

A Comparative Study for the Effectiveness of Alfalfa Mother Tincture over Individualized Homoeopathic medicine in management of Anorexia

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Abstract:

Background: Anorexia means loss of appetite. Patient feels fullness after just few mouthfuls. Appetizers are the conventional management prescribed by Allopathic physician. In Homoeopathy, Dr. W. Boericke and S.R. Phatak have mentioned alfalfa mother tincture as an appetizer. **Objective:** 1) To evaluate effectiveness of Alfalfa mother tincture in patients suffering from anorexia 2) To determine effectiveness of Individualized homoeopathic medicine in patients suffering from anorexia. 3) To assess the effectiveness of Alfalfa mother tincture over individualized homoeopathic medicine in patients suffering from anorexia. **Materials and Methods:** The study includes 46 cases of Anorexia; of which 23 cases were administered Alfalfa Mother Tincture and 23 patients were administered Individualized homoeopathic medicine. **Result:** t value for paired t-test for group A was 22 and for group B was 13.4 and t-value for unpaired t-test were 5. The test result is statistically significant at 5% and 1% level. **Conclusion:** Alfalfa mother tincture is more effective than Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine in the management of Anorexia.

Key words: Anorexia, Alfalfa Mother tincture, Individualized Homoeopathic medicine.

Eating disorders (ED) have been reported to be on the increase among Indians, particularly among adolescent and young adult female. Surveys of ED since 1995 from India, have shown increasing prevalence through indirect surveys, hospital-based studies, and case reports.⁽¹⁾ The conventional management given by Allopathic physician are Appetizers. Many of the herbs called as blood cleansers or purifiers are used traditionally. Cooking of food with spices is the oldest form of aromatherapy, since aroma can stimulate gastric secretions that create appetite.⁽²⁾ Basically, the stimulating components can act as appetizer. The purpose behind the comparative study is to establish the effectiveness of alfalfa mother tincture over individualized homoeopathic medicine in management of anorexia. Dr. W. Boericke and S.R. Phatak also mentioned alfalfa mother tincture as an appetizer.

Anorexia refers to loss of appetite, Patient feels fullness after just few mouthfuls.⁽⁶⁾ Anorexia (loss of appetite) is not always an indication of stomach diseases it is present in many general constitutional disturbances, such as infectious fevers, tuberculosis and malignant diseases.⁽⁷⁾ The peak ages for these diseases are in late adolescence and young adulthood. Patients therefore suffer setbacks both in the school and/or in their occupational careers.⁽³⁾

The study shows that a significant number of young people, especially females, exist in India who have conflicts with regard to their eating habits and who are at possible risk for developing more serious disorders⁽⁴⁾

In India, the exact incidence and prevalence of anorexia is not known, though there is indirect evidence from various clinics and hospitals that its incidence has been increasing in the last decade (malik, 1992). There is a lack of systematic study on the nature and extent of eating disorder in the Non-western world comparable to those conducted in the western populations. Patten and king (1991) have indicated that despite several methodological problems of this

area of research, the study of eating disorders in non-western cultures could offer greater insight in to the determinants, especially the cultural ones, of these disorders.⁽⁴⁾

Anorexia results from a complex interplay between biologic, psychological, and social factors; it tends to affect women more than men, and adolescents more than older women.⁽⁸⁾ Infections, endocrinal causes, liver disease, Renal disease, Malignancy, Leukemia, Psychiatric are the common causes of Anorexia.⁽⁹⁾

Alfalfa favorably influences nutrition, toning up the appetite and digestion resulting in greatly improved mental and physical vigor, with gain in weight. It acts as a fat producer. It is also successfully used in convalescence, after child birth and during lactation.⁽¹²⁾ Alfalfa has an extremely high nutritive value; it includes vitamins A, B1, B6, B12, C, D, E, and K, niacin, pantothenic acid, biotin, folic acid, minerals, protein.⁽¹³⁾

The best results are elicited with material doses (5-10) drops of tincture, several times daily.⁽¹⁰⁾

Alfalfa may be considered as a remedy for various clinical condition like anorexia, coryza, depression, fever, headache, irritability, lethargy, sleeplessness, sneezing, cervical pain, weakness.⁽⁵⁾ It increases the quality and quantity of milk in nursing mothers.⁽¹¹⁾

MATERIALS AND METHODS: A comparative study to see the effectiveness of Alfalfa Mother Tincture against the individualized Homoeopathic medicines was taken up at the Motiwala (National) Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Nashik. 46 Patients attending Out Patient Departments of the hospital were included in the study. Patients suffering from any major illness and co-morbidities like Hypertension, Diabetes Mellitus and Thyroid disorders were excluded from the study. A systematic Random sampling of the patients was done into study group of 23 patients receiving Alfalfa Mother Tincture and a control group of 23 patients receiving individualized Homoeopathic Medicine. Follow up of the cases was taken up at an interval 15days. Council of Nutrition Appetite Questionnaire (CNAQ)⁽¹⁴⁾ was applied at each follow up during the six months of study period.

