



ROLE OF HOMOEOPATHY IN ALCOHOLISM

Homeopathy

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ABSTRACT

Alcohol consumption in higher amount is important risk factor for many health factors. Heavy alcohol drinking is an underlying cause for more than 30 conditions. Homoeopathic mode can help augment one's will power, help in ease, beat one's craving for alcohol, also strengthens the person's overall mindset and constitution. Homoeopathic system of medicine is based on individualization and homoeopathic remedy is selected on the basis of person's personality, temperament, sensitivities and idiosyncrasies. It has the potential to reinforce individual physically and psychologically, while help him to overcome the problem of alcohol use and also giving up the habit of drinking.

KEYWORDS

1. INTRODUCTION

Alcohol dependence is a common problem of modern society and is associated with other risk factors and co-morbidities. Individuals addicted to alcohol many not abstain themselves from drinking due to craving and apprehension of complaints associated with withdrawal, even though they want to do so.

Studies show that abrupt cessation of prolonged, sustained ethanol intake leads to Acute Alcohol Withdrawal (AAW). About 50% of alcohol dependent patients develop clinically relevant symptoms of withdrawal.

Management includes assessment of the severity of the patients symptoms and treatment of withdrawal symptoms with pharmacological and non-pharmacological approaches.

In that, Homoeopathy is holistic system of medicine that is showing good results in treating cases of alcohol intoxication and other disorders related to alcohol abuse.

2. Effects of Alcohol on Body

Alcohol affects everyone. How it affects you depends on, how much you drink, your health, your age and other factors.

Drinking too much can lead to harmful short term and long term effects. It can affect your physical and mental health, your job, your fitness, your family and your community.

3. Blood Alcohol Levels

The level of alcohol in your blood is called 'Blood Alcohol Concentration' (BAC). A BAC of 0.01 means there is 0.01 g of alcohol in 100 ml of your blood.

Short term effects of alcohol on body -

BAC up to 0.05 -

- Feeling of wellbeing.
- Talkative, relax and more confident.

BAC 0.05 to 0.08 -

- Impaired judgment and movement.
- Reduced inhibitions.

BAC 0.08 to 0.15 -

- Slurred speech.
- Impaired balance, co-ordination, vision and reflexes.
- Unstable emotions.
- Nausea and vomiting.

BAC 0.15 to 0.30 -

- Unable to walk without help.
- Sleepy.
- Difficulty breathing.
- Memory loss.
- Loss of bladder control.
- Possible loss of consciousness.

BAC over 0.30 -

- Coma
- Death

In short term effects, drinking too much alcohol can also lead to -

- Accidental injury (to yourself or others).
- Being in a road accident.
- Deliberately harming yourself or others.
- Family, domestic and sexual violence.
- Alcohol poisoning.
- Hangovers

Long Term Effects -

- Mental health issues, such as increase risk of suicide.
- Substance abuse - you may become dependent to alcohol, especially if you have depression, anxiety or a family history of alcohol dependence.
- Increase risk of diabetes and weight gain.
- Impotence and other problem with sexual performance.
- Cancer - such as, stomach, bowel, breast, mouth, throat, oesophageal and liver cancer.
- Fertility issues such as, reduced sperm count and reduced testosterone levels in men.
- Brain damage, stroke and dementia.
- Heart issues - Hypertension, heart damage and attacks.
- Cirrhosis of liver and liver failure.

Social and Financial Problems -

- Alcohol can reduce your inhibitions and lead you to behave in a way you normally wouldn't.
- You may commit crime, behave in an antisocial way or do something embarrassing.
- It can affect your friendship, work and family.

Immune System -

- Drinking too much can weaken your immune system, making your body a much easier target for disease.

Eye -

Nystagmus, weakness and paralysis of eye muscle due to deficiency of Vit. B₁ (thiamine).

4. Causes of Alcoholism

I. Biological Factors

- Alcoholism runs in families of alcoholics become alcoholic about 4 times more than those of non-alcoholics.
- Co-morbid psychiatric disorder or personality disorder.
- Co-morbid medical disorders.
- Withdrawal effects and craving.

