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HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH FOR MANAGEMENT OF ULCERATIVE COLITIS

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ABSTRACT

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) are increasing in India and other Asian countries and India is on top among other southeast-asian countries. Inflammatory bowel disease categorises ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease in it. These are two chronic inflammatory disease of uncertain etiology affecting the gut. Ulcerative colitis is a form of inflammatory bowel disease which is characterised by diffuse inflammation of the colonic mucosa. It has symptoms like bloody diarrhea, abdominal pain, and rectal problems. Treatment options for ulcerative colitis in modern medicine have various side effects. Thus it is needed to develop safe and effective treatment. This article presents the treatment of Ulcerative colitis in Homeopathy. Improved understanding of some factors responsible like genetics, unhealthy diet and the immune system paved the path towards successful treatment through Homeopathy.

Key-words – Inflammatory, ulcerative, Homeopathy, abdominal pain

Introduction

Ulcerative colitis is a lapsing and remitting disorder of the gut. It has been reported that ulcerative colitis onset can get triggered by the environmental factors because incidences are increasing in countries which have moved towards industrialization. Its peak of onset is mostly seen around 15-30 years and 50-70 years of age. Although precise etiology is unknown but person is more susceptible for the ulcerative colitis due to genetic history. This occurs due to improper immune response of mucosa of gut which affects commensal flora and thus causing inflammation. This inflammation will start from rectum, then spread proximally throughout length of colon and affects only mucosal layer. Previous infection of Salmonella species, Campylobacter species, Shigella species increases the risk of patient for ulcerative colitis. Thus this indicates that intestinal infection may change the flora of the gut which can result in inflammatory diseases.

In normal physiology, food enters through mouth, passes from oesophagus, then through stomach, small intestine and then enters into the large intestine; then after absorbing nutrients, excretory material is expelled through anus. It is one of the types of inflammatory bowel disease. Crohn's disease affects small intestine and Ulcerative colitis affects large intestine. Ulcerative colitis is a chronic inflammatory bowel disease causing inflammation and ulceration in the colon and rectum. This starts gradually but often gets worse with time. In severe cases, the ulcers can bleed, leading to pus and mucus accumulation.

Etiology of Ulcerative colitis

Exact cause of it is still unknown, but it is considered as an auto-immune disorder. Some of the causes of ulcerative colitis are as follows:-

➤ Hereditary

It is reported that genetic history increases the chances of susceptibility. About one-fifth of the patients have family history of this disease.

➤ Immune system

It is considered as an auto-immune disorder. Some alterations in the immune system of the body can trigger the inflammation. In some patients, the body can respond to a viral or bacterial infection in such a way that it can be linked with ulcerative colitis. Sometimes due to certain reasons, the immune system continues to fight even after the suppression of infection and this damages the body's own tissues and organs. Here the auto-immune system is destroying the colon and rectum of the body.

➤ Stress

In some cases, patients suffer the repeated episodes of this problem, when they are experiencing any type of mental tension or stress.

➤ Drugs

Excessive use of certain drugs like NSAIDs, antibiotics, contraceptive pills are found to have some role in triggering ulcerative colitis.

➤ Diet

Excessive intake of carbohydrate-rich, spicy, sugar-rich food can increase the chances.

➤ Environment

People living in poor hygienic conditions are more prone to ulcerative colitis. Air

pollution, smoking also increases the chances of occurrence.

Types of ulcerative colitis

On the basis of parts of the colon affected, ulcerative colitis is divided into different

types as depicted in the **figure 1** along with different symptoms experienced by the patients.

Left sided colitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This affect the rectum, left side of descending colon • Symptoms:- Bloody diarrhoea, abdominal cramps specifically on left side etc.
Proctosigmoiditis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This occurs in the rectum and the sigmoid colon. • Symptoms:- Bloody diarrhoea, abdominal pain with cramps, increased urge to pass stools etc.
Ulcerative proctitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This causes inflammation and ulceration in the end part of the colon (rectum). • Symptoms:- Rectal bleeding, inability to pass stools etc.
Pancolitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This affects the whole colon. • Symptoms:- Fatigue, weight loss, abdominal pain with cramps, severe bloody diarrhoea.
Fulminant colitis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe, life threatening type of colitis. • Symptoms:- Severe pain, diarrhoea, dehydration, shock, sometimes rupture of colon can also occur.

