



HOMOEOPATHY IN COVID 19- A MULTI STAGE AND MULTI-DIMENSIONAL APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

With a subdued celebration of World Homoeopathy Day on 10th April 2020 due to the on-going COVID (Corona Virus Disease) 19 epidemic, it is time to reflect what Homoeopathy can offer at this stage as a therapeutic system. Currently, Homoeopathy has not been tried on COVID 19 patients yet it has been reinforced that there is no cure to COVID 19 yet. It can be emphatically stated that Homoeopathy has proved its effectiveness in multiple viral diseases since its discovery in 1790. However, officially the AYUSH ministry through CCRH in January 2020 has already offered the Homoeopathic medicine Arsenic Album- 30C as a preventive medicine for COVID 19. The doses and frequency of the medicine are also clearly mentioned.^[7,8] The related press release of AYUSH ministry mentions that health advisory of AYUSH ministry includes Arsenic Album-30 as a possible preventive for flu like illness such as corona virus infection.^[7,8] The current article focuses on the curative approach that Homoeopathy has the potential to offer in COVID 19. Studies have indicated that the initial symptoms of COVID 19 disease lead to anosmia followed by fever, dry cough, respiratory distress through dry pneumonia respectively. The approach of treatment through the various stages has been dealt with in the article through application of multiple Homoeopathic medicines. The selected medicines are based on the principles of Homoeopathy using the Homoeopathic Materia Medica.

KEYWORDS: COVID 19, Homoeopathic Materia Medica, Generalities, Constitutional medicine, antigen, antibody.

INTRODUCTION

The symptoms of COVID 19 is given in the following table where there is a comparison of symptoms among

the similar diseases like Common Cold, Flu and Allergies.^[1]

Table 1.

Symptoms	COVID 19	Common Cold	Flu	Allergies
Fever	Common	Rare	Common	Sometimes
Dry Cough	Common	Mild	Common	Sometimes
Shortness of Breath	Common	No	No	Common
Headache	Sometimes	Rare	Common	Sometimes
Pain	Sometimes	Common	Common	No
Sore Throat	Sometimes	Common	Common	No
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Diarrhoea	Rare	No	Sometimes	No
Runny Nose	Rare	Common	Sometimes	Common
Sneezing	No	Common	No	Common

Infection by the virus causes respiratory symptoms, fever, fatigue and in severe cases can cause SARS, organ failure and even death.^[2,5]

The website of Government of India mentions dry cough, high fever, sore throat and difficulty in breathing. Regarding spread, the website mentions air by cough or

sneeze, personal contact, contaminated objects and mass gathering.^[4]

Mentioning about prevention, the details given are washing the hands often, wearing a face mask, avoiding contact with sick people, always covering one's cough or sneeze.^[4]

About the Virus^[2]

The n-COVID-19 or the Novel Corona Virus Disease is named by the Corona virus study group of International Committee on taxonomy of viruses in 2019. Here Novel means new as the virus is actually the SARS-CoV-2 (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Corona Virus-2) as it was different from the SARS-CoV-1. Later, it was named as n-COVID-19 as it was discovered in the year 2019 in the Wuhan province of China.

Novel corona virus was first reported on 31st December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, China. In one case, the virus was allowed to spread on the diamond princess cruise ship. The ship was used to quarantine passengers after one passenger tested positive. On the contrary, the quarantine acted as the incubator for the virus to spread. By 30th January 2020, WHO declared the virus as a pandemic.

The virus belongs to the 2B group of beta corona virus family, the same as SARS CoV and MERS CoV. Corona viruses are enveloped viruses with a positive sense, single stranded RNA genome. The Corona virus belongs to the same family as SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) Corona Virus. The word Corona means crown in Latin as these viruses have a crown like coat. These are the club shaped glycoprotein spikes protruding from the surface of the virus. These spikes allow the viruses to bind to certain receptors in human body cells.

The virus has a spike protein that has two regions namely S1 and S2 where the former is for the host cell receptor binding and the later for membrane fusion. The spike protein is a typical target for neutralizing with antibodies and vaccines.

The virus can infect the human respiratory epithelial cells 100-1000 times more than other strains by interacting with human ACE 2 receptors.

Epidemiology of infection

In December 2019, an outbreak of pneumonia of unknown source in Wuhan city was attributed to a newly identified culprit, the novel corona virus.^[3]

This epidemic is the third corona virus outbreak in the last 20 years after the SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV. The primary mode of transmission is droplet and contact person to person transmission. Initially, it was thought to be zoonotic where the seafood market in the capital of

Chinese province Hubei, Wuhan city acted as the disease reservoir.^[3]

The basic reproductive value of the virus is 2.2 meaning each case can spread to two other people. The 1918 Influenza virus had a reproductive value of 1.8. The incubation period is 14 days and that's why the quarantine period is 14 days.^[5]

Viral testing should not be used only for clinical care. Testing capacity must be reserved to support the public health efforts to explain the trajectory and severity of the disease. This approach will help to detect cases without travel history to high risk countries or areas.^[6]

As India is currently in the second phase of transmission, it is identifying hot spots as well as random testing in community to address the above-mentioned strategy.^[4]

About the diagnosis of infection^[2]

The diagnosis is done by serologically for antibodies and molecularly for antigens. Blood samples are used to immunoassay tests through a dual ELISA test. This test detects the specific IgA and IgG in the blood of infected people.

