

Role of Homoeopathic Medicines as an Add-on Therapy in Management of Mild to Moderate Cases of Covid-19 : A Prospective observational study

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Abstract:

Epidemics have perturbed the humankind from time to time. The world, was struggling with the pandemic of Covid-19. Whereas, the medical community and scientist were trying to find ways to control its spread. Developing countries like India suffered drastically in sudden surge of second wave and witnessed a greater number of fatalities because of poor public health policies, lack of health resources and huge population. Multiple conventional medicines were tried but experts failed to cure deadly Covid-19 virus with single medicine. Multiple challenges were faced by health professionals like changing symptomatology, vaccine under trial, cost, non-availability and side effects of indicated medicines. Fortunately, India's Health Care System is equipped with conventional as well as Complementary Therapies. Homoeopathic remedies have been used as both prophylactic to prevent and treat epidemic since centuries. Homoeopathy was successfully applied during the epidemic of Spanish flu in 1918-19 where around 20 million people died globally. Mortality rate of population treated with Homoeopathy was 1-2% while 30-60% in population treated with conventional medicines. During second wave of Covid-19 varied symptomatology was being observed during course of the disease in different individuals. Also, response to the conventional treatment was different in each individual based on their individual susceptibility.

13 Patients of different age groups and all genders having mild to moderate infection and who gave consent to be a part of study were included. All patients included in the study were on standard conventional treatment. Individual case-history was taken and prescription was given on the basis of Acute Totality; Repetition of medicine was as per the demand of susceptibility. Follow up was assessed with modified Naranjo's Criteria. Out of 13 patients positive Naranjo's score was noticed in 84%, also observed that hospital stay of patient who opted for homoeopathic treatment along with conventional treatment was less than patient with only conventional treatment.

Key Words: Covid-19, Case study, Homoeopathy, Modified Naranjo's Criteria

Introduction:

Epidemics have perturbed the humankind from time to time. The plague in Europe in the Middle Ages, smallpox, yellow fever in the America or the infamous flu pandemic of 1918-1919. To add on, recently, there have been epidemics of swine flu, Zika, encephalitis, Ebola, Influenza, Chikungunya, Dengue etc⁽¹⁾. Gold standard for conventional treatment for various epidemic diseases so far, even though published sources proving their efficacy beyond doubt in epidemics are hard to find. Besides issues such as difficulties with developing and disseminating vaccines, their side effects, viral mutations, exorbitant costs involved, the growing problem of antibiotic-resistant bacteria are undermining these approaches. Innovative approaches for treating communicable diseases are being sought for by WHO and some had been welcomed during Ebola outbreak in 2014 when their expert group recommended that *"it is ethical to offer unproven interventions with as yet unknown efficacy and adverse effects, as potential treatment or prevention keeping in view no vaccine or anti-virals are available."*⁽²⁾

Homoeopathic remedies have been used as prophylactic to prevent and treat epidemic since centuries.⁽³⁾ It was Dr. Hahnemann who first applied genus epidemicus in 1799 during scarlet fever, Homoeopathy was successfully applied during the epidemic of Spanish flu in 1918-19 where around 20 million people died globally. Mortality rate of population treated with Homoeopathy was 1-2% while 30-60% in population treated with conventional medicines.⁽⁴⁾ One can learn a lot from history. Thus, the choice of Homoeopathy for tackling the current COVID 19 pandemic seems promising with a vision to find solution to the ailing humanity. Owing to the unique approach and possibility to provide early treatment based on the *semiology* of the patient in any diseased condition, which helps in checking not only the disease progression, but even prevention of disease.

The following study is an attempt to observe response to Homoeopathic medicines as an

Add-on therapy in management of individuals with mild to moderate cases of Covid-19 with indicated Homoeopathic medicines administered in minute doses by applying the

Modified *Naranjo's criteria*. Use of modified Naranjo's criteria for homoeopathy enables assessment of the likelihood of assigning *causal relationship* between a homoeopathic intervention and clinical improvement.⁽⁵⁾

Although, RCTs are considered the gold standards for establishing causality, a pool of good quality case reports would offer an important additional contribution to knowledge⁽⁵⁾

Material And Methods:

Study Design- Observational case series

Sample size- 13

Inclusion Criteria

- All genders
- Age- 25-75yrs
- Mild- moderate cases of Covid-19

Data collection

- Data was collected from IPD patient and it was recorded in case paper separately de-signed for Covid-19 cases.