Figure 1:- Different types of ulcerative colitis with associated symptoms.

Symptoms

This can vary according to the severity of the disease and the part it is affecting.

▪ Diarrhoea

This is often the first symptom of ulcerative colitis. Most common symptom is passing blood or pus in stools. Patient will experience severe urge to pass stools and pain with cramps in abdomen region. Feeling of tenesmus (unsatisfactory bowel

movements) is often experienced by the patients.

▪ Nausea and constipation

Patient can also experience constipation and nausea. All these symptoms are worst during the morning time.

▪ Loss of appetite

Patient can become weak and lose weight due to loss in appetite.

▪ Anemia

Due to the deficiency of certain essential elements certain deficiency disorders also occurs. Anemia is mostly noticed in ulcerative colitis patients.

Diagnosis

For the diagnosis, we need to record proper case history of the patient with every detail about the symptoms, family history etc. On palpation, tenderness will be felt in the abdomen region. Several tests can be performed to know the details such as blood tests, stool tests, colonoscopy, endoscopy, sigmoidoscopy, CT scan. All this will help us in getting internal details about the various parts such as oesophagus, stomach, small intestine, large intestine etc. Stool test will help in detecting the bacteria or parasites.

Treatment in Homeopathy

Homeopathy is extremely effective in treating Chronic Ulcerative colitis. Homeopathy provides a effective treatment towards the Ulcerative colitis. It focuses on treating the main cause i.e. it tries to correct the working of immune system of the body. By correcting this, ulcer formation in intestinal tract can be treated. Homeopathy medicines do not have side effect on the patients. It helps in reducing the severity and recurrence of the ulcerative colitis. Surgery can be avoided if patient start receiving treatment from starting only. It reduces the need for taking immunosuppressant and overall improves the health of the patient.

Besides this Homeopathy also has emphasise on the constitutional remedies. This are prescribed after knowing in details about the patient's personality, symptoms, likes-dislikes, sleep habits, etc. This improves the normal functioning of the immune

system by reducing stress. Following remedies will help in reducing inflammation, ulceration and bleeding in the intestine.

- Arsenic album

It is very potent medicine having wide sphere of action. It works on various organs such as gastrointestinal system, respiratory system, urinary system etc. It works in a good way for the septic infections. It is indicated in patients who are passing mucus and blood in the foul smelling watery stool. Patient also suffer from severe abdominal pain and burning sensation sometimes with sudden chills. Patient will be weak, anxious and will be restless.

- Merc Cor

This is suggested to the patients having pain in abdomen, hemorrhagic ulcerations in the intestine, painful defecation, and foul smelling stools with blood.

- Merc Sol

This is a deeply acting remedy which stimulates proper functioning of the various systems of the body. It can be used in ulcerative colitis, skin abscesses, tonsillitis, etc. It is given to the patients who have constant urge to pass stools. Stools will have blood and mucus. Patient who experience constant pain in abdomen with chills and has become weak are advised to take this medicine.

- Argentum nitricum

It helps in treating patients who suffer from ulcerative colitis, diarrhea, excessive formation of gas and anxiety.

- Phosphorus

This is suggested to the patients who suffer from diarrhea and pass blood in the stools

but pain is not experienced. It is given to the patients who are emotionally weak.

- Carcinosis

It is a medicine having wide range of spectrum. As homeopathy considers genetic influence as an important factor in the development of disease thus this is used to treat the genetic linking of the disease.

- Kali bichromatum

When patient complaints of chronic intestinal ulcerations alongwith vomiting. Patient will also pass bloody and mucus filled stools with feeling of tenesmus. If after every meal patient suffer from constricting, burning pain then this remedy is indicated.

Conclusion

In recent years it is noticed that inflammatory bowel diseases are increasing in South-East Asian countries. Treatment of ulcerative colitis according to the modern medicine has many side effects, therefore it is the need of the hour to look for the other options. In such condition, Homeopathy provides the best treatment with best medicines for curing the ulcerative colitis.

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