

## **A systematic review of utility of homoeopathy in dentistry**

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### **ABSTRACT-**

Dentistry has come a long way from past to present in providing dental care to patients. Now, our main focus is to preserve tooth as we have realized the importance of tooth in our life. Nowadays, many of the dental professionals are facing difficulties in managing acute or chronic toothache or other recurrent dental issues due to recurring symptoms. Sometimes, there may be other health related issues or co-morbidities that works continuously for maintaining the dental health of the individual on which Homoeopathy has great influence. Homeopathy is the system of medicine based on nature's law of cure i.e. like cures like; that is recognized for safe and effective treatment. Homoeopathy in dentistry is a less visited system of medicine in the management of orofacial diseases. Homoeopathy is a safe and natural alternative that is effective in all ages. Homeopathic remedies are used in the field of dentistry to improve individual's psychological or emotional condition with minimal or no side effects of conventional drugs. Homoeopathy can be safely used for the pain management that may be acute or chronic including acute dental emergencies. Homeopathy is not a replacement to dental care but can be safely used along with the conventional line of treatment<sup>(1)</sup>. The present scientific literature based review is an attempt to highlight the possible role of Homeopathy in the management of various orofacial disorders.

### **KEYWORDS-**

Systematic review, Homoeopathy, Dentistry, Traditional therapy.

### **AIM-**

To highlight the role of homoeopathy in the field of dentistry through systemic review of existing literatures.

### **OBJECTIVES-**

1. Systematic evaluation of the existing literature on homeopathy and dentistry studies.
2. To evaluate the utility of homoeopathy in dental practice through the analysis of different previously conducted studies (existing literature).

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS-**

In this study, we considered to review existing literature based on the field of dentistry and homoeopathy. Here we have considered different studies that are related with the philosophy of

Homoeopathy. Different databases searched for the current review were Google, Google scholar, PubMed, ncbi, etc., previous researches on the topic, homoeopathic books were also studied. References that were only peripherally related to our topic were excluded from the study.

After the vast search we came to know that Homeopathy can be safely used for the treatment of different dental conditions. It can help to repair any damage that the body has the potential to repair and restoration of the health. Though, Homoeopathy and conventional line of treatment has their different approach, both can very well work alongside each other

We found that Homoeopathy has broad scope in treating various dental conditions. It is commonly used to reduce pain associated with various dental or orofacial issues, to minimize bleeding and inflammation. At a more advanced level, a dentist can safely use Homoeopathy to: - to prevent or inhibit the disease development in the oral cavity by prescribing individualized homoeopathic medicine, provide treatments that work along with conventional medicine, Prevent or limit further complications, sequelae of surgical intervention, and to facilitate rapid and gentle recovery from dental trauma, improve patient tolerance or prostheses and instrumentation.

#### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE-**

Dentistry is a branch of medical science which deals with “the evaluation, prevention and/ or treatment (nonsurgical, surgical, or related procedures) of diseases, disorders and /or conditions of the oral cavity, maxillofacial area and / or the adjacent and associated structures and their impact on the human body; provided by a dentist, within the scope of his/ her education, training and experience, in accordance with the ethics of the profession and applicable law.”<sup>(10)</sup>

Dentistry has observed tremendous change since ancient times. In recent times, teeth are made of ceramics and zirconia and even continues to do so which were made gold, silver, ivory, wood and lead <sup>(6)</sup>.

Nowadays, dental health care professionals are facing different challenges in management of acute or chronic dental conditions due to failure in regression of patient’s symptoms or sometimes due to side effects of traditional treatment regimens. In view of these facts, dental health care approach is directed towards different approaches like Ayurveda, acupuncture, naturopathy or homeopathy in the management of different acute or chronic dental or orofacial disease conditions. Homoeopathy is the branch of medical science based on nature’s law of cure i.e. ‘*Similia similibus curentur*’ which has been used since last 200 years. It was discovered by the German Physician Dr.Samuel Hahnemann, who was carrying a research for the cure for malaria fever. He found that “cinchona bark” (Peruvian bark from which quinine is derived) produced symptoms similar to malaria fever when it was given to a healthy individual which it cures in the sick; when given when given on the basis of symptom similarity <sup>(1)</sup>. He introduced three laws as the basic principles of homeopathy - law of similarity, minimum dose and theory of individualisation. <sup>(2)</sup>

Rationale for homeopathy in dentistry are <sup>(1)</sup>:

1. Prevention of the development of disease conditions in the oral cavity.
2. Safely provide treatments which can be given along with the conventional medicine.
3. Prevent, limit or minimize complications of surgical intervention needed as treatment for different dental issues.
4. Reduce phobias, apprehensive anxieties which patient has while going for any dental procedure.
5. Facilitate rapid and gentle recovery from the trauma following surgical intervention.
6. Manage dental conditions with a holistic approach.