The antigens are determined by the proteins of the virus. Nucleocapsid protein is used as a marker for diagnostics. The virus also has haemagglutinin esterase dimer, a membrane glycoprotein, an envelope protein and RNA. Nucleic Acid Testing is done by Reverse Transcriptase PCR assays.

The diagnostic kit has three assays where each target one gene in the virus. Chances of mutation of all the three genes is very low. These genes are Orf1 (Human RNA Polymerase Protein), the N-gene (Nucleocapsid Protein) and I-gene (Envelope Protein). Some kits target the S-gene (Spike Protein).

To collect the samples, swabs with synthetic fibres and plastic shafts are to be used. Nasopharyngeal or oropharyngeal swabs are taken and these swabs are kept in 2-3 ml of viral transport media.

In India currently, the Indian Council of Medical Research is using the antibody test to do the community testing on a large scale using random sampling.^[4] The antigen testing is done for the selected few who show symptoms. There are so many asymptomatic cases as well. While the antibodies show in the blood after 7-8days of infection, antigens depict immediately in the collected swabs. The antibody test is much cheaper than the antigen tests. Table 2 compares the diagnostic tests in a nutshell.^[2]

Table^[2,4]

Names of the tests	Antibody test	RT-PCR (Antigen test)	NAT (Antigen test)
Duration taken to be detected in the body	Detected after 7-8 days of infection	Immediately detected in the body after the virus infection	Immediately detected in the body after the virus infection
Time taken for results	Few hours	3-4 days	1-2 days
Confirmation of infection	Not confirmative but suggestive	Confirmative	Confirmative
Cost	Cheapest among the three	Cheap among the three	Cheaper among the three
HR need	Few skills are needed	Highly skilled people are needed	Medium skilled people are needed
Community reach	Can reach masses easily	Can be done in the established lab	Can be done in labs set up in the community

Homoeopathic treatment

First stage

Analysing the symptoms, it is found that the initial symptoms suggest anosmia that is loss of smell³. The other symptom is dry nose.^[2] Based upon these particulars, *Sticta Pulmonaria* 30CH and *Arundo Mauritanica* 30CH can be prescribed where the former addresses the dryness and the later targets the anosmia.^[9,11]

Second stage

The second stage is sore throat and dry cough with fever². Here using generalities like thirst, *Belladonna* 1000CH can be prescribed for thirst-less cases and *Arsenic Album* 1000CH for cases that are thirsty.^[9,10,11]

Third stage

Here, respiratory trouble and dry pneumonia burdens the patients.^[2] These lead to organ failure and death.^[2] To protect the heart and lungs, *Aspidosperma-Q* can be prescribed in drop doses frequently along with *Spongia Tosta*-30CH so that the dry pneumonia, heart and the lungs are taken care of.^[9,11]

Scientific updated related prescription

Hydroxychloroquine Sulphate has showed promise in a lab setting against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 and preliminary report suggests potential efficacy in small studies with patients.^[12] Homoeopathy has *Chininum Sulph* that is prepared from Quinine Sulphate. It is a well proved medicine and covers all the symptoms of COVID-19.^[9,11] Here, *Chininum Sulph* can be prescribed in 3X potency as the crude doses have been found to be useful.

Febrile cases

In case of patients with high fever, along with the above-mentioned medicine at various stages, anti-febrile medicines like *Acetanilidum* 30CH and the *Bowel Nosode Brucella Melitensis* 30CH can be prescribed.^[9,10,11] Here the former is a specific in high fevers and the later is known as the fever microbe.^[9,10,11] The later will also enhance the immunity of the patient as it is a bacteria from which the medicine is prepared.^[9,10,11] As it is a nosode, it will further enhance the action of the prescribed medicines.

CONCLUSION

Homoeopathy is and will be effective against COVID-19 ailments where the approach has to be aggressive, multi-layered and rigorous. The current article adds another feather in the Homoeopathic cap as it can deal with the probable upcoming community level transmission. However, it should be also seen that along with constitutional medicines, specific medicines are also required to deal with the cases. Simultaneously, nutrition, diet and all public health modalities are adhered in each case. Green leafy vegetables are to be added in the diet in order to enable the body to fight the conditions like COVID-19 pandemics. The Homoeopathic fraternity should be ready to cover the masses as there is no other therapeutic system that can cover the masses effectively while being economical and cost effective.

Declaration of authors

The authors certify that they have expressed their personal opinions based upon their public health and clinical experiences. The treatment approach is only suggestive in nature.

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Conflict of interest

Nil.

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