. This means they had also contracted COVID-19 though on the 7th day testing they had tested negative. It left me thinking that it could be the homeopathic medicines they were being administered, that made them negative while the rest of the family remained positive?

I am not making any claim with respect to this but definitely this observation from actual experience merits further investigations.

Homeopathic medicines have proven to be effective as a prophylactic as well as in treating COVID-19. More research on modern clinical lines will be able to confirm this.

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