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## REVIEW ARTICLE

### HOMOEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT OF HYPERURICAEMIA...GOUT

Yogesh Kumar Sharma<sup>1</sup>, Gagandeep Kour<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Schlor, Tantia University, Sri Ganganagar Rajasthan. <sup>2</sup> Supervisor, Dept. Organon of medicine with Homoeopathic Philosophy, Tantia University, Sri Ganganagar. Rajasthan

#### Abstract

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**Corresponding Author:-**  
Yogesh Kumar Sharma,  
Ph.D. Schlor, Tantia  
University, Sri  
Ganganagar Rajasthan

Gout is a common disorder of purine metabolism. It is a disease caused by deposition of monosodium urate (MSU) crystals in tissue such as cartilage, synovial membrane, bone and tissue. This deposition occurs when serum uric acid levels exceed the saturation point of MSU crystal formation, a condition called Hyperuricemia. Hyperuricemia has been defined as a serum or plasma urate concentration greater than 7.0 mg/dl in males and 6.0mg/dl in females.

#### INTRODUCTION

The health of an individual depends upon many factors and among all his lifestyle and diet is most important. Nowadays human beings are more vulnerable to metabolic disorders due to their faulty life style and dietary habits. Clinically gout is characterized by pain and swelling of joints, especially 1st metatarsal joint.

Gout is rare in most other animals due to their ability to produce uricase, which breaks down uric acid. Humans and other great apes do not have this ability; thus, gout is common. Other animals with uricase include fish, amphibians and most non-primate mammals. The Tyrannosaurus rex specimen known as "Sue" is believed to have had gout

## EPIDEMIOLOGY:

Gout is a global problem and seems to be increasing in many parts of world over the past 50 years. Developed countries tend to have a higher burden of gout than developing countries, and seem to have increasing prevalence and incidence of the disease.

Gout can affect anyone. It usually occurs earlier in men than women. Men can be three times more likely than women to get it because they have higher levels of uric acid most of their lives. The incidence of gout varies in population from 0.2 to 3.5 per 1000, with an overall prevalence of 2 to 26 per 1,000.

Many epidemiological studies have shown that hyperuricemia and gout are associated with the development of hypertension, cardiovascular disease, stroke, chronic kidney disease and diabetes, potentially through crystal-independent modes of action.

Men are 10 times more likely to have gout than women, and it rarely occurs before young adulthood and seldom in premenopausal females. Gout presents in middle life 40-50.

Patients of gouty arthritis land up in severe joint destructions. The common complications in patients of gout are urate nephropathy, uric acid nephropathy and nephrolithiasis.

## PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

Gout is a disorder of purine metabolism and occurs when its final metabolite, uric acid, crystallizes in the form of monosodium urate, precipitating and forming deposits (tophi) in joints, on tendons, and in the surrounding tissues. Crystal of gout is a form of metabolic crystal arthropathy associated with hyperuricaemia. It can be defined as the pathological reaction of the joint or periarticular tissues due to presence of monosodium urate crystals. As the crystal deposits slowly, there is progressive involvement of more proximal sites & the potential for cartilage and bone damage with consequent development of 'secondary Osteoarthritis', renal disease and nephrolithiasis.

## CAUSES:

- It generally occurs after menopause in women. Women reach these uric acid levels after menopause.
- Overweight/obesity.
- Congestive heart failure.
- Diabetes.
- Family history of gout.
- Hypertension (high blood pressure).
- Kidney disease.
- Consume a diet high in animal proteins.
- Consume a significant amount of alcohol.
- Are on water pills (diuretics).

## SYMPTOMS

An episode of gout is called a gout attack. Gout attacks are very painful and can happen quite suddenly, often overnight. A gout pain can last a week or two.

During a gout attack, symptoms in the affected joint(s) may include:

- Intense pain.
- Redness.
- Stiffness.
- Swelling.
- Tenderness, even to light touch, such as from a bedsheet.
- Warmth or a feeling like the joint is “on fire.”

## DIAGNOSIS AND TESTS

One should examine the affected joint(s) to look for swelling, redness and warmth.

- Serum Uric acid
- Plain X-rays,
- An ultrasound or
- MRI.
- Aspiration of fluid from the joint to see for uric acid crystals (confirming gout) or a different problem (such as bacteria with infection or other type of crystal).

## MANAGEMENT

Despite being the most common type of inflammatory arthritis, gout is often poorly managed. The overarching goal of chronic management is to reduce

serum urate concentrations to below the level where MSU crystals form, through a combination of both life-style and pharmacologic strategies. As serum or plasma urate concentration greater than 7.0 mg/dl in males and 6.0mg/dl in females is considered as Hyperuricaemia.

The overall management of gouty arthritis has three phases:

- A. Controlling acute flares,
- B. Controlling hyperuricemia, and
- C. Prophylaxis to prevent painful recurrences.

D. Other than that:

- Elevating the joint(s).
- Putting ice on the joint(s).
- Limiting any stress on the joint(s).

Modern drug regimens for the management of gout in the modern medicine like Non-steroid anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), Corticosteroids, Antihyperuricemic drugs and Uricosuric agents.

