

Usefulness of Homeopathic Medicines in Fungal Diseases

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Abstract: Skin is the largest organ of the body. It is the outermost part of the human body which covers and protects the internal organs from injurious effects of the environment and harmful organisms. It is made up of three different layers of the tissue. Fungi are type of plants that can infect people. Fungi are mainly opportunistic pathogens that only invade the body if severely weakened. Diseases caused by fungi are called mycoses. By prescribing appropriate homeopathic medicines fungal diseases can be cured and managed.

Keywords: Skin, Fungal, Homeopathy, Disease, Mycoses

1. Introduction

The skin is a complete body system and integral part of the overall health of an individual. Our skin makes up an integumentary system. Our skin is continuously and constantly renewing itself. Healthy skin is slightly moist, soft and exfoliated. It provides first line of defense against diseases and environmental changes.

Fungal diseases are called mycoses and those affecting humans can be divided into four groups based on the level of penetration into the body tissue -

- 1) Superficial mycoses caused by fungi that grow only on the surface of the skin or hair
- 2) Cutaneous mycoses or dermatomycoses includes such infections as athlete's foot and ringworm which grow in the superficial layers of the skin.
- 3) Subcutaneous mycoses penetrate below the skin to involