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Homoeopathic interventions for Pediatric Allergic Rhinitis: A Review of Effectiveness

By

**Dr. Rinku Bishwas¹, Dr. Ruchi Wadhwa (Biswas)², Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Srivastava³, Dr. Surjeet Singh kaswan⁴,
Dr. Chandra mani singh⁵, Dr. Praveen kumar Singh⁶**

¹*B.H.M.S., M.D.(Hom), H.O.D. and Professor-Department of Pathology & Microbiology, State Lalbahadur shastri Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Shantipuram, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

²B.H.M.S., M.D.(Hom), Professor & H.O.D. –Dept. of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology -State National Homoeopathic Medical College & Hospital, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow, Uttar

³B.H.M.S., M.D.(Hom.), Assistant Professor- Department of Organon of Medicine & Homoeopathic Philosophy-State Lalbahadur shastri Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Shantipuram, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

⁴Dean/Professor Faculty of Physical Education, Tanta University, Sri Ganganagar Rajasthan

⁵B.H.M.S., M.D.(Hom.), Assistant Professor- Department of Practice of Medicine-State Lalbahadur shastri Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Shantipuram, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh

⁶B.H.M.S.-State Lalbahadur shastri Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Shantipuram, Prayagraj, Homoeopathic Practitioner in Shantipuram, Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh



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Abstract

Allergic rhinitis is a commonly encountered condition worldwide. It is very troublesome condition in children disturbing daily activity. Allergic rhinitis is type 1 hypersensitivity reaction of upper respiratory system characterized by watery running nose/nasal obstruction, sneezing and irritation of nasal mucosa and conjunctiva some time lachrymation. It may be seasonal or perennial. Seasonal allergic rhinitis is a specific reaction to antigens derived by pollens from grasses flowers weeds or trees depending on seasonal variation. Its peak is seen during harvest season. Perennial allergic rhinitis presents all through the year and is often caused by house dust fungal spores or animal dander, physical or chemical irritant pungent odor fumes, perfumes, cold air and dry atmosphere.⁽¹⁾

KEYWORDS:- Allergic rhinitis, Perineal Allergic rhinitis, Rhinorrhea, Homoeopathy

INTRODUCTION

Allergic rhinitis is an inflammation of nasal mucus membrane. It is an IgE-mediated immunologic response of nasal mucosa to air borne- allergens that is characterized by sneezing, nasal congestion, nasal itching and rhinorrhea in any combination may be associated with itching in the eyes palate & pharynx.

Etiological agent who is inhaled produce specific allergens to the host due to specific reaction to antigens derived from pollens and grasses, house dust, fungal spores or animal dander, debris from insects or house mite. Similar symptoms can be caused by physical or chemical irritants for e.g. pungent odours or fumes, including strong perfumes, cold air and dry atmosphere.

DEFINITION

It is a symptomatic disorder of the nose induced after exposure to allergens via IgE-mediated hypersensitivity reactions, which are characterized by 4 cardinal symptoms of watery rhinorrhea, nasal obstruction, nasal itching and sneezing. The eyes, ear, sinuses, and throat can also be involved.

TYPES- Allergic rhinitis takes two different forms:-

SEASONAL RHINITIS:- Symptoms of seasonal allergic rhinitis can occur in spring, summer and early fall. They are usually caused by allergic sensitivity to airborne mold spores or to pollens from grass, tree and weeds.

PERENNIAL ASTHMA – People with perennial allergic rhinitis experience symptoms year-round. It is generally caused by dust mites, pet hair or dander, cockroaches or mold.



Underlying or hidden food allergies rarely cause perennial nasal symptoms.

CAUSES OF ALLERGIC RHINITIS

Airborne mold spores,

Grass: Ryegrass, Timothy

Trees : Pine, Cedar, Hazel, Hornbeam, Horse chestnut, Willow, lime, Olive

Weeds: Ragweed, Plantain, Mugwort etc.

Dust mites, Pet hair or dander, Cockroaches.

.Perfumes, Toiletries products,

Beside these factors inherited genetics also helps in development of allergic rhinitis.

RISK FACTORS

Allergies can effect anyone at anytime but if there is history of allergies in family, then patient is more prone to develop allergic rhinitis. Atopic eczema and asthma also increases the risk of allergic rhinitis. Some factors can also trigger or worsen AR, such as like- Chemicals, Cold temperature, Humidity, Air pollutions, Hair spray, Cologens, Wood smoke, Fumes.

COMPLICATION

1. Recurrent sinusitis
2. Nasal polyp
3. Serous otitis media
4. Orthodontic problem bronchial asthma

CLINICAL FEATURES

1. Itchy nose, mouth, eyes, throat, skin, or any area
2. Runny nose
3. Sneezing
4. Tearing eyes
1. Nasal congestion
2. Coughing
3. Clogged ears and decreased sense of smell
4. Sore throat
5. Puffiness under the eyes
6. Fatigue and irritability
7. Headache

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY OF ALLERGIC RHINITIS

Allergic rhinitis represents a persistent inflammation in terms of activation of eosinophils and constant up regulation of the pro inflammatory cytokine IL-1 β in the pollen season and thereafter. Persistent inflammation may furthermore lead to the dysregulation of local cellular immunity by reducing the number and activity of neutrophils on the mucosal surface. In the allergic rhinitis, there is epithelial mast cell accumulation and tissue infiltration by eosinophils. Activation of these cells can be observed by electron microscopy and by elevated levels of tryptase and eosinophils cationic protein in nasal lavage fluid. Seasonal increases in the antigen presenting cells (Langerhans cell) are also evident.

