

Review Article

Homoeopathic Management of Common Cold and Cough: A Mini Review

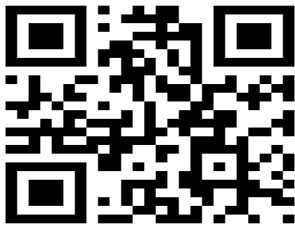
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ABSTRACT

The common cold is an acute, self-limiting viral infection of the upper respiratory tract involving the nose, sinuses, pharynx and larynx. The virus is spread by hand contact with secretions from an infected person (direct or indirect) or aerosol of the secretions and virus. The incubation period varies but is just under two days for rhinovirus. Symptoms, which generally relate to the infected mucosa, typically peak at 1–3 days and last 7–10 days, although they occasionally persist for three weeks. They include sore throat, rhinitis, rhinorrhea, cough and malaise. The severity and type of symptoms will vary among individuals and with different infective agents.

Keywords: Common cold, Homoeopathy, treatment



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Conflict of Interest: None Declared!

(Received 06 February 2024; Accepted 25 February 2024; Published 31 February 2024) ISSN: 2347-8136 ©2024 JMPI

INTRODUCTION

The common cold is a viral infection of the upper respiratory tract. It usually lasts approximately 7 days. There are more than 200 number of virus associated with it. Season of the year especially change of weather, rainy season, age group are important factors in the type of virus causing the infection.

There are no major gender or ethnicity differences in incidence. Most of the infections occur in winter period. A US study found that 23.6% of adults have experienced a cold in 4 weeks. Children get 6-8 cold per year and adults get 4-6 cold per year.

Homoeopathy is one of the effective alternative medicines available for stubborn coughs and colds. Unlike other lines of medicine, homeopathy emphasizes on understanding the underlying cause of the ailment before initiating the treatment. Every sign and symptom may require different medication.

Types of coughs

Dry: These coughs are unproductive and irritating. It usually feels like a tickle and expels

very little or no mucus.

Wet: Wet coughs are productive and they expel the mucus secreted in throat or chest.

Homeopathic approach:

For selecting a homeopathic medicine, the specialist takes an understanding of the following characteristics:

Causes

Type

Type of secretions

Aggravating and ameliorating modalities

Likes and dislikes of patients during the current episode of respiratory infection

These factors make it easy for the doctor to determine the exact remedy or medication as different types of coughs will need different remedies for treatment.

Homeopathy for cough

Nux vomica: If you experience a cough that makes you restless along with fever and chills, then Nux Vomica is ideal for you. This kind of cold and cough involves a nose block towards the night with a sore throat that might be painful

when you try to swallow.

Kali bich: This is prescribed if you have sticky, smelly mucus that fills your sinuses and hoarseness and pain at the root of the nose. You may even need to cough hard to clear your throat in such cases. Mornings can be quite troublesome since mucus accumulates overnight and blocks the nasal passages. The pain may also extend to the ear.

Bryonia: If you see symptoms like bone aches, chill-ridden fever, dry throat, constant urge to drink cold water and a hacking cough, then Bryonia may help relieve you of that pain. It is also ideal for coughs that start slowly and linger for too long or the ones that are caused due to sudden changes in weather.

Hepar Sulph: If a rattling and dry cough along with chilliness and yellow phlegm are troubling you, Hepar Sulph is the cure. You may also feel pressure on your sinus and a sore throat with splinters.

Natrum Mur: If you experience a lot of dryness accompanied with mucus that is clear but thick and a desire to eat salty foods, then Natrum Mur will help you alleviate the pain from this dry and tickling cough and congestion.

Basic advice

Avoid sugary foods and high intake of sugar as they suppress the immune system for a few hours post consumption.

Rest as much as you can to help your body recover.

Keep consuming liquids like soothing teas or lukewarm water frequently. This will help you keep the mucous membranes moist, thus releasing congestion.

Steam inhalation could provide you with the much-needed relief by soothing the inflamed airways in your nostrils. You can add some eucalyptus oil or vapor rub to the boiling water before inhaling the steam. A warm shower relaxes the body and relieves it of any aches and pains.

Smoking is a big no if you are suffering from cold or cough. The harmful smoke damages the fine hair that lines your airways and may aggravate cough.

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