II. Biochemical Factors

A genetically determined deficiency of brain neurotransmitters (endorphins) predisposes an individual to alcoholism

III. Psychological Factors

- Curiosity

- Early imitation of alcohol and tobacco.
- Poor, impulse control.
- Low self esteem.
- Concerns regarding personal autonomy.
- Poor stress management skills.
- Childhood trauma or loss.
- Relief from fatigue and boredom.
- Escape from reality.
- Psychological distress.

IV. Social Factors

- Peer pressure, often more important than parental factors.
- Modeling, imitating behavior of important others.
- Ease of availability.
- Interfamilial conflicts.
- Religious reasons.
- Poor social and family support.
- Rapid urbanization.

5. Role of Homoeopathy

Homoeopathy today is a rapidly growing system and is being practiced all over the world. Its strength lies in its evident effectiveness as it takes the holistic approach towards the sick individual through promotion of inner balance of mental, emotional, spiritual and physical levels.

When 'alcohol use disorder' is concerned there are many effective medicines available in Homoeopathy, but the selection depends upon the individuality of the patient, considering his mental and physical symptoms.

According to Aphorism 221, of the 6th edition of the Organon of Medicine, acute mental diseases like insanity caused by abuse of spirituous liquors that causes transient latent Psora explosion is treated by acute remedies. These diseases are due to Psoric miasm (inflammation) in the primary stages and later may end up in Syphilitic miasm (Destruction).

6. Important Homoeopathic Remedies for Alcoholism -

1. Sulphuric Acid

- Sulphuric acid is one of the top remedies for alcoholism.
- The patient experiences heart burn, sour eructation's and sour vomiting.
- Craving for alcohol is important symptom of this remedy.
- It is prescribed when water causes coldness of stomach.
- The patient experiences relax feeling in stomach which relieved by heal application.
- Aversion to smell of coffee.

2. Nux Vomica

- Nux Vomica is prescribed when there is giddiness and restlessness after alcohol drinking.
- Heavy vomiting after drinking.
- The patient experiences nausea and trembling after drinking.
- Nervousness due to drinking wine.
- Nux Vomica patients are frightened by little noise and spring up at night with dreadful dreams.
- These patients have tendency to envy and jealousy.
- They commit suicide by shooting or stabbing.

3. China Officinalis

- China removes the craving for alcohol in drunkards who wish to reform.
- There is internal coldness of stomach and abdomen.
- Liver and spleen enlarged.
- Patient experiences flatulence and there is belching of bitter fluid or regurgitation of food, gives no relief.

4. Sulphur

- Sulphur should be tried when China fails.
- The patient has great desire to drink alcohol all the time, wants to drink from morning till evening or till awake.
- There is complete loss of appetite and very weak and faint feeling in stomach at about 11 a.m., must have something to eat.

5. Arsenic Album

- Arsenic Album stops the craving for alcohol and helps in reducing the ill effects of excessive alcoholism.
- Arsenic patient experiences great anxiety, restlessness and fear of

- death.
- There is delirium tremors.

6. Lachesis

- Lachesis patients are ill natured, inclined to violent crimes.
- Vindictive, Jealous, envious, incline to kill others.
- Talkativeness before and during drunkenness.

7. Apocynum Cannabinum

- Effective for curing great craving of alcohol.
- The patients are low spirited and experiences anxiety and depression.
- There is severe nausea and vomiting.
- The patient experiences difficulty in passing urine and it takes long time.
- The urine is hot, turbid and mixed with thick mucus and burning in urethra after urinating.

8. Avena Sativa

- It is prescribed for sleeplessness and nervousness in drunkards.
- It takes away the longing for alcohol.

9. Coffea Cruda

- Coffea is effective for headache due to alcoholism.
- Headache as if nails were driven into the head worse in open air.
- It also effective for sleeplessness and convulsions due to alcohol.

10. Gelsemium

- Gelsemium is prescribed when nervous symptoms are predominant in alcoholics.
- There is excessive trembling and weakness of all limbs.
- Patient experiences lack of muscular coordination.

11. Strychnium Nitricum

- It removes the craving for alcohol in any form.

12. Sterculia

- An effective remedy for alcoholism.
- It promotes the appetite and digestion and lessens the craving for alcohol.