DIAGNOSIS:

1. The key to diagnosis of AR is awareness of signs and symptoms.
2. IgE antibody tests to detect specific allergens are the standard method used today.
3. Skin testing is the most common method of allergy testing. This may include a patch test to determine if a particular substance is causing the rhinitis, or an intradermal, scratch, or other test.
4. The Radioallergosorbent test (RAST) blood test may be helpful in determining specific allergen sensitivity.

PREVALENCE

Allergic rhinitis is another major allergic disease which is ignored both by the patients and doctors. The Indian Council of Medical Research found the prevalence allergic rhinitis in 3.5% of population of India. In cases of children allergic rhino-conjunctivitis occurred in 3.3% of children aged 6-7 years and 5.6% of children aged 13-14 years in India. In school girls aged 4-17 years the prevalence was found to be 21.27%. The overall prevalence of AR is 26.1% in school children. When seen along with socio-economic status, the prevalence was 27.1% in lower class, 33.3% in middle class and 28.6% in upper class in urban area and 11.1% in village area of Delhi. Also in a study it has been found that tobacco users had higher prevalence of rhinitis (55% of tobacco users compared to 12.8% no-tobacco users).

HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH

Homoeopathy is the holistic system of medicine. The selection of remedy is based upon the theory of individualization and symptom similarity. The aim of homoeopathy is not only to treat diseases but to address its underlying causes and individual susceptibility.

HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINES

1. **Arsenic alb** - Thin watery discharge from the nose with burning sensation, recurrent sneezing one after another with runny nose. Burning and tearing of eyes. There is puffiness around eyes, stuffy nose. There is marked wheezing sound during asthmatic affection. The allergic rhinitis is worse in wet cold weather. Sneezing without relief. Hay fever with coryza < open air and > indoors. Right-sided coryza with hoarseness and sleeplessness. Besides the constitutional symptoms of arsenic alb are anxiety, restlessness, prostration, burning sensation
2. **Sulphur** - There is itching with redness of eyes in allergic condition. The itching is followed by burning sensation and relieved by cold application. Chronic dry cough, scabs and nose feels stiffed at indoors. Frequent sneezing in morning and evening. Oppression and burning sensation in chest. Respiration difficult, wants windows open. Loose cough worse talking and morning. Sulphur patient is

always irritable, depressed, thin and weak, but good appetite

3. **Natrum mur** – Natrum mur is generally well indicated in case of allergic condition which gives the symptoms of more itching of nose, throat, ear with recurrent sneezing one after another. The characteristic discharge from the mucous membranes is watery or thick whitish, like the white of an egg. Natrum mur patient is very sensitive in nature.
4. **Sabadilla**- It has good action on mucous membrane of the nose and the lachrymal glands, producing coryza and symptoms like hay-fever. There is spasmodic sneezing one after another. symptoms of hay-fever or allergic rhinitis with itchy nose and fluent coryza. Either nostril stuffed up, inspiration through nose labored, snoring. Violent sneezing is occurred from time to time, shaking abdomen followed by lachrymation. There is runny nose with severe frontal headache and redness of eyelids.
5. **Pulsatilla nigricans** - It has repeated attacks of coryza, with sneezing, and stuffing up of nose. In the evening, watery discharge, with sneezing. It is suited to chronic catarrh. The patient feels better in open air and worse in warm room. There are times when his nose stuffs up more in warm room, where he sneezes more in a warm room. He gets up in the morning with a stuffed up nose
6. **Allium cepa**: Allium Cepa is one of the most commonly used Homeopathic medicines for Allergic Rhinitis or Hay Fever. It is generally used in the symptoms of severe runny nose that drips from the tip of nose with watery eyes. There is burning of nose due to over secretion mucous. Along with the watery nasal discharge there is watery eye. There is profuse sneezing associated with runny nose and watery eyes.
7. **Tuberculinum**- The patient is very susceptible to catch cold. The physical constitution is lean and thin like natrum mur, but not obese like calcarea carb. If there is family history of tuberculosis or bronchial asthma then is more suitable to give this medicines in any allergic or asthma condition.
8. **Tabacum** - Burning sensation and tingling in the nose. Diminished power of smell, which, however, is very sensitive to odour of wine; fumes all but intoxicate her. Frequent sneezing. Dryness and obstruction of nose. Smarting in eyes. Heat and burning sensation in eyes, with redness
9. **Euphrasia officinalis**: There is inflammation of conjunctival membrane especially, producing profuse lachrymation. Patient is better in open air. Catarrhal affections of mucous membrane especially of eyes and nose. Profuse acrid lachrymation and bland coryza; worse in evening.

Profuse and fluent coryza, with violent cough and abundant expectoration. Catarrhal conjunctivitis; discharge of acrid matter. The eyes water all the time. Burning and swelling of the lids. Pressure in eyes.

Gelsemium - A tired, droopy feeling during allergies with a flushed and heavy-feeling face suggest a need for this remedy. A sensation of dryness or of swollen membranes may be felt inside the nose—or the nose may run with irritating watery discharge, with the person sneezing frequently.

CONCLUSION

Allergic rhinitis is one of the most prevalent diseases in children is responsible for a significant impairment in quality of life, its control is usually far from satisfactory. AR, if ignored, can lead to complications such as asthma, sinusitis, etc Antihistamines provide some relief but improvement is only partial. In this case report it can be concluded that lesser known homeopathic medicines are of importance in managing allergic rhinitis and can help the patient to take a new lease on life. There is a better scope in homeopathy for the treatment of allergic rhinitis in children since the treatment is based on holistic and individualistic approach but to establish their proper effects on system.

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