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Research Highlights

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Research Highlights

Abstract

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Research highlights

SYSTEMIC REVIEW OF META-ANALYSIS OF PLACEBO-CONTROLLED HOMOEOPATHIC TRIALS

Title: Efficacy of homoeopathic treatment: Systematic review of meta-analyses of randomised placebo-controlled homoeopathy trials for any indication^[1]

Authors: H. J. Hamre, A. Glockmann, K. von Ammon, D. S. Riley, H. Kiene

Journal: Systematic Reviews, DOI: 10.1186/s13643-023-02313-2

Summary: In this review, six meta-analyses (MA) were included, covering individualised homoeopathy (I-HOM, $n = 2$), non-individualised homoeopathy (NI-HOM, $n = 1$) and all homoeopathy types (ALL-HOM = I-HOM + NI-HOM, $n = 3$). The meta-analyses comprised between 16 and 110 trials published between 1943 and 2014. The median trial sample size ranged from 45 to 97 patients. The risk of bias was rated as low for three meta-analyses and high for three meta-analyses. Effect estimates for all trials in each meta-analysis showed a significant positive effect of homoeopathy compared to placebo (5 of 5 MAs, no data in 1 MA). Sensitivity analyses with sample restriction to high-quality trials were available from 4 MAs; the effect remained significant in three of the MAs (2 MAs assessed ALL-HOM and 1 MA assessed I-HOM) and was no longer significant in 1 MA (which assessed NI-HOM). The quality of evidence for positive effects of homoeopathy beyond placebo was high for I-HOM and moderate for ALL-HOM and NI-HOM.

Comment: The available meta-analyses of placebo-controlled randomised efficacy trials of homoeopathy for any indication reveal significant positive effects of homoeopathy beyond placebo. This is in accordance with laboratory experiments that show partially replicable effects of homoeopathically potentised preparations in physico-chemical, *in vitro*, plant-based and animal-based test systems.

ADJUVANT HOMOEOPATHIC TREATMENT OF MODERATE/SEVERE COVID-19 CASES IN INTENSIVE CARE UNIT

Title: Randomised controlled trial to compare efficacy of standard care alone and in combination with homoeopathic treatment of moderate/severe COVID-19 cases^[2]

Authors: Harleen Kaur, Ramesh Bawaskar, Akash Khobragade, Dhiraj Kalra, Vedati Packiam, Mohammed Yamin Khan, Twinkle Kaur, Manish Sharma, Naval Kumar Verma, Subhash Kaushik, Anil khurana

Journal: PLOS ONE. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0292783>

Summary: This trial was done to assess the efficacy of customised homoeopathic medicines, as an add-on treatment to standard of care (SOC), in patients suffering from moderate to severe COVID-19 infection who were admitted to an intensive care unit setup. It was found that when participants were administered the add-on homoeopathic treatment, there was a significantly lower requirement of oxygen when compared to SOC alone, and the difference was highly significant ($9.8 [\pm 7]$ days in the homoeopathy arm and $14.9 [\pm 7.5]$ days in the SOC arm). Conversion of reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction status from positive to negative was one of the endpoints of the study, which occurred at an earlier date in the homoeopathy arm (10.6 ± 5.7 days), as compared to SOC arm (12.9 ± 5.6 days) and the difference was statistically significant.

Comments: Homoeopathy as an adjuvant has been shown to reduce the symptoms of COVID-19, when given as an add-on therapy with SOC for COVID-19 management. This trial demonstrates a reduction in mortality and morbidity, by reduced requirement of oxygen and duration of hospitalisation.

GLOBAL STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVE ON WHO'S CURRENT AND FUTURE STRATEGY

Title: Traditional, complementary and integrative healthcare: global stakeholder perspective on WHO's current and future strategy^[3]

Authors: Tido von Schoen-Angerer, Raj Kumar Manchanda, Iva Lloyd, Jon Wardle, Janka Szöke, Iracema Benevides, Natalia Sofia Aldana Martinez, Festus Tolo, Ton Nicolai, Cristal Skaling-Klopstock, Tabatha Parker, Dwi Linna Suswardany, Robbert van Haselen, Jianping Liu

Journal: BMJ Global Health, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2023-013150>

Summary: The essential role of traditional, complementary and integrative healthcare in achieving health and well-being and universal health coverage is stated in the WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy: 2014–2023 (WHO TM Strategy) and in the Astana Declaration on Primary Health Care, with its corresponding operational framework. As the World Health Assembly has decided to extend the current WHO TM Strategy until 2025, so the WHO has started drafting a new 10-year traditional medicine strategy that will be presented to the World Health Assembly for approval in 2025.

Comments: The paper is written from the perspective of the 'People's Declaration on Traditional, Complementary and

Integrative Healthcare', a worldwide coalition of over 300 professional and patient organisations, research centres and educational institutions. The coalition unites around the TCIH Declaration and calls for respectful collaboration between traditional, complementary and biomedical practices.

IMMUNOLOGICAL RESPONSES OF ARSENIC ALBUM IN COVID-19

Title: Immunological Responses of Arsenicum album 30CH to Combat COVID-19: Protocol for a Double-Blind, Randomised and Placebo-Controlled Clinical Trial in the Pathanamthitta District of Kerala^[4]

Authors: Suhana Panaparambil Azis, Kusum Lata, Shruti Jain Vij, Sreekanth Gopinathan Pillai, Bijukumar Damodaran, R T Shaji Kumar, K C Muraleedharan, Subhash Kaushik

Journal: JMIR Research Protocols, doi: 10.2196/48479

Summary: This is a protocol for randomised controlled clinical trial which will include two parallel comparator groups of AA30CH and placebo with an allocation ratio of 1:1, to evaluate immunogenic responses by determining the antigen density and modulation in immunological markers and lymphocyte subsets CD3, CD4, CD8, CD24, CD27, CD38, CD4 interferon- γ , CD4 CD17, CD4 CD25 (activated T lymphocytes), T-cells, B-cells, dendritic cells (mature and immature) and natural killer cells on days 1, 5, 23, 27, 45, 49 and 66. The innate and acquired immune responses will also be evaluated by reverse transcription-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) array profiler (84-gene set) before and after the study interventions. The toxicity status of AA30CH in study participants will be evaluated through hepatic, renal and haematological parameters and peripheral smears on days 1, 5, 23, 27, 45, 49 and 66. The number of participants developing COVID-19-like symptoms per National Centre for Disease Control guidelines and the number of participants testing positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR during follow-ups in any of the three intervention schedules will be identified. A subgroup analysis will be used to assess the COVID-19 antibody responses between vaccinated and unvaccinated participants.

Comments: This study will represent the first evaluation of the immunological efficacy and safety of AA 30CH in randomised controlled trial, which, in the future, will significantly impact the use of homoeopathy as evidence-based medicine approach.

PHYSICOCHEMICAL IMPLICATIONS OF HIGHLY DILUTED GLYPHOSATE-BASED HERBICIDE

Title: Highly Diluted Glyphosate Mitigates Its Effects on *Artemia salina*: Physicochemical Implications^[5]

Authors: Mirian Yaeko Dias de Oliveira Nagai, Suham Nowrooz Mohammad, Andreia Adelaide G Pinto, Ednar Nascimento Coimbra, Giovani Bravin Peres, Ivana Barbosa

Suffredini, Maria Martha Bernardi, Alexander L Tournier, Igor Jerman, Steven John Cartwright, Leoni Villano Bonamin

Journal: International Journal of Molecular Sciences, <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijms24119478>

Summary: This study investigated the putative mitigating activity of highly diluted potencies of glyphosate-based herbicide (GBH) on *Artemia salina* cysts exposed to low concentrations of GBH. Glyphosate 6CH treatment appears to produce protective effects on the development of *Artemia salina* exposed to GBH at low concentrations.

Comment: This approach opens new possibilities for the rational use of potentised high dilutions as a valuable tool for the mitigation of the effects of environmental toxins.

