

Understanding the concept of susceptibility and its assessment on respiratory tract infections (RTIS): a review

Comprensión del concepto de susceptibilidad y su evaluación en infecciones del tracto respiratorio (ITR): una revisión

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ABSTRACT

Homeopathy is a system of medicines & that deals with any disease condition in a holistic way bringing to the needs of the present scenario which possesses a better scope to reduce the recurrence of the disease. Susceptibility is revealed by the reaction that occurs when the host interacts with environmental factors through signs and symptoms. Respiratory tract infections are spreading rapidly within the communities & represent the third most frequent health problem across the globe due to microorganisms. The disease is more vulnerable to infection than the other parts of the body. The intensity of symptoms can be ranged from mild to severe. Most of the incidence is underestimated because of infection is mild & not hamper daily activities until severity. According to WHO data published in 2017 death in India due to RTI (i.e., lung disease) reaches 8, 96, 77 or 10.19% which India ranks 4th in the world & adolescents & adults have approximately 2-4 colds in a year. Assessing the susceptibility and proper selection of potency of simillimum can bring an ideal cure. The study was to understand the concept of susceptibility and its application in RTI disease. The aim of the study is to review on the available literature with objective to subject each research paper to shed light on the current topic and to find the way for new research. Databases such as PubMed, Google Scholar, Medline and Science Direct were used to search the articles. This study suggested that the importance of assessment of Susceptibility in Homoeopathy which helps in evaluation of cases and selection of potency and the curative dose of simillimum. As Homoeopathic medicine effectively gives relief to the patient and restoration of the normal susceptibility is the basis of cure.

Keywords: Homoeopathy, RTI, Susceptibility, Simillimum

RESUMEN

La homeopatía es un sistema de medicamentos que trata cualquier enfermedad de forma holística, adaptándose a las necesidades del escenario actual, lo que permite reducir la recurrencia de la enfermedad. La susceptibilidad se revela por la reacción que se produce cuando el huésped interactúa con los factores ambientales a través de signos y síntomas. Las infecciones del tracto respiratorio se están extendiendo rápidamente en las comunidades y representan el tercer problema de salud más frecuente en todo el mundo debido a los microorganismos. La enfermedad es más vulnerable a la infección que otras partes del cuerpo. La intensidad de los síntomas puede variar de leve a grave. La mayor parte de la incidencia se subestima porque la infección es leve y no dificulta las actividades cotidianas hasta que se agrava. Según datos de la OMS publicados en 2017, la mortalidad en la India debida a ITR (es decir, enfermedad pulmonar) alcanza el 8,96,77 o el 10,19%, lo que sitúa a la India en el 4º puesto mundial, y los adolescentes y adultos sufren aproximadamente entre 2 y 4 resfriados al año. La evaluación de la susceptibilidad y la selección adecuada de la potencia del simillimum pueden aportar una curación ideal. El objetivo del estudio era comprender el concepto de susceptibilidad y su aplicación en la enfermedad ITR. El objetivo del estudio es revisar la bibliografía disponible con el fin de que cada artículo de investigación arroje luz sobre el tema actual y abra el camino a nuevas investigaciones. Para buscar los artículos se utilizaron bases de datos como PubMed, Google Scholar, Medline y Science Direct. Este estudio sugiere que la importancia de la evaluación de la susceptibilidad en homeopatía ayuda en la evaluación de los casos y en la selección de la potencia y la dosis curativa del simillimum. La medicina homeopática alivia eficazmente al paciente y el restablecimiento de la susceptibilidad normal es la base de la curación.

Palabras clave: homeopatía, ITR, susceptibilidad, simillimum

INTRODUCTION

Organon is the greatest watermark of medical philosophy written by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann. In 1790 Dr. Hahnemann has done the Golden experiment with China (Cinchona bark) which is the root of the invention of Homoeopathy. Father of Homoeopathy was given new concept to the new world in therapeutics and the practical interpretation to guide the physician to understand the law of cure for healing process^[4]. One of the most important aspects of Homoeopathic treatment is the concept of susceptibility. The fundamental attribute of the life principle is entirely responsible for the success of Homoeopathic prescription. The "THEORY OF VITAL FORCE" is a cardinal principle of Homoeopathy. The vital force is essentially the life force without which our material organism cannot function daily. The fundamental property of the vital force is susceptibility. Susceptibility is defined in most homoeopathic literature as the living organism's ability to receive impression^[11]. This sensitivity underpins all of the live organism's essential processes. Pathological processes, often known as disease, can arise from any cause due to a change in susceptibility. Susceptibility is essential for curative medical treatment, therefore even cure is reliant on

susceptibility. From a homoeopathic standpoint, it is critical to concentrate on this essential data of susceptibility to properly apply the medicine in perfect potency, which is based on susceptibility to treat patients.

