

Review Article

Chikungunya and Homeopathy

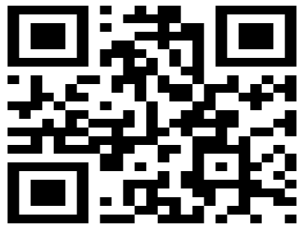
Mayuri Bhalekar and Pradeep Bisen

Guru Mishri Homoeopathic Medical College PG Institute, Shelagaon Jalna

ABSTRACT

Chikungunya is a relatively rare form of viral fever caused by an Alpha virus that is transmitted to humans by the infective bite of the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. These mosquitoes bite humans aggressively during the day. They breed in stagnant water. Pasteur Institute in Paris, in its recent research work has gathered data, which shows that this alpha virus has undergone certain transformations, called mutations, enabling its transmission by another mosquito named *Aedes albopictus*, generally referred as the Tiger Mosquito.

Keywords: Chikungunya, Homoeopathy, treatment, common medicines



QR Code for Mobile Users

(Received 02nd January 2021; Accepted 15 January 2021; Published 28 January 2021) ISSN: 2347-8136 ©2020 JMPI

Address for Correspondence:

Dr. Mayuri Bhalekar

Guru Mishri Homoeopathic Medical College PG
Institute, Shelagaon Jalna, India

Conflict of Interest: None Declared!

INTRODUCTION:

Chikungunya infection is very similar to 'Yellow Fever', which is again transmitted by the same mosquito (*Aedes aegypti*). Chikungunya is not fatal, and a person suffering from this infection is believed to develop lifelong immunity.

The origin of the term Chikungunya can be traced back to an African language 'Makonde' spoken by the 'Makonde' people, an ethnic group in Southeast Tanzania and Northern Mozambique. 'Makonde' in African language means "that which bends up" referring to the bent posture resulting from the arthritic symptoms of the disease.

Recent Outbreak

According to the WHO, chikungunya has been reported recently, from a number of countries including India and various Indian Ocean islands like the Mauritius, and Seychelles, after a period of more than 20 years. People living in these areas where the disease is endemic and travelers to these areas are at high risk.

According to a survey that took place in

September 2006 in the islands of the Indian Ocean, particularly Reunion, more than 115 travelers were reported to be infected by the Chikungunya virus. There is an increase of infection reported in India too.

Signs and symptoms

Chikungunya is rarely a life-threatening disease. Nevertheless widespread occurrence of the disease causes extensive morbidity and financial loss.

One cannot miss the prominent symptoms in a typical case of Chikungunya. After an incubation period of 3-12 days the following symptoms are noted-

High fever typically lasts for two days and may abate all of a sudden

Joints pain that are severe and often crippling
Petechiae - tiny purplish red spots on the skin or reddish measles rash usually on the extremities and upper body, associated headaches, eye infections, over sensitiveness to light, difficulty to sleep

Severe weakness over a variable period of 5-7 days after the first onset of symptoms.

Conventional Treatment

Conventional treatment offers symptomatic treatment for pain and fever using anti-inflammatory drugs, along with rest. While most cases survive the onslaught, healing can be prolonged to over a year, and the unrelenting joint pain may require medication and long-term anti-inflammatory therapy to reduce the pain.

Homeopathy Treatment

Is Homeopathy effective in treating Chikungunya?

Yes, Homeopathy is an effective therapeutic option to tackle viral fevers. The clinical symptoms of Chikungunya and other contagious illnesses occur in individuals who are susceptible to such illnesses. This susceptibility to catch an infection increases with the decreased resistance of a person. The constitutional make-up and temperament of a person affects an individual's susceptibility to illness.

A well qualified physician observes each patient minutely. He would be able to distinguish a fine, yet palpable, difference in every patient that makes him stand out from the other patients suffering from the same infection. This means that beyond the pathologic signs and symptoms that a physician detects, there exists other underlying individualizing symptoms that makes every patient unique.

A qualified homeopathic physician analyses the totality of symptoms that not only includes pathological symptoms of a disease, but also the finer emotional symptoms, which indicates disturbance at the psychological level, and other functional symptoms related to sleep, thirst, appetite and bowel movements. This totality of symptoms helps the physician to choose the remedy that best suits the patient from the *Materia Medica*. The *materia medica* is a kind of encyclopedia that lists the symptoms of all proven homeopathic remedies, which were tested on healthy human beings.

