

# Healing The Reflux Naturally: Homoeopathic Insights into Therapeutics and Rubrics of GERD-A Review

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**Abstract -** Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) is a common gastrointestinal disorder characterized by the reflux of gastric contents into the esophagus, resulting in symptoms such as heartburn, regurgitation, and chest pain. The global prevalence of GERD ranges between 15–20%, with varying distribution across regions; in India, approximately 22.2% of the population is affected. Several factors contribute to the development of GERD, including obesity, sedentary lifestyle, dietary habits, smoking, alcohol consumption, and anatomical or functional abnormalities such as transient relaxation of the lower esophageal sphincter and delayed gastric emptying. GERD may also present with extra-esophageal manifestations like chronic cough, asthma, hoarseness of voice, and sore throat. Diagnosis involves clinical evaluation and investigations such as proton pump inhibitor trials, upper gastrointestinal endoscopy, barium esophagram, and esophageal manometry.

Homoeopathy offers an individualized therapeutic approach in the management of GERD by addressing the patient's constitutional and symptomatic picture... Repertorization further assists in remedy selection by organizing symptoms systematically and guiding the physician toward the most similar remedy. Important rubrics related to GERD can be found in repertories such as Kent, Boenninghausen's Characteristics Repertory, Clarke, Phatak, and Synthesis.

This article highlights the clinical understanding of GERD along with the role of homoeopathic therapeutics and repertory rubrics in its management, emphasizing the importance of individualized treatment for effective and holistic care.

**Key Words-** Gerd, Homoeopathy, Repertory, Individualisation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Gastro-esophageal reflux disease is the common problem people have with their esophagus and it

affects around 75% of people who have esophagus problems.[1]

In general Gastro-esophageal reflux disease affects 15% to 20% of people according to research done in countries. [1]

In Asia Gastro-esophageal reflux disease is not as common probably because people in Asia have Helicobacter pylori, lower body mass index eat less fat and have more genetic differences.[1]

Gastro-esophageal reflux disease is a problem over the world and it seems to be getting worse. The number of people with Gastro-esophageal reflux disease varies a lot from one place to another. Only in East Asia is it less than 10%. [2]

Twenty eight studies found that 18.1% to 27.8% of people in North America have Gastro-esophageal reflux disease, 8.8% to 25.9% of people in Europe have it and 2.5% to 7.8% of people in East Asia have it.[2]

In India 22.2% of people have Gastro-esophageal reflux disease and older people and men are more likely to have it.[3]

People who are overweight or obese are more likely to have Gastro-esophageal reflux disease than people who're not overweight. People who live in cities are also more likely to have Gastro-esophageal reflux disease than people who live in areas.[3]

People who had less education are also more likely to have Gastro-esophageal reflux disease. People who chew pan masala regularly are more likely to

get Gastro-esophageal reflux disease than people who do not chew pan masala.[3]

This is similar to what other studies have found in places. The reason for this might be that men and women have eating habits, lifestyles and hormone levels especially the role of hormones like progesterone.[4]

It has also been suggested that women might be more stressed, which affects the pituitary-adrenal axis and leads to more cortisol, less prostaglandin, more stomach acid and slower emptying of the stomach.[4]

Students from cities are 33% less likely to have Gastro-esophageal reflux disease symptoms than students, from areas.[4]

## II. METHODS

This article is based on a narrative review of literature focusing on the homoeopathic understanding and management of Gastro-esophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) along with repertorial analysis.

The present work is a descriptive literature review aimed at compiling information regarding the etiology, pathophysiology, clinical features, and management of GERD with special emphasis on homoeopathic therapeutics and repertorial rubrics.

Information for this article was collected from standard medical and homoeopathic textbooks, repertories, and peer-reviewed journals.

## III. ETIOLOGY

Many risk factors can cause gastroesophageal reflux disease. Over time people have found out what these risk factors are.[5]

A number of motor anomalies are implicated in the development of gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD), including delayed gastric emptying, transitory lower esophageal sphincter (LES) relaxation, esophageal dysmotility leading to decreased esophageal acid clearance, and altered LES tone. [5]

The fact that someone has gastroesophageal reflux disease is also linked to anatomy of body. For

example in hiatus hernia or increased intra-abdominal pressure as seen in obesity.

