

Principles of Prescribing

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Abstract

The general concept in Homeopathy towards treatment of the sick is *Treat the patient not the disease*. On a superficial sense, this may be preposterous, but in a deeper sense it conveys its holistic concepts towards the patient. A patient with hypertension, diabetes mellitus and COPD may express multitude of symptoms common to each of these diseases. Based on the clinical findings and diagnostic evidences, he is considered as a patient of hypertension, diabetes and COPD. Such a concept necessitates different prescriptions to balance the patho- physiological changes in the patient's health. Whether the patient is lean or obese, irritable or gentle does not matter in selection of remedies. Even the patient is not personally present for consultation; the medicines can be prescribed merely based on the diagnostic evidences. Most of these prescriptions shall give relief to the suffering.

Keywords: Prescribing, Susceptibility, Keynote, Constitutional, Miasmatic, Palliative.

Introduction:

Treat the patient not the disease concept of homeopathy explains that the patient suffering from one or many diseases is an individual whose health has got deranged due to multitude of factors. This external factor (meturic and telluric) influence the susceptibility of the individual and deranges the weaker parts of the human economy. This brings changes in the patho- physiological frame of the individual and thus the healthy person become sick. In short, homeopathy believes that the hypertension, diabetes and COPD are the result of the derangement of the human economy (life force). The susceptibility of the individual depends on his genomic states (constitution), lifestyle, living conditions, habits, past history, family history and so on. This explains rationally, why certain people fall sick on similar situations and certain people escape from the diseases in spite of reasonable exposure to similar situations. This also explains why the expressions of the same disease differ in different people (individuality)¹

Symptoms are the language of the disease - the body's attempt to warn about the internal derangement of the person. Without symptoms, a person could not have illness. The symptom may be trivial or significant. This may be at physical, mental or at spiritual level. As experienced physician shall be able to identify the internal derangement through the signs and symptoms, even if it is trivial or insignificant to the patient.²

In homeopathy, medicine is prescribed after a detailed case taking, giving importance both to mental and physical attributes as well as any particular symptoms. Both subjective and objective symptoms have got its importance. The symptoms that represent the patient as a whole are of more value, especially such as are expressed in the patient's own words.²

The core concept of Homeopathy is principle of Similia Similibus Curantur, which demonstrates that a remedy selected for the treatment of a natural disease shall be the one that is capable of producing a range of similar symptoms in a healthy person. Therefore, the precondition to call a substance a homeopathic remedy is its ability to produce set symptoms on healthy human volunteers during the course of its clinical

trial (Human Pathogenic Trial/ drug proving). Basically, this principle demonstrates that disease can be cured by a medicinal substance that is tested on the principles of Homeopathic pharmacodynamics.³

Evaluation of Symptoms -

The word symptom implies any change that the patient experiences during the illness, including changes in emotional patterns, sleep, eating habits, temperature variations and so on. The following are the different approaches of evaluation of symptoms:

Peculiar symptoms: These are symptoms unique to the individual that do not occur in most persons with the same disease⁴

Mental and emotional symptoms: These are important general symptoms that inform about the patient's total experience of the disorder.⁴

Other general symptoms: These are physical symptoms felt throughout the patient's body such as tiredness, changes in appetite, or restlessness.⁴

Particular symptoms: Particular symptoms are localized in the body; they include such symptoms as nausea, skin rashes, headache, and etc.⁴

During homeopathic case-taking, the practitioner will evaluate the intensity of the patient's symptoms, assess their depth, duration, note any peculiar symptoms, evaluate the modalities of each symptoms and make a list of totality of symptoms to guide the selection of the proper medicine.

Selection and administration of a remedy –

Homeopathic remedies are prescribed according to the law of similar. There are several types of prescriptions according to the different types of clinical presentation of the case which are as follows -

1. Acute Prescription - The acute disease is a clinical condition with a sudden onset, sudden progress and a sudden decline. It is mainly self-limiting in nature. These symptoms are fairly intense and resolve in a short period of time. The common acute diseases are colds, flu, bronchitis, childhood illnesses, tonsillitis, appendicitis, ear aches, most headaches, sudden diarrhoea, and most infectious disease. In many cases there may not be many peculiar symptoms other than the disease symptoms to select a similimum or there may not be much time for a detailed case taking. In such cases, while taking the case, one has to give importance to the observation, objective signs or symptoms and any keynotes besides the major symptoms. Try to find the causation which would definitely help you in the prescription.²

.2. Keynote Prescription - There are some great stalwarts who prescribe based on one or two keynotes for the cases with great success. This become possible only when the experienced physician could identify those few key notes that represent the patient as a whole and is in a position to select the similar remedy with the same characteristics⁵

Materia medica such as Allen's Key Notes, the striking symptoms of each remedies are in bold letters.⁶ In some other Materia medicas this may be in italic letters.

3. Constitutional Prescription - This prescription is based on the patient's constitutional makeup which includes the patient's physical, mental, temperamental, and emotional aspects. Constitutional homoeopathic prescribing, also called classical prescribing . Constitutional prescribing is holistic in that it is intended to treat the patient on the emotional and spiritual levels of his or her being as well as the physical symptoms. Homeopathy can be extremely effective in treating chronic and long-term health

problems through this approach. It is seen that constitutional medicines not only cure the disease, but also strengthen the body's immune system and thus prevent future occurrences of the disease.

4. Miasmatic Prescription - Miasms are the tendencies and predisposition to certain diseases either inherited or acquired. Miasm as an invisible, inimical, dynamic principle which permeates into the system of a living creature, creating a groove or stigma in the constitution which can only be eradicated by a suitable anti-miasmatic remedy. These Miasms could be dormant or active. If effective anti-miasmatic treatment is not given then the miasm will persist throughout the life of the person and will be transmitted to the next generation. Depending on the expression in a particular individual, the respective Miasm could be diagnosed and treated with an appropriate anti-Miasmatic remedy so as to achieve cure or open up the concealed diseases picture that may give new clues for selection of remedy.²

5. Pathological Prescription - Pathological prescription is given based on the similarity to the disease process or pathological changes. Generally low potencies in repeated doses are effective for severe pathological conditions like cancer. Dr C M Boger's Boenninghausen's Characteristics MM and Repertory gives several information for selecting remedies based on Pathological generals.⁷

6. Palliative Prescriptions - In terminally ill patients the aim of the physician would be to ensure painlessness, less discomfort and relief to the suffering of the patient. In this regard Homeopathy is effective without side effects. In some cases, palliation is a necessary tool of prescribing, not just in terminal illness but in any situation where there is extreme pain or urgency.⁸

Conclusion:

In Homeopathy, the most appropriate treatment protocol is based on the *simila* principle; however, this may not happen in all the cases. This is because in certain cases there may not be adequate symptom to select the similimum, or in certain cases already other mode of treatment might have been applied and the true picture might be masked. There will be possibility of getting cases in incurable stage, which may warrant only palliation. Therefore, planning the course of treatment may not always be on a fixed protocol. Experienced physicians switch from one method to another based on the case, availability of the symptoms and also based on his experience. Sometimes the physician may get a clue about the similimum with one or two symptoms, wherein he may resort to key note prescription. In another case he may have to take full case history to get the totality. Even in such cases if the physician is not able to arrive a similimum, he may evaluate the miasmatic background, past history etc to get more accurate prescription. This is the artistic aspects of case study peculiar in homeopathy.

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