

Ananda Wellness : A New Paradigm to healing by a Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) Discipline

Alvin Toffler: *“The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”*

There was a recent study conducted at the Seth G.S. Medical College and K.E.M. Hospital, Parel, Mumbai and published in the National Medical Journal of India 2013, that highlights the relevance of CAM in today’s time and the need for more transparency in the field of medicine. It also illustrates the need for better evidence-based medicine and an open-minded collaboration of modern medicine and their complementary counterparts, in the best interests of their common patients.

It has been estimated that two-thirds of the world’s population seeks health care from sources other than those providing treatment with the allopathic system of medicine.

It has been reported that patients opt for CAM because they are dissatisfied with allopathic healthcare as it is perceived to be ineffective, have side effects, is impersonal or too expensive. However, it has been suggested that disenchantment with allopathic medicine is not necessarily the only reason why patients turn to CAM. Patients may also find CAM attractive because it is in consonance with their personal values as well as religious and health philosophies.

It was found that there is a high prevalence of use of CAM among patients with chronic diseases. Patients seeking treatment for chronic diseases believed it was safe, effective and convenient with a high satisfaction score.

Case of collagen vascular disease :

The below presented case was treated jointly by an allopathic doctor along with the Ananda Wellness clinic team.

Collagen vascular disease is an autoimmune disease. This means that your immune system mistakenly attacks your body’s healthy tissue. In this specific case presented, one’s immune system causes inflammation in the collagen which is a tough fiber-like protein and is part of the structure of tendons, bones, and connective tissues.

Symptoms typically experienced are fatigue, muscle weakness, fever, body aches, joint pain, skin rash etc.

Treatment: Corticosteroids reduce inflammation throughout the body and help normalize your immune system, however, they also carry major side effects including weight gain, mood changes, and rise in blood sugar levels.

Immunosuppressant medication works by lowering your immune response. When your immune response is lower, your body will no longer attack itself as much. However,

having a lowered immunity can increase your risk of becoming sick due to opportunistic infections. It is an ideal case for homeopathic intervention.

Case Study: Following is the case of patient PK, 30 years old male, who carries the diagnosis of collagen vascular disease. It finally resulted in avascular necrosis of femur. At that stage the case was referred to us for homeopathic case management support.

His complaints date back to 2006 when he first noticed a dark pigmented rash on his left arm without any itching or pain. This was treated with Candid-B anti-fungal topical application.

Over the next few months he had recurrent bouts of fever, cold and cough during which time he would have intense flaring up of rashes. He was prescribed antibiotics and soon after the rashes came on to the whole body with high fever, sore throat preventing any food intake. He was admitted in critical condition in July 2006 in KEM hospital under a renowned physician's care. His fever subsided but rashes did not.

He again had a relapse in 2008 and finally after a series of blood tests and radiological screening, after which he was diagnosed with connective tissue disorder. Around the same time his symptoms had exacerbated rapidly and he had developed severe pain in his right hip. which made walking extremely painful. An MRI confirmed avascular necrosis of the femur bone, one of his many symptoms, that along with the bouts of fever and skin rash, conformed his diagnosis.

At this point, the patient was referred to Ananda Wellness by the attending allopathic physician who had seen other such cases being treated and cured with homeopathy.

The homeopathic approach :

A homoeopath needs to know both homoeopathy and allopathy which includes the pharmacology of both too. *Only if a physician knows what is normal, will he know what is abnormal.* Knowledge along with a detailed information about who is the patient that has the disease, is as important as the disease itself. What has he like even before the obvious symptoms of his many ailments started to manifest themselves ? What were the effect of these complaints on his life ? In what way has his disease, made him not at ease ? The pathognomonic symptoms are the ones on which the allopath bases his diagnoses and line of treatment. Even though that is equally important to a homoeopath, what is even more important for him are the non-pathognomonic or peculiar symptoms. It is largely on these symptoms that astounding homeopathic cures are achieved. *It can be said that when an allopathic history is concluded, a homeopathic case taking commences !*

So in order to find the exact curative remedy for a patient, a homeopath undertakes a comprehensive individualistic evaluation of the patient's physical, mental and emotional makeup rather than just his isolated or pathology-based symptoms. Such a remedy acts just as a catalyst to stimulate the body's own innate self-healing abilities.

Highlights of the Case

For those that are not familiar with the depth involved in case taking sessions, it is worth taking note of the aspect of 'source words' being used casually by the patient while describing his ailments. Such source words carry a lot of purpose and are like cues that offer a homeopath, precise direction in the process of case navigation.