HOMOEOPATHY IN ATOPIC DERMATITIS: A REPLICATION TRIAL

Title: Double-Blind, Randomised and Placebo-Controlled Trial of Individualised Homoeopathic Medicines in Atopic Dermatitis in Adults: A Replication Trial with 6 Months' Follow-up^[6]

Authors: Sanjukta Mandal, Shubhamoy Ghosh, Aakash Deep Das, Bikash Biswas, Chithra Palanisamy, Nilanjana Guha, Shukdeb Maiti, Souvik Dutta, Navin Kumar Singh, Munmun Koley, Subhranil Saha

Journal: Homoeopathy, DOI: 10.1055/s-0042-1760339

Summary: This double-blind randomised controlled trial evaluated the efficacy of individualised homoeopathic medicines (IHMs) against identical-looking placebos in the treatment of Atopic dermatitis. In 60 patients with atopic dermatitis, the primary outcome PO-SCORAD showed statistically significant results with very large effect sizes favouring IHMs against placebos. The secondary subjective outcomes – ADBSA and dermatology life quality index (DLQI) – overall were non-significant, though DLQI revealed significant effects of IHMs at 5 and 6 months, with a medium effect size at the latter time point. In comparison with the previous randomised controlled trial (RCTs) by Siebenwirth *et al.* and Dey *et al.*, this trial had several advantages. It achieved sample size of 54 which was larger and the attrition rate of 15% was lower compared with the data reported, and this replication trial used multiple outcome measures instead of a single outcome.

Comments: The present RCT was a replication of the trial reported by Dey *et al.*; in comparison with the previous studies, this study had several advantages and methodologically stronger and more robust than its predecessors.

EFFICACY OF HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINE IN THE TREATMENT OF TINEA CORPORIS

Title: Individualised Homoeopathic Medicines in the Treatment of Tinea Corporis: Double-Blind, Randomised and Placebo-Controlled Trial^[7]

Authors: Bakibillah Laskar, Swapan Paul, Abhijit Chattopadhyay, Avaranjika Karuppusamy, Dharshna Balamurugan, Puja Bhakta, Sourav Das, Siddhartha Pal, Navin Kumar Singh, Munmun Koley, Subhranil Saha

Journal: Homoeopathy, doi: 10.1055/s-0042-1750799

Summary: A double-blind, randomised and placebo-controlled trial of individualised homoeopathic medicines in LM potencies was conducted on 62 patients suffering from tinea corporis. The primary outcome measure was the number of participants showing complete disappearance of skin lesions after 3 months. Secondary outcomes were a numeric rating scale measuring the intensity of itching and the Skindex-29 questionnaire. Results were negative on the primary outcome; however, secondary outcomes included some statistically significant results favouring IHMs against placebo after 3 months. Sulphur, Bacillinum and Thuja occidentalis were the most frequently prescribed medicines.

Comment: Robust trials on larger samples and for longer periods of time are now indicated, especially in view of emerging basic scientific evidence that homoeopathic remedies have physico-chemical properties that differ from those of placebos. There are several clinical conditions that are frequently encountered in practice and are well managed with individualised homoeopathy. However, clinicians must be encouraged to publish their clinical successes to enrich the evidence-based literature on homoeopathy.

ANTI-EPITHELIAL-MESENCHYMAL TRANSITION PROPERTY OF ARNICA MONTANA IN TRIPLE-NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER

Title: Anti-Epithelial-Mesenchymal Transition Property of Arnica Montana Attributed to Mitochondria-Mediated Apoptosis in Triple-Negative Breast Cancer^[8]

Authors: Nilanjana Basu, Chandardeep Tandon, Simran Tandon

Journal: Biointerface Research in Applied Chemistry, DOI: 10.33263/BRIAC135.492

Summary: In this study, the potential of Arnica Montana in hormone-independent breast cancer (MDA MB231) cells was evaluated. To assess the inhibitory effect after the treatment with different potencies of Arnica, a clonogenic assay was done and it was found that Arnica could inhibit the ability of a single TNBC cell to form discrete colonies as compared to SC and doxorubicin-treated cells. Apoptotic and anti-migratory effect of the ethanolic extract of Arnica in hormone-dependent breast cancer cells was reported. The data showed that Arnica Montana in various serially diluted and agitated potencies could inhibit the MDA MB231 cell proliferation and migration by altering the epithelial-mesenchymal transition pathway.

Comment: Homoeopathic system of medicine has been able to spark scientific minds to explore the plausibility,

action and nature of this system, especially on fundamental aspects. This study showed positive results which lay down the foundation for future studies in animal models to elucidate the potential therapeutic role of homoeopathy medicines.

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