

Hydrangea Arborescens Exploring its Drug Picture and Clinical Importance in Homoeopathy

Dr. Drashti G. Gadhiya¹, Dr. Vani Oza²

¹PG Scholar MD Part 2 Department of Homoeopathic Materia Medica Rajkot Homoeopathic Medical College

²MD (HOM.) Professor and HOD of Department of Homoeopathic Materia Medica Rajkot Homoeopathic Medical College, Parul University

Abstract—Hydrangea Arborescens, also referred to as Seven Barks or Smooth Hydrangea, is a significant homoeopathic remedy that has a strong affinity for the urinary system. It was first used in medicine by Dr. S. W. Butler and has long been known to be beneficial for prostatic problems, renal calculi, urinary gravel, and chronic cystitis. White amorphous urine deposits, burning and frequent urination, renal colic, and prostate enlargement are the symptoms of the remedy. According to traditional homoeopathic literature, it acts as an eliminative rather than a solvent, easing the passage of tiny calculi and lessening urinary tract discomfort. The botanical background, pharmacological basis, homoeopathic drug image, clinical indications, and therapeutic importance of Hydrangea arborescens are all reviewed in this article.

Index Terms—Hydrangea arborescens, Seven Barks, renal calculi, homoeopathy, urinary disorders, prostate.

I. INTRODUCTION

Due to its high recurrence rate and related morbidity, urinary stone disease therapy is still difficult. Hydrangea arborescens holds a unique position among the medications used in homoeopathic treatment for urinary calculi because of its notable effects on the kidneys, ureters, bladder, and prostate. For generations, Hydrangea arborescens, a native of eastern North America, has been utilized in traditional herbal treatment. The bark and roots were used by Native American tribes, especially the Cherokee, to treat kidney and bladder problems. Dr. S. W. Butler brought the treatment to the medical field and claimed significant clinical results in patients with renal calculi and urinary gravel. Since then, the medication's distinctive symptomatology and steady clinical utility have led to its inclusion in

homoeopathic Materia Medica.

Unlike remedies that are prescribed solely on pathological diagnosis, Hydrangea arborescens is selected based on a characteristic combination of urinary irritation, sedimentation, renal pain, and prostatic involvement. It is especially useful in patients who repeatedly form urinary calculi and experience painful passage of gravel.

Botanical Background

Hydrangea arborescens belongs to the family Saxifragaceae and is commonly known as Smooth Hydrangea, Wild Hydrangea, or Seven Barks. It is a deciduous shrub naturally distributed throughout the eastern United States.

The name "Seven Barks" originates from its unique bark, which peels away in several thin layers of different shades. The medicinal part of the plant consists mainly of the dried root and rhizome, from which the homoeopathic mother tincture is prepared. The roots contain several active constituents including Hydrangin, resins, starch, sugars, fixed and volatile oils, mineral salts, Hydrangeic acid, and Hydragenol. These constituents are believed to contribute to its traditional diuretic, anti-inflammatory, and anti-lithic properties.

II. PREPARATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF HYDRANGEA ARBORESCENS

Traditionally, Hydrangea was taken three times daily as a concentrated syrup or tincture.

Currently, the root decoction or Hydrangea tincture is preferred, with 5–30 drops three times daily,

preferably in hot water.

Sphere of Action

The principal sphere of action of *Hydrangea arborescens* is the genitourinary system.

The remedy acts on:

- Kidneys
- Renal pelvis
- Ureters
- Urinary bladder
- Urethra
- Prostate gland

Its action is characterized by irritation of the urinary mucosa together with a marked tendency toward the formation of urinary calculi and phosphatic deposits.

Drug Picture

The central theme of *Hydrangea arborescens* is stone formation associated with chronic irritation of the urinary tract.

The patient requiring this medicine frequently complains of recurrent attacks of renal colic accompanied by burning urination and passage of gravel. Urine often contains abundant white amorphous sediment, indicating phosphatic deposits. The pain usually extends from the kidney along the course of the ureter toward the bladder.

Unlike many urinary remedies that primarily relieve pain, *Hydrangea arborescens* is believed to facilitate the elimination of small calculi while reducing inflammation of the urinary passages.

