

Constitutional treatment in homoeopathy: a narrative review

Tratamiento constitucional en homeopatía: una revisión narrativa

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ABSTRACT

Constitutional prescription is one of the most important aspects of the homoeopathic therapeutic process. It is a method to identify the constitution of an individual and treating the patient as a whole irrespective of names of the diseases and organs affected. The choice of remedy is entirely based on the individual's totality of all mental and physical reactions. It is based on the Principle of Homoeopathy "SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTER". The aim is to summarize and review the available literature on the homoeopathic constitutional treatments. Research carried out from all available literature books and database such as PubMed, Google Scholar and Cochrane Library using Mesh Terms: "constitution and homeopathy", "constitutional treatment". Only the articles published in English language were selected. The study suggested that Homoeopathic Constitutional treatment is effective and has an important role in treating many diseases.

Keywords: Individualization, Constitutional treatment, Homoeopathy, Constitution.

RESUMEN

La prescripción constitucional es uno de los aspectos más importantes del proceso terapéutico homeopático. Es un método para identificar la constitución de un individuo y tratar al paciente como un todo independientemente de los nombres de las enfermedades y órganos afectados. La elección del remedio se basa enteramente en la totalidad de las reacciones mentales y físicas del individuo. Se basa en el Principio de la Homeopatía "SIMILIA SIMILIBUS CURANTER". El objetivo es resumir y revisar la literatura disponible sobre los tratamientos constitucionales homeopáticos. Investigación realizada a partir de todos los libros de literatura disponibles y bases de datos como PubMed, Google Scholar y Cochrane Library utilizando términos de malla: "constitución y homeopatía", "tratamiento constitucional". Solo se seleccionaron los artículos publicados en idioma inglés. El estudio sugirió que el tratamiento homeopático constitucional es efectivo y tiene un papel importante en el tratamiento de muchas enfermedades.

Palabras clave: Individualización, Tratamiento constitucional, Homeopatía, Constitución.

INTRODUCTION

Constitutional diagnosis means the identification of the constitution of an individual. It covers the level of susceptibility, the tendencies, the behavior patterns and the underlying miasms. So, constitutional remedy is used as preventive, curative and prophylaxis ^[1]. Homeopathic system of Medicine, is the practice of medicine that embraces a holistic, natural approach to the treatment of the sick ^[2]. Master Samuel Hahnemann has explained regarding chronic diseases in aphorism number 78-81 in Organon of Medicine 6th edition. The term “CONSTITUTION” is derived from the Latin word “CONSTITUERE” which means to set up, establish or make up, to appoint to give being to. Dr. Hahnemann gives a fair importance of the constitution in aphorism 5 of 6th edition of organon of medicine. In the German text, Dr. Hahnemann used the term “beschaffenheit” when translated to English as ‘Constitution’. In 6th edition of Organon of medicine Hahnemann explains about constitution and is related in aphorisms 5, 102, 117, 138 ^[3].

1.1 Origin of the concept:

Aristotle (384 BC- 322 BC) was the first person in history who grouped individuals under different headings. In his essay on “Physiognomy” he classified human beings on the basis of Size, Built and Nature.

Hippocrates (460 BC- 377 BC) in his “Natura Medicatrix” says that each and every individual has his nature that cannot be changed ^[4].

1.2 Types of Constitution:

Dr. Von Grauvogl classified constitution into 3 types-

- Carbo-nitrogenoid constitution
- Oxygenoid constitution
- Hydrogenoid constitution

The carbo-nitrogenoid constitution is characterized by insufficient oxygenation and the general symptoms are breathlessness, short breadth, frequent pulse, constipation or diarrhea, flatulence, urinary troubles. Patients are irritable and impatient, vertigo, gouty swelling, hypochondriasis, dullness et.

The oxygenoid constitution likes to eat fats and carbohydrates, and are underweight. Such type of patients is worse before storms and during windy weather, better by rain or snow.

The hydrogenoid constitution patients are recognized by its modalities. They feel worse in cold or damp weather or when living near water ^[5].

1.3 Concepts of Constitution in homoeopathy according to stalwarts:

STUART CLOSE defines constitution as “that aggregate of hereditary characters, influenced more or less by the environment which determines the individuals reaction, successful or unsuccessful, to the stress of environment” ^[6].

Dr. KENT says “The perceptible ailment that follows a disorder in the man's vital power is called physical constitution” ^[7].