(CNAQ) Council of Nutrition Appetite Questionnaire:

Council of Nutrition Appetite Questionnaire (CNAQ) is a short and simple appetite assessment tool. It contains 8 questions related to the appetite. Each question is given options as a,b,c,d,e. Patient is asked to tick the answers according to his symptoms where a=1, b=2,c=3, d=4, e=5. The tally of the scores for the individual items constitutes the CNAQ score. 8 is minimum score, 40 is maximum score. CNAQ score 8 to 27 is Anorexic, 28 to 30 is Normal Appetite.

RESULT

In the patients prescribed with Alfalfa mother tincture Mean CNAQ on the first visit was 19.87 and Mean CNAQ on the last visit was 31.78, whereas in the patients prescribed with Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine Mean CNAQ on the first visit was 20.96 and Mean CNAQ on the last visit was 28.87. Highly significant improvement was seen in patients treated with Alfalfa Mother Tincture than in those treated with Individualized Homoeopathic Medicines.

The findings presented in Tables-1 and Table-2 show that there was a significant difference in the scores of patients suffering from Anorexia before and after treatment when Alfalfa Mother Tincture and individualized homoeopathic medicine was administered.

Table-3 shows the unpaired t-test of effectiveness of Alfalfa Mother Tincture over Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine.⁽¹⁵⁾

Table1 : Paired t-test for effectiveness of Alfalfa Mother Tincture				
GROUP	CNAQ Before	CNAQ After	t- value	p value
Mean	19.87	31.78	22	0.00
SD	1.79	1.81		
SEM	0.37	0.38		
N	23	23		

Table2: Paired t-test for effectiveness of Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine				
GROUP	CNAQ Before	CNAQ After	t value	p value
Mean	20.96	28.87	13.4	0.00
SD	1.52	2.32		
SEM	0.32	0.48		
N	23	23		

Table3: Unpaired t-test for effectiveness of Alfalfa Mother Tincture over Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine				
GROUP	Difference in CNAQ Alfalfa Q	Difference in CNAQ Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine	t value	p value
Mean	-11.91	-7.91	5	0.00001
SD	2.59	2.87		
SEM	0.54	0.60		
N	23	23		

DISCUSSION

With an aim to compare the effectiveness of Alfalfa mother tincture over individualized Homoeopathic medicine in the management of Anorexia, 46 patients suffering from Anorexia were included in the study by applying Council of Nutrition Appetite Questionnaire (CNAQ). This scale was applied to record the improvement at each follow up during the study period of six months at an interval of fifteen days. Patients suffering from any major illness and co-morbidities like Hypertension, Diabetes Mellitus and Thyroid disorders were excluded from the study because of possible drug interference. The 46 number of patients were divided into study group and control group. The study group was administered with Alfalfa Mother Tincture 10 drops in half cup of water before food twice a day. The control group patients were give individualized Homoeopathic medicine based on the totality of symptoms after repertorisation. In cases receiving Alfalfa Mother Tincture we have seen improvement in appetite in about 74% of patients while 26% of patients were reported to be improving.

Where as in cases prescribed with Individualized homoeopathic medicine only 26% patients have shown improvement in their appetite, around 35% of patients were reported to be improving and about 39% of the patients are still anorexic.

Commonly prescribed individualized Homoeopathic medicines in the management of Anorexia were Natrum Muriaticum, Arsenicum album (n=4) followed by Nux Vomica, sulphur (n=2) and Pulsatilla, Chininum sulph, calcarea Carbinica, phosphorus, Lycopodium, Argentumnitricum, Sepia, Barytacarb, Lachesis, Natrumcarb, China, Phosphorous (n=1).

For statistical analysis Paired and unpaired T test were used to compare the result statistically. By using Paired t-test Calculated t-value of group A was 22 and group B was 13.4, as both the values were greater than the table value of t. Hence they were significantly effective.

By using unpaired t-test Calculated t-value was 5 which was greater than the table value of t at 5% and at 1% level of significance. The statistical analysis shows that there was less significant improvement in CNAQ in cases with Individualized Homoeopathic medicines than Alfalfa Mother Tincture. It was reported by the patients that the administration of Alfalfa Mother Tincture was needed daily to sustain improvement in appetite. Contrary to this the improvement was more sustained, in patients who showed improvement with individualized Homoeopathic medication.

CONCLUSION

Alfalfa Mother Tincture is more effective than Individualized Homoeopathic medicines in management of Anorexia.

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