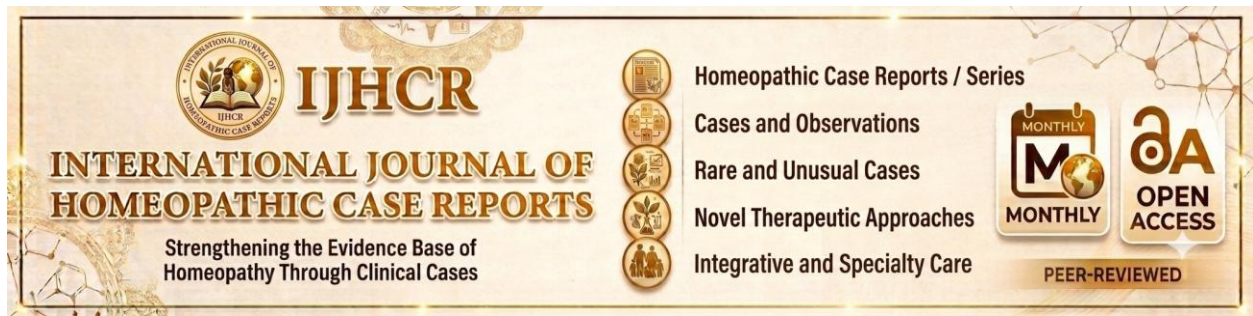




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Homoeopathic Management of Acute Eczematous Dermatitis in a Young Female: A Case Report a Dr Batra's

Dr Nilima Manker

Homeopathic Consultant

Hi-Tech City, Hyderabad, Telangana

Dr. Batra's Positive Health Clinic Pvt. Ltd

BHMS

Email id: chc-hitechcity@drbatras.com

Mobile: +91 – 97547 84076

Abstract

Background

Occupational eczematous dermatitis is a common inflammatory dermatosis resulting from repeated exposure to irritants, heat, friction, sweat, and allergens. Repeated inflammation often leads to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH), particularly in individuals with darker skin phototypes. Early recognition and prompt management are essential to prevent chronicity and cosmetic disfigurement. Homoeopathy emphasizes individualized constitutional prescribing based on the patient's mental, emotional, and physical characteristics.

Case Presentation A 22-year-old unmarried female student working part-time as a coffee maker at Starbucks presented with acute onset of dry, hyperpigmented, mildly pruritic lesions over both elbows, fingers, hands, and knees for 15 days. The lesions appeared after repeated exposure to heat, sweating, coffee preparation, and sun exposure. Dermatological treatment with topical medications produced minimal improvement. Wood's lamp examination demonstrated brown hyperpigmented lesions without fluorescence, suggestive of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. Constitutional assessment revealed an introverted, oversensitive young woman with disappointed love, fear of failure, anxiety regarding examinations and career, and a tendency to weep easily while narrating emotional experiences. **Natrum muriaticum** was selected as the constitutional remedy, while **Berberis aquifolium** was prescribed as an acute remedy to support pigment reduction.

Outcome

Serial photographic comparison and Wood's lamp examination demonstrated progressive reduction in erythema, itching, pigmentation, and eczema patches. Approximately **40% improvement** was observed during the initial follow-up and nearly **80% improvement** was documented by the second follow-up, with no new lesions and significant reduction in pigmentation and inflammation.

Conclusion

This case demonstrates favorable clinical improvement in acute occupational eczematous dermatitis with post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation following individualized homoeopathic treatment.

Keywords: Occupational dermatitis, Eczema, Hyperpigmentation, Natrum muriaticum, Berberis aquifolium, Homoeopathy

Introduction

Occupational dermatitis accounts for a substantial proportion of work-related skin disorders worldwide. Repeated exposure to heat, sweat, detergents, chemicals, friction, and ultraviolet radiation disrupts the epidermal barrier, leading to inflammation, xerosis, pruritus, and chronic eczema. Individuals employed in food preparation and beverage services are particularly vulnerable because of continuous exposure to hot surfaces, steam, moisture, and frequent hand washing.

Persistent inflammation commonly results in post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, especially in individuals with Fitzpatrick skin types III–VI. Although topical corticosteroids, emollients, and avoidance of irritants constitute standard treatment, cosmetic concerns and recurrent inflammation often persist.

Individualized homoeopathic prescribing considers constitutional susceptibility together with local pathology, aiming to restore systemic balance while addressing acute inflammatory changes.

This report presents the successful management of acute occupational eczematous dermatitis associated with post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation in a young female.

Case Presentation

A 22-year-old unmarried female presented to **Dr Batra's® Positive Health Clinics** with complaints of sudden onset dryness and dark discoloration of the skin over both elbows, fingers, hands, and knees for the previous 15 days.

She was a student and simultaneously worked part-time at **Starbucks** as a coffee maker. Her work required prolonged exposure to steam, heat, hot beverages, and repeated hand washing.

History of Present Illness

Approximately fifteen days before presentation, the patient noticed sudden development of:

- Dryness over both elbows
- Hyperpigmentation
- Mild itching
- Rough skin
- Dark discoloration
- Mild erythema

The lesions gradually involved:

- Both elbows
- Fingers
- Dorsum of hands
- Knees

There was no previous similar episode.

Modalities

Aggravation

- Sweating
- Heat
- Hot air
- Sun exposure
- Preparing coffee
- Occupational heat exposure

Amelioration

- Cold water application
- Cold compresses
- Coconut oil application

Previous Treatment

The patient had consulted a dermatologist before visiting the clinic.

She received:

- Oral **Flufer** tablets
- **Micromer cream** (topical medication)

However, improvement was minimal.

Associated Complaints

- Borderline hypothyroidism
- Recurrent skin allergy

Menstrual irregularity had occurred approximately one year previously. She consulted a gynecologist and was diagnosed with borderline thyroid dysfunction. Oral medication was prescribed, following which her menstrual cycles became regular.

Past History

- Childhood recurrent cold and cough
- Typhoid fever
- No history of surgery
- No hospitalization
- No fractures

Family History

Father (48 years)

- Farmer
- Hypertension
- Similar tendency toward skin pigmentation

Mother

- Housewife
- Hypertension

One younger sibling

- Healthy

Personal History

Diet Mixed diet (vegetarian and non-vegetarian).

Appetite Normal.

Craving Sweets.

Aversion Bitter gourd.

Thirst Approximately 3–4 litres/day.

Urine Normal.

Stool Regular.

Thermals Hot patient.

Sleep 6–7 hours. Unrefreshing.

Perspiration Normal quantity. Non-offensive. Generalized.

Menstrual History

Menarche attained normally.

Last menstrual period: **18 May 2026**

Cycle regular.

Flow: 2–3 days.

Previous menstrual irregularity had resolved after treatment for borderline hypothyroidism.

Physical Examination

General condition was satisfactory.

Dermatological examination demonstrated:

- Hyperpigmented plaques
- Dry skin
- Mild erythema
- Mild inflammation
- Xerosis
- Rough skin texture
- Mild excoriation due to scratching

Lesions were symmetrically distributed over:

- Both elbows
- Fingers
- Dorsum of hands
- Knees

No active oozing was present.

Wood's Lamp Examination

Wood's lamp examination demonstrated:

- Brown hyperpigmented lesions
- Increased pigmentation
- Mild inflammatory changes
- No fluorescence suggestive of fungal infection

The findings were consistent with **post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation secondary to inflammatory dermatitis**.

Investigations

Previous investigations included:

- Hemoglobin: **13.4 g/dL**
- Widal test: Positive (previous typhoid fever)

Routine thyroid profile was advised because of previous borderline hypothyroidism.

Diagnosis

Primary Diagnosis

Occupational Eczematous Dermatitis with Post-inflammatory Hyperpigmentation

Differential Diagnosis

- Atopic dermatitis
- Sweat dermatitis
- Pigmented contact dermatitis
- Frictional melanosis
- Lichen simplex chronicus

Case Analysis

The patient presented with an acute inflammatory dermatosis affecting exposed pressure areas following repeated occupational exposure to heat, sweating, steam, and friction during coffee preparation. The temporal association with occupational activities, aggravation by heat and sweating, and improvement with cooling measures suggested an occupational irritant eczematous dermatitis with secondary post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

Constitutional assessment revealed a markedly sensitive emotional profile. She was introverted, emotionally attached to relationships, deeply affected by a previous romantic disappointment, and continued to brood over the event. She expressed fear of failure, anxiety regarding examinations and career, overthinking, and wept while discussing her past relationship. She also reported becoming easily hurt by harsh words and preferred to suppress emotional distress rather than express it openly.

Physical generals included craving for sweets, hot thermal reaction, increased thirst (3–4 litres/day), unrefreshing sleep, and aggravation from heat and sweating. These mental and physical characteristics strongly corresponded to **Natrum muriaticum**, which was selected as the constitutional remedy. **Berberis aquifolium** was prescribed concurrently because of its traditional affinity for pigmentary disorders and post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

Serial follow-up demonstrated objective reduction in erythema, itching, pigmentation, and lesion size, supported by clinical photography and Wood's lamp examination, with approximately **80% overall improvement** achieved within the follow-up period.

