



Original Research Article

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EFFECTIVENESS OF INDIVIDUALISED HOMOEOPATHY TREATMENT IN PALMOPLANTAR PSORIASIS: AN EVIDENCE BASED CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is a chronic immune-mediated inflammatory skin disease with multiple phenotypically distinct subtypes e.g. plaque, flexural, guttate, pustular or erythrodermic. Psoriasis has a major genetic component, with heritability estimated to be 60–90%. High-impact and difficult-to-treat psoriasis sites include scalp, face, nails, genitalia, palms and soles.

Case Summary: We present a case of 46 years female suffering with severe marked symptoms of palmo-plantar Psoriasis which was treated and improved by individualised homoeopathy remedies. Evidence-based illustrations were done before and after treatment with Palmo-plantar Psoriasis area and severity index (PPASI) score and photographs to ascertain the prognosis. Marked improvement was seen in lesions which is evidenced photographically and with PPASI score. This case shows the effectiveness of Homoeopathy in treating the Palmo-plantar Psoriasis.

Keywords: Palmo-plantar Psoriasis, Individualised medicine, Homoeopathy, Constitutional treatment.

INTRODUCTION

Psoriasis is a non-contagious autoimmune disease of the skin and joints. The word psoriasis is derived from the Greek word 'Psora' meaning itching and 'lasis' means pain.⁽¹⁾ Psoriasis affects the skin and nails and is known to have many complications. The disease can either be localised or generalised and the lesions are usually symmetrical, well-defined red pustular plaques, often covered with white or silvery scales. It mainly causes itching and pain.⁽²⁾ Psoriasis can affect physically, emotionally and socially. Overall quality of life is often greatly affected too. The most common symptoms of psoriasis reported by patients are skin peeling: 92%, pruritus: 72%, erythema: 69%, fatigue: 27%, swelling: 23%, burning: 20%, bleeding: 20% and pain.⁽³⁾

The worldwide prevalence of psoriasis is estimated to be approximately 2–3%.⁽⁴⁾ In a diverse country such as India, the prevalence of psoriasis may vary from region to region due to variable environmental and genetic factors.⁽⁵⁾ There are different types of psoriasis where palmoplantar psoriasis is one of the most common.

Palmo-plantar psoriasis appears on the palms of the hands and/or the bottoms of the feet. Even though the term palmo-plantar psoriasis implies the involvement of both palms and soles, variability in the presentation does exist, with 59% of cases having both palmar and plantar lesions while exclusive palmar or plantar lesions are seen in 21% and 20% of patients, respectively. The palmo-plantar variant of psoriasis is around 3–4% of all psoriasis cases, affecting 2–5% of the population.⁽⁶⁾

Psoriasis on the hands and feet is considered a high impact site, which can have an increased negative impact on quality of life, regardless of the total area affected by psoriasis. Palmo-plantar psoriasis can be one of the most disabling forms of psoriasis because it can limit the use of your hands and feet. Daily activities, such as holding objects, typing, or walking, can become painful. Research shows that people living with palmo-plantar psoriasis are almost twice as likely to report mobility problems and almost 2.5 times more likely to say they have trouble doing daily activities.⁽⁷⁾

It manifests as dryness, scaling, thickened skin, fissures, redness, and severe itching, often aggravated in the morning. The condition can significantly impair daily activities, including walking and manual tasks, due to pain and discomfort from fissures and thickened plaques. While the exact cause remains multifactorial, genetic predisposition, immune dysregulation,

environmental triggers, and stress are known contributors. Complications may include secondary infections, persistent pain, psychological stress, and impact on quality of life. Conventional treatments often involve topical steroids, emollients, and systemic therapy, which provide symptomatic relief but may not address underlying constitutional imbalances. Homeopathy adopts a holistic approach, considering physical, mental, and emotional aspects of the patient, aiming to restore equilibrium and stimulate self-healing.⁽⁸⁾

CASE STUDY:

A female patient of 46 years age came to OPD of Hamsa Homoeopathy Medical College, Hospital & Research Centre and presented with the following complaints.

| LOCATION | SENSATION | MODALITIES | CONCOMITANT |
|-----------------|---|--|-------------|
| Palms | Dryness +++ Itching ++ Cracked with scaling ++ | < washing hands < morning < cold weather | |
| Heels and Soles | Dryness +++ Itching ++ Pain +++ Cracked skin +++ Bleeding + | < getting feet wet < morning < cold weather < walking > warm application | |

Past History:

Psoriasis – since 2 years – got partially relieved on using allopathic medicines

K/C/O Diabetes mellitus – Since 8 years – under control on allopathic medication.

K/C/O Hypertension – Since 13 years – under control on allopathic medication

Family History:

Father and Mother – Died due to old age.

2 Brothers – Died due to an accident

1 Brother – Schizophrenia

2 Sisters – Apparently Healthy

Husband – Schizophrenia for last 6 years

Son – Apparently Healthy

Daughter – Apparently Healthy

Life Space Investigation:

She was born and brought up in a middle-class family. Studied till 10th standard and stopped her education due to financial circumstances. She has 3 brothers (2 brothers died) and 2 sisters and has good interpersonal relationship with them. In the initial day after her marriage, she was happy with her husband and children. But while days passed her daughter from the age of 10 years started wearing men's clothes, mingling only with boys, playing only boyish games, she appears like a boy and behaves like a boy which is making her sad and worried. 6 years ago, one day soon after coming from office her husband suddenly started saying that some black magic is done on him and stopped going to work and was having delusions and always been silent, dull and depressed which made her more worried about the family. She has an own house but stays in rented house because she started believing that there are some negative energies present in that house which is causing all her troubles. Because of all the problems she was always dull, sudden violent weeping when alone and just to divert herself from the thoughts of sadness she desires going out, mingling with people and she loves helping others in all their daily chaos.

Physical Generals

- Appetite – Reduced
- Desires – Chicken
- Aversion – Brinjal
- Intolerance – Sour food
- Thirst – Thirsty for cold water
- Bowels – Regular and satisfactory
- Urine – Clear
- Perspiration – Generalized on exertion
- Sleep – Disturbed due to pain and itching sometimes
- Dreams – Frightful
- Habits – Nothing

- Thermals –Chilly

Mental Generals:

- Sadness about her daughter and husband.
- Does not share her sadness with others.
- Desires to mingle with people.
- Desires to go out.
- Helping others in their works.
- Superstitious believes are present as she says that some negative energies are present in the house giving them all the troubles.

Obstetric History:G₂ P₂ L₂ A₀

Skin Examination:

- Thick, hard skin (Hyperkeratosis) with yellowish thick plaques on soles.
- Painful deep cracked fissures on heels and weight bearing areas.
- Thick sticky discharge was seen.
- Auspitz's sign – Positive indicating the psoriasis.

Palmo-plantar Psoriasis Area and Severity Index (PPASI) Score - 26

Totality Of Symptoms:

- Sadness about her daughter and husband.
- Desires to mingle with people.
- Helping others in their works.
- Superstitious believes are present as she says that some negative energies are present in the house giving them all the troubles.
- Desires chicken.
- Intolerance to sour food (Aggravation of itching on eating).
- Thirst for cold water.
- Sleep disturbed due to pain, itching and frightful dreams sometimes.
- Thermals towards chilly.
- Pain and itching of palms and soles.
- Pain and itching aggravated in morning, cold weather, getting wet and walking.
- Pain and itching ameliorated by warm applications.
- Thick, hard skin with yellowish plaques on soles.
- Deep cracked fissures on heels.
- Cracked skin on palms with scaling.

