



DEMONSTRATING THE EFFICIENCY OF HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICATION IN THE TREATMENT OF ANDROPHOBIA THROUGH A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Specific phobia is a marked and persistent fear that is excessive or unreasonable, triggered by the presence or anticipation of a specific object or situation. Androphobia is an irrational and persistent fear of men, which impedes the individual's social interaction. Rising cases of harm against individuals of all genders has also increased the number of cases of androphobia. Factors such as changes in societal norms, cultural shifts, and increased awareness and recognition of mental health issues could potentially influence the reporting and diagnosis of androphobia.

Case summary: A 12 year old female presented with the complaint of fear of men since 7 years. Lachesis 200 was prescribed based on the constitutional totality and the patient was completely better within a year.

INTRODUCTION

Specific phobias are marked, persistent and excessive fear, cued by and specific to an object or a situation because of which the person tries to avoid it. Studies show a lifetime prevalence of 12.5%. Stimulus most commonly avoided due to excessive fear



include animals, aspects of nature or blood. The phobic reactions may interfere with the individual's social, academic and personal life.^[1]

Androphobia is an extreme and unreasonable fear of men which is a psychiatric condition when it comes with life disrupting symptoms. It definitely hinders efficient functioning in the society as it consists of people of all genders. Androphobia is relatively less common compared to other specific phobias. However, its prevalence is not extensively studied or documented, making it challenging to determine its rarity definitively. Additionally, the perception of rarity can vary depending on cultural, social, and individual factors. It's important to note that the rarity of androphobia doesn't diminish its significance or impact on individuals who experience it. Like other phobias, androphobia can cause significant distress and impairment in daily functioning for those affected by it.^[2]

Conventional treatment includes benzodiazepines which are proven to have serious side effects such as muscle weakness, drowsiness, memory impairment, unsteadiness among others. Other methods include cognitive behavioural therapy, exposure therapy and systematic desensitisation.^[3]

The Psycho-neuro-endocrino-immunological axis relates to the interaction between the psyche (mind), the nervous system, and the endocrine (hormonal) system. In the context of phobias, this axis plays a role in how psychological factors, such as fear and anxiety, can influence the nervous and endocrine systems, which in turn can affect immune function. While research suggests a connection between psychological stress and immune function, the exact mechanisms underlying this relationship in phobias are still being explored.^[4]

Homoeopathy is a holistic system which treats a disease by emphasising the individuality of each patient. In fact, it treats the patient and not the disease. Homoeopathic principles aim at removing the cause that can be traced back to early childhood experiences or even genetic dispositions.

CASE STUDY

A 12 year-old patient was brought to the clinic by her mother with the complaint of fear of males (except for her younger brother) since 7 years. Informant was the Patient's mother.

History of the chief complaint:

At the age of 4 years, the patient had witnessed her mother being physically abused by her father on multiple occasions. She developed a fear of men and grew up with a difficulty to even make eye contact with men. She has a good relationship with her brother who is a few years younger than her. She used to score well in all subjects taught by female teachers but scored poorly in those taught by male teachers. Patient is not on any medication or therapy for these complaints.

Past history: Patent Ductus Arteriosus at birth, underwent surgery at the age of 4 years.

Personal history: Thirstless, Desire for pungent food and thermally hot.

As a person

She is talkative and has incoherent speech. She enjoys doing makeup, dressing up and clicking selfies. She is intelligent and has an aptitude for mathematics.

On observation: She hid behind her mother on seeing the male physician with an expression of fear.

TABLE 1 - MENTAL STATUS EXAMINATION

	06/09/2018	20/12/2018	13/09/2019
1. General appearance and behaviour: Appearance Social manner	Hid behind mother, Eye to eye contact - made, Adequately groomed,	Sat beside her mother, Eye to eye contact - not made, Adequately groomed,	Eye to eye contact - maintained, Adequately groomed,
Attitude towards examiner Psychomotor activity	Poor Non cooperative, guarded moderate	Poor Non cooperative, Shy moderate	Good, greeted male physician Cooperative, Shy moderate
2. Speech	Didn't speak	Didn't speak	Rate - moderate, Quantity - less Volume - low, Tone- meek
3. Mood Affect	Couldn't elicit Fearful	Couldn't elicit Anxious	"Fine" Congruent
4. Thoughts	Couldn't elicit	Couldn't elicit	Nothing specific
5. Perception	No Abnormalities detected	No Abnormalities detected	No Abnormalities detected
6. Cognition	Intact	Intact	Intact
7. Insight	Grade 5	Grade 5	Grade 6
8. Judgement	Couldn't elicit	Couldn't elicit	Good



DIAGNOSIS

Androphobia

A type of Specific phobia (ICD 10 – F40.2)^[5]

Totality

Fear of men

Talkative, unintelligible

speech Foppish

Intelligent

Thirstless

Thermally hot

Desire for pungent foods

History of Patent ductus arteriosus

TABLE 2 - REPERTORISATION^[6]

MIND		Remedies	ΣSym	ΣDeg	Symptoms
1 MIND - FEAR -		lach.	8	15	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
men; of [= male persons]	✕	phos.	7	11	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
2 MIND - FOPPISH	✕	sulph.	7	8	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
3 MIND - INTELLIGENT	✕	bell.	6	10	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
4 MIND - LOQUACITY	✕	aur.	6	9	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
5 MIND - SPEECH - incoherent	✕	verat.	6	8	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
STOMACH		alum.	6	7	3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8
6 STOMACH - THIRSTLESS	✕	puls.	5	11	1, 4, 6, 7, 8
CHEST		hyos.	5	10	1, 4, 5, 6, 7
7 CHEST -		bry.	5	8	4, 5, 6, 7, 8
HEART; complaints of the	✕	lyc.	5	8	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
GENERALS		ph-ac.	5	8	4, 5, 6, 7, 8
8 GENERALS - FOOD and DRINKS - p		acon.	5	7	1, 4, 6, 7, 8
desire	✕	arg-n.	5	7	4, 5, 6, 7, 8
		ars.	5	7	4, 5, 6, 7, 8

With reference to the Materia Medica, Lachesis was found to be the similimum.^[7]

PRESCRIPTION

6/9/2018:

Rx,

- 1) LACHESIS 200, 1 dose in powder form (to be mixed in half glass of water and given orally)

Follow up criteria: Fear of men

**TABLE 3 - FOLLOW-UP:**

Sl no.	Date	Symptoms	Prescription
1.	20/12/2018	Fear of men – slightly better, doesn't hide on seeing men	No medicine given
2.	13/3/2019	Fear of men – more better from last follow up	No medicine given
3.	6/6/2019	Fear of men – much better, talks to men whom her mother talks to	No medicine given
4.	13/9/2019	Fear of men – almost absent, but interacts and makes friendship with only selected people. Goes on ride with her Uncle on bike	No medicine given

DISCUSSION

Phobias most often stem from deeply ingrained cognitive errors and affective responses developed as a consequence to early childhood experiences and heritable traits. Studies have shown that phobic anxiety disorders or specific phobia often precede the onset of other mental illnesses and therefore it could be a possible indicator for the lifetime prevalence of vulnerability to psychopathology.^[8,9] In a survey conducted by World Health Organization World Mental Health Surveys initiative, it was observed that onset of specific phobias preceded the onset of other mental health comorbidities in 72.6% of cases.^[10]

Conventional treatment of specific phobia aims at symptomatic management with pharmacotherapy and addressing the underlying cause with psychotherapy. Homoeopathic treatment is observed to be effective in managing the condition in its whole extent, dealing with both these aspects.^[11,12,13,14]

This case falls under mental diseases of emotional origin (Aphorism 225, as per Organon of Medicine by Dr Samuel Hahnemann, 6th edition) as it originated due to prolonged fear, worry after being repeatedly exposed to domestic violence in the household. As it wasn't possible to employ psychical remedies, only Homoeopathic medicine was given in this case.^[15] The Constitutional method considers mental symptoms (like stress reactions to biopsychosocial conflicts, thought patterns and feelings), physical generals (physiological functions like appetite, thirst, thermal reaction, sleep and dreams) and characteristic symptoms (symptoms that makes each case unique). Constitutional method modifies vulnerabilities as it is individualistically adapted to the patient in all aspects.^[16]

The limitation in this case was the non-availability of a female physician in order to



build a better rapport with and understand the mental processes from the patient's point of view. The other limitation encountered in this case was the inability to apply a scale (Severity measure for Specific Phobia - Child), due to the non cooperative nature of the patient.

CONCLUSION

Androphobia is a relatively rare condition on which there is insufficient research done. Homoeopathy opens up a new avenue in the treatment by constitutional approach.

The constitutional approach in Homoeopathy proved to be effective in this case even without cognitive behavioural therapy. It suggests further study to explore the scope of Homoeopathy in specific phobias with control groups who receive cognitive behavioural therapy.

Declaration by Authors

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