

Review Article

Homoeopathic Treatment of Primary Insomnia – A Case Study

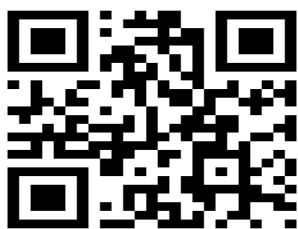
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ABSTRACT

Insomnia is a disorder during which interruption between sleep is observed and quality of sleep is disturbed. Insomnia is complex and often difficult to relieve because physiological parameters keep changing with age. Insomnia can also affect productivity in work and increase motor vehicles accidents and rate of hospitalisation. Loss of productivity can affect cost estimates even after being the commonest disorder where 30-40% of sleep disorder is occupied by primary insomnia. There is no definitive therapy for management and using psychological and pharmacological drugs for the treatment may cause habituation and withdrawal symptoms. Many homoeopaths advocate the use of homoeopathy for such illnesses as homoeopathic drugs cause no harm and no dependency is developed. Insomnia in Homoeopathy can be considered as part of clinical picture and can be used as the effective management for insomnia.

Keywords: primary insomnia, sleeplessness, homoeopathy



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INTRODUCTION

Insomnia can be defined as an individual's report of difficulty with sleep. Normal sleep duration varies considerably within the general population. (e.g., irritability, intermittent wakefulness, fatigue, concentration issues, and many more).

There are two types of insomnia 1. Primary insomnia 2. Secondary insomnia

Primary insomnia isn't directly linked to other health conditions or problems. The diagnostic criteria for primary insomnia is introduced briefly by the Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders, fourth edition, text revision (DSM-IV-TR).¹

Primary insomnia caused by fatigue, extreme heat or cold, lack of exercise, caffeine or alcohol use before bedtime, job shift changes, high altitudes, environmental noise, daytime napping.¹

Etiology of insomnia: Stress, Disturbed travel or work schedule, Poor sleep habits, Poor sleep habits, Eating too much late in the evening, Mental health disorders, Anxiety disorders, Medications, Medical conditions, Sleep-related disorders, Caffeine, nicotine and alcohol, Coffee, tea, cola, Alcohol²

Signs and symptoms: Insomnia commonly interferes with personal relationships, job performance, and daily functions and is associated with the following symptoms: Difficulty falling or staying asleep, Non restorative sleep—individuals feel that sleep is unrefreshing or of poor quality, Waking up during night, Waking up too early, Not feeling well rested after a night sleep, Daytime fatigue and/or sleepiness, Difficulty concentrating and remembering, Changes in mood can make person feel —irritable,

anxious, depressed, low at motivation and energy .

Diagnostic criteria for Primary Insomnia

A. the most dominant complaint is issues in initiating or maintaining sleep, or non-restorative sleep, for a minimum of 1 month.

B. The sleep disturbance (or associated daytime fatigue) causes clinically significant distress or impairment in social, occupational, or other essential planes of working of a person.

C. The sleep disturbance doesn't appear during the course of Narcolepsy, Breathing-Related Disorder, Biological time Disorder, or Parasomnia.

D. The disturbance doesn't occur exclusively during the course of another mental disorder (e.g., Major clinical depression , Generalized mental disorder , a delirium).

E. The disturbance is not directly linked to physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or a general medical condition¹

Consequences of insomnia: Thanks to its chronicity, insomnia is related to substantial impairments in an individual's quality of life. In multiple studies, insomniacs reported decreased quality of life on virtually all dimensions of which assesses 8 domains:

1) Physical functioning: Puffy eyes, dark circles, dizziness, slow decision-making (or poor decision making), dry eyes, headaches, nausea. These are just a small picture of consequences a person may have the day after just one sleepless night.

2) Role limitation due to physical health problems (role physical)

3) Bodily pain

4) General health perceptions

5) Vitality

6) Social functioning

7) Role limitations due to emotional health problems (role emotional)

8) Mental health.

If you accumulate a series of sleepless nights, the sleep debt you create by under-sleeping on a regular basis gets worse up to the point where you can't ever wholly repay

your body the sleep it demands to run properly throughout. Chronic insomnia like this invites more serious health problems beyond the short-term side effects of a single night without the wholesome sleep. Researchers have found that chronic, ongoing or intermittent insomnia may have an effect on different planes of human functioning , including the nervous system, immunity, the endocrine system (hormones), and cardiovascular health (the heart). Untreated insomnia can put you in a higher-risk category for heart condition. Under-sleeping can also contribute to the severity of existing conditions like Heart Disease, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure, Stroke Attention, concentration, and focus problems, Difficulty reasoning and making decisions, Learning difficulties, Memory impairment, Mental health and mood swings. Sleep is a crucial part of regulating mood. Not getting enough sleep may trigger psychiatric problems and mood disorders and worsen the preexisting condition. Insomnia and sleep deprivation have been linked to: Anxiety, Depression, Irritability, anger, or aggression, Impulsive behavior, Low energy, Lack of motivation, Mood swings, Obesity and obesity-related health problems. Sleep plays a role in your body's balance of hunger hormones (ghrelin and leptin) and insulin.³