In children with behavioral difficulties, homeopathic remedy was marginally more successful than oral midazolam in lowering anxiety during dental treatment <sup>(4)</sup>.

Some studies reported improvement in appetite disorders, gum discomfort, and excess salivation using homeopathic medicines. One study showed a new gel with hyaluronic acid was more effective than an anesthetic gel in improving signs and symptoms such as pain, gingival redness, and poor or hampered sleep quality of patients <sup>(5)</sup>. The utility of homeopathic medicines in dentistry is helpful from simple and straight forward mild pain due to a decayed tooth to difficult and long standing conditions that have shown to be tough to cure, for example, fear of dentist, atypical facial pain, and burning mouth syndrome and post extraction osteitis, neuralgias. Different studies showed that Homoeopathy is used as a complement to dental treatment to help relieve toothache, inflammation and hemorrhage. Homoeopathy makes the entire procedure more comfortable and peaceful for the patient as well as the dentist by alleviating fear, anticipatory anxiety of the patient <sup>(6)</sup>.

Homeopathic medicine offers dentistry which one might not have wondered. Dental problems initially appear as very simple, easy which only requires proper tooth brushing and oral hygiene maintenance for prevention of further progression of the disease <sup>(6)</sup>.

Patient's fright, worry and expectation of dental visits can be effectively managed with homeopathic medicines. We have different homeopathic medicines which work similarly on an individual's psychology.

- Aconite (monkshood) is very commonly used medicine given usually for children having fear of going to dentists. Many times, children become enraged, uneasy and irritated (they tend to kick and stamp their feet), and have a tendency of fear of a dentist or his instrument .

- Gelsemium works wonderfully especially in children, a dose of 12C potency taken in the morning of the dental procedure, is sufficient to reduce the anxiety level of patient so that a relaxed patient can contribute to easy, gentle work for the dentist<sup>(6)</sup>.

Role of homoeopathy in tooth related problems <sup>(8)</sup>-

Homoeopathy has large number of medicines which can contribute effective management of dental problems. Out of them few medicines with their dental symptoms are mentioned here which have been studied through different available literature-

- *Calcarea carbonica*: Bleeding of gums. Difficult and delayed dentition. Teeth ache; excited by current of air, anything cold or hot. Offensive smell from mouth.
- *Calcarea fluorica*: Gumboil, with hard swelling on the jaw. Unnatural looseness of the teeth, with or without pain; teeth become loose in their sockets. Toothache, with pain if any food touches the tooth.
- *Calcarea phosphorica*: Complaints during teething; teeth develop slowly; rapid decay of teeth.
- *Cheiranthus*: Cooper considers as a keynote of the remedy, "Nose stopped at night from irritation of cutting wisdom teeth." • *Chamomilla*: Toothache, if anything warm is taken, from coffee, during pregnancy. • *Clematis erecta*: Toothache; worse, at night and from tobacco. Teeth feel too long.
- *Coffea cruda*: Toothache; temporarily relieved by holding ice-water in the mouth. • *Fluoricum acidum*: Teeth feel warm. Affects teeth and bones of upper jaw.
- *Hecla lava*: Marked action upon the jaws. Of great use in exostosis, gum abscess, difficult teething. Nodosities, caries of bone, etc. Osteitis, periostitis, osteosarcoma; rachitis. Tumors in general. Bone necrosis. Necrosis and sinus after mastoid operation.
- *Hepar sulphur*: Ptyalism. Gums and mouth painful to touch and bleed readily.
- *Ignatia amara*: Toothache; worse after drinking coffee and smoking.
- *Kreosotum*: Very painful dentition; child will not sleep. Very rapid decay of teeth, with spongy, bleeding gums; teeth dark and crumbly (Staph; Ant c). Putrid odor and bitter taste.
- *Magnesium carbonicum*: Toothache, especially during pregnancy; worse at night; worse, cold and quiet. Teeth feel too long. Ailments from cutting wisdom teeth. Pain in malar bone, worse during rest, night. Swelling of malar bone with pulsating pain, worse exposure to cold wind. Crown of teeth decay. Teeth loose, feel tender and elongated.

