



## A CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE AND EXPERIENCE ON THE SCOPE OF HOMEOPATHY IN THE MANAGEMENT OF COVID-19

Dr Vijay Parasharam Pawar,<sup>1\*</sup> Dr Dilip Nana Kadam,<sup>2</sup> Dr Prashant Manik Patil,<sup>3</sup> Dr Devendra Sheshrao Patil,<sup>4</sup> Dr Sharad Nana Kedar,<sup>5</sup> Dr Sawani Sameer Yarnalkar<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>BHMS MD, Head and Associate Professor, Department of Surgery and Homoeopathic Therapeutics, Sharadchandraji Pawar Homoeopathic Medical College, Shrirampur, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

<sup>2</sup>BHMS, MD, Professor and Head, Department of Homeopathic Pharmacy, SJSHMC Kopergaon, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

<sup>3</sup>BHMS, MD, PhD (Scholar), Associate Professor, Department of Pathology and Microbiology, Merchant Homoeopathic Medical College, Mehsana, Gujarat

<sup>4</sup>BHMS, MD, Principal and Professor, Department of Homeopathic Materia Medica, VIHMC, Sangamner, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

<sup>5</sup>BHMS MD, Associate Professor, Department of Organon of Medicine, Sharadchandraji Pawar Homoeopathic Medical College Shrirampur, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

<sup>6</sup>BHMS MD, Principal, Professor, Department of Organon of Medicine, Rashtrasant Janardhan Swami Homoeopathic Medical College and Research Centre, Kopergao, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra

**Corresponding Author: Dr Vijay Parasharam Pawar**

Email id: [drvijayppawar@gmail.com](mailto:drvijayppawar@gmail.com)

**Article Received: 17/04/2022, Article Accepted: 15/05/2022, Article Published: 12/06/2022** How To Cite: Pawar VP, Kadam DN, Patil PM, Patil DS, Kedar SN. A clinical perspective and experience on the scope of homeopathy in the management of COVID-19. International Research Journal Of Pharmacy, 2022, 13:06:7-11. DOI: 10.32937/2230-8407.3728

### ABSTRACT

COVID-19 or coronavirus disease is a disease with high infectivity that was first reported in Wuhan, China in 2019. It was later declared a pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO) owing to its global spread. COVID-19 led to a high mortality rate worldwide. To date, no specific treatment has been available to combat COVID-19. Considering this. Prevention of the infection spread is the only acceptable approach widely accepted by all the major health agencies including the WHO along with immunity strengthening as subjects with compromised immunity are considered the compatible host for the virus causing COVID-19. Homeopathic medicine has an established and wide clinical experience as immune boosting medicine and in the prevention of various viral infections.

For preventing the spread of various diseases including Fever, dengue, Japanese Encephalitis, Chikungunya, and/or cholera, The Genus Epidemicus has been used and reported to have good results. Considering the clinical success of homeopathy in these severe infectious diseases, the role of homeopathic medicine as an adjunct to standard care should be assessed in the management and treatment of COVID-19 infection. The ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) has recommended the use of Arsenicum album – 30 in the prevention of COVID-19 and suggested its possible role in combating the disease. However, there are scarce data in the literature concerning the efficacy of homeopathy in the COVID-19 infection. Hence, the present review aims to fill the knowledge gap in the role of homeopathy in the prevention of COVID-19 which will also form the basis for further research and studies.

**Keywords:** Arsenicum album, COVID-19, homeopathy, immunity, SARS-CoV-2.

### INTRODUCTION

COVID-19 or coronavirus disease is caused by SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2) and is a disease with a high infection rate and

mortality. It was first reported in Wuhan, China in 2019 and later spread to various countries affecting a large human population, and was declared a pandemic by WHO in 2020.<sup>1</sup> In a short span following its

identification, COVID-19 spread across 210 countries and territories across the globe. COVID-19 affects the respiratory system and infection is spread via saliva discharge or aerosols and droplets released from the mouth or nose during the cough or sneeze of the COVID-19-affected subject.<sup>2</sup>

The clinical profile of the coronavirus disease varies largely owing to the infection by the different variants and the emergence of new variants of the virus. However, considering the literature evidence available to date, the majority of the subjects affected with COVID-19 develop only mild to moderate symptoms after an incubation period varying from 1 day to as long as 14 days, and these subjects recover without any specific treatment.<sup>3</sup> Also, a herd of COVID-19-affected subjects remains asymptomatic. These asymptomatic subjects can still spread the infection and are the active carriers of the disease. Also, these asymptomatic subjects can lead to the progression of the disease. The disease can affect all subjects of every age. However, the elderly subjects of age >60 years and the subjects with underlying systemic diseases including diabetes, cancer, immune disorders, tuberculosis, etc. are at higher risk of developing the disease with poor treatment outcomes and adverse systemic effects.<sup>4,5</sup>

The most commonly seen symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, sore throat, itching throat, pain in the throat, and dry cough. The other symptoms seen less commonly are runny nose, diarrhea, shortness of breath, headache, and/or body aches. These symptoms are absent in the asymptomatic disease carriers. Hence, to reach a definitive diagnosis of COVID-19 diseases, laboratory testing is needed that assess the presence of the virus in the samples and the antibodies specific to the disease produced as a response to the infection.<sup>6,7</sup>

The RT-PCR is used in the initial screening of COVID-19 as it detects the RNA (Ribonucleic acid) of the coronavirus, and hence, confirms its diagnosis. The confirmatory test identifies the active infection or the recent infection with COVID-19. The RT-PCR is done on the sputum samples or the nasopharyngeal swabs of the subjects affected with COVID-19. In addition to the RT-PCR, serological tests for specific antibodies are useful for both population surveillance and the diagnosis of COVID-19 disease during the late stages of the infection.<sup>8</sup>

### **Treating the COVID-19**

Recently, there are no specific and established guidelines for treating COVID-19, and the vaccines are

in their preliminary stage with no established safety and efficacy. However, many trials are undergoing for assessment of the different potential treatment strategies for COVID-19. With the global focus on the response to the COVID-19 infection and possible treatment, WHO issued some guidelines to prevent the infection spread and to minimize exposure including the quarantine following assessment of the infected subject, boosting the immunity, use of PPE (personal protective equipment), respiratory hygiene, and personal hygiene.<sup>9</sup> During the outbreak of the Ebola virus infection in 2014, the expert WHO group recommend it was ethical to use interventions that were still not proven, and the drugs whose adverse effects and efficacy are not known yet as the prevention treatment with potential efficacy considering that no particular treatment was established and no specific vaccine was available for the disease.<sup>10</sup>

### **Role of Homeopathic medicine in COVID-19**

The role of homeopathy in the prevention of various diseases is well established for many years and various diseases including viral diseases. In history, homeopathy has gained popularity after it has shown promising results in treating various epidemics including scarlet fever, leptospirosis, Spanish influenza, Diphtheria, Yellow fever, typhoid, cholera, and many more.<sup>11</sup>

The concept of prevention and treatment of epidemic diseases was first propagated by Samuel Hahnemann in the Organon of Medicine 5th edition in aphorism 102—the whole extent of such an epidemic disease and the totality of its symptoms (the knowledge whereof, which is essential for enabling us to choose the most suitable homeopathic remedy for this array of symptoms, is obtained by a complete survey of the morbid picture)... is ... ascertained from the sufferings of several patients of different constitutions.<sup>12,13</sup>

The GE (Genus Epidemics) is the treatment selected by observation of the many subjects having the epidemic disease and after assessing the symptoms among those subjects concerning the medicine which is most commonly prescribed for the disease. It was also suggested that recently past Genus Epidemicus has been used during the outbreaks of various epidemics including Dengue fever, Japanese Encephalitis, Chikungunya, and Cholera with clinically acceptable outcomes. The benefits of using homeopathic medicine in controlling these epidemics are well-established by Isaac Golden in 2019.<sup>14</sup>

The literature data reported the efficacy of homeopathy in 1918-1919 during the Spanish flu endemic that had high mortality as data reported nearly 20 million deaths globally by the Spanish flu. The study by Winston J et al in 1999<sup>15</sup> reported significantly lesser mortality rates of 1% to 2% in subjects treated with the homeopathic treatment in comparison to mortality rates of 50%-60% in subjects that were treated with conventional management strategies.<sup>16</sup>

In a clinical study approved by the CCRH (Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy), subjects having Dengue hemorrhagic fever that was given homeopathic treatment showed an early increase in the platelet counts and lesser duration of the hospital stay by 2 days.<sup>17</sup> In a similar manner, for Japanese Encephalitis/Acute Encephalitis Syndrome, homeopathy, when used as an adjunct to the conventional treatment protocol, has been reported to reduce the mortality rates by 15% compared to the subjects that received only the conventional treatment and care.<sup>18</sup> In these literature studies, no adverse effects/side effects were observed.

Keeping in mind, the success of homeopathic medicine in various viral diseases, the role of homeopathy as an adjunct to conventional treatment should be considered for managing the COVID-19 subjects. The AYUSH (Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy) health advisory against the COVID-19 infection includes a homeopathic treatment medicine, namely, Arsenicum album – 30. Arsenicum album – 30 is found effective in preventing various flu-like diseases like coronavirus infection. CCRH scientific advisory board suggested the use of Arsenicum album – 30 in preventing influenza-like diseases. It is considered that Arsenicum album – 30 is a commonly prescribed homeopathic medicine in subjects having respiratory infections in routine homeopathy practice.<sup>19,20</sup>

The pharmacology of the Arsenicum album – 30 as a component of various formulations has been reported to have their action on human macrophages and HT29 cells. Arsenicum album – 30 has also been reported to have an inhibitory action on the hyperactivity of NF- $\kappa$ B that cause the reduced expression of the GFP gene in transfecting the HT29 cells and inhibits the release of TNF- $\alpha$  in the macrophages.<sup>21</sup>

Like prevention, homeopathic medicine is utilized in flu-like symptoms and has results that are trusted for a long time including Bryonia, Phosphorus, Arsenicum, and Gelsemium. These homeopathic medicines should

be assessed as the treatment protocol drugs in subjects having COVID-19 infection. This should be followed considering the basic Homeopathy principles and holistic therapy along with the other standards of care advised currently for the management of the subjects having COVID-19 infection.<sup>22</sup>

After the advisory of the AYUSH ministry suggested the inclusion of homeopathic medicine in treating subjects with COVID-19 infection, especially the Arsenicum Album 30. A significant increase in the demand for Arsenicum Album 30 to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infection. In the year, 2020, various literature data processed by authors having considerable experience suggested prescribing the homeopathic medicine, Arsenicum Album 30. Arsenicum Album 30 was suggested by Parikh N and Parikh D to >100 families having more than 400 members with no symptoms of COVID-19. However, many of these subjects were under homeopathic treatment for other ailments including diabetes mellitus, hypertension, and bronchial asthma. The authors suggested using the Arsenicum Album 30 for more than 6 weeks as a preventive measure for COVID-19. The authors reported that till complete follow-up, no subjects reported any symptoms of COVID-19 or reported to have developed COVID-19. Also, the published list of subjects having COVID-19 was checked, and the name of no study subject was seen in the list. Also, no subject reported any side-effect related to Arsenicum Album 30.<sup>23</sup>

The literature data concerning the efficacy of homeopathic management in boosting immunity and preventing various viral infections are established in the clinical field with numerous years of experience concerning their use. The use of homeopathic medicine for managing various virus infections has been well established. However, the mechanism of action for this homeopathic medicine at the molecular level is poorly understood and needs a reverse and proper pharmacological study for their assessment.<sup>24</sup>

Homeopathic medicine in managing flu-like diseases is proven to be clinically efficacious with many years of experience and similar results were shown by the study of Parikh N and Parikh D in 2020 concerning COVID-19 infection during the assessment period of 8 weeks to 12 weeks.<sup>25</sup>

WHO suggested the best way to prevention of COVID-19 is to avoid contact with the affected subject and follow the social distancing protocols. Also, to get

better prevention from the COVID-19 pandemic, immunity enhancement, personal hygiene, and good health play a vital role while following the routine daily life along with COVID-19 present in the environment. Further assessment of the role of homeopathic medicine in the prevention and management of COVID-19 owing to the lack of data as limited and needs to be researched in the long-term including more subjects.<sup>26</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Owing to the non-availability of specific treatment modalities and short-term results of vaccines against COVID-19, an experience-based use of homeopathic medicine should be utilized in addition to the multidisciplinary management strategies. However, even in the preliminary data, the use of homeopathic medicine in COVID-19 has shown promising results concerning disease prevention. However, further randomized controlled clinical trials with a larger sample size and longer monitoring periods are needed to reach a definitive conclusion on the efficacy of homeopathic medicine in COVID-19.