6th edition of the Organon of Medicine in aphorism 31, Dr. Hahnemann mentions the term susceptibility. As we know Morden era is more scientific, it begins with Hahnemann experimentation and observation. There is a widespread misconception that Homoeopathy is more effective in chronic diseases than in acute diseases. Contrary to popular belief, Homoeopathy has a greater scope in acute diseases because Susceptibility is high and reactivity is quick. As a result, medicine in acute disease is becoming more susceptible. In acute disease, the disorder begins at the lowest level of life in the tissue- cells or organs cells-and spreads to the entire or central life force. In this case, the disease process is the result of the part's action and the whole's reaction to it. The disease process appears to begin from the outside in or in ascending order in this case. Homoeopathy is an effective system of medicine that treats any illness condition holistically and meets the needs of today's world. Concept of Susceptibility makes us different from each other, as sensitivity to the conditions is different for each of us. Epidemic situations were the best example to the demonstrated situation of susceptibility which contagion at that time and produce similar reactions and symptoms. For clear understanding we have understood some examples like the ill effect of cold wind or a stomach upset after having something unhealthy it is because of our living conditions or someone living in a damp house is mostly affects with upper respiratory tract suffering after a while, some of us will be infected sooner rather than later. Manifestation of the Susceptibilities includes the level of mental, emotional or physical & the events Susceptibility can be linked to certain environment factors. It's not about only the sign and symptom, considering the level of suppression to the individual is also give the whole picture of individual. Now a days, it's become a key point to knowing the mental state for the treatment of the patient as a whole. Frequently we use of conventional 'cures' that limit the perimeter of in our body. Now the question must raise how often do we 'remove' a rash by applying a cream, only to relieve a pain, a medicine which palliate the symptom only. Every physician duty must address the susceptibility behind it and find a way to treat a person as whole.

Role of susceptibility in the Posology

No such parameters identify or judge the susceptibility of the patient but in posology it helps during the prescription. According to Stuart.C - More susceptibility- higher the potency, less the susceptibility-lower potency. Factors which help to assume susceptibility of the: age, sex, constitution, environment, habits, temperament, nature and pathology of disease, various suppression, physical and mental reaction to the environmental stimuli ^[12].

What is Susceptibility?

Dictionary meaning: According to Oxford Dictionary.

-The state of being very likely to be influenced harmed or affected by anything.

e.g., susceptibility to diseases or infections.

-Persons feeling which are likely to be easily hurt. i.e., susceptibility.

Definition

It is a very relative term, means wants to be magnetized by some impulse consciously or unconsciously by both mentally and physically, it is fundamental attribute of life.

- At birth we acquire the hereditary dyspraxia and particular environmental adaptability. The combination of these two constitute Susceptibility. It indicates the measures of defences in the body.
- Susceptibility is fundamental quality upon which all action and reaction in the physiological and pathological sense takes places in the living organism.
- Upon it depends on all functioning of vital processes. Disease processes arising from infection or contagion are to the power of Susceptibility.

AIM AND OBJECTIVE

The aim of the study is to review on the available literature with objective to subject each research paper to shed light on the current topic and to find the way for new research.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: HOMOEOPATHIC LITERATURE

In Epidemiology susceptible individual is a member of a population who is at risk of becoming infected by a disease if he or she is exposed to the infectious agents^[18]. Most of cases are associated with a higher sensitivity of these individuals to a specific exogenous or endogenous substance or a physical agent. Different fundamental and clinical research have suspected genes, acquired factors and environment exposure as well as nutritional factors and their interactions as eventual causes for the Susceptibility^[16].