The symptoms of gastroesophageal reflux disease are also linked to following risk factors These risk factors include being older, than fifty years ,not having a lot of money , smoking tobacco, drinking much alcohol, having diseases that affect the connective tissue, being pregnant ,lying down after eating ,taking certain kinds of medicine like benzodiazepines, anticholinergics, aspirin, nitroglycerin, albuterol, calcium channel blockers, antidepressants and glucagon.[5]

## IV. PATHOPHYSIOLOGY:

The lower esophageal sphincter's (LES) function is reduced, and there is temporary relaxation of the LES (TLESRs), improper esophageal peristalsis and decreased mucosal defense against stomach acid reflux [5]

## V. CLINICAL FEATURES

The most prevalent symptoms of GERD include heartburn, regurgitation, and chest discomfort. Heartburn is described as a burning feeling experienced mainly behind the breastbone within an hour after eating, often triggered by physical activity or lying down. The pain usually begins in the upper abdomen and can radiate towards the neck. Acid regurgitation is felt as sour or burning taste in the throat or mouth.[6]

Chronic cough:

Gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) can result in a persistent cough, but it must be differentiated from conditions affecting the upper respiratory tract or lungs. A chronic cough can also occur as a side effect of some medications, such as angiotensin-converting enzyme inhibitors. The mechanism behind cough in reflux esophagitis can be attributed to the stimulation of an esophageal-bronchial reflux. Alternatively, chronic cough may arise from irritation caused by acid in the pharynx or larynx.[6]

Asthma

People with asthma often have something called autonomic dysregulation. It can make the vagal tone go up. When you have asthma the air pressure in your chest gets lower. This can make it more likely that you get reflux. Some medicines that doctors give to people with asthma like theophylline can also

make reflux happen by decreasing the pressure at the lower esophageal sphincter [6].

Extraesophageal symptoms:

Sometimes people with reflux have problems that are not just, about the esophagus. They can have a hoarseness of voice, a sore throat and their voice box can even undergo spasm. [6]

## VI. INVESTIGATIONS

### *Proton pump inhibitor therapy*

Proton Pump Inhibitor therapy for people, with GERD symptoms is usually started without waiting for signs. If someone has trouble swallowing or pain when they swallow or they lose weight without trying or they have bleeding in their stomach or they do not feel like eating that is different.. For people who just have regular GERD symptoms doctors often say to try Proton Pump Inhibitor therapy for 8 weeks to see what happens.[7]

If the person feels better during this time that means the Proton Pump Inhibitor therapy is probably working and it can help figure out if they really have GERD.

If the symptoms go away the person should stop taking Proton Pump Inhibitors after 8 weeks.. If the symptoms do not go away or if they come back after stopping the Proton Pump Inhibitor therapy or if there are other strange symptoms the doctor will want to do more tests to find out what is going on with the Proton Pump Inhibitor therapy and the GERD symptoms.[7]

### *Upper endoscopy :*

It helps doctors to see esophageal mucosa and take a sample of any suspicious looking areas like Barrett's esophagus, strictures or masses for further testing.

The doctors think that people with risk factors for getting a type of cancer in the esophagus should have a Screening endoscopy for Barrett's esophagus. These risk factors include:

- Being fifty years old or more
- Being a man

- Having acid reflux problems for a long time

- Having a Hiatal hernia

- Being overweight

- Having a lot of fat, around the waist area [7]

### *Barium esophagram:*

It is often used to check for problems caused by GERD like narrowing of the esophagus.

This test also helps find out why someone is having trouble swallowing.

It is especially helpful, for people who have had surgery to prevent stomach acid from flowing up into the esophagus. the test is usually done along with an endoscopy.[7]

### *Esophageal manometry:*

It helps doctors before surgery to check if someone has movement problems, in their esophagus like achalasia or scleroderma..