III. HOMOEOPATIC SYMPTOMATOLOGY

Principle organ and system	Renal/Urinary (prostate, bladder, ureters, kidneys)
Key indication	Blood in the urine, frequent or spasmodic urination, irritation of the prostate or bladder neck, renal calculi or gravel, white amorphous urinary deposits, renal colic, dribbling or incontinence, etc.
Therapeutic theme	An irritable urinary tract and prostatic area; persistent sedimentation and irritation; a propensity for "stone-forming" in the urinary system

Characteristic Symptoms Urinary Symptoms

These represent the keynote of the remedy.

Characteristic features include:

- Renal calculi.
- Urinary gravel.
- Burning urination.
- Frequent desire to urinate.
- Difficulty initiating urination.
- Dribbling of urine.
- Sharp ureteric pain.
- Pain in the lumbar region.
- Blood in urine.
- White amorphous urinary sediment.
- Thick mucus in urine.
- Chronic irritation of the bladder.
- Renal colic with severe pain.

The patient often experiences repeated attacks due to passage of small calculi.

Male Genital Symptoms

The remedy possesses a marked affinity for the prostate.

Clinical indications include:

- Enlarged prostate.
- Chronic prostatitis.
- Difficulty passing urine.
- Urinary retention due to prostatic enlargement.
- Dribbling after urination.

Older men with prostatic enlargement and phosphatic deposits are particularly benefited.

General Symptoms

Although the urinary system predominates, several constitutional symptoms are frequently observed:

- Great thirst.
- Dizziness.
- Chest oppression.
- Weakness.
- Lumbar pain.
- Restlessness during renal colic.

These symptoms often accompany severe urinary attacks.

Clinical Applications

The principal clinical indications are:

- Renal calculi
- Ureteric calculi
- Urinary gravel
- Renal colic
- Chronic cystitis
- Nephritis
- Urethritis
- Chronic prostatitis
- Benign prostatic hyperplasia
- Urinary incontinence
- Phosphatic urinary deposits
- Persistent bladder irritation

Among these conditions, renal calculi remain the most important indication.

Clinical Experience

- S. W. Butler: Introduced *Hydrangea arborescens* for urinary calculi; promoted elimination of small stones rather than dissolving existing stones.
- Nottingham: Reported improvement in prostatic enlargement, urinary dribbling, renal catarrh, and sediment-filled urine.
- Robert T. Cooper: Recommended it in diabetic patients with enlarged prostate, thirst, abdominal discomfort, and urinary symptoms.
- Hansen: Emphasized its anti-lithic action, reducing recurrent stones and renal pain while facilitating elimination of phosphatic deposits.

Comparative Study

Several remedies should be differentiated from *Hydrangea arborescens*.

Berberis vulgaris presents with radiating renal pain extending to the thighs and bladder.

Lycopodium clavatum is especially suited to right-sided renal calculi with red sandy deposits.

Pareira brava is characterized by violent straining during urination and pain extending down the thighs.

Chimaphila umbellata is useful in chronic cystitis associated with enlarged prostate.

Sabal serrulata has a deeper action on prostatic hypertrophy.

Uva ursi is indicated in chronic inflammation of the bladder with offensive urine.

The characteristic white amorphous sediment and tendency to recurrent gravel distinguish *Hydrangea arborescens* from these remedies.

Therapeutic Importance

The greatest value of *Hydrangea arborescens* lies in its ability to relieve irritation of the urinary tract while facilitating the passage of small urinary calculi. Classical literature repeatedly emphasizes that the medicine prevents further enlargement of stone nuclei rather than chemically dissolving stones.

Its usefulness extends beyond renal calculi to chronic cystitis, enlarged prostate, phosphatic deposits, urethral irritation, and recurrent urinary tract inflammation. Because of this broad sphere of action, it remains one of the principal homoeopathic medicines for chronic urinary disorders.

IV. CONCLUSION

Hydrangea arborescens is a valuable remedy in homoeopathic Materia Medica with a pronounced affinity for the kidneys, ureters, bladder, and prostate. Its characteristic indications include renal calculi, urinary gravel, and white amorphous urinary sediment, burning difficult urination, renal colic, and prostatic enlargement. Clinical observations by Dr. S. W. Butler, Dr. Nottingham, Dr. Cooper, and Dr. Hansen have consistently demonstrated its usefulness in relieving urinary irritation and facilitating the elimination of small calculi.

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