

Homeopathic Interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature

Dr. Dhanvarsha Jhade¹, Dr. Deepti Sharma²

¹Assistant Professor Dept. of Human Physiology and Biochemistry,
DEI Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Dayalbagh Agra

²Associate Professor Dept. of Human Physiology and Biochemistry,
DEI Homoeopathic Medical College and Hospital, Dayalbagh Agra

Abstract—autism spectrum disorder is a complex neurodevelopmental condition which is characterised by abnormal functioning in areas of social interaction, communication and restricted repetitive behavior. As the global prevalence of ASD is rising constantly, there is need for alternative medicine to address behavioral symptoms and improve quality of life. This article explores the different areas affected under autism and the role of individualized homoeopathic medicines in the management of autistic spectrum disorder.

Index Terms—Autism, Autism Spectrum disorder, Homoeopathy, management, Neurodevelopmental disorder, Holistic Medicine, Individualization.

I. INTRODUCTION

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental disorder involving challenges with social communication, restricted interests and repetitive behavior.¹

It affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave. It is termed as “developmental disorder” as it can be diagnosed at any age, but symptoms generally appear in the first two years of life.²

II. EPIDEMIOLOGY³⁻⁴

The prevalence rate of autism is increasing globally, it's due to increase of awareness and improved screening practices. Due to which Autism is been early diagnosed.

In 2021, it is estimated that worldwide 1 in 127 persons had autism.

In India the prevalence rate of autism is steadily increasing. According to a 2021 study published in the Indian Journal of Pediatrics⁵:

The estimated prevalence of Autism in India is around 1 in 68 children. Boys are more commonly affected by Autism than girls, with a male-to-female ratio of approximately 3:1. For screening autism, various tools are available such as the Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (M-CHATs), Trivandrum Autism Behavioral Checklist (TABC), and Social Communication Questionnaire (SCQ).

Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and the Indian Scale for the Assessment of Autism (ISAA).

Diagnostic criteria as per ICD-10 INCLUDES Autism under “Pervasive Developmental Disorders” section F84.0 F84.0 Childhood Autism

- Presence of abnormal or impaired development, manifest before 3yr of age.
- Characteristic type of abnormal functioning in all three areas of social interaction, communication, and restricted, repetitive behavior.
- It occurs in boys three to four times more often in girls.

III. MANAGEMENT IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER⁵

Early screening, accurate diagnosis, and multidisciplinary interventions are very essential to bring positive improvement in the lives of patients diagnosed with Autism. Multidisciplinary Interventions for ASD includes pediatricians, psychologists, psychiatrists, special educators,

occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech therapists, and social workers.

Other evidence-based approaches used for management are - Applied behavior analysis (ABA), naturalistic developmental behavioral interventions (NDBIs), and parent-mediated treatment. Different therapies like speech-language therapy, motor therapy, and sensory integration therapy if intervened along with treatment play vital roles in addressing the diverse needs of individuals with ASD. Medical interventions should be used alongside behavioral and environmental strategies.

Multidisciplinary approach along with increased awareness plays crucial role in addressing ASD worldwide.

VI. HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH

The Importance of Case Taking

For selection of well indicated individualized medicine, case taking should be done appropriately and comprehensively. It should also include:

- I. Prenatal History: The mother's emotional and physical state during pregnancy.
- II. Developmental Milestones: Delays in speech, walking, or toilet training.
- III. Sensory Profile: Hypersensitivity to noise, touch, or light.
- IV. Behavioral Peculiarities: Hand-flapping, spinning, or aversion to eye contact.

Repertorial view

Few rubrics under which Autism is searched in different repertories:

Key Rubrics for ASD:

Mind: Detached; Autism; Communication, lost desire for.

Mind: Repetitive behavior; Gestures, plays with fingers.

Mind: Sensitive, oversensitive to noise.

Mind: Speech, delayed.

Generalities: Development, arrested/stunted.

VII. HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICINAL APPROACH⁶

- 1) Aethusa Cynapium- Inability to think, to fix the attention. Mental retardation, Attention deficit, Idiotic children. Idiocy may alternate with furor

and irritability. Restlessness, anxious and crying. Reserved with inwardly strong emotions. Feels unconnected to other people. Loves animals.

