

Heart & Homoeopathy in COVID 19

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ABSTRACT: Recently, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) through studies confirmed that there is no link between the COVID-19 vaccines & heart issues. The larger issue is that there is an established link between COVID-19 disease & heart issues.

The current article deals with the details of the process of COVID-19 & heart problems. The patho-physiology, symptoms pattern, epidemiology of the entire phenomenon is touched upon. To deal with the COVID related heart issues, the article proposes the integration of Homoeopathy of AYUSH. In the article, it details out a suggested treatment protocol based on homoeopathic therapeutics for COVID related heart issues.

Taking into account the risk factors involved in these heart issues, the percentage of individuals who have high blood sugar & high blood pressure levels in India are considered at high risk. The related data from National Family Health Survey 5th round is cited to enumerate the risk involved at the national level.

Finally, the article banks on the useful properties of homoeopathy. These are cost effectiveness, clinical effectiveness & zero side effects. The article also enumerates its role in the mass coverage at the national level.

KEYWORDS: COVID-19, Homoeopathy, Cardio Vascular, Materia Medica, Miasms

INTRODUCTION

After 12 months of lull, the COVID-19 has again surged. This is attributed to new variant JN.1. This variant is more contagious but less severe. This spike is inevitable because of the rush due to the holiday season in the 2023 end. It is equally important to have self-protection. Recurring COVID 19 affections affect our vasculature leading to vascular diseases. These diseases lead to cardio vascular issues that also involve the heart.^{1to5}

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The immediate & long-term effects of COVID-19 are evident through long COVID. Exposure to the virus & emerging studies thereafter establish a link between COVID-19 & heart complications. These complications range from subclinical conditions to more severe heart conditions.^{1 to5}

There are two aspects to the association of heart & COVID-19. The first aspect is the association between the COVID-19 disease & heart issues. The second aspect is the association between the COVID-19 vaccinations & heart issues. Both these aspects are discussed in the current article.^{1 to5}

STUDIES ON COVID-19 & HEART

During March 2020 to March 2022, in the United States, there was a significant increase in Cardio Vascular System (CVS) related deaths. In India also, deaths occurred in 25-to-44-year age group. These were people who recovered from COVID-19. As the virus impacts artery walls & macrophages, the risk of heart attacks & strokes increase due to inflammation in plaque formation. To complicate matters, cardio myopathy also occurs that affects the pumping action of the heart.^{6,7,8}

Another study focused on individuals who received their first booster vaccine, the m-RNA vaccine. The study found that 2.8% exhibited heart inflammation or heart cell damage. These cases were mild & temporary but the long term effects are uncertain. This induced inflammation is of concern that demands attention. The study examined individuals even if they did not display any symptom.⁹

In the same study, people who had heart issues did not exhibit any signs or symptoms, no abnormality on their heart monitors or Electro Cardio Gram (ECG). It was found that they had elevated levels of a substance called as Cardiac Troponin in their blood. This condition indicates heart damage like Pericarditis & Myocarditis.⁹

Basically, the above-mentioned study concluded that m-RNA-1273 vaccine associated myocardial injury was more common than previously thought, being mild & transient & more frequent in women versus men.⁹

PATHOPHYSIOLOGY & RELATED ACTIONS

The possible protective role of IFN Lambda 1 or Inter Leukin-29 (IL-29) & Granulocyte Macrophage Colony Stimulating Factor (GM-CSF) in the above-mentioned study warrants further studies. These two are inflammatory substances in the blood & are identified as inflammatory markers.⁹

The inflammation in the heart can lead to complications such as irregular heartbeats, heart failure & heart damage. These individuals have to avoid excessive stress. The uncertainty of long-term effects, possibility of complications as irregular heartbeat or heart failure needs to be explored in future.^{1,2,3}

Emergency guidelines on CVS treatment needs to be developed in this context. The guidelines should include a combination of medications like blood thinners, clot busters like thrombolytic or fibrinolytic, cholesterol lowering agents & Nitroglycerine. This combination will help the heart to pump smoothly thereby enhancing blood flow in the coronary arteries.^{1,2,3}

SUPPORTIVE THERAPY

Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) needs to be incorporated to sustain blood circulation before Emergency Medical Assistance (EMA). The other is Chest Compression (CC) @ 100 to 120 compressions per minute.^{1 to6}

BURDEN OF THE PROBLEM AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Table 1. Prevalence of Blood Sugar among adults in India¹¹

The table below shows that 12.3% of women in 15+ year group suffer from hyperglycemia & it is good to see that 13.5% of these women are under treatment to deal with hyperglycemia. Similarly, 14.5% of men in 15+ year group suffer from hyperglycemia & it is also significant to note that 15.6% of these men are under treatment to deal with hyperglycemia. These are the men & women who are at risk of being heart cases & out of that, those who have had an attack of COVID-19 are at higher risk towards developing heart related issues.¹¹

Indicator	Gender	Urban	Rural	Total
Percentage of Women age 15 years and above who have high blood sugar level (141-160mg/dl)	Female	6.7	5.9	6.1
Percentage of Women age 15 years and above who have very high blood sugar level (>160mg/dl)	Female	8.0	5.5	6.3
Percentage of	Female	16.3	12.3	13.5

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Women age 15 years and above who have high or very high blood sugar level(>140mg/dl) or taking medicine to control blood sugar level				
Percentage of Men age 15 years and above who have high blood sugar level (141-160mg/dl)	Male	7.8	7.0	7.3
Percentage of Men age 15 years and above who have very high blood sugar level (>160mg/dl)	Male	8.5	6.5	7.2
Percentage of Men age 15 years and above who have high or very high blood sugar level(>140mg/dl) or taking medicine to control blood sugar level	Male	17.9	14.5	15.6

The table given below describes the burden in India through the NFHS 5 data regarding blood sugar & blood pressure.¹¹

Table 2. Percentage of men & women above 15 years having high or very high blood sugar and hypertension in India or are taking medicine to control blood sugar and hypertension (Source- NFHS 5, 2019-21)¹¹

Indicator	Gender	Urban	Rural	Total
Percentage of men age 15 years and above who have high or very high blood sugar level and taking medicine to control blood sugar level	Male	17.9	14.5	15.6
Percentage of Men age 15 years and above who have elevated blood pressure or taking medicine to control blood pressure	Male	26.6	22.7	24.0
Percentage of women age 15 years and above who have high or very high blood sugar level and taking medicine to control blood sugar level	Female	16.3	12.3	13.5
Percentage of women age 15 years and above who have elevated blood pressure or taking medicine to control blood pressure	Female	23.6	20.2	21.3

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As mentioned above, hypertension & diabetes are triggering factors for heart issues exacerbated by COVID-19. The above table implies that mainly hypertensive and diabetic people who suffered from COVID-19 are at risk of being heart related cases. This reflects the magnitude of the problem in the country as well as the steps that the nation needs to take to deal with the crisis. Heart issues affect females predominantly as mentioned in a study in this article. So 34.8% of females in the age group of 15 years and above (25-44 year age group) currently are the target groups to be converted to heart cases or to be the sufferer of heart related problems. Already it is seen that predominantly 25-44 year group suffered from COVID-19 & COVID-19 related heart complications. The percentages of males who are the potential COVID-19 induced heart cases constitute 39.6% of male population of 15+ year age group. These are the high risk cases as they have both hypertension and high blood sugar. It is significant to note that urban India is more hypertensive & diabetic than rural India. As mentioned above, this phenomenon holds good for both the sexes.¹¹

In India, Homoeopathy is the third preferred system of treatment after Allopathy and Ayurveda. About 10% of the populations depend on Homoeopathy for their health issues.

This means Homoeopathy is used by 10% of the population in India. So, out of the 1300 million populations, 130 million use Homoeopathy or 130 million use Homoeopathy for their health issues. These 130 million consist of all age groups i.e. infant to old age. A section among the 15+ age group suffers from COVID-19 induced heart cases as per the epidemiological studies. As 10% of total population use homoeopathy, it is inferred that 13 million population use homoeopathy currently in India. So if homoeopathy is integrated in to the COVID-19 induced Heart Health (HH) battle in India, 13 million people can be saved from being cases related to heart problems & the loss of days due to this morbidity.¹²

Similarly, in all 74.4% of population that consist of males & females in the age group of 15+ year group are at high risk of being converted to COVID-19 induced heart cases as these are co-morbidities that trigger heart complications. Hence, 2/3rd of the populations in India are at risk of being COVID-19 induced heart cases & active integration of Homoeopathy into heart care will be the only cost effective method to avoid these risks in adults.¹¹

HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH

As mentioned above, the three cardinal properties of homoeopathic system of therapeutics are cost effectiveness, therapeutic/clinical effectiveness & zero side effects.²⁵

As all drugs in homoeopathy have a group of mental symptoms, Homoeopathy is and will be effective against COVID-19 induced heart issues in general. The current article adds another feather in the Homoeopathic cap as it can deal with the probable upcoming of large number of cases of heart disorders in view of high stress levels due to the consequences of the ongoing COVID 19 crisis that is still prevalent in the form of long COVID. However, it should be also seen that along with constitutional/deep acting/polychrest Homoeopathic medicines, specific medicines are also required to deal with the cases. Simultaneously, nutrition, counselling and all psychic health modalities like life style modification, diet and stress reduction are adhered in each case.^{2 to 5}