## REFERENCES

1. Society of Homeopaths: Coronavirus COVID- 19. Last accessed on 15th April 2020 at: <https://homeopathy-soh.org/coronavirus-covid-19>.
2. Bellavite P, Signorini A, Marzotto M, Moratti E, Bonafini C, Oliosio D. Cell sensitivity, non-linearity, and inverse effects. *Homeopathy*, 2015;104:139-60.
3. Gupta J, Rao MP, Raju K, Prasad RVR, Arya JS, Mondal BK et al. Management of early years of simple and mucopurulent chronic bronchitis with pre-defined homeopathic medicines – a Prospective Observational Study with 2-Years Follow Up; *International Journal of High Dilution Research*. 2019;18:47-62.
4. Chakraborty PS, Lamba CD, Nayak D, John MD, Sarkar DB, et al. Effect of individualized homeopathic treatment in influenza-like illness: A multicenter, single-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study. *Indian J of Research in Homoeopathy*. 2013;7:1.
5. Mathie RT, Baitson ES, Frye J, Nayak C, Manchanda RK, Fisher P. Homeopathic treatment of patients with influenza-like illness during the 2009 A/H1N1 influenza pandemic in India. *Homeopathy*. 2013;102:187-92.
6. Press Information Bureau, Government of India. Advisory for Coronavirus. Last accessed on 12th April 2020 at: <https://pib.gov.in/pressreleasepage.aspx?prid=1600895>.
7. World Health Organization. Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) advice for the public. Accessed on 10th April 2020 at: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
8. Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Testing for COVID-19. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Updated 2020 April 13]. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>
9. Cascella M, Rajnik M, Cuomo A, et al. Features, Evaluation and Treatment Coronavirus (COVID-19) [Updated 2020 Mar 20]. In: *StatPearls* [Internet]. Treasure Island (FL): StatPearls Publishing; 2020. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK554776/>
10. Cucinotta D, Vanelli M. WHO Declares COVID-19 a Pandemic. *Acta Biomed*. 2020;91:157–60.
11. Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Pandemic: Last accessed on 15th April 2020 at: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
12. Teixemann S. *Organon of Medicine*. Aphorism 102. 5th ed. New Delhi: B Jain Publishers, 2004.
13. Harilal KN, Thyagaraj AP, Thomas MV, Suresh AT. Development of Homoeopathic Genus Epidemicus for Secondary Level Prevention of Dengue Virus Infection at Kannur, Kerala. Last accessed on 15th April 2020 at: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326742719>
14. Golden I. Large Scale Homoeoprophylaxis: Results of Brief and Long-Term Interventions. *AJHM* 112-1 Spring, 2019; 31.
15. Winston J. *The Faces of Homoeopathy*. Wellington, New Zealand: Great Auk Publishing, 1999.
16. Dewey WA. Homeopathy in Influenza—A chorus of fifty in harmony. *Journal of the American Institute of Homeopathy*. 1920-21;13:1038-43.
17. Homeopathic Perspectives in COVID-19 Coronavirus Infection- Fact Sheet. Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy. Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. 2020. Last accessed on 15th April 2020 at: <https://www.ccrhindia.nic.in/showimg.aspx?ID=15677>.
18. Nayak D, Chadha V, Jain S, Nim P, Sachdeva J, Sachdeva G, et al. Effect of Adjuvant Homeopathy

- with Usual Care in Management of Thrombocytopenia Due to Dengue: A Comparative Cohort Study. *Homeopathy*, 2019;108:150-7.
19. Oberai P, Varanasi R, Padmanabhan M, Upadhyaya A, Singh S, Singh SP. Effectiveness of Homeopathic Medicines as Addon to Institutional Management Protocol for Acute Encephalitis Syndrome in Children: An Open-Label Randomized PlaceboControlled Trial. *Homeopathy*, Aug 2018;107:161-71.
  20. World Health Organization. Ethical considerations for use of unregistered interventions for Ebola virus disease (EVD) Last accessed on 11th March 2020 at: <https://www.who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2014/ebola-ethical-review-summary/en/>
  21. Jacobs J. Homeopathic Prevention and Management of Epidemic Diseases. *Homeopathy*, 2018;107:157-60.
  22. Rapid Action Epidemic Control Cell Homeopathy (RAECH), Kerala. Last accessed on 15th April 2020 at <http://www.homeopathy.kerala.gov.in/index.php/services/raech> from:
  23. Parikh N and Parikh D. Role of Homeopathy in Covid-19 Management- A Clinical Experience. *World J Pharm Res.* 2020;9:2459-66.
  24. Lockie A. Complete guide to homeopathy. Second Edition Edn Dorling Kindersley New York 2000.
  25. Ministry of Ayush Guidelines for homeopathic practitioners for covid-19, <https://www.ayush.gov.in/docs/homeopathy-guidelines.pdf>
  26. Role of homeopathy in covid-19 management-a clinical experience article in World journal of pharmaceutical research. may 2020 doi: 10.20959/wjpr20205-17504 citation 1 reads 3,205