Below are the main extracts of the case, which begin as most case do, with the physical symptoms, and when each of them are probed further, the case takes a different meaning and starts to evolve, and show its initial hidden interiors :

“ Severe pain in right hip joint on walking since 3 weeks due to avascular necrosis of femur. All of a sudden spike of pain like a needle pricking. Herpes of right thigh during which this pain had stopped but has returned now.

Pain in left jaw, unable to open mouth.

Muscular pain and arthritis of different joints.

Broken left wrist.

Sore throat with stinging pain, like a sudden bite of an ant, anything eaten would feel spicy.

High fever up to 103 during which there is a lot of heat build up. It is like a steam like sensation as if **hot vapor is emitting from the body** with pain in hands, fingers and bones. Could not even close my fist -You feel **the heat and warm sensation like a volcano or a stove**. Heat and temperature both increase, better with cold water compress. But in spite of this I would go to work. I am a workaholic ”

Further probing on the frequently used word- ‘erupting’ - the patient says “ it is as if something starting minor in initial stage, slowly increasing in intensity, **something coming out and erupting like a volcano. Erupts like a volcano all of a sudden**. Some activities are being displayed below the earth which cannot be recognized at the surface. The **lava starts collecting and pressurizes the surface of the earth from below**, it is making pressure and the surface starts cracking. Then it looks for a major crack from where it can erupt fast and suddenly. **Happens to me in the skin in the same way too. I always feel the warmth first, then small rashes, within 2-3 hours full arm is red.**”

Hippocrates the father of modern medicine wrote: “It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has.”

Life space and personal interests:

I am always fighting with my father, he wants me to be self-earning. I accepted it as a challenge but we still argue and fight over general issues. Our ideas would clash. No compromise in our views. We are Kshatriyas - **warriors**- strong to fight on issues, **debate on issues**, we never leave it. He is one of the few people with whom I find it extremely hard to control my anger. In extreme provocation my words can be very harsh and hard hitting. I realize this later, but by then the damage has already been done.

Unfairness at first job - I had the capability but they would not give me projects due to my qualification. I felt this was unfair, so left the job.

Athlete - baseball pitcher, also base hitter.

Remedy prescribed - Hecla lava.

Remedy Source Information: Hecla is Iceland’s most active volcano with over 20 recorded eruptions since the 11th century. The word Hecla means cloak in Icelandic

which most probably is a reference to the almost permanent cloud hovering over its summit. A Hecla volcanic eruption characteristically starts out with an explosive phase that usually lasts for a few hours followed by an eruptive phase in which large quantities of lava are spewed up over a period of several weeks. The homoeopathic remedy Hecla lava is prepared by triturating the volcanic ash of Mount Hecla. The ash itself is composed mainly of Silica, Alumina, Lime, Magnesia and Iron Oxides.

The remedy Hecla Lava is a very effective remedy for all kinds of arthralgia. The bones and joints get inflamed and even necrosed due to lack of sufficient blood supply. This useful remedy was introduced into the pharmacopeia of homeopathy by Wilkinson because he observed massive exostosis of the jaw in sheep grazing in the region of Mt. Hecla and also a failure of milk in animals grazing in this region. The finer ash which fell on pastures at a distance, was the most toxic, the gross ash near the mountain was inert.

Hecla lava has been given with good results in diverse bone diseases, and has also been employed in bone sarcoma. The remedies tendency to damage bone tissue also makes it a useful remedy for all kinds of suppuration and fistula's.

Every homeopathic remedy has an emotional counterpart to it as well. The temperament of a Hecla Lava individual is of one who is a very calm and poised person, but when provoked, can burst into violent anger. No control. Shouting at others whoever they may be, using words that offend."

They can be compared to volcanoes that usually look gentle, but once they start erupting, they behave very violently, blasting and blazing, the hot lava destroying and hurting everything around.

The patient was followed up and monitored both by the doctor who had referred him, and well as by the Ananda Wellness clinic over a period of two years. The results were quick and very satisfactory indeed. As is evident, pathological tests were conducted at frequent intervals to assess the improvement at the level of the pathology as well.

What was not surprising was that other than his marked amelioration with regards to all his physical parameters, he gradually calmed down as a person as well. His violent outbursts reduced. Due to which he was more productive at work and even started having a better and healthier relationship with his father. This case like several others treated at such a deep level, reminds us that a healthy individual is not only one that looks healthy and fit. He should also be able to exhibit a healthy response to those around him as well. That is true health - the ability to stay centered even when there are excitable triggers around us, and respond as the situation demands.