Totality of Symptoms

Mental Generals

- Introverted personality
- Fear of failure

- Anxiety regarding examinations
- Anxiety about career and future
- Oversensitive to criticism
- Gets hurt easily
- Weeps easily
- Disappointed love
- Broods over past events
- Emotionally attached to people
- Sadness after separation
- Reserved emotions
- Overthinking
- Independent in decision making
- Health anxiety

Physical Generals

- Craving for sweets
- Aversion to bitter gourd
- Hot patient
- Thirst increased (3–4 L/day)
- Unrefreshing sleep
- Perspiration normal
- Mixed diet
- Aggravation from heat and sweating

Particular Symptoms

- Sudden onset eczema
- Dryness of elbows
- Dryness over fingers
- Hyperpigmentation
- Mild itching
- Rough skin
- Mild inflammation
- Symmetrical lesions
- Worse from heat
- Worse from sweating
- Worse from sun exposure
- Worse while preparing coffee
- Better by cold water
- Better by cold compress
- Better by coconut oil

Evaluation of Characteristic Symptoms

The following symptoms formed the basis of constitutional prescribing.

Mental Characteristics

- Disappointed love

- Silent grief
- Brooding over the past
- Fear of failure
- Oversensitive
- Easily weeping
- Anxiety regarding examinations
- Anxiety regarding career
- Emotional attachment

Physical Characteristics

- Increased thirst
- Desire for sweets
- Hot patient
- Unrefreshing sleep

Particular Symptoms

- Acute occupational eczema
- Hyperpigmentation
- Aggravation from heat
- Aggravation from sweating
- Better from cold application

Repertorial Analysis

Kent's Repertory was consulted using the constitutional totality.

Selected Rubrics

Mind

- Mind; Grief; disappointed love
- Mind; Dwells on past disagreeable occurrences
- Mind; Weeping easily
- Mind; Fear; failure
- Mind; Anxiety; future
- Mind; Sensitive; reprimands

Skin

- Eruptions; eczema
- Skin; discoloration
- Skin; pigmentation
- Skin; itching
- Skin; dryness
- Skin; inflammation

Generalities

- Heat aggravates
- Sun aggravates
- Cold applications ameliorate

The repertorial evaluation strongly favored **Natrum muriaticum**, with **Berberis aquifolium** considered as a complementary remedy for the pigmentary changes.

Remedies	calc.	nat-m.	aur-m-n.	nux-v.	carc.	nat-sil.	ozone	lyc.	ph-ac.	caust.	lach.	sep.	staph.	sulph.	bell.	spong.	aur.	kali-p.
Serial Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Symptoms Covered	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Intensity	15	15	14	10	8	8	7	14	13	12	12	12	12	12	11	10	9	9
Result	7/15	7/15	7/14	7/10	7/8	7/8	7/7	6/14	6/13	6/12	6/12	6/12	6/12	6/12	6/11	6/10	6/9	6/9
Clipboard 3																		
GENERALS -																		
FOOD and DRINKS - sweets - desire	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	3		1	1	2	2	3	1	1	1	1
MIND - WEeping	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	2
MIND - BROODING	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1		1	1	1	1	1
MIND - ANXIETY - expected of him; when anything is																		
PERSPIRATION - PROFUSE	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	3	3	2	2	3	1	2	3	2	1	3
MIND - SENSITIVE - rudeness, to	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1				3			2		
SLEEP - UNREFRESHING	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	3	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	1
MIND - AILMENTS FROM - love; disappointed	1	4	2	1	1	2	1		3	2	2	1	3	1	2		3	1

Remedy Differentiation

Natrum muriaticum (Constitutional Remedy)

Natrum muriaticum was selected because it closely matched the constitutional picture.

Characteristic features included:

- Disappointed love
- Silent grief
- Brooding over past events
- Weeping while narrating emotional experiences
- Fear of failure
- Anxiety regarding examinations and career
- Emotional attachment
- Sensitive to harsh words
- Introverted disposition

These mental characteristics formed the strongest indication for constitutional prescribing.

Berberis aquifolium (Acute / Organ-specific Remedy)

Berberis aquifolium was prescribed because of its affinity for:

- Hyperpigmentation
- Uneven skin complexion
- Post-inflammatory pigmentation
- Pigmented inflammatory dermatoses

It was prescribed as an adjunct to constitutional treatment rather than as the constitutional remedy itself.

Prescription

Constitutional Remedy

Natrum muriaticum 200C

Selected because of:

- Long-standing emotional disappointment
- Brooding disposition
- Fear of failure
- Emotional sensitivity
- Oversensitivity to criticism
- Weeping easily

Acute Remedy

Berberis aquifolium

Prescribed to facilitate resolution of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation while constitutional treatment addressed the underlying susceptibility.

Miasmatic Analysis

The case predominantly demonstrated a **Psoric miasmatic background**.

Psoric Features

- Acute eczema
- Itching
- Dryness
- Inflammation
- Hypersensitivity
- Emotional anxiety

A mild sycotic tendency was suggested by persistent pigmentation; however, the dominant expression remained psoric.