Repertorial Totality with Repertorization Sheet:

| Remedy Name | Phos | Ars | Sep | Petr | Merc | Rhus-t | Puls | Sulph |
|--|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|---|
| Totality | 20 | 18 | 14 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 12 | 11 |
| Symptoms Covered | 8 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 7 |
| Kindom |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| [Complete] [Mind]Grief:Silent, pent up: (189) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 |
| [Complete] [Mind]Anxiety:Family, about his: (78) | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| [Complete] [Mind]Benevolence: (60) | 1 | | | | | | 4 | 1 |
| [Complete] [Mind]Social:Sociable: (23) | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 3 |
| [Complete] [Mind]Company:Desire for: (260) | 4 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| [Complete] [Mind]Superstitious: (44) | 1 | 1 | | | | 3 | | |
| [Complete] [Extremities]Cracks, fissures:Feet:Soles: (12) | | 1 | | | | | | |
| [Complete] [Extremities]Eruptions:Psoriasis:Feet, soles: (12) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | | |
| [Complete] [Extremities]Cracks, fissures:Hands:Palms: (29) | | | | 3 | | 3 | | 1 |
| [Complete] [Extremities]Eruptions:Psoriasis:Hands:Palms: (31) | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | | | 3 |

Remedy Selection:

Based on the mental and physical symptoms like silent grief, sudden violent weeping, desiring company, frightful dreams, thirst for cold water, chilly, fissures of soles with thick crusty appearance, desquamation of skin and hemorrhagic tendency constitutional remedy selected was Phosphorous.

Based on the acute totality covering the symptoms of itching palms and soles, painful fissures with bleeding and thick sticky discharges and crusty appearance of soles acute remedy selected was Graphites.

Prescription:

Phosphorous 30C – 1 dose

Graphites 30C – 3 doses / 1 month

Follow Up:

| MONTH | SYMPTOMS | PRESCRIPTION |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| 1 st Month | Pain and itching of palms reduced slightly. Pain and itching from soles was present. Occasional bleeding from soles. Thick sticky discharge from soles increased. Appetite reduced. Sleep disturbed due to pain. | Graphites 30C 3 doses Sac lac - 1 month |
| 2 nd Month | Pain and itching of palms reduced. Itching of soles was reduced slightly but pain persists. Thickness of soles was also reduced skin of soles softened and bleeding reduced. Occasional discharge from soles was present. | Sac lac – 1 month |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| | Appetite improved but sleep was disturbed by dreams. | |
| 3 rd Month | Itching and pain of soles reduced but increased when she ate sour food. Fissures were same but pain reduced. Sleep was not disturbed but unrefreshing. | Phosphorous 200C – 3 doses Sac lac – 1 month |
| 4 th Month | No change in any complaints. Itching and pain persisting. | Psorinum 200C – 1 dose Sac lac – 1 month |
| 5 th Month | Mild recurrence of itching in palms and soles. Pain in soles was reducing. Sleep quality improved. | Sac lac – 1 month |
| 6 th Month | Itching in palms reduced. Itching in soles reduced. Pain in soles was less compared to previous visit. On examination – Fissures reduced by 50%, Thick crusts were reducing. Appetite and sleep improved. | Sac lac – 1 month |
| 7 th Month | Pain and itching reduced but not much variation in the improved and fissures were still present. Bleeding from fissures of heel occurred once. | Phosphorous 1M – 1 dose Sac lac – 1 month |
| 8 th Month | Pain in soles reduced but pain in heel was present while walking. Itching was reduced but still persists. No bleeding was observed this month. General health was good. | Sac lac – 1 month |
| 9 th Month | Acute exacerbation of itching was seen from 10 days as she went on a trip where she walked for long distance with bare foot. Bleeding from heel was present for 3 days. | Petroleum 200C – 6 doses Sac lac – 1 month |
| 10 th month | Itching reduced. Pain in heels reduced. Fissures reduced by 80%. No bleeding, no discharge was seen. Appetite improved. Sleep improved. | Sac lac – 1 month |
| 11 th Month | Pain reduced. Fissures were reduced by 90%. Hyperkeratosis was absent. No skin thickness. Dryness and mild cracks were seen. Itching was still present. | Phosphorous 1M – 1 dose Sac lac – 1 month |

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|-------------------|
| 12 th month | Pain was absent. Mild dryness, cracks and itching was present in soles. General health was good. | Sac lac – 1 month |
| 13 th Month | Pain reduced. Cracks reduced. Mild itching was present in soles. Able to eat sour food no aggravation after eating. Sleep was sound. General health was good. | Sac lac – 1month |

Table 1. Follow Up prescriptions to the patients at different intervals.