Treatment: Common conventional treatment include sedating anti- histamines, Hypnotics, cognitive behavior therapy, behavioral therapy etc. But hypnotics cause side effects like drowsiness especially during the day time, constipation, headache etc. & they may also make patients dependent on their use after using for a long period. Homoeopathy is an old yet more validated and advanced science which deals with patients as a whole. Though different scattered opinions can be observed it is essential for a homoeopath to look upon a case in depth and deal with the patient accordingly.

CASE PRESENTATION

A fifty year old female patient consulted us on 21-08-2021 for the treatment of sleeplessness followed by day time fatigue

and hyperacidity with burning in the chest in the morning. The complaint is observed a few months after the skin eruption is gone. Difficulty in initiating sleep is observed by patients before midnight. General weakness. Breathless on ascending stairs, can hardly climb up to 2 floors after that she has to take rest for a while. No addiction to coffee, tea. No course of medication for other causes. After screening and obtaining consent, a routine physical examination of the patient was done and she was found normal. She has not taken any treatment for the same complaint previously

Personal history/ Family history

History of suppressed itching eruptions with application of ointment.

Mental and physical generals

The patient is chilly. Feels hungry but has no desire to eat, strong craving of boiled eggs

and mitti (lime) is seen, aversion to slimy food. Thirst is excessive. Mentally she explained herself as strongly fearful about high places, mice. Fear of contamination due to pandemic. She is too sensitive to horrible stories such as death of someone, cannot watch news and TV series regarding murder and crimes. The patient is timid in nature.

General Physical Examination

Height – 5’1”, Weight – 45Kgs. Anemia – Nil, Jaundice – Nil, Cyanosis – Nil, Generalized lymphadenopathy – Nil, Pulse – 76 / min, Temperature 98.40° F, Respiratory rate -16 / min, BP -120 /82 mm Hg. Tongue - clean and moist, nails – brittle

Systemic Examination

Respiratory, Gasto-intestinal, Locomotor and Nervous System are found to be normal

Analysis of symptoms:

| Complaints | Location | Sensation | Modality | Type of symptom |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Timid nature | | | | Mental general symptom |
| Fear of high places | | | | Mental general symptom |
| Fear of seeing horrible things | | | | Mental general symptom |
| Fear of covid 19 pandemic | | | | Mental general symptom |
| Generalised weakness | | | | Physical general symptom |
| Boiled egg desire | | | | Physical general symptom |
| Sleeplessness before midnight and due to thoughts crowding | | | | Physical general symptom |
| Breathing difficult | Respiratory system | breathlessness | <Ascending stairs | Complete particular symptom |
| Chest pain | Gastrointestinal system | Burning , nausea | < sleeplessness | Complete particular symptom |

Evaluation of symptoms according to Kents approach

1. Mind-Timidty
2. Mind- Fear high places of
3. Mind- Horrible things and sad stories affect her profoundly
4. Mind-fear-disease of impending-contagious-epidemic-disease of a
5. General- weakness
6. General- food and drinks-eggs- desire boiled-hard boiled
7. Sleep- sleeplessness-night-midnight-before
8. Sleep-sleeplessness-thoughts-activity of thoughts from
9. Respiration-ascending-aggravation
10. Chest-pain-burning

Reportorial totality

| Clipboard 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| 1. MIND - TIMIDTY (163.1) | 3 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2. MIND - FEAR - High places of (61.1) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| 3. MIND - HORRIBLE things, sad stories affect her profoundly (63.1) | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| 4. MIND - FEAR - disease, of impending - contagious, epidemic disease of (11.1) | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 5. GENERAL - WEAKNESS (802.1) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| 6. GENERAL - FOOD and DRINKS + eggs + desire - boiled - hard boiled (7.1) | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 7. SLEEP - SLEEPLESSNESS - night - midnight - before (172.1) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | |
| 8. SLEEP - SLEEPLESSNESS - thoughts - activity of thoughts from (179.1) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| 9. RESPIRATION + ASCENDING - egg (28.1) | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |
| 10. CHEST - PAIN - External chest - burning (48.1) | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | |

Therapeutic intervention

Detailed case taking was done as per hahnemannian guidelines of case taking given in organon of medicine followed by analysis and evaluation of the symptoms done. Totality is erected and prescription on the basis of striking mental and physical general is done.^{4,5,6}

Selection of Remedy: After repertorial analysis, strong indication of symptom similarity and with the help of materia medica, the selection of calcarea carbonica is done.