Assessment Parameters

Participants were analysed using following pa-rameters

A. Subjective

1. Fever
2. Dry Cough
3. Dyspnoea
4. Loss of taste/smell
5. GIT symptoms
6. Weakness

B. Objective

1. Body temperature
2. Oxygen requirement
3. Vitals Parameters
4. Systemic findings

C. Naranjo's Criteria -

Modified Naranjo's criteria questionnaire was filled during follow up in order to check the causal relationship

Results:

It was observed that out of 13 patient volunteers, 11 cases met the requirement of positive Naranjo's Score, while 2 cases did not meet the score. It was also observed that hospital stay of patient who opted for homoeopathic treatment along with conventional treatment was less than patient with only conventional treatment.

Discussion:

Although, RCTs are considered the gold standards for establishing causality, a pool of good quality case series would offer an important additional contribution to knowledge. But one can also learn a lot by critical clinical observations alone from the successful management of individual suffering from the infection, an attempt has been made in this report highlighting this aspect. Data from the current study reveals that the subjective as well as objectives symptoms were reduced. Oxygen requirement after intervention with Homoeopathic medicine was reduced. Frequently used medicines were *Bryonia*, *Arsenicum Album*, and *Pulsatilla*. The use of Modified Naranjo's criteria helped us to establish causal relationship between Homoeopathic intervention and clinical improvement seen in patients of Covid-19.

Conclusion:

Future studies with a pragmatic study design can be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of treatment in Covid-19 and to confirm the claims.

Limitations:

This study being a case series, number of cases included for homoeopathic interventions are only 13. Though this is a very small number however, results are optimistic. Therefore this will require large sample size to assess the effectiveness of homoeopathic treatment as an add on therapy in cases of COVID 19 with mild to moderate presentation.

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BOC members of MTE Society.

Consultants of Sanjivan Hospital, Pune

We would like to acknowledge the patients of Covid-19 who gave us consent for Homoeopathic medicines along with their ongoing conventional treatment.

Compliance With Ethical Standards

Ethical approval- all Human subject data used in this study were used in coded format.

No conflict of interest.

No outside funding was obtained

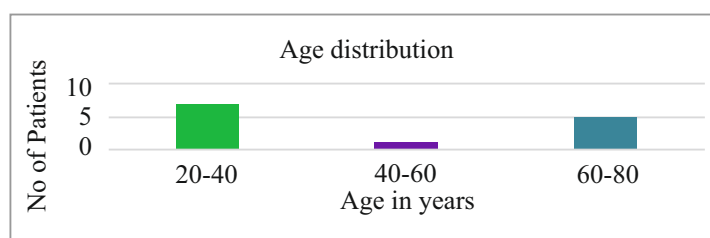
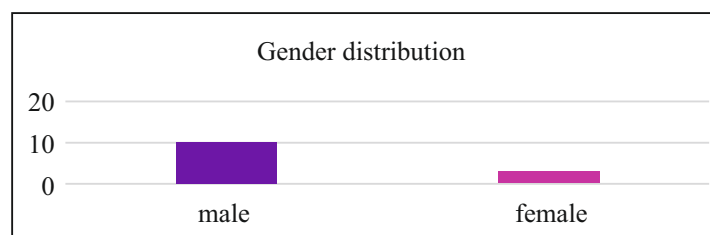
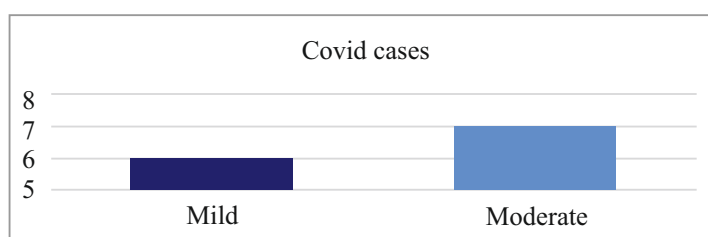
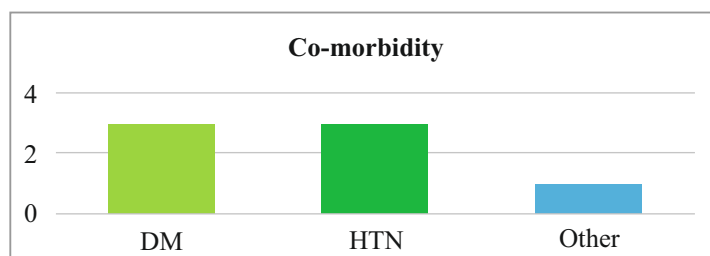
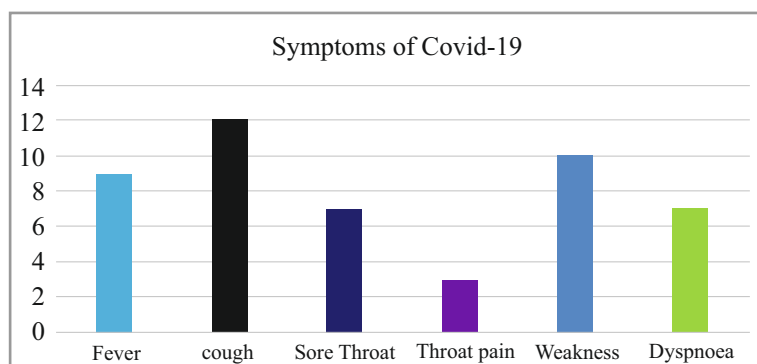
Table No. 1A: Demographic Data (Age Distribution)**Table No. 1B: Demographic Data (Gender distribution)****Table No. 2: Classification as per severity of disease and Co-morbidities****Table No. 3: Classification of Co-morbidities****Table No. 4: Symptoms of Covid-19**