- Magnesium phosphoricum: Toothache; better by heat and hot liquids. Ulceration of teeth, with swelling of glands of face, throat and neck and swelling of tongue. Complaints of teething children.
- Mezereum: Violent neuralgia about face and teeth, running towards ear, at night; worse, eating; better near hot stove. Roots of teeth decay. Teeth feel elongated.
- Mercurius solubilis: Gums spongy, recede, bleed easily. Sore pain on touch and from chewing. Whole mouth moist. Crown of teeth decay. Teeth loose, feel tender and elongated. Furrow in upper surface of tongue lengthwise. Fetid odor from mouth, can smell it all over room. Alveolar abscess, worse at night. Great thirst, with moist mouth.
- Nux vomica: Jaws, contracted. Small aphthous ulcers, with bloody saliva. First half of tongue clean; posterior covered with deep fur; white, yellow, cracked edges. Teeth ache; worse, cold things. Gums swollen, white, and bleeding.
- Phytolacca decandra: Teething children with irresistible desire to bite the teeth together. Teeth clenched; lower lip drawn down; lips everted; jaws firmly set; chin drawn down on sternum.
- Plantago major: Teeth ache and are sensitive and sore to touch. Swelling of cheeks. Salivation; teeth feel too long; worse, cold air and contact. Toothache, better while eating. Profuse of saliva. Toothache, with reflex neuralgia of eyelids.
- Podophyllum: Grinding the teeth at night; intense desire to press the gums together (Phytol). Difficult dentition. Tongue broad, large, and moist. Foul, putrid taste. Burning sensation of tongue.
- Pulsatilla pratensis: Toothache; relieved by holding cold water in mouth (Coff). Offensive odor from mouth (Merc; Aur). Food, especially bread, tastes bitter. Much sweet saliva. Alternations of taste, bitter, bilious, greasy, salty, foul. Loss of taste. Desire for tonics.
- Sepia officinalis: Pain in teeth from 6 pm till midnight; worse on lying.

Hence by considering the importance of homeopathic preparations, a sincere attempt has been made to highlight the possible integration of dental treatment modalities and homeopathic medicine to provide the best and unique from each medicine.

## **DISCUSSION-**

The results that we see in the patients suggest that homeopathy definitely have a place in modern dental treatment. It is helpful in those cases where patients are apprehensive of undertaking dental treatment, different surgical procedures and in those cases which are not responding to conventional line of management. In India, patients have great trust in homeopathic medicine

and about 100 million use homeopathy as their only form of medical care. The homeopathic applications can become an integral part of dental treatment and hence will result in less discomfort to patient, shorter period of recovery and will make the patient feel better without side effects. The treatment of any dental disorder is successful, if it is realized that the overall physical state of the patient is to be treated along with the teeth disorder which we homoeopaths consider as the constitution of the individual. The proper understanding of this relationship makes key to success of any dental disorder.<sup>(3)</sup>

In dentistry, homeopathic remedies have been proposed for oral ulcers, sialorrhea, neuralgia, temporo-mandibular joint disorders, xerostomia, lichen plan, and bruxism. However, there is not enough evidence to support them<sup>(7)</sup>.

One of the studies "Comparison of the efficacy of ibuprofen and Belladonna in the control of orthodontic separator pain" showed that- Ibuprofen and Homoeopathic medicine Belladonna 6C are effective and provide adequate analgesia with no statistically significant difference, lack of adverse effects with Belladonna 6C makes it an effective and valuable alternative<sup>(9)</sup>.

In this way, we came to know that Homoeopathic medicines with the appropriate knowledge of science (Homoeopathy) can become an irreplaceable part of dentist's armamentarium. So, further studies need to be conducted in order to assess more on the dental utility of homoeopathic medicines.

## **CONCLUSION-**

Homeopathy has a defined space in the present day dental setting. It is not a substitution for the expertise of the dentist but is an essential complement in many ways, especially to assist those who are anxious or suffer from dental problems which do not respond to traditional therapy protocols<sup>(6)</sup>. Homeopathy is an emerging field of dental medicine that may be useful in management of conditions affecting orofacial structures. It is expected that homeopathic medicines may have a role in providing dental treatments, which are free of side effects, easily accessible, much cheaper, and perhaps of high quality overall, Homeopathic medicines with proper knowledge of homoeopathy may serve as an integral part of the Dentist's Armamentarium for the prevention and treatment of dental diseases that would be for the betterment of patients. However, more evidence based research is required to firmly establish the areas of use as well as those in which they may not be applicable. Further studies need to be conducted in order to assess more on the dental utility of homoeopathic medicines.

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Systematic Review on the Use of Homeopathy in Dentistry: Critical Analysis of Clinical Trials

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Efficacy of treatments used to relieve signs and symptoms associated with teething: a systematic review

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