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Chronic Ichthyosis with Marked Winter-Aggravated Xerosis: A Case Report of Improvement During Homeopathic Care

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ABSTRACT

Background

Ichthyosis is characterized by abnormal epidermal keratinization resulting in persistent dryness and scaling of the skin. Chronic xerosis may become particularly prominent during winter and can significantly affect comfort and quality of life. This case describes a 33-year-old male with a 15-year history of ichthyosis, persistent generalized dryness despite prolonged treatment, and characteristic winter aggravation.

Case Presentation

A 33-year-old male, employed for the past 15 years, presented with ichthyosis of 15 years' duration. He had previously received homeopathic treatment for approximately 8.5 years and reported substantial improvement, although dryness persisted. At presentation, dryness was predominantly generalized and markedly aggravated during winter. Intermittent formication was also reported. Associated complaints included flatulence for approximately two months. Physical generals included normal appetite and thirst, intolerance to both extremes of temperature, increased perspiration over the back, deep sleep with an abdominal sleeping position, and no significant fears. He had an aversion to milk, including vomiting from its smell, and reported inability to tolerate or look at non-vegetarian food. His mother, who died of kidney disease in 2010, was also reported to have dry skin.

Treatment and Follow-up

The documented prescription consisted of Graphites 200C, with Sac lac subsequently documented. During follow-up, progressive improvement in dryness and ichthyotic changes was recorded. Improvement was noted over the abdomen, back, palms and hands, with reduced hardness of the palms. Later follow-ups documented overall improvement in the skin condition, although intermittent dryness and darkening over the hips remained.

Conclusion

This case demonstrates the longitudinal clinical documentation of a patient with long-standing ichthyosis and persistent xerosis, with improvement recorded during follow-up under individualized homeopathic care. However, as this is a single uncontrolled case, the observed improvement cannot establish a causal relationship with homeopathic treatment.

Keywords: Ichthyosis, xerosis, dry skin, winter aggravation, Graphites, case report, homeopathy.

1. Introduction

Ichthyosis comprises a group of disorders characterized by abnormal keratinization and excessive dryness and scaling of the skin. The clinical presentation may vary considerably according to the underlying subtype and may persist for many years.

Environmental factors, particularly low humidity and cold weather, can contribute to worsening of xerosis. In chronic cases, patients may experience persistent dryness, scaling, fissuring and discomfort despite long-term treatment.

The present case describes a 33-year-old male with a 15-year history of ichthyosis who reported substantial improvement following approximately 8.5 years of homeopathic treatment, but continued to experience residual generalized dryness, particularly during winter. The case was followed longitudinally with repeated clinical assessments.

2. Case Presentation

2.1 Patient Profile

- Age: 33 years
- Sex: Male
- Occupation: Employed for approximately 15 years
- Primary complaint: Ichthyosis
- Duration: Approximately 15 years
- Previous homeopathic treatment: Approximately 8.5 years

3. Chief Complaint

The patient presented with ichthyosis with persistent dryness of the skin for approximately 15 years. Although he reported considerable improvement during his previous treatment, residual dryness continued to be present over the body.

Characteristic features

- Dryness of skin
- Winter aggravation
- Intermittent formication
- Persistent dryness despite improvement in ichthyosis
- Cracking of soles with pain during episodes
- No significant itching

4. History of Present Illness

The patient had been suffering from ichthyosis for approximately 15 years. He had taken homeopathic treatment for approximately 8.5 years and reported that his condition had improved considerably.

Despite this improvement, dryness remained over the body and became particularly prominent during winter. Intermittent formication was reported.

During the subsequent follow-up period, the skin condition remained stable initially, followed by progressive improvement in dryness and ichthyotic changes involving different body regions.

5. Associated Complaint

The patient reported flatulence, present for approximately 2 months and associated with passage of flatus. No other significant associated complaint was documented.

6. Family History

The patient's mother had a history of dry skin. She died in 2010 due to kidney disease. The presence of similar skin dryness in the mother was considered relevant to the assessment of the patient's long-standing skin condition.

7. Personal History and Physical Generals

Parameter	Finding
Appetite	Normal
Diet preference	Vegetarian
Aversion	Milk
Food intolerance	Cannot tolerate/observe non-vegetarian food
Thirst	Normal
Thermal state	Cannot tolerate both extremes of temperature
Perspiration	Increased over back
Sleep	Deep
Sleeping position	Abdomen
Dreams	Not significant
Fear	None reported
Mood	Cheerful
Anger	Very rare
Desire for solitude	Present, associated with meditation

The patient also reported irritation from bright light.

8. Mental-Emotional Profile

The patient described himself as generally cheerful, with anger occurring rarely. He preferred spending time alone and related this partly to his practice of meditation. No significant fears or insecurities were reported.

The available case record therefore provides relatively few prominent mental symptoms compared with the physical characteristics.

9. Investigations

Investigations dated 23/11/2025 documented:

Investigation	Result
Total IgE	209.68
Total protein	8.6 g/dL — high
Globulin	3.8 g/dL — high

The supplied case record does not provide a complete interpretation or serial comparison of these laboratory values.

10. Clinical Assessment

The dominant clinical picture consisted of:

Skin

- Long-standing ichthyosis
- Generalized dryness
- Marked winter aggravation
- Intermittent formication
- Palmar dryness/hardness

- Occasional painful cracking of soles

General characteristics

- Chilly/intolerance of both temperature extremes
- Increased perspiration over back
- Deep sleep
- Sleeping on abdomen
- Vegetarian preference
- Marked aversion to milk
- Aversion to non-vegetarian food
- Cheerful disposition
- Rare anger

11. Totality of Symptoms

1. Ichthyosis of long duration
2. Persistent dryness of skin
3. Dryness aggravated during winter
4. Formication, intermittent
5. Palmar dryness and hardness
6. Cracking of soles with pain
7. Aversion to milk, including intolerance to its smell
8. Aversion to non-vegetarian food
9. Perspiration predominantly over the back
10. Deep sleep
11. Sleeping on abdomen
12. Intolerance of both extremes of temperature
13. Cheerful disposition
14. Rare anger

The repertorization image supplied with the case shows Graphites among the leading remedies, consistent with the documented prescription.