Table No. 5 : Physical General symptoms observed

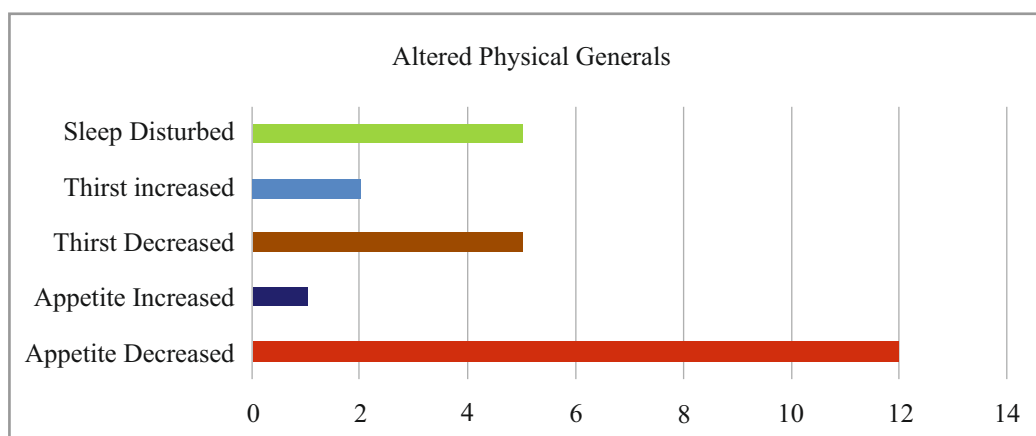


Table No. 6 : Mental General Symptoms

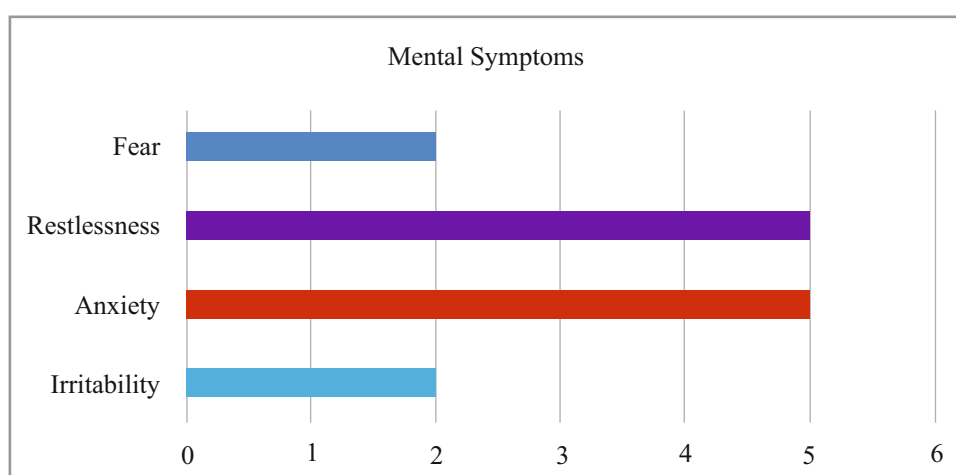


Table No. 7: Oxygen Requirement

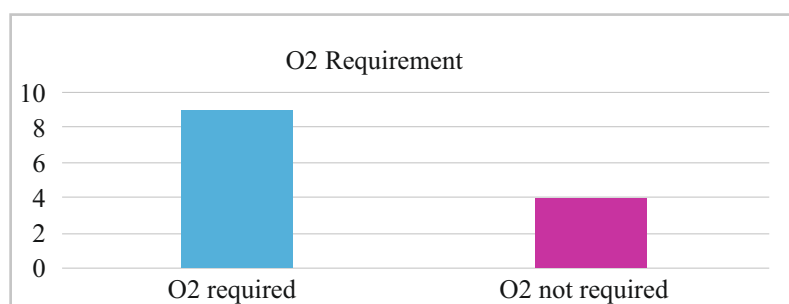


Table No. 8: Reduced Oxygen demands after onset of treatment

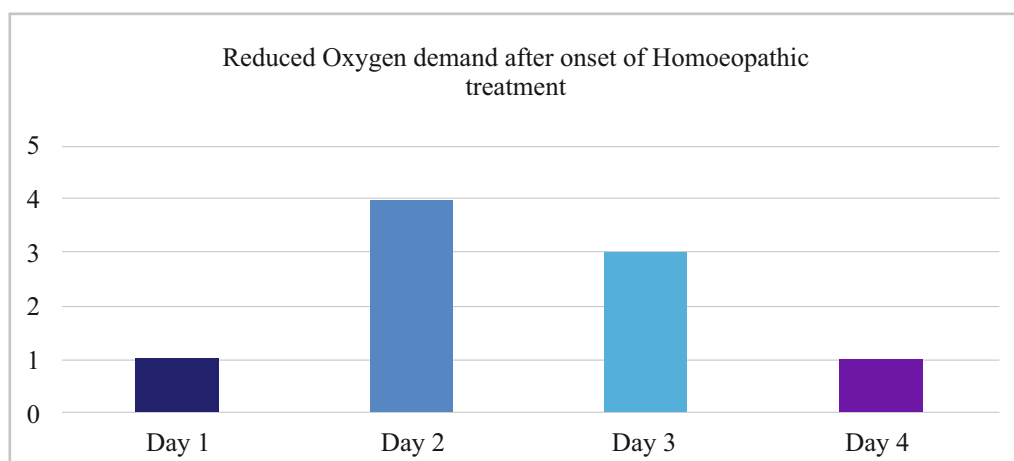