Homeopathically, when we analyze the entire process of CVS issues because of COVID-19, as a result of inflammatory markers in the body, the functional disturbances occur in the body. This is the entry of 'Psoric' miasm in the body. Thereafter, the heart & the vascular system undergoes the process of increasing in size like cardiomyopathy & thus the 'sycotic' miasm enters the body. Finally, as the degenerative processes start in the body, the 'syphilitic' miasm enters the body. Hence, depending on the predominant miasm in the body, the homoeopath should prescribe either one antipsoric, antisycotic & antisiphilitic.^{13 to 23}

The primary causes are the buildup of inflammatory markers in the body. In Homoeopathy, anti inflammatory medicines like 'Prednisolone', 'Cortisone', 'Curcuma Longa', 'Aconitine', 'Colchicine', 'Emetine', 'Curcumine', 'Strychnine', 'Resorcine', 'Vaccinium', 'Pyrogen', 'Pencillin' can be prescribed.^{13 to 23}

As mentioned above, the first category of medicines should be blood thinners. Here the medicines are 'Aspirin', 'Cholesterinum', 'Fel Tauri', 'Natrum Cholenicum', 'Gauteria Gaumeri', 'Allium Sativa', 'Cholesterol', 'Gall Stone'.^{13 to 23}

The next category is Fibrinolytics or Thrombolytics. The medicines are 'Bothrops', 'Variolinum', 'Leucas Aspera', 'Echinacea', 'Crotalus Horridus', 'Cobra', 'Naja', 'Lachesis', 'Golondrina', 'Azadirachta Indica'.^{13 to 23}

The next category is cholesterol lowering agents. These conditions can be dealt by medicines like 'Gauteria Gaumeri', 'Ferrum Iod', 'Ferrum Ars', 'Taraxacum', 'Myrica', & other liver medicines like 'Kalmegh' & 'Chelidonium'.^{13 to 23}

The next category is anti-hypertensives like 'Nitroglycerine'. Homoeopathic medicine 'Glonoin' can be given in potencies & mother tincture also. Besides this medicine, 'Sumbul', 'Stropanthus', 'Terminalia Arjuna' in mother tinctures can be prescribed.^{13 to 23}

Whenever heart attacks occur, emergency medicines like Latrodectus, Glonoin, Haematoxylon, Natrum Iod & Zinc Iod are also to be prescribed. The classic combination of Carbo Veg & Aconite can also be prescribed.^{13 to 23}

Another classic example is the combination of Cactus, Crataegus & Calcarea Ars where the first two can be given in mother tinctures & the third in triturations can be used. The point is that the diabetic & heart patients should carry these emergency medicines with them. This discipline will save their lives from heart related issues.^{13 to 23}

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It is also equally critical to keep the Bach flower remedy known as 'Rescue Remedy' as these patients can be saved from heart attacks as well.^{13 to 23}

Another preventive & curative medicine is the Bowel Nosode 'Dysentery Compound' which is also a heart nosode.^{13 to 23}

FINAL WORD

The community needs to deal with complexities of COVID-19 & heart health. Awareness & preventive measures are the need of the hour. The call to action that prioritizes our well being should be shared with others. The modalities on heart health with others will foster a community/group who behaves responsibly on health practices.^{1 to 4}

To deal with this issue at the national level, the Government of India operates the National Program for Prevention & Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardio-vascular Diseases & Stroke (NPCDCS) since 2020. The target group here is 25-44 year age group who had COVID-19.¹⁰

The integration of homoeopathy can be done if Universal Health Coverage (UHC) approach is applied on a large scale & the idea of integration of AYUSH was also suggested in a Lancet article.²³

CONCLUSION

In fact, the detailed case taking of a case & empathetic hearing are the elements of supportive therapy as these heart cases are slow, gradual & become chronic and resistant. The Homoeopathic approach of case-taking/anamnesis exactly fits into the criteria of supportive therapy. Hence, as a part of treatment, the supportive therapy is inherent in the Homoeopathic system of treatment.

The Homoeopathic fraternity should be ready to cover the masses as there is no other therapeutic system that can cover the masses effectively while being economical, no side effects and to add to it, it is cost effective. Simultaneously, it has a wide range of medicines for COVID-19 & COVID-19 induced heart cases as seen in the contents of the sections mentioned above.

DECLARATION OF THE LEAD AUTHOR

Prof. Shankar Das, a co-author of the current article was the Ph.D. guide of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Professor D.P. Singh, another co-author of the article was the teacher of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai during 1995-1997. The lead author also certifies that he has expressed his personal opinion based upon his public health and clinical experiences. The treatment approach or the medicines suggested are only suggestive in nature.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Nil

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