

Homeopathic Treatment for COVID-19-Related Symptoms: An Overview

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Abstract

It's been 20 years since Remedial Homeopathy Manufactory was founded as part of the company group Salvatore Pharmacy/Remedial, located in Eisenstaedt, Burgenland. Back then homeopathy was still in its infancy, but Remedial started a new chapter of success in this field. Custom production of homeopathic remedies is our speciality. Remedial Homeopathy is an internationally known brand which guarantees highest quality. An alternative approach to medicine based on the belief that natural substances, prepared in a special way and used most often in very small amounts, restore health. According to these beliefs, in order for a remedy to be effective, it must cause in a healthy person the same symptoms being treated in the patient. Also called homeopathy.

Introduction

Homeopathy is more than 200 years old. It is one of the most common complementary therapies used by people with cancer. Homeopathy is based on the theory of 'like cures like' and the 'law of the smallest dose'. To treat an illness, a homeopathic therapist (homeopath) uses tiny doses of a substance [1]. In large doses, the substance would cause the symptoms of the illness. Followers believe that homeopathic medicines work by starting the body's self-healing process. This happens through a reaction. Healing occurs because the body tries to keep a stable internal environment. Manufacturers make homeopathic remedies from plant, mineral and animal substances. They are diluted in water and shaken until there is little, if any, of the original substance left. They use the water to make drops, pills or creams [2].

Severe acute respiratory syndrome due to coronavirus 2 (SARS CoV-2) is a novel infectious disease, which has quickly developed into a pandemic. The spectrum of COVID-19 symptoms is broad, ranging from a mild, self-limiting respiratory tract illness to severe progressive pneumonia, multi-organ failure and possible death. Despite much effort and multiple clinical trials, there are, to date, no specific therapeutic agents to treat or cure the coronavirus infection [3]. The present paper presents 5 cases of patients with moderate to severe COVID-19 infections, 2 of them hospitalized in the intensive care unit, who were successfully treated with homeopathy. All 5 patients responded to homeopathic treatment in an unexpectedly short time span, improving both physically and mentally [4]. The present case series emphasizes the rapidity of response among moderate to severely ill patients to homeopathic treatment, when conventional medical options have been unable to relieve or shorten the disease. The observations described should encourage use of homeopathy in treating patients with COVID-19 during the acute phase of the disease [5].

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Homeopathy, while controversial, is one of the most popular forms of complementary and alternative medicine. It is rooted in two theories. First, that "like cures like" – that is, disease can be cured by a substance

that produces similar symptoms in healthy people. Second, "the law of minimum dose" -which means that the lower the dosage, the more effective the medication. Homeopathy is not an indicative method in which one medicine treats one disease [7]. It is, rather, a system in which remedies are customized to individuals, based on broad themes and idiosyncratic characteristics identified from the totality of the presenting patient's physical, mental and emotional symptoms. Moreover, each patient usually requires a series of medications to elicit a cure. Because homeopathic medications are subjective and unique to each individual, randomized clinical trials, designed to test how one medication treats one disease with one primary outcome, are ill-suited to examining homeopathic remedies [8].

We present 5 patients with COVID-19, who were successfully treated with homeopathy. Hospitalized at a tertiary medical center in Jerusalem for moderate to severe COVID-19-related symptoms, each of them requested homeopathic treatment in addition to conventional therapy from the hospital's Center for Integrative Complementary Medicine, which was established over two decades ago to provide controlled and responsible complementary and alternative medicine therapies to hospitalized patients seeking such therapies [9]. All 5 patients were over 18 years old and had confirmed COVID-19 infection at the time of admission. They received their homeopathic medications as small round pills (globules) at a concentration of 10–60 of the stem solutions by a licensed pharmacy [10].

As with most types of complementary therapy, people use it because it may help them feel better or more in control of their situation. Some people choose homeopathy because it is a different type of treatment compared to conventional medicine. People use it alongside conventional medicine [11]. You should not have it instead of conventional cancer treatment. Homeopaths believe that it can treat a wide range of symptoms and conditions.

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Followers of homeopathy promote it to people with cancer as a natural way to help you:

- relax
- cope with stress, anxiety and depression
- control symptoms and side effects such as pain, sickness and tiredness

People report that they feel better with homeopathy. But there is no evidence to show that it helps with any health condition. It is thought that it may have a placebo effect. This is when people feel better if they believe they have taken something to make them feel better [12].

In 2010, the UK Science and Technology Committee made a recommendation to the NHS. They suggested that the NHS stop funding homeopathy. They said there is no evidence that it works beyond the placebo effect. And in 2017, NHS England recommended that GPs and other prescribers do not prescribe it. They agreed with the statement in 2010 that there is no evidence that it works for any health condition. The National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) advise the NHS on the use of treatments. Currently, NICE does not recommend homeopathy as a treatment for any health condition [13].

The consultation usually lasts about 45 minutes. Further appointments may be shorter. Homeopathic remedies come as:

- tablets
- granules
- powders
- liquid

You take them by mouth or as creams or drops. Your therapist will let you know how to take your remedies and how often. They'll also let you know when to go back for a check up to see if your condition has improved. If you have a long lasting (chronic) condition, they may suggest you go back a few times. Your homeopath may ask you to keep a record of any changes in your symptoms or condition. You can buy homeopathic remedies over the counter. They are available at the chemist or in health food shops. Homeopathic medicines are unlicensed medicines. So, the chemist will not tailor these remedies for you.

Discussion

Using homeopathic medicine is generally safe. Some homeopaths warn people that their symptoms could get worse first. After that it will settle down and improve. But this doesn't happen very often. Researchers did a systematic review in 2016. This means that a group of experts gather all the evidence about a particular subject. They then go through it to work out whether there is any evidence to support it [14]. The researchers looked at 41 studies. They found that homeopathy had no more side effects than placebos. The researchers said that many studies on homeopathy failed to report side effects. The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NIH) in America warns against certain homeopathic products. Researchers found that some homeopathic products contained heavy metals. They were not diluted. These products could cause severe side effects. A 2017 study also warned against homeopathy. It said that it might cause people to stop their conventional treatment [15].

It's important to understand homeopathic remedies should not

replace conventional treatments for most medical conditions. There's no evidence these substances have any effect. If you use homeopathic remedies instead of conventional treatments backed by well-designed studies, you may end up sicker and worse off than you were from just the disease. While many of these treatments are unlikely to be harmful when combined with conventional treatments, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about them to make sure you're staying safe.

Conclusion

While homeopathic remedies haven't conclusively been found helpful for any disease, practitioners do offer a service some people feel is currently lacking in conventional medical care: time and listening. A visit with a homeopathic provider may last for an hour or more, compared with the brief visits many allopathic healthcare providers offer. The opportunity to have someone listen to concerns in an empathic manner can be important. Homeopathic providers may also take more time to discuss healthy lifestyle practices, which can have a real benefit on health.

Acknowledgement

None

Conflict of Interest

None

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