Table No. 9: Medicines prescribed

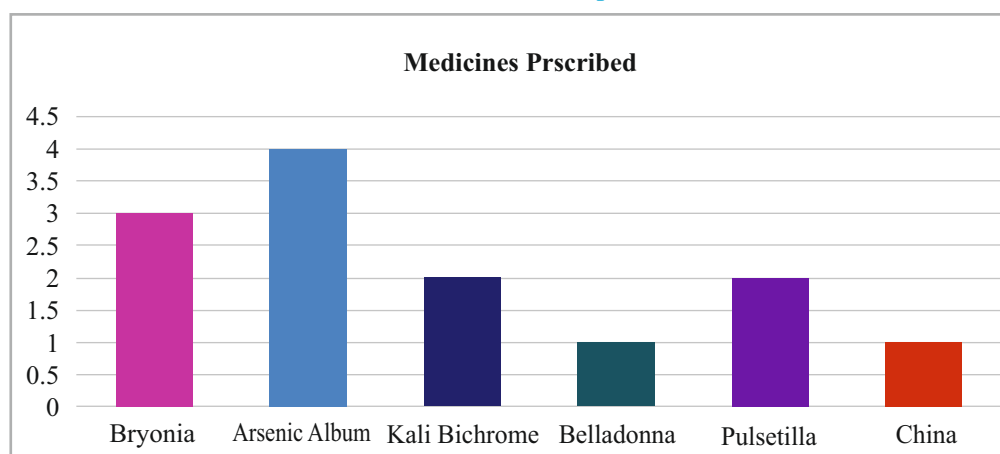
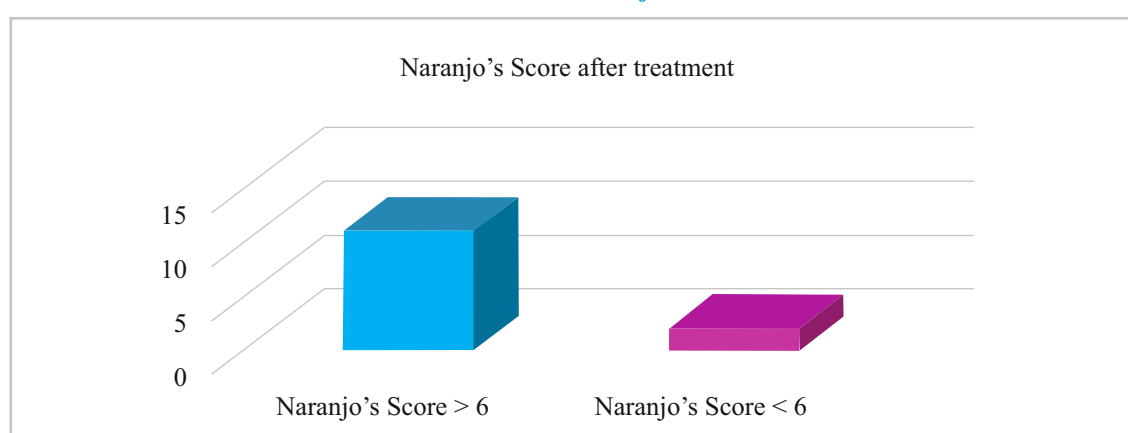


Table No. 10: Naranjo's Score



Modified Naranjo's Score-Positive predictive score is more than 6

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: Nil

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