PPASI SCORING:

PPASI score is calculated as follows:

(sum of scores for E + I + D) * Area * 0.2(location: right palm) + (sum of scores for E + I + D) * Area * 0.2(location: left palm) + (sum of scores for E + I + D) * Area * 0.3(location: right sole) + (sum of scores for E + I + D) * Area * 0.3(location: left sole).⁽⁹⁾

| Plaque Characteristic | Left Palm | Right Palm | Left Sole | Right Sole |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Erythema (E) | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Induration (I) | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Desquamation (D) | 2 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| Severity Score = | 5 | 5 | 10 | 10 |
| Weighting Factor * | 20% (0.2) | 20% (0.2) | 30% (0.3) | 30% (0.3) |
| Severity Sub total = | 1 | 1 | 3 | 3 |
| Area Score * | 3 | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| Region Score = | 4 | 4 | 9 | 9 |
| PPASI Score (Sum of region scores) | | | | 26 |

Table 2. PPASI Score before treatment.

| Plaque Characteristic | Left Palm | Right Palm | Left Sole | Right Sole |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Erythema (E) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Induration (I) | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Desquamation (D) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Severity Score = | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Weighting Factor * | 20% (0.2) | 20% (0.2) | 30% (0.3) | 30% (0.3) |
| Severity Sub total = | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 0.3 |
| Area Score * | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Region Score = | 0 | 0 | 1.3 | 1.3 |
| PPASI Score (Sum of region scores) | | | | 2.6 |

Table 3. PPASI Score after treatment.**Lesions Before And After The Treatment:****Before Treatment****After Treatment**

Discussion:

Homoeopathy is a unique system of medical science which has a holistic approach to the management of the patient. This system is based on Similia and Individualisation.

This case of Palmo-plantar Psoriasis with severe symptoms of pain, itching and fissures of palms and soles were improved by Phosphorous, Graphites where Phosphorous was selected as constitutional remedy and Graphites was selected initially for acute exacerbation of symptoms. With repetition of doses it relieved the intial troublesome symptoms.

However considering the changes and recurrences of symptoms Phosphorous200C was prescribed which didn't show any improvement. Hence thought of miasmatic block in healing and prescribed Psorinum 200C as an inter-current remedy which resulted in mild recurrence of symptoms but later reduced in intensity. There was no much variation in further visits indicating to increase potency, so prescribed with Phosphorous 1M and had marked improvement in all the symptoms.

There was an acute exacerbation in the symptoms in the next visit as she went on a religious pilgrimage and walked with bare feet which acted as an exciting cause to trigger her symptoms. Petroleum 30C was given based acute totality as she has severe itching with cracked dry heels which was bleeding. This gave relief of symptoms and lesions. As there was improvement continued with placebo. At this point the case was reassessed and Phosphorous was still the indicated remedy so continued with Phosphorous with significant improvement in symptoms.

With individualised Homoeopathic treatment, there was improvement in the local symptoms, mental sytoms as well as general well-being of the patient. The frequency of acute exacerbations were reduced with marked improvement in the lesions and reduction of the PPASI score from 26 to 2.6 by the end of the follow up.

In this case of Palmo-Plantar Psoriasis remedies Phosphorous, Graphites, Petroleum and Psorinum were found useful. Thus, the case underscores the usefulness of individualised homoeopathic treatment in the management of Palmo-plantar Psoriasis.

Conclusion:

The patient is still under the observation and no relapses of symptoms till date. This case shows the effectiveness of homoeopathic individualised remedies in treating the cases of

palmoplantar psoriasis leading to marked significant improvement in acute exacerbation of symptoms and gradual improvement in general well being.

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Declaration of Patient Conccent:

Patient's conccent was obtained to disseminate the clinical information and display images on a scientific platform.

Conflict Of Interest:

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

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