12. Homeopathic Treatment Plan

Sr. No.	Category	Treatment documented
1	Constitutional	Graphites 200C

The case record specifically documents Graphites 200C followed by Sac lac. No additional remedy should be attributed to this case unless documented in the original clinical record.

13. Follow-up and Clinical Outcome

The patient was followed longitudinally.

Date	Clinical observation
Initial assessment	Ichthyosis stable; dryness present over hands and palms; increased dryness over the preceding 3–4 days; soles normal but reported cracking with pain.
04/02/2026	Ichthyosis better; skin dryness reduced; no itching; sleep and stools normal.
03/03/2026	Persistent dryness over palms and dorsum of hands; no itching.
02/04/2026	Marked improvement in skin dryness; ichthyosis over abdomen and back also much better; hardness of palms reduced.

06/05/2026	Continued improvement in dryness and ichthyotic changes over abdomen and back; reduced palmar hardness; no itching.
03/06/2026	Dryness over palms and back of hands much better; ichthyosis improved; no itching.
02/07/2026	Ichthyosis improved; residual darkness and dryness over hips documented.
05/08/2026	Patient reported overall improvement in the skin condition.

Overall documented trend: The follow-up record demonstrates a progressive reduction in dryness and improvement in ichthyotic skin changes, particularly involving the abdomen, back, palms and dorsum of hands. Residual dryness/darkening over the hips was documented later in the follow-up.

Outcome Summary

Clinical Parameter	Baseline	Follow-up
Ichthyosis	Long-standing, persistent	Improved
Generalized dryness	Present	Reduced
Winter aggravation	Marked	Not subsequently emphasized
Palmar dryness/hardness	Present	Reduced
Abdominal/back ichthyosis	Present	Much improved
Sole cracking	Episodic, painful	No persistent progression documented
Itching	Not significant	No itching documented
Formication	Intermittent	Not subsequently emphasized
Overall skin condition	Chronic	Reported as better by August 2026

Remedies	ars.	phos.	lyc.	sil.	sulph.	calc.	graph.	merc.	kal.c.	phal.	sepi.	nat.c.	nat.m.	natr.	bell.	lin.	nux-v.	mag.	nat-sul.	calc-s.
Serial Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Symptoms Covered	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Intensity	14	14	12	12	12	11	9	9	10	10	10	9	9	9	8	8	8	7	6	5
Result	6/14	6/14	6/12	6/12	6/12	6/11	6/9	6/9	5/10	5/10	5/10	5/9	5/9	5/9	5/8	5/8	5/8	5/7	5/6	5/5
Clipboard 1																				
SKIN - DRY	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	1
SKIN - ERUPTIONS - scaly - ichthyosis	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1			1	2			1			1		
GENERALS - SEASONS - winter - agg.	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	1	3	2	2	3	2	1	1
GENERALS - PERIODICITY	3	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	2	3	1	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	1
GENERALS - FOOD AND DRINKS - milk - aversion	1	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	3	2		1	2	1	2	2	1
GENERALS - FOOD AND DRINKS - sweets - aversion	2	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	2	1			1	1	1	1	1		1	1

Figure 1. Repertorial analysis chart.

14. Discussion

This case describes a patient with long-standing ichthyosis and persistent xerosis despite a prolonged history of treatment. The most prominent clinical characteristic was dryness aggravated during winter.

The case also contained several individualizing physical features, including aversion to milk, inability to tolerate non-vegetarian food, perspiration predominantly over the back, deep sleep, abdominal sleeping position and intolerance to both extremes of temperature.

A significant family history was also present, with the patient's mother reportedly having dry skin. This may be relevant when considering the chronic nature of the condition.

The repertorization supplied with the case shows Graphites as a leading consideration, and the treatment record documents Graphites 200C. The subsequent follow-up notes record progressive improvement in dryness and ichthyotic changes.

However, the improvement observed in this individual case should be interpreted cautiously. A case report without a control group cannot determine whether improvement was caused by the prescribed treatment. Ichthyosis can also fluctuate over time, and environmental, behavioural, skin-care and other treatment factors may contribute to changes in symptoms.



Figure 2. Clinical photographs — before and after treatment.

15. Strengths of the Case

1. Long duration of disease was documented.
2. A clear characteristic modality—winter aggravation—was recorded.
3. Detailed physical-general characteristics were available.
4. Family history of similar dry skin was documented.
5. The case had longitudinal follow-up over several months.
6. Multiple anatomical sites were assessed during follow-up.
7. The treatment prescribed was explicitly documented.

16. Conclusion

This case describes a 33-year-old male with long-standing ichthyosis characterized by persistent skin dryness and marked winter aggravation. The case exhibited a distinctive combination of physical generals, food preferences, thermal characteristics and skin modalities. Graphites 200C was the documented constitutional prescription, followed by Sac lac.

Longitudinal follow-up documented progressive improvement in dryness and ichthyotic changes involving the abdomen, back, hands and palms, with overall skin improvement reported at the final documented visit.

The case supports the value of detailed longitudinal documentation in chronic dermatological conditions, while recognizing that a single case report cannot establish treatment efficacy or causation.

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