- 2) Baryta Carbonica- Arrested mental development, extreme shyness, delayed milestones, and physical dwarfishness. backward mentally and physically, are dwarfish, do not grow and develop. mental weakness. Aversion to strangers
- 3) Carcinosisin - High sensitivity to reprimand, insomnia, love for music/dancing, and a family history of high stress or cancer. Used in treating depraved inherited conditions in children
- 4) Calcarea Phosphorica - weak-minded children. Temper Tantrums, slow comprehension, mental dullness in children, difficulty in performing intellectual operations, idiocy of children, slow learning to talk. and a tendency toward physical weakness or thinness
- 5) Stramonium - Intense fears (especially of the dark), violent outbursts, or night terrors.
- 6) Hyoscyamus - Intense restlessness, inappropriate social behavior, and desire to be naked or touch others.
- 7) Syphillinum – it is used as an intercurrent remedy in the course for chronic diseases. It is frequently used where there is syphilitic hereditary tendency present. Weakness of mind, difficulty in making arithmetical calculations. Antisocial behavior, aversion to company. Great restlessness at night. Causeless weeping.
- 8) Silicea - Fixed ideas, lack of "grit" (emotional and physical), and sensitivity to cold or sensory input.
- 9) Tuberculinum- Mentally deficient children with tendency to catch cold easily. Desire to travel, does not want to remain in one place. Restlessness with impulse to run, desire to break things. Destructive behavior. Children awake screaming with restlessness, contradictory behavior, sensitive to music, fear of animals. Desire to use foul language, curse and swear.

Many studies conducted on ASD prove the potential of homoeopathy in improving the symptoms and quality of life among autistic children.

A nonrandomized, self-controlled, pre- and post-intervention study was conducted which reported usefulness of homoeopathic treatment in management of neuropsychological dysfunction in childhood autism disorder, which is reflected in significant

reduction of hyperactivity, behavioral dysfunction, sensory impairment as well as communication difficulty. The study was conducted on 60 autistic children of both genders below 12 age group.⁷

This study was conducted on 4 clinical cases of autism with regular homoeopathic treatment, which showed marked improvement with homoeopathic medicines Belladonna, Bufo rana, Calcarea carbonica, Calcarea phosphorica, Hyoscyamus niger, Natrum muriaticum, Phosphorus, Santoninum, Silicea, Sulphur, Tarantula, Thuja occidentalis, Tuberculinum, Veratrum album.⁸

This clinical observational study proves the effectiveness of homeopathic medicines in the management of ASD with positive impacts on the behavioral issues and social interactions.⁹

This case study which was conducted over 20 cases, presented marked difference in the median baseline ATEC SCORE, with significant changes in all domains of speech language communication, sociability, sensory/cognitive awareness and health/physical/behavior within 12 months. Effective medicines which were used-*Calcarea carbonica*, *Calcarea phosphorica*, *Carcinosinum*, *Mercurius solubilis*, *Natrum muriaticum*, *Silicea*, *Theridion*, *Tuberculinum*, *Zincum metallicum* etc.¹⁰

This study shows the effectiveness of homoeopathic medicines on the cognitive and motor development in children with infantile autism. Medicines were selected on the basis of individualized symptoms which showed significant improvement.¹¹

VIII. CONCLUSION

Autism as a complex neurodevelopmental disorder can be managed significantly with homoeopathic medicines. Different areas in autism are addressed well with this alternative therapy and shown marked improvement in symptoms and quality of life. Homoeopathy should be viewed as a complementary tool that works alongside conventional interventions to support the overall well-being of the child.

REFERENCES

- [1] <https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/autism/what-is-autism-spectrum-disorder>
- [2] <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/autism-spectrum-disorder>

- [3] <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/autism-spectrum-disorders>
- [4] <https://indiaautismcenter.org/blog/early-detection-and-diagnosis-of-autism-in-india-importance-and-challenges/>.
- [5] Uke P, Gaikwad S, Vagha K, Wandile S. Unraveling the Spectrum: A Comprehensive Review of Autism Spectrum Disorder in India. *Cureus*. 2024 Jun 20;16(6): e62753. doi: 10.7759/cureus.62753. PMID: 39036210; PMCID: PMC11260197
- [6] Murphy Robin, *lotus material medica*, third edition 2010
- [7] Barvalia P, Oza P, Daftary A, Patil V, Agarwal V, Mehta A. Effectiveness of homoeopathic therapeutics in the management of childhood autism disorder. *Indian journal of research in Homoeopathy*. 2014;8(3):147-59.
- [8] Gupta N, Saxena RK, Juneja RA. Effectiveness of homeopathy in four autism spectrum disorder cases. *Homoeopathic Links*. 2013 Dec;26(04):256-61.
- [9] Rajalakshmi MA, BHMS M. Role of Homoeopathy in the management of autism: Study of effects of homoeopathic treatment on the autism triad. *The Internet Journal of Alternative Medicine*. 2008;6(1).
- [10] Gilla D, Sreeja KR, Resmy R. Autism Spectrum Disorder Managed with Individualised Homoeopathic Medicine Analysis of 20 Cases. *Homoeopathic Links*. 2022 Mar;35(01):070-5.
- [11] de Menezes Fonseca GR, Bolognani FA, Durão FF, Souza KM, de Castro M, Accioly C, Bagarollo MF. Effect of homeopathic medication on the cognitive and motor performance of autistic children. *International Journal of High Dilution Research-ISSN 1982-6206*. 2008;7(23):63-71.