

ROLE OF HOMEOPATHY IN PALLIATIVE CARE: ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE IN SEVERE ILLNESSES

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ABSTRACT

Homeopathy is a widespread medical practice which uses various agents for therapeutic purpose; these medicinal agents also provoke healing potential of the human body. Homeopathic practice employed as complementary therapy for many severe illness including cancer, asthma, chronic infection and others life threatening diseases. Homeopathy is also used as supportive and palliative treatment for many other cases. Homeopathic treatment can also be employed after surgery, chemo and radio therapy as a palliative approach. Homeopathic medicines induces apoptosis and modulates immune system thus imparts health benefits in chronic conditions at cellular level. As an adjunct treatment homeopathy improves life quality and increases levels of immunity. This review discusses role of homeopathy in palliative care to enhancing quality of life in severe illnesses.

KEYWORDS: *Homeopathy, Palliative, Chronic, Illness, Cancer, Alternative.*

INTRODUCTION

Homeopathic medicines are considered relatively safe which possess lesser side effects and not interfere with other medicines. These drugs are used in highly diluted form thus not causes side effects. The uses of

homeopathic medicines enhance possibility of cure in chronic and severe illness or improve quality of life. There are different approaches of utilizing homeopathic methods as mentioned. **Figure 1.**

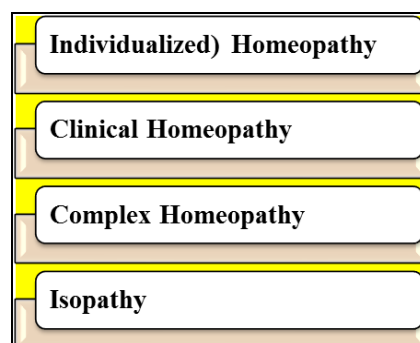


Figure 1: Different approaches of utilizing homeopathic methods.

As mentioned in **Figure 1**, individualized homeopathy, clinical homeopathy, complex homeopathy and isopathy are major approaches of homeopathic treatments. Individualized homeopathy involves specific remedy according to particular symptoms. Clinical homeopathy is the same remedy that is prescribed to all patients

diagnosed with the same condition and symptoms. Complex homeopathy uses combined remedies for the same symptomatic conditions. Isopathy is the approach in which remedy is prepared from the causal agent of disease.

Sources of homeopathic remedies are zoological sources, mineral botanical, microbiological sources, etc. The preparation of homeopathic medicines includes uses of mother tincture, mainly in the form of alcohol. Further step includes potentiating by means of successive dilution, which is performed by vigorous shaking. Decimal dilutions, centesimal dilutions, hundredfold dilution and centesimal dilution are performed for diluting the homeopathic remedies.

Homeopathy as Palliation Therapy

Homeopathy can be used as complimentary or adjuvant therapy to compensate complication of radiotherapy, chemotherapy, surgery, biological therapies and hormonal treatments, etc. Thus homeopathy play vital role in minimizing side effects of other treatments. As palliation therapy homeopathy helps in the alleviation of symptoms of diseases or symptoms arises as side effects of other therapies. Remedies with mild potency can be administered when patient's strength is very weak. This approach prevents reoccurrence of symptoms if therapy continued for longer period of time.

This type of complimentary approach sometimes become essential as adjuvant treatment of conditions like cancer, brain hypoxia, myocardial infarct, hypertension and autoimmune diseases, etc. The homeopathic therapy along with other approaches convert long-term severe symptom into their milder form which further become

easily treatable. The synergistic effect of alternative approach with main therapy enhances effects of each other, thus as combination approach homeopathy improves efficacy of other treatment modality as compared to individual effects of each one.

It is suggested to start with lesser potencies in advanced cases of pathological change. However, if patient offers good susceptibility and tolerable strength, higher potency may be advises. Thus in case of strong susceptibility or strength moderate or high potency may be used to enhance recovery process in severe illness, while in case of low susceptibility issue the potency of homeopathic medicines should be increases gradually starting with low potency. This is considered as superior to other palliation at the terminal stages.

Conventional drugs may exert pathogenic influence or side effects, these drugs aggravate defensive responses, thus draining weakened vital force. The secondary effects of modern treatments may offer temporary relief and if treatment stopped in this condition then patient's condition become more worsen. Therefore complimentary/alternative/adjuvant, palliation therapy must be needed to improves quality of life of patient suffering with terminal illness. Here homeopathy can play vital role since homeopathic remedies (**Table 1**) relieve severity of symptoms and boost self healing process.

Table 1: Name of remedies used for palliative care in severe illness.

S. No.	Drugs
1	<i>Aconitum Napellus</i>
2	<i>Antimonium Tartaricum</i>
3	<i>Arsenicum Album</i>
4	<i>Carbo Vegetabilis</i>
5	<i>Lachesis</i>
6	<i>Latrodectus Mactans</i>
7	<i>Opium</i>
8	<i>Tarentula Cubensis</i>
9	<i>Tuberculinum</i>
10	<i>Veratrum Album</i>

Homeopathic Remedies as Palliative Therapy

- ✚ *Aconitum Napellus* relieves intense anxiety, fear and restlessness. It also pacifies agitation.
- ✚ *Antimonium Tartaricum* is suggested for the patients suffering from abundant mucus in the lungs. It relieves symptoms such as breathlessness, edema, lung paralysis and chronic cough, etc.
- ✚ *Carbo Vegetabilis* is used for the patients in extreme collapse, close to death and gasping for breathing problem. It also relieves symptoms like cool breath, undetectable pulse, labored breathing and feverish head, etc.
- ✚ *Lachesis* as remedy makes death easier and gives soothing effect.

- ✚ *Latrodectus Mactans* is helpful in patients suffering from heart issue, it relieves extreme breathlessness, cure anxiety and other problems.
- ✚ *Opium* is considered useful for patients in a deep stupor, relieves unconscious conditions and treats breathing problems.
- ✚ *Tarentula Cubensis* relieves distress, pacify nervous agitation, provide relief in case of dyspnea, and help in delirium and anxiety. This drug eliminates noxious effect of extreme exhaustion.
- ✚ *Tuberculinum* is suggested for relieving distress related to the terminal illness; this drug makes breathing easy and imparts peaceful effect.
- ✚ *Veratrum Album* used for cases of profound collapse, relieves extreme coldness, treats severe weakness and manages cold sweat.

DISCUSSION

Palliation simply means relief of symptoms when soothing or calming therapy needed. In case of advanced stage of disease the primary aim of therapy is become to provide symptomatic relief rather than recovery from terminal illness. Palliation required when strength of patient become too weak. The mild remedies of lower potencies work significantly in such types of conditions. The medicines belong from the plant kingdom like *Drosera* and *Rumex* mainly used for palliation purpose. The uses of homeopathic medicines in many problems help to prevent mild or acute condition into severe or chronic conditions. As adjuvant of complimentary therapy homeopathic remedies not only provides symptomatic relief but also ease last stage of terminal illness. In cases where there is no cure available for severe diseases, palliation can help to improve quality of life and reduces severity of symptoms.

CONCLUSION

The homeopathic medicines are considered very safe, as they cause a minimum number of side effects with no interference of other treatments. Their highly diluted forms minimize adverse reactions and have the potential to enhance recovery from chronic and severe illnesses. The treatment approaches for homeopathy differ, such as individualized, clinical, complex homeopathy, and isopathy, depending on the specific patient needs. The treatments are obtained from various natural origins and, before being administered to patients, have to undergo potentization, whereby they will guarantee efficacy and safety. Palliative therapy through homeopathy provides immense support in dealing with the symptomatology, reduces side effects associated with other drugs, and alleviates pain to make a terminal illness bearable. The practice is mostly offered as complementary or adjuvant therapy to address conditions such as cancer, myocardial infarction, and autoimmune diseases through the attenuation of symptoms and consequently improving treatment. Remedies such as *Aconitum Napellus*, *Antimonium Tartaricum*, *Arsenicum Album*, *Carbo Vegetabilis*, *Lachesis*, *Latrodectus Mactans*, *Opium*, *Tarentula Cubensis*, *Tuberculinum* and *Veratrum Album*, etc. can be used for palliation therapy to relieves severity of terminal illness like cancer and autoimmune disorders, etc.

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