Below are few of the personal follow ups along with the pathological test results and their findings :

01/09/08 - As the homeopathic treatment commenced, he was encouraged to wean off the oral steroids and anti-inflammatory drugs. The rashes on his left arm gradually

subsided and so did his fever. He took Enteroquinol for an acute bout of dysentery. As such treatments are known to interfere with the positive effects of homeopathic remedies, an awareness was created not to do so in future, but to contact the clinic instead, and take our advice first, in such situations, in the patients best interest.

04/10/08 - Stiffness of finger joint on waking, better gradually. Not feverish. General feeling of well being. Physician in constant touch regarding progress of case.

10/1/09 - X-ray shows early arthritic changes in rt. hip joint. MRI dated 03/01/09 - Avascular necrosis of bilateral femoral heads, grade III on right and grade II on left. Damage is critical. Pain reduced now. Skin rashes same. Hectic schedule at work, lot of walking and traveling.

14/02/09 – Not feverish. Face rashes reduced.

11/4/09 - Pains bearable. Much better than earlier. Limping less now. Stomach normal. Not feverish.

20/6/09 - Much better. Hardly using any pain-killers now. No steroids since last 4 months. Able to walk for 15 minutes but some problem on slopes. Pain in right hip considerably reduced as compared to before. Heat and itching none but pigmentation persisting.

06/02/10 - Stiffness of body reduced. Limping still there but feel normal within 2-3 minutes. There is critical workload but can cope up with that. Skin rash same, no itching. Not feverish.

03/04/10 - Stable, can climb up a few steps. Limping still there but no stiffness. Skin patch is there like a scar mark.

26/6/10 - 90% recovery is there but remaining 10% is slow. Cannot sit continuously for long time.

28/8/10 - Much better. No allopathic treatment. Able to walk but cannot run yet. Able to climb 3-4 floors without any problem. No skin trouble. No itching. No roughness of left arm scar compared to previous.

03/11/10 - MRI dated 23/10/10 - Sub-chondral sclerosis and inflammatory changes with mild further flattening of right femoral head with resolution of marrow edema in the neck and intertrochanteric region. Joint effusion is also reduced compared to previous.

03/01/11 - Much better. Not much pain on walking or stairs. Walking faster but slight limping. MRI shows progress. No upper respiratory infections. Although everyone in the patient's family is sick with acute gastroenteritis, i.e. severe vomiting, diarrhea and weakness, the patient says that he is continuing to do well which is indicative of improved immunity.

30/1/12 - Emotionally good. Getting married next month. Feeling good after losing weight (10 kg). Not feverish. Sitting aggravates left knee pain, better walking and keeping busy. Lt. knee herpes like eruptions stayed for a week but without much discomfort to the patient. It was explained to the patient that after receiving a good fit homeopathic remedy, all healing occurs from within out, from the head down, and in the reverse order in which the symptoms have appeared. This is referred to as the Hering's law of cure. So the herpes-like eruptions actually represent the exteriorization of the

toxic accumulations from the inside of the body to the outside (through the skin). This usually lasts for few days before resolving completely.

MRI dated 05/01/14 - As compared to previous MRI 19/01/12 the changes in right hip joint appear stable. There is reduction in marrow edema in bilateral femoral heads and left femoral neck. The femur bone in comparison to the earlier reports shows complete resolution.

Conclusion :

We at Ananda Wellness believe that treatment should be patient centric and not system centric. Certain cases warrant an integrated approach designed around specific needs of the patient and that the attending physician should always be open to such an option in the best interest of the patient.

We conclude by stating that CAM is here to stay. Recognizing its benefits and availing of the same conveys maturity on the part of a doctor and respect to the wishes of his patients. The need of the hour is a better collaborative effort between therapists as per the specific needs of the patient. The Indian Government has always supported such disciplines, and recognizing their role in the general treatment of masses, has given special privileges to all scientific disciplines of AYUSH.

The above case illustrates that homoeopathy can be successfully used in ailments with an auto-immune disorder label, for which conventional medicine has its limitations in terms of a permanent cure. Here, with the aid of a well-chosen homeopathic remedy, we were not only able to taper the patient not only off steroids, but also drastically reduce the susceptibility to recurrent infections, promote improved functional mobility and thus increase the overall quality of life of the patient.

The primary physician who referred the case was jointly managing the case at every stage. He would provide constant assurance to the patient and his family and also exercise great restraint in ensuring minimal intervention. This joint and transparent collaboration has contributed largely to the success, outcome and prognosis of this case. Such counter references will play a huge and positive role in the treatment of chronic illnesses seen in this century and thereafter.

We need to align as one team in the treatment of those who seek our help. That is the primary objective at Ananda Wellness. That has been our objective at our earlier two clinics. We now hope to extend true healing in the lovely city of Ahmedabad as well.

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Customized homeopathic remedial solutions with life style modifications

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