Hahnemann's point of view about the susceptibility

According to Dr. Samuel Hahnemann (1755 – 1843) who developed the scientific system of treatment which he called Homoeopathy, two introductory factors are demanded for an individual to become sick. One is the existent's susceptibility and the other is exposure to the natural complaint or in general terms to different pouring events or stressors. So, to Hahnemann, the susceptibility is the predisposing and most central and determining cause for getting sick and for being defended from sickness and it's influenced by precipitating events or stressor.

Kent's viewpoint on susceptibility is as follows

Kent's Lecture on Homoeopathy Philosophy by Dr. James Tyler Kent (1849 - 1916), who discussed the many parts of Hahnemann's Organon of the healing art, analyses susceptibility and gives an additional explanation about its functional side. He mentions that humans have varying degrees of susceptibility and as a result some people are safe to illness, but others became sick. In contagious stage of a disease cause continues to flow in until the individual's

susceptibility is met. The sickness would take its course till the victim died if there was no limit to the influx. As a result of the resistance provided, the invasion of the cause is prevented, and the sickness reduces.^[7]

Vithoukaskas's Opinion about the susceptibility

Vithoukaskas (1932) in his book, "The Science of Homoeopathy", explains that, for most of the disease agents (also called exciting cause) which we are exposed to the vital force tries to response and improve without marked symptoms. Vital force, the defence mechanism has to counteract the stimulus for those ailment agents. However, when the defence mechanism is not strong, it starts maintains a lowered state of health and can lead to a powerful susceptibility of the person against the disease agent. This predisposition also called the maintaining cause, is necessary for producing disease. Therefore, he proposed that "disease is a result of a morbid stimulus which resonates with the particular level of susceptibility of the organisms."^[19]

SUSCEPTIBILITY ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT STALWART'S

Dr. Kent

- Defines susceptibility as INFLUX which means the disease's cause continues to flow until the individual's susceptibility is met. The sickness would take its course till the victim died if there was no limit to the influx. As a result of the resistance provided by the person's susceptibility, the influx of the cause is prevented, and the sickness declines. ^[7]

H.A. Roberts

- Expression of vacuum is defined as an individual's Susceptibility. The vacuum draws and pulls for the items that are most needed and vibrate on the same frequency as the body's need. Susceptibility is the body's reaction to both outside and inside factor ^[14].

S. Close

- Defines susceptibility as the general quality or capability of the living organism to receive impressions and the power to react to stimuli ^[11].

The term "Respiratory tract infection"(RTIs) are infections of parts of the body involved in breathing, such as the sinuses, throat, airways, or lungs.

Symptoms of an RTI include:

- A cough-may bring up mucus (phlegm)
- Sneezing

- A stuffy or runny nose.
- A sore throat
- Headache
- Muscles aches
- Breathlessness, tight chest, or wheezing.
- High temperature, feeling generally unwell. It is usually often spread in the coughs and sneezes of someone with an infection. And they are usually grouped into upper and lower RTI

PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND ARTICLES

Gianfranco Maria Beghi et al. 2016

This study was carried out to improve the understanding of Homoeopathy, a real-life clinical settings and observational studies and which also monitors the effect of homoeopathy, and it was helpful adjunct to randomized controlled trials. The observational study aims or goal to investigate the role of the homoeopathic medicine in preventing respiratory tract infections (RTIs). In this retrospective analysis of patient's medical reports focused on a single centre from 2002 to 2011. And examined 459 patients, out of which, 248 were treated with homoeopathic medicine and 211 were not treated. All patients were followed up for at least 1 year and up to a maximum of 10 years. It shows significant reduction in the frequency of onset of RTI was found in both homoeopathic medicine and untreated groups, after a period of study significantly greater on the homoeopathic medicine treated group than the untreated patients. In this study, it shows and give the results that homoeopathic medicine may had a positive effect in preventing respiratory tract infections (RTIs).^[2]

Allessandro Zanasi et al. 2014 Feb

It was a placebo controlled, randomised, double blind clinical trial. In this study, patients were treated with either the homoeopathic syrup or a placebo for a week and recorded cough severity in a diary by means of verbal category – descriptive score for 2 weeks because cough is a frequent symptom associated to upper respiratory tract infections and it also being a self-limiting, it might deeply affect the quality of life. Sputum Viscosity was assessed with a viscometer before and after 4 days of treatment, it also provides subjective evaluation of viscosity to the patient. In this study 80 patients were randomized to receive placebo (n=40) and homoeopathic syrup (n=40). After 4 and 7 days of treatment, cough severity was significantly lower in homoeopathic group. This study conclude that the homoeopathic syrup employed in study was able to effectively reduce cough severity and sputum viscosity.^[21]