Homeopathy and Prevention

Homeopathic prophylaxis is based on the principles of practice laid down in the *Organon of medicine*. This book lays down

the governing principles of homeopathy. In it Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, the father of homeopathy, opines that a *Genus epidemicus* can be determined which will have a prophylactic action on the population in an area.

A *genus epidemicus* can be best explained as, that remedy which covers most of the symptoms that are peculiarly similar, during an epidemic. Many homeopaths, after careful consideration, selected *Eupatorium perfoliatum* as a preventive medicine or *Genus epidemicus* for Chikungunya epidemic that swept across India.

The most commonly suggested strength or potency used for prophylaxis is 200th potency of *Eupatorium perfoliatum*. According to the writings of eminent homeopaths, the homeopathic remedies useful for prophylaxis are - *Eupatorium Perfoliatum*, *Gelsemium*, *Rhus tox*, *Bryonia Alba*, *Arsalb*, *Aconite* and *Polyporus*.

Let us now look into some of the remedies that have been found effective in clearing up symptoms that surfaced during the current epidemic that swept India viciously.

Eupatorium Perfoliatum-is the most widely suited remedy in most endemic areas and is indicated when excruciating pain in the limbs and muscles is seen associated with fever. There may be severe bone pain. Perspiration relieves all complaints except headache. Much swelling of ankles and feet associated with soreness. Aching pain in bones of extremities as if they would break with soreness of flesh is marked. Patient often complains of great thirst. *Eupatorium 200* was found to be most effective

Rhus Toxicodendron-Indicated in fever with polyarthritis and maculopapular rashes. Pain and stiffness in joints, which is aggravated by first movement of joint or limb, but gets relief with further continued movement. Complaints often worsen in damp weather.

China – is indicated when pain in the limbs are severe and joints feel sprained. Patient flinches at the slightest touch. Patient complains of debilitating night sweats.

Arnica - is indicated in fevers with marked redness of body. Patient's head is intensely hot, while the rest of body remains cold. There is spate of perspiration throughout the

night. Offensiveness is a feature that is marked in patients who need this remedy. There is a lameness and soreness associated in the joints. This patient bleeds easily.

Belladonna - is very useful in high fevers when face looks besotted and flushed in the first stages of fever. Patient is thirst less during fever. Joints appear swollen and red and extremities will be cold. Patient finds slightest jar, noise or draught unbearable.

Bryonia - Patient presents with fever with a full pounding pulse with severe dryness of mouth, with excessive thirst, often constipated, severe stitching pains, which are aggravated by slightest movement.

Pyrogenum - is indicated when fever rises rapidly with marked heat over the head associated with profuse sweating. But sweating does not bring down fever. There is marked soreness and aching in limbs. Patient is very restless and loquacious.

Cedron - a remedy of choice in diseases that are native to tropics is suited to individuals with fevers, marked by chill towards evening and where there is a distinct redness and, itching in the eyes and tearing pain along the limbs.

It will be good to conclude with a word of caution. It is always wise to consult a well-qualified registered homoeopathic physician for homoeopathic treatment. A qualified homoeopath will judiciously choose the remedy of choice that would be best suited for an individual and provide medicines in the potency and dosage that is most suitable according to his judgment.

Prevention and control

There is no vaccine available against this viral infection. It is imperative to take every precaution to avoid mosquito bites and to identify the sites conducive for mosquito-breeding.

A. To avoid mosquito bites:

Use clothes that cover limbs and body sufficiently,

Use mosquito repellents in plenty,

Use mosquito nets when sleeping, even during the day.

B. To prevent mosquito breeding:

Discard stagnant water in which *Aedes* mosquitoes breed. Stagnant Water in open containers, flowerpots, coolers, tanks, drums

and buckets, and discarded open plastic food should be periodically emptied.

In some places biological vectors have also employed, like fish that feed on larvae of mosquitoes, in order to minimize mosquito breeding.

All communities of people in the endemic areas should be made aware of hazards and methods of prevention of mosquito bite-related fevers.

National programmes for mosquito control and eradication should be strengthened.

REFERENCES

1. Homoeopathic Materia Medica and Repertory by W. Boericke
2. Lectures on Homoeopathic Materia Medica by James Tyler Kent
3. www.wikipedia.org/wiki/chikungunya
4. <http://www.searo.who.int/en/Section10/Section2246.htm>