Follow-up

Table 1. Clinical Follow-up

Date	Clinical Findings	Outcome
05 May 2026	Initial consultation. Acute eczema with hyperpigmentation over elbows, fingers, hands and knees. Dryness, itching and erythema aggravated by heat and sweating.	Baseline
June 2026	Wood's lamp examination showed reduced erythema and pigmentation compared with baseline photographs. No progression of lesions.	Approximately 40% improvement
21 July 2026	Eczema patches markedly reduced. No new lesions. Itching and irritation absent. Pigmentation reduced considerably. Facial acne persisted mildly because of menstrual irregularity.	Approximately 80% improvement
Subsequent Review	Skin remained stable with no recurrence of eczema. Pigmentation continued to fade gradually. Diet and general health remained satisfactory.	Sustained improvement



Clinical Outcome

Within a short period of treatment:

- Eczema patches reduced markedly.
- Itching resolved completely.
- Dryness improved.
- Inflammation subsided.
- Hyperpigmentation became significantly lighter.
- No new lesions appeared.
- Occupational activities were continued without aggravation.

- Overall improvement reached approximately **80%**, confirmed clinically and by comparison with serial photographs.

Discussion

Occupational eczematous dermatitis is a common inflammatory disorder resulting from repeated exposure to heat, sweat, friction, detergents, and other workplace irritants. Workers in the food and beverage industry are particularly susceptible because of frequent contact with steam, hot liquids, repeated hand washing, and prolonged exposure to elevated temperatures. Persistent inflammation often results in post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, especially in individuals with darker skin types.

The present patient developed acute eczema shortly after repeated occupational exposure to heat while working as a coffee maker. The lesions were localized predominantly to exposed areas subjected to repeated friction, sweating, and thermal stress. Clinical examination and Wood's lamp evaluation supported the diagnosis of inflammatory dermatitis with post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

Beyond the local pathology, constitutional assessment revealed a characteristic emotional profile marked by disappointed love, prolonged brooding over past events, fear of failure, oversensitivity to criticism, anxiety regarding future career, and weeping while discussing emotionally significant experiences. These features strongly indicated **Natrum muriaticum** as the constitutional remedy. **Berberis aquifolium** was prescribed as an adjunct because of its traditional affinity for pigmentary disorders and its use in promoting improvement in post-inflammatory skin discoloration.

Serial clinical photographs and Wood's lamp examination demonstrated progressive reduction in erythema, pigmentation, and eczema patches. Approximately 40% improvement was observed during the early follow-up, increasing to nearly 80% by the subsequent review, with complete resolution of itching and absence of new lesions.

Although this report describes only a single patient and spontaneous improvement or occupational modifications cannot be completely excluded, the close temporal relationship between individualized homoeopathic treatment and sustained clinical improvement suggests a potential adjunctive role for constitutional homoeopathy in managing acute occupational eczema with secondary pigmentation. Larger prospective studies are required to evaluate these observations systematically.

Health-Related Quality of Life (HRQL)

Initially, the patient experienced discomfort while performing occupational duties because sweating and heat aggravated the lesions. The visible pigmentation also affected her self-confidence and caused anxiety regarding appearance. Following treatment, itching resolved, pigmentation reduced, and she became more confident in both her work and social interactions.

Patient Perspective

"The dark patches and dryness were becoming more noticeable every day, especially while working. Heat and sweating made them worse. After treatment, the itching disappeared, the

dark patches became lighter, and I felt much more confident. I can now work comfortably without worrying about my skin."

Learning Points

- Occupational exposure to heat and sweating should be considered as potential triggers for acute eczematous dermatitis.
- Wood's lamp examination and serial clinical photographs are valuable objective tools for documenting pigmentary improvement.
- Constitutional prescribing based on the patient's emotional characteristics can complement management of acute dermatological conditions.
- Early intervention may prevent progression to chronic eczema and persistent post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.
- Individualized homoeopathic treatment may be considered as an adjunct to conventional dermatological care in appropriately selected patients.

Conclusion

This case illustrates the successful management of **acute occupational eczematous dermatitis with post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation** in a young female through individualized homoeopathic treatment. **Natrum muriaticum**, prescribed on the basis of a characteristic constitutional picture of disappointed love, emotional sensitivity, brooding, and fear of failure, together with **Berberis aquifolium** for pigmentary changes, was associated with rapid clinical improvement. Serial photographic assessment and Wood's lamp examination documented progressive reduction in erythema, itching, and pigmentation, with approximately **80% overall improvement** and no recurrence during follow-up. While conclusions regarding efficacy cannot be drawn from a single case, this report highlights the importance of integrating occupational history, constitutional assessment, and objective dermatological evaluation in the management of inflammatory pigmentary skin disorders and supports further clinical research in this area.