13. Quercus Robur

- The most effective and specific remedy for alcoholism.

Quercus Robur

1. Family - Fagaceae

2. Common Names

English Oak, Common Oak, Tanner's bark.

3. Parts Used

Dried bark and branches, trunk and shoots, dried leaves and seed kernels with seed coats removed, also bark and galls.

4. History

The genus name Quercus comes from a Celtic word 'quer' meaning 'fine', 'cua' meaning tree.

Numerous references are made to its cooling action and it was used internally or externally for inflammation. It is known as one of the best remedy for inflammation of eye.

It was implicated for use in exhausting night sweat and fever. It was also said to have cooling effect on liver.

Reference to its use in urinary system and upon kidney function is present in historical text, where the acorn power taken in wine was said to promote urine.

The bark to cause weak stimulation of the renal and lower urinary system and act as tonic on kidney. Water found in hollow spaces of old oaks was said to be effectual against the spreading of foul scabs.

A decoction applied to ulcerations with unhealthy, fetid discharges or spongy granulation or for the treatment of gangrene. It was also known to act as a tonic upon the

An affinity for treatment of the oral cavity is noted with reference to its

use in cases of bleeding of the mouth, ulcerated and putrid sore throat.

A wash of oak bark was also used for prolapsed rectum, where a portion of bowels protrudes from anus.

Quercus robur additionally played a role in convalescence and was used in incidences of great exhaustion of vital organs.

5. Actions

- Astringent
- Tonic
- Antiseptic
- Anti oxidant
- Anti inflammatory
- Anti-viral
- Haemostatic

6. Clinical Outcome Studies

No clinical human studies have been conducted on Quercus robur as of this time.

7. Indications

- Diarrhea
- Dysentery
- Tonsillitis
- Haemorrhoids
- Leucorrhoea
- Eczema/dermatitis
- Hemorrhage
- Hepatoprotective

Quercus species exhibited strong antiproliferative effect against t-HSC/CI-6 cells than the reference silymarin suggesting its potential for being developed into antihepatic fibrosis food or medicine. In the same year, Singh and Bisht investigated in vivo hepato-protective activity of the root extract of Quercus and clearly shown the positive effective of the ethanolic extract at the dose of 300 mg/kg in comparison to the reference silymarin. Similarly, it was stated that the administration of 300 mg/kg of Quercus extract displayed protective effect against bisphenol A-induced hepatotoxicity by restoring hepatic inflammation towards normal.

Other studies performed by Toori investigated the hepatoprotective effects of acorn extracts on carbon tetrachloride induced liver damage in rats. Their analysis showed that the aqueous extract at 250 and 500 mg/kg displayed excellent hepatoprotective potential, indicating that this solvent is better alternative, with no toxic effects.

In addition, several studies have shown that Quercus species exhibited hepatoprotective effect.

According to John Henry Clarke Quercus is one of the Rademacher's Splenic remedies. It was introduced to homoeopathic practice by Burnett, who published in his diseases of spleen, a translation of Rademacher's account of the remedy and how he came to learn about it.

Rademacher gave the tincture of acorns to an old brandy drunkard who had long suffered from the spleen, which was at times very painful, and who was at times 'sick up to death' with ascites and dropsy of the legs.

The urine at once increased, but the patient complained that each dose of the medicine caused constriction of the chest. This led Rademacher to prepare a distilled spirit, and finally the Aqua, as the milder preparation, which they proved to be for the remedy completely cured the patient without causing further constriction of the chest. In the course of cures of spleen cases, Rademacher noticed that not only was the flow of urine increased, there was also, especially in old spleen engorgements, an eliminative diarrhea get decrease generally.

Another observation was this, certain few people feel, as soon as they have taken it, a peculiar sensation in the head, lasting barely a minute or two, which they say is like being drunk. This put Burnett on the track of another use of this remedy, which he elaborated in his, 'Gout and its cure' in the treatment of alcoholism and its effects.

8. CONCLUSION

From above we come to conclusion that Homoeopathy has many

effective remedies for alcoholism among which Quercus plays an important role and seems to be specific remedy for such cases.

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