According to PHILIP M. BAILEY, Constitutional prescribing means selecting the remedy which covers the totality of the patient’s symptoms (both physical and mental) at a given time^[8]. When it comes to constitution, Dr. M.L DHAWALE says that everyone has a unique characteristic that gives them their personality, which is partly affected by genes and environmental factors throughout their lives^[9].

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVE:

To summarize and review the available literature on the effectiveness or efficacy of homeopathy and its constitutional treatment. And the objective is to know the clinical evidences and the importance of constitutional treatment in the field of homeopathic system of medicine.

3. PREVIOUS RESEARCHES AND ARTICLES:

3.1 Search strategy-

Relevant literature or research articles were taken from various database such as PubMed, Google Scholar, Cochrane Library and websites. Search terms were constitution, constitution and homeopathy, constitutional treatment. Homeopathic philosophy books were searched for data on constitution.

3.2 Data items-

The data were extracted in the form of: study design; number of participants who have participated in the study; inclusion/exclusion criteria; homeopathic intervention compared to control group or no comparison; period of study; outcome measures and result.

Table 1: List of Articles with their study design, number of participants, intervention, time period, outcome and result

Article Ref. no.	Design	Participants	Inclusion/Exclusion criteria	Intervention	Time period	Outcome Criteria	Result
10	Clinical trial	40	Infertile women of age group of 18-40 years, Cases of PCOS, Endometriosis, Chronic, Primary and Secondary Infertility were included. Unknown infertility causes and congenital defects and women whose husband`s	Individualized Homeopathic Remedies	3 years	Urine pregnancy test, USG	Effective

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 abnormal were excluded.

11	Clinical trial (Retrospective study)	30	Individual of age 6 months to 8 years, individual diagnosed with delayed speech using Sarada Krishna Homoeopathic Medical College Developmental Screening Test Questionnaire, individuals undergone with homeopathic treatment were included. Individuals below age of 6 months and above 8 years, individuals who have undergone with other conventional method of treatment were excluded.	Calcarea group	1 year	Sarada Krishna Homoeopathic Medical College Developmental Screening Test Chart	Effective
12	Clinical trial	30	Children having learning disability viz dyslexia, dysgraphia, from 6 to 15 years of age group of both sexes were included. Neurological problem with emotional disturbances like Depression, Mental	Individualized Homeopathic Remedies	1 and half years	VAS	Effective

			retardation, Lack of educational inputs, Non-Verbal Learning Disabilities, Dyspraxia, Autism was excluded.				
13	Clinical trial	30	Age group of 15-30 years of both the sex were included.	Sulphur, Arsenic album, Lycopodium, Natrum mur, Psorinum, Phosphorus, Sepia.	-	KOH test	Effective
14	Case report	1	-	Lycopodium	-	Pain score, USG	Effective
15	Case report	1	-	Sepia	-	USG	Effective
16	Case report	1	-	Natrum mur	-	SCORAD index	Effective
17	Case report	1	-	Tuberculinum, Phosphorus	1 year	MONARCH, score	Effective
18	Case report	1	-	Conium mac	-	USG	Effective
19	Case report	1	-	Natrum muriaticum	-	Thyroid Function test	Effective
20	Case study	1	-	Pulsatilla	-	USG	Effective
21	RCT	83	Women who have completed surgery, chemotherapy and radiation treatment were included.	Individualized Homeopathic Remedy ass add on therapy	1 year	KMI, SF-36, Hot flush frequency.	Effective

Patient taking other medication, chronic health problems such as rheumatoid arthritis, asthma, heart diseases, subjects who were expected to receive additional chemotherapy or radiation treatment, pregnant women were excluded.

22	Odservat ional study	34	<p>Patients between the age group of 18–40 years, the absence of menstruation for 45 days or more and/or 70 ng/dl in the absence of other causes of hyperandrogenism, Polycystic ovaries: Presence of >10 cysts, 2–8 mm in diameter, usually combined with increased ovarian volume of >10 cm³ and an echo-dense stroma in pelvic USG, no use of birth control pill for at least 3 months before the study and no plans of pregnancy during the study were included.</p> <p>Elevated creatine kinase above two times the upper limit of normal or liver enzymes (transaminases) above two times of upper limit of normal range, Current use</p>	<p>Lycopodium, Natrum muriaticum, Pulsatilla, Sepia, Staphysagria, Calcarea carbonica, Nux vomica</p>	<p>July 2015 to June 2017</p>	<p>PCOSQ, USG, Hormonal profile</p>	<p>Effective</p>
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of any medications -
Cyclosporine, fibrates,
niacin, antifungal agents
and macrolide antibiotics,
Use of oral contraceptives
and other steroid
hormones 3 months
before the study,
Contraindications to oral
contraceptives, Clinical
history of systemic illness
such as cancer and HIV
were excluded.

DISCUSSION:

In one of the clinical trials by Lobo A. *et al*, the study was conducted to evaluate the efficacy of homoeopathic treatment in female infertility. 40 women diagnosed with infertility, fulfilling the inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected for the study from the hospital opd of Father Muller Homoeopathic Hospital. Duration of study was of 3 years, homoeopathic medicines of potency 200, 1M were given after careful case taking and McNemar's test was performed to determine the effectiveness of homoeopathic treatment. The study showed 85% success in PCOD in female infertility, 70% success in chronic PID in female infertility and 30% success in Endometriosis in female infertility. Out of 40 cases of female infertility, 27 female patients (67.5%) were conceived after individualized homeopathic treatment ^[10]. A retrospective study conducted for 1 year in Sarada Krishna Homeopathic Medical College in cases with delayed speech in children. A sample size of 30 children were selected which fulfils the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Prescription of medicine was based on constitution of the child and potency on the basis of susceptibility of the children. Among Calcarea group of medicines Calcarea carbonica was the most given medicine. Most improvement was shown within 8 months. The outcome was measured by using Sarada Krishna Homeopathic Medical College Developmental Screening Test Chart. Most reported case were in age of 4. Among 30 cases 17 cases show good improvement, 9 cases show moderate improvement and 4 cases with no improvement ^[11]. In a single blind, single arm clinical study done by Kondhalkar AK in the management of learning disability viz dyslexia and dysgraphia by homeopathic constitutional medicine in children. 30 sample were selected for one and half year study period. Constitutional medicine was prescribed to each patient of potency 30C, 200C and 1M. Five follow up of each patient at interval of 15 days. Outcome was measured by VAS, among 30 patient 11 children show moderate improvement and mild improvement in 19 children ^[12]. A study of constitutional approach in case of tinea corporis which was carried out in hostels of Alvas

Educational Foundation. A sample size of 30 case were selected and case were diagnosed on basis of symptomatology and investigation. In the age group of 15-20, cases were more. Homeopathic medicines such as Sulphur, Arsenicum album, Lycopodium clavatum, Natrium muriaticum, Psorinum, Phosphorus, Sepia etc. were prescribed on the basis of their constitution and followed up once in 2 weeks or whenever required and assessment was done by using KOH test. All the cases were improved with no side effects ^[13]. A case report of a 43-year-old male who have severe pain in right loin and increased frequency of urination, ineffectual urging to urinate and severe pain at close of urination. Right ureteric calculus seen in USG. The patient was given Lycopodium clavatum 0/1 and 0/2 as constitutional medicine according to his constitution for 16 days and later with higher potency of the same medicine. Within two and half months there was complete relief of all symptoms. The outcome was measured by pain score and USG ^[14]. A female patient reported with pain in lower abdomen with profuse menstruation for the last two years. USG reveals a posterior wall uterine wall myoma. After detailed case taking repertorization was done using Complete repertory, Sepia 30 single dose was prescribed according to her constitution and placebo once daily for 15 days and in next follow up after 15 days symptoms reduced and sepia 200 three doses in water at 15 minutes interval and placebo once daily for one month. After two months the USG shows complete resolutions of posterior wall uterine myoma ^[15].

A case report of Atopic Dermatitis successfully treated with constitutional homeopathic medicine, here a female patient of 28 years old diagnosed with AD having complaints of eczematous lesion on face and genitalia along with sadness and depression for 2 years. She was on allopathic medication but only got temporary relief of the complaints, after detailed case taking and repertorization of the case she was prescribed homeopathic medicine Natrium muriaticum 200C according to her constitution, improvement was seen but later standstill of the complaint, so the same medicine was given in increase potency 1M. The outcome was measured by SCORAD index, there was marked improvements in SCORAD index following 6 months of treatment with no recurrence of the symptoms ^[16]. Here in a rare case report of a 4-year-old boy with Lymphangioma of tongue treated with constitutional homeopathic medicine. The child was previously diagnosed as a case of micro and macrocystic lymphatic malformation of tongue, Lymphangioma of tongue was diagnosed clinically and confirmed by MRI of neck that revealed Lymphangioma of tongue. Medical investigations were all normal except anemia. On examination tongue shows multiple pink and red papules or vesicles with frequent bleeding and burning pain. Homeopathic medicine phosphorus 30C was given on the basis of totality of symptom. After the initial improvement with Phosphorus, Tuberculinum 200C was prescribed as the constitutional remedy according to the child`s constitution, later its potency increases up to 1M and 10M. The final outcome was measured by MONARCH score. After 1 year of treatment no recurrences and no serious complications were noted ^[17]. Another case report of a 26 year old female of Hemorrhagic ovarian cyst treated with constitutional homeopathic medicine, suffering from constant cramping pain in lower abdomen and menses problem also with other physical complaints. After proper case taking and repertorization was done by using Synthesis repertory. Conium maculatum 1M was prescribed on the basis of her constitution. After two months of homeopathic treatment overall improvement has seen and the USG report shows no evidence of any cyst or lesions comparing with the previous USG report ^[18]. A known case of a hypothyroidism in a female of 34 years old treated with homeopathic constitutional medicine. She was having complaints of hypothyroidism for the last 3 months, her TSH level was

15.39 and T₄ was 8.2 and was on hormonal treatment and discontinued the treatment after few days of treatment. She was given Natrium muriaticum 200C according to her constitution after proper case discussion and reorientation. After 8 months of homeopathic treatment her TSH level was 2.7 and T₄ was 7.5, she continued the treatment and after one month her TSH level reduce to 1.4. Outcome was assessed by Thyroid profile test ^[19]. In a case study of Adenomyomatosis of gallbladder in a 17-year-old girl, she was having recurrent abdominal pain for 1 year, investigation revealed adenomyomatosis of gallbladder. She was given Pulsatilla homeopathic medicine according to her constitution after analyzing the case. She show improvement with the treatment and got relief from the previous complaints. Later her investigation reports show no abnormality. The outcome was assessed by USG ^[20]. In a RCT of Menopausal symptoms in breast cancer survivors with homeopathic treatment. Here 83 women were selected who fulfils the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Individualized homeopathic remedy were given after evaluation of each subject. The subjects were randomized into 3 groups Patients were seen homeopathic physician every two months for 1 year. There was evidence of homeopathic drug proving in subjects. The outcome was measured by hot flash frequency, KMI index and SF-36. Improvement was seen in overall general health especially in subjects who doesn't take tamoxifen ^[21]. A prospective single arm observational study was conducted for 2 years at Homoeopathic Research Foundation, Lucknow for 1 year of women with polycystic ovarian syndrome. 100 cases were enrolled out of whic 38 women were selected who fulfils the inclusion and exclusion criteria. All the patients undergo USG to confirm the diagnosis of PCOS, all the patients were given homeopathic medicine based on their constitution after proper repertorization of the cases. Follow up was done once for every month. The primary outcome was measured by QOL, PCOSQ for every 3 months for 12 months, and the secondary outcome was assessed by investigations such as FSH, LH, TSH and USG etc. Homeopathic medicines like calcarea carbonica, lycopodium clavatum, natrium muriaticum, pulsatilla, nux vomica, staphysagria were prescribed. The study shows significant results in the management of PCOS with homeopathic medicines ^[22].

CONCLUSION:

In all the previous articles, the authors discuss about the importance and efficacy of constitutional homeopathic medicines in treating many clinical conditions and treating even incurable diseases in a harmless way. This review concludes that there is clear evidence that homeopathic constitutional treatment is effective and useful in treating a number of clinical conditions without harming the sick individuals.

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10.ABBREVIATIONS:

Sr. No.	Abbreviations	Full form
1	RCTs	Randomized Control Trials
2	VAS	Visual Analogue Scale
3	PCOS	Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome
4	PCOSQ	Polycystic Ovary Syndrome Health Related Quality of Life
5	USG	Ultra-Sonography
6	KOH test	Potassium hydroxide test
7	SCORAD	Scoring Atopic Dermatitis
8	MONARCH	Modified Naranjo Criteria for Homoeopathy
9	KMI	Kupperman Menopausal Index
10	SF-36	Short form 36
11	WHOQOL - Bref	World Health Organization Quality of Life
12	LH	Luteinising Hormone
13	FSH	Follicular Stimulating Hormone
14	TSH	Thyroid Stimulating Hormone
15	UTI	Urinary Tract Infection