## PREVENTION

- lifestyle changes to help prevent gout:
- Drink plenty of water to help your kidneys function better and avoid dehydration.
- Exercise regularly. As overweight/obesity increases uric acid and puts more stress on joints.

- Foods and drinks containing high purine levels include: Alcohol, Red meat and organ meats (liver), Shellfish, Drinks and foods high in fructose (fruit sugar).
- Eating dairy products, vitamin C-rich foods, coffee, and cherries
- Protein from animal sources. All protein from animal flesh can potentially lead to elevated uric acid levels.
- Certain medications can lead to elevated uric acid levels like Diuretics, also known as “water pills.”

#### **DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS**

- A. Septic arthritis.
- B. Other conditions that can look similar include CPPD (pseudogout),
- C. rheumatoid arthritis,
- D. psoriatic arthritis,
- E. palindromic rheumatism, and reactive arthritis.
- F. Basal cell carcinoma or other neoplasms.

#### **HOMOEOPATHIC VIEW:**

The total individual picture of the patient is not only based on the physical symptoms, but lifestyle, character, mental and emotional state, stress levels, diet, family history and other general factors in order to prescribe the remedy. Homeopathic treatments are highly individualized. Two people with gout are

treated as distinct individuals, each uniquely influenced by the many factors as mentioned above, with each patient being prescribed a remedy that matches their symptom i.e. Symptom similarity.

As §73....As regards acute diseases, they are either of such a kind as attack human beings individually, the exciting cause being injurious influences to which they were particularly exposed. Excesses in food, or an insufficient supply of it, severe physical impression, chills, over heatings, dissipation, strains, etc., or physical irritations, mental emotions, and the like, are exciting causes of such acute febrile affections; in reality, however, they are generally only a transient explosion of latent psora, which spontaneously returns to its dormant state if the acute diseases were not of too violent a character and were soon quelled. .... so we should first operate the exciting and maintaining causes of gaout.

Patient develops gout under the influence of psoricmiasm as Gout is an inflammatory condition. In case of chronic tophaceous gout, there is deposition of MSU crystals in around the joint, which is mainly a sycotic manifestation. Uric acid diathesis is also sycotic manifestation. Syphilitic miasm is characterized by degeneration and destruction. In advance or complicated cases of gout there is destruction of the joint and articular

surface, which is chiefly syphilitic in nature.

Homeopathic remedies for high uric acid provide an excellent cure. Treatment of elevated uric acid levels with homeopathic remedies not only lowers the levels but also treats body's defective tendency to hold excess of uric acid. Homeopathic remedies also treat the body's metabolic process which handles purines ( kind of protein which ends up as uric acid after the body processes it. Homoeopathy can control & treat acute episodes of gout effectively by preventing their recurrence and complications with permanent restoration of health.

#### **HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINES SPECIFIC FOR GOUT:**

➤ **COLCHICUM:-** Colchicum is one of the most indicated remedy in raised uric acid levels. This is specially indicated in cases where high uric acid levels give rise to onset of gout. There is sharp pain in the great toe. The affected parts are red, swollen and very hot to touch. There could be great sensitivity to touch on account of extreme pain. Tearing pains could be more intense in the evening and night. Slightest effort to move the legs gives rise to a sharp, shooting and unbearable tearing pain in the big toe. There may be difficult to walk on

account of pain. Oedematous swelling of legs and feet

- **LEDUM PAL-** It is one of the most indicated remedies in treating cases of high uric acid levels. The pains shift from downwards to upwards. Patient feels chilly, yet he does not like to be covered as his pains are better by cold. Ledum pal is indicated when the high levels of uric acid in blood may result in its crystals being deposited in the joint spaces. The pain could be triggered at night, especially after consuming meat and alcohol.
- **GUAIAACUM:-** It is also a well indicated remedy in treating high uric acid levels. It is more suited in chronic cases where the deformities and contractures set in. Gouty pains tearing and lancinating, worse from motion, heat, cold wet weather, touch and pressure, from 6pm to 4 am. Better by external pressure. The affected joints may be extremely hot to touch. Guaiacum may be given when there is a bad smell from the body. The affected limb is painful, stiff and immobile.
- **LITHIUM CARB:-** Lithium carb is a good remedy in treating raised uric acid levels. The high levels of uric acid give rise to an unusual stiffness all over the body. There is itching all over the skin of the joints. The pains are

relieved by pouring hot water. Uric acid may get deposited in the joint spaces to give rise to nodosities which can be felt externally also. The nodes may also be felt in the finger joints and in some severe cases, they may be felt in the ear pinna.

- **BENZOIC ACID**- It is an excellent remedy for for high uric acid levels. It is indicated when the urinary symptoms are more marked. The uric acid crystals may be deposited in the kidneys or the urinary tract giving rise to stones. The colour of urine may also keep changing from dark brown to pale yellow and smells like urine of a horse. There is crackling sensation in the joints. The great toe may be swollen and may give rise to difficulty in walking or even moving the limb.

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