Thinesse Mallwitz et al. 2015

It was a Randomized controlled multinational clinical trial. Patients with feverish URTI received either on demand symptomatic standard treatment or homoeopathic medication for 7 days plus the same on demand

standard treatment. It also assessed using the Wiscosin URTI Survey – 21. It gives response within day 4 and defined as the absence of fever and absence or very mild degree of URTI symptoms, was the primary outcome measures. It shows homoeopathic treatment shortened URTI duration and it reduced the use of symptomatic medication and was well tolerated.^[17]

Atif Raza et al. 2019

In this systematic review, it aimed to evaluate the efficacy of homoeopathic medicines in respiratory tract infections. A comprehensive computerized literature search was carried out to find clinical research articles like PubMed, Medline, Google Scholars, Science Direct and Thieme - E – Journal of homoeopathy was search extensively. In this review, only human based clinical trials were included in the review along with randomized double – blind, placebo – controlled prospective observational clinical research articles were included. 40 articles were studied for this review, 21 research articles were selected for the systematic review, 3 articles were found about acute respiratory tract infection and 19 articles were about upper respiratory tract infection and no single article were found on lower respiratory tract infection. In this study, they concluded that homoeopathic medicine is safe and effective in acute and upper respiratory tract infection.^[13]

Kushal Banerjee et al. 2014

It was a double blinded, randomized controlled trials comparing homoeopathy with other conventional treatments and placebo. The study was conducted in all age group were suffering from seasonal or perennial allergic rhinitis. The focus of the study was improvement of the nasal symptoms and improvement of the patient's quality of life score (such as RQLQ score). The study result is measured by calculating the mean difference and the standard mean difference with 95% confidence interval (CI).^[1]

P S Chakraborty et al. 2013

The study was multicentre, prospective randomized triple arm placebo-controlled trial to indicate the effectiveness of homoeopathic medicines in the treatment of influenza like illness (ILI) (primary objective) and compare the difficulty rate among patients who are receiving homoeopathic medication as compared to the patient's receiving placebo and also to compare the effectiveness of LM potency vis – a – vis centesimal potency (secondary objective). This research was conducted from June to December (2009 to 2010). The symptoms of ILI were assessed as per validated scales; The symptoms were compared for 10 days among the allocated groups using Kruskal Wallis Test and Bon Ferreni correction for the multiple comparison. The study indicated that the significant effect of individualized Homoeopathic treatment in the patients suffering from ILI with no significant difference between LM and CM groups.^[8]

Marcus Ruopp et al. 2015

It was a systematically analysed RTI clinical trials which states that Respiratory tract infections are highly prevalent and variable and confer considerable morbidity and mortality. There is a growing need for new treatments for such infections, particularly in the setting of worsening anti-bacterial resistance. Here the study was analysed data from ClinicalTrials.gov to summarize activity in respiratory infection trials, identify gaps in research activity, and inform efforts to address disparities between antimicrobial resistance and development of new antibacterial drugs. In these trials they examined 69,779 interventional trials registered with Clinical Trials gov. Concentrating on study and interventions to find respiratory infection-related trials from 2007 to 2012. For analysis, there were 6,253 infectious illness trials, 1,377 respiratory infection trials, and 270 lower respiratory tract infections trials identified using programmatic identification with manual confirmation. In these trials more frequently evaluated vaccines (52.7 vs. 15.5% of non-respiratory tract infection trials). Lower respiratory tract infection trials (excluding tuberculosis) focused primarily on bacterial pathogens (78.5%) followed by viral (12.6%), fungal (5.6%), and non-tuberculosis mycobacterial (3.0%) pathogens. According to the findings, respiratory tract infection trials did not occur in sufficient numbers to have a global impact. And there was a concerning reduction in prevention-oriented lower respiratory infection trials and an overall low number of such trials involving novel antimicrobials.^[15]

Ashish Kumar et al. 2020

The study was carried out and summarised the appraise and findings of various studies on Respiratory infections in homoeopathy. Severity of acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) infection is accountable for significant mortality worldwide. The study states that there is no precise treatment available till today. And find out the alternative approach which can reduce the burden of disease. The study looked at literature on homoeopathy and respiratory illness that were published between January 1, 2000, and June 15, 2020. For the literature search they used major electronic medical databases such as PubMed, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, CORE-Hom, and CAM-QUEST. 46 studies congregated out of which 9 were systematic reviews, 18 randomised controlled trials, 1 controlled clinical trial, 13 comparative cohorts, 3 single-arm cohort observational studies, 1 case series and 1 case report. And the results of this review were encouraging. It shows Homeopathic medications have a positive effect in reducing the number of attacks of respiratory infections, less antibiotic usage, tolerability and good compliance as compared to conventional treatment. The review suggested a definite role of homeopathy beyond placebo in the treatment of various conditions of respiratory infections. And was shown cost effective, feasible and safe as an adjunctive treatment in Covid – 19 (i.e., Homoeopathy treatment).^[3]

Table 1

| Artificial Susceptibility | Morbid Susceptibility | Natural Susceptibility Or Normal susceptibility |
|---|--|--|
| DR. Kent speaks on his book Lect. of Homoeopathic philosophy that | Susceptibility may become morbid & altered under the | According to H.A. Roberts – |

when medicines are given, they act for period, satisfying the susceptibility. It helps to change the susceptibility, and when that dose of medicine can no longer work on the changed susceptibility, a new dose or potency is required. Artificial susceptibility refers to the altered susceptibility that is achieved.

circumstances of suffering with disease & death. It may be regarded as a negative or minus condition – a state of lowered resistance.

The Reaction of stimuli in the healthy state of the individual could be known by the response of the individual's physical environment, food, remedies and to react defensively against toxic agents. The individual's health is dependent on this normal susceptibility. Natural susceptibility is the body's ability to power of the toxin, contagion, or an infection as well as to respond positively to food and drinks and curatively to the homoeopathic remedy.

DISCUSSION

As Homoeopathy is the only system, we treat the persons as whole which consider the physical generals, mental general's, history, and family history Homoeopathy which is perfectly fixed in its principles as utilise in practice also. In many countries, 3rd death is due to respiratory disease and most common problem visit the doctor.^[10] Major cause of morbidity and mortality are due to infection of the respiratory system (URTI/LRTI) mostly seen in patient at extreme of age and those with immune suppression. RTI have become common disorder as per the present scenario of India^[20,9]. Still the Recurrent respiratory Infection are persistent in the population. So, it is important to find out & understand how to prevent from the recurrent episodes of RTI by assessing the Susceptibility of individual which will help the Physician in treating the RTI more effectively by Homeopathic system of medicine. One of the simple systems of medicine is. Circumstances and environment have an impact on everything that has life^[22]. One of the most basic characteristics of life is susceptibility. All physiological and pathological functions, such as digestion, adaptation, nutrition, restoration, secretion, excretion, metabolic activity, and catabolism, as well as all disease processes resulting from infectious or contagious, are dependent on the organism's ability to react to specific stimuli. Susceptibility varies from person to person and may differently times in the same patient^[5]. Now a days it is observed in clinic practice by physicians that majority of the cases are of acute origin and the rest are chronic in nature. Primarily need of the physician is to treat RTI condition as early as possible without recurrency of symptoms. We've already established that an organism must continually adapt to its surroundings to sustain balance. Because of the susceptibility, this adaption process may be hindered^[6]. We have to understand the susceptibility role in RTI cases. To treat the suffering of the patient we should know the cause of the patient's related to susceptibility on which we can find a curative dose which is simillimum to them. It is indicated that the necessity of susceptibility in pathogenicity of disease, any environmental factor, prescription, selection of potency and other factor of the particular case with the help of simillimum medication to reach the path of cure in Homoeopathy.

CONCLUSION

In all previous articles and literature, the authors discuss by assessing the susceptibility help us to reduce the intensity and frequency of episodes in cases of RTI. And the use of Homoeopathy or alternative therapies has a great role in treating the patient's sufferings from Respiratory Tract Infections. We could readily conclude that a sound grasp of susceptibility in general and its correct evaluation in a particular patient is quite essential for a physician who aspire to cure in a "rapid, gentle, permanent and most harmless way.

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