Susceptibility, posology and repetition- The pace of disease in this case shows a gradual progress with no marked structural changes in any system. The patient shows marked sensitivity on the mind level. so the sensitivity is high. Hence, the susceptibility of the patient is moderate to high. Thus, 200 potency was selected.⁴

1ST PRESCRIPTION: (21/08/2021): Calcarea carb 200 ch single dose followed by placebo for 15 days.

| Date | | Complaints | Interpretations | Prescription |
|-------------------------|---|--|-----------------|--|
| FOLLOW-UP (08/09/2021): | 1 | Difficulty in initiating sleep reduced slightly, day time fatigue slightly reduced. Breathlessness still persists. Desire for lime as it is, desire for eggs reduced slightly. Thirst normal. Fear of mice and high places not checked as the patient is not encountered with it. Sensitivity to horrible stories slightly reduced Energy improved | Improvement | placebo prescribed and follow up after 15 days |
| FOLLOW-UP (24/09/2021): | 2 | Sleep quality improved. Day time | Improvement | Placebo prescribed , follow up after 15 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|----|--|---|---|
| | | fatigue is reduced. Breathlessness reduced. Desire for lime and eggs is reduced. Less fearful about the pandemic and horrible stories. thirst and appetite normal | | days |
| FOLLOW-UP (11/10/2021): | 3: | Having good quality sleep on alternating days. Difficulty in initiating sleep. Day time fatigue appeared. Fear resurfaced after attending the funeral of a relative. cannot sleep at night due to crowding of thoughts and having nausea and hyperacidity in morning, energy levels are down slightly Thirst and appetite reduced. | The action of medicine must be disturbed due to the incident in the family, repetition in higher potency given. | Calcarea carbonica 1M 1 dose, follow up after 15 days . |
| FOLLOW-UP (27/10/2021): | 4: | thirst appetite – improved. Sleep improved but day time fatigue is as it is. Nausea and hyperacidity slightly reduced. Fear of high places is reduced. There is less difficulty in initiating sleep dues to less crowding of thoughts. | Improved | Placebo repeated for 15 days. |
| FOLLOW-UP (13/11/2021): | 5: | sleep improved, feels fresh after sleep, day time fatigue reduced . hyperacidity reduced. Fear reduced. Thirst and appetite came to normal | Improvement | Prescribed placebo and follow up after 15 days |
| FOLLOW-UP (28/11/2021): | 6: | Sleep improved feels fresh after sleep, no day time fatigue, hyperacidity reduced | Old suppressed symptoms reappeared , improvement. | Prescribed placebo and follow up after 15 days |

| | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|-------------|--|
| | . Blackish eruption over back appeared. Slightly itching over eruptions sensitivity of horrible stories reduced. Appetite and thirst normal | | |
| FOLLOW-UP 7: (13/12/2021): | Sleep improved feels fresh after sleep, no day time fatigue ,no hyperacidity , fear reduced and itching over skin eruptions reduced , size of eruptions as it is placebo for 30 days. | Improvement | Prescribed placebo and follow up after 15 days |
| FOLLOW-UP 8: (30/12/2021): | Sleep improved feels fresh after sleep, no day time fatigue, no difficulty in initiating sleep, no hyperacidity, fear reduced and itching over skin eruptions reduced, size of eruptions reduced . | Improvement | Prescribed placebo and follow up after 15 days |

Management and outcome

Patient was generally advised to

1. Listen to light music before sleeping.
2. Advice for yoga and pranayama.
3. Advice for a balanced diet.
4. Drink plenty of water.
5. Avoid use of electronic gadgets at night.
6. Avoid working overtime at late night hours.
7. Use comfortable clothes at night.
8. Observe proper ventilation in the room.

The duration of treatment was around 4 months after that patient felt better both mentally and physically and the treatment was concluded on a positive result. Patient is still in contact and has had no episode of sleeplessness for 2 months.

Discussion

Unlike homoeopathy the treatment of insomnia varies according to its duration and severity in other systems of medicine but as

in homoeopathy we do not treat the illness we treat the man. In this case the insomnia occurred after the suppression of eruption, the disease has traveled to a deeper plane, for such cases homoeopathic similimum works upon all the dimensions and provide a positive result. After taking the detailed case and studying it from every aspect calcarea carb was the most indicated medicine. There were prominent mental as well as physical generals so it was prescribed in 1M potency. No aggravation with the recovery of the patient is observed and according to Kent's 4th observation, the action of remedy is observed for a while. The case came to a standstill point after the improvement in third follow up and response was inconsistent; after re-studying the case calcarea carb in higher potency which was indicated is given. The older symptom of

skin eruptions observed again according to the hering's law of cure and kents 11th observation the prognosis of case is considered good and repetition of the medicine was not needed as the older symptoms disappeared by their own. ^{4,5,6}

CONCLUSION

Homoeopathy is useful in treating the cases of insomnia when prescribed on the basis of individualization. More study is needed to validate the result.

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