It is not used to diagnose GERD normally.[7]

## VII. TREATMENT

Dietary and behavioral changes are typically the first steps in treatment. meals that aggravate reflux, including as fried or fatty meals, coffee-containing beverages, chocolate, and mint, should be avoided by the patient, and their consumption of acidic foods, such as citrus fruits, spicy foods, carbonated drinks, tomatoes, and onions, should be reduced. Lifestyle changes include raising the head end of the bed, avoiding certain foods, and losing weight if one is obese, eating three hours before going to bed if you have symptoms at night. It is recommended that patients with postprandial symptoms eat small meals often. [1]

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) have been shown by meta-analysis of randomized control trials to be superior than H2 receptor antagonists (H2RAs) in the treatment and symptom amelioration of esophagitis. When used at recommended dosages, PPIs (omeprazole, lansoprazole, pantoprazole, rabeprazole, and esomeprazole) are all equally effective.[1]

### VIII. HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH

In acute cases the gastric symptoms presentation is generally taken in account forming the acute totality of symptoms there by prescribing an acute remedy

for example heartburn with frontal headache which sets teeth on edge we would think of robinia as an acute remedy but same picture is goes on in chronic state one would need deep acting constitutional prescription like puls, lyco, nux vomica etc

In homeopathy, especially for chronic cases the approach to treatment emphasizes viewing the patient as an integrated whole, rather than focusing solely on individual organs, body parts, or isolated disease systems. The goal is to identify and administer the remedy that most closely matches the patient's overall symptom picture—referred to as the simillimum. This remedy is selected with careful consideration of the appropriate potency and repetition, with the aim of achieving a complete and lasting cure.

List of following medicines

Nux vomica

Nux Vomica often helps people who have sedentary lifestyle and this includes those who work in offices or do mental work. They feel mentally drained because of work pressures and emotional stress. These people usually turn to things, like coffee, alcohol or cigarettes to cope. Sometimes they overdo it. They might also try stuff or activities to calm down or take their mind off things for a bit.[8,9]

Iris.versicolor

Iris Versicolor is used to help people who have stomach and headache that happen over and over. Sometimes people get blurred vision before they get a headache. The people who get these headaches usually feel sick and have nausea and diarrhea. These headaches happen at the time every month or every six weeks and they can last for two or three days. Iris Versicolor is used to help with these kinds of headaches. Iris Versicolor can make a difference, for people who have these recurring headaches.[8,9]

Natrum phosphoricum

Natrum Phosphoricum is really good for people who have much lactic acid in their body. This usually happens when they eat much sugar. It helps with problems that make your body very acidic. For example Natrum Phosphoricum is good for belching, sour taste in the mouth and sour vomiting.

One thing that stands out about Natrum Phosphoricum is that people who need it often have a creamy coating, on the back of their tongue and the roof of their mouth.[8,9]

China

These problems can make them feel weak and really sensitive. Sometimes they can eat a little bit of food and still feel bad. They feel full or heavy in their stomach when they have not eaten very much. For these people things, like tea, fruit or cold foods can make them feel even worse. They also get gas all the time. It does not help when they burp or throw up bitter tasting fluids. [8,9]

Carbo veg

They often have gas can't tolerate foods and digest food slowly. These people usually do not like to eat meat, fatty foods or milk. This is because such foods make them feel bloated and uncomfortable. Some patients even feel sick when they think about eating.[8,9]

Lycopodium

Lycopodium is an important remedy for people who have problems with their stomach. This is especially true for people who get dyspepsia from eating foods like cabbage and beans that're hard to digest. Sometimes even a little bit of food can make you feel really full and bloated, in your stomach.[8,9]

Phosphorous

People who have a lot of trouble with their stomachs might need Phosphorus. This is especially true, for those who get a lot of gas and belch a lot especially after they eat. Sometimes they even throw up the food they just ate. One characteristic symptom that can happen is that they throw up water soon as it gets warm in their stomach. [8,9]

Robinia

Robinia is really good at helping people who have much stomach acid. This is called hyperchlorhydria. When people have this problem they get burps and a very sour taste in their mouth. The stomach acid can be so bad that it can hurt their teeth.

Symptoms of this problem usually include having acid in the stomach and a headache that does not go away. The headache is usually, in the front of the head. It gets worse when you move around or read.[8,9]

#### Abies Nigra

Abies Nigra is mainly used for stomach problems, with heart issues in older people. It really helps with indigestion caused by drinking much tea, smoking or chewing tobacco. [8,9]

#### Pulsatilla

Pulsatilla is a choice when people have stomach problems with symptoms like burping a lot and a bad taste in their mouth that will not go away especially after eating cold things like ice and fruit. People with Pulsatilla often feel sick, to their stomach. Have heartburn and they usually do not feel like drinking much water, which is something that happens with a lot of the symptoms of Pulsatilla [8,9]

### IX. REPERTORY

Repertory is an index, a catalogue of symptoms of Materia Medica, neatly arranged in a practical form and also indicating the relative gradation of drugs, and it greatly facilitates for quick selection of the indicated remedy. [10]

#### NEED FOR REPERTORY

A repertory is an index where data is organized, categorized, or kept in a methodical manner to make it easier to get the most similar remedy quickly. The repertory's primary goal is to assist in selecting the right remedy for a given case this is the another method of individualization through mathematical calculations. The vastness of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica makes it difficult to refer to all similar drugs in the Materia Medica that correspond to a particular disease picture. This is why repertorization helps us focus on a group of similar medicines that are then easier to distinguish from the materia medica.[10]

#### RUBRICS OF GERD

*Repertory of Homoeopathic Materia medica by J.T. Kent [11]*

STOMACH - HEARTBURN

STOMACH - ERUCTATIONS - FOOD (REGURGITATION)

STOMACH - ERUCTATIONS; TYPE OF - FOOD - SOUR:

STOMACH - HEARTBURN - NAUSEA, WITH

STOMACH - VOMITING

*Boger Boenninghausen characteristics and repertory [12]*

WATERBRASH AND HEARTBURN - HEARTBURN

WATERBRASH AND HEARTBURN - REGURGITATION

WATERBRASH AND HEARTBURN - REGURGITATION - EATING, WHILE

WATERBRASH AND HEARTBURN - RISINGS IN THROAT

WATERBRASH AND HEARTBURN - WATER COLLECTING, IN MOUTH

*A Clinical Repertory to the dictionary of Materia Medica- J.H. Clarke [13]*

CLINICAL - H - HEARTBURN:

*Concise repertory of Homoeopathic Materia medica- Dr. Phatak [14]*

H - HEARTBURN

H - HEARTBURN - FATS AGG

H - HEARTBURN - MILK AFTER

*Synthesis Repertorium Homoeopathicum Syntheticum - Dr. Frederik Schroyens [15]*

STOMACH - HEARTBURN

STOMACH - ERUCTATIONS; TYPE OF - FOOD

STOMACH - ERUCTATIONS; TYPE OF - FOOD  
- EATING - AFTER - AGG.

STOMACH - ERUCTATIONS; TYPE OF - FOOD  
- ACRID, SHARP TASTING

STOMACH - ERUCTATIONS; TYPE OF - FOOD  
- SOUR

## X. DISCUSSION

Homoeopathic medicines have efficacy in reducing the symptoms of GERD there are previous studies which emphasis the role of individualised homoeopathic medicines when given on based of individualizing symptoms helps in management of GERD

one such study is in international journal of research i.e study on homoeopathic management of gastroesophageal reflux disease in adults in which 40 patients of GERD were taken and after case taking and analysing the case the individualising remedy was given and GERD Q score was used as assement tool before and after study. Based on statistical results this study showed significant improvement in GERD Q score after giving individualised homoeopathic remedy.[16]

international journal of high dilution and Reasarch showed homoeopathy as an emerging alternative for GERD

Following are studies which support this article  
The findings from the reviewed studies underscore the potential utility of homeopathic medicines in the management of Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) and related gastrointestinal ailments. Renu Mittal's study yielded noteworthy insights, revealing that homeopathic treatment significantly ameliorated GERD symptoms and enhanced patient overall quality of life within an eight-week timeframe. [17]

Dr. Leena Dighe's retrospective study showed the effectiveness of homeopathic medicines in managing GERD, Acid-Peptic Disorder (APD), and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). many percentages of patients experiencing improvement, this study shows value of sticking to homeopathic principles

for long lasting cures in gastrointestinal disorders.[17]

Homoeopathy medicines are successfully practised by individualisation to be prescribed for patient as a whole and not on merely the parts.

The totality of symptoms is to be presented by considering emotional, intellectual and physical aspects considering the person as whole.

## XI. CONCLUSION

GERD is the most common prevailing disease all over the world. Homoeopathic medicines when given on based of individualisation and significant changes are seen in managing symptoms of GERD. The individulisation can be done by referring various rubrics from various repertories and after repertorial analysis simillimum has to be selected thus it can be said that individualisation plays supportive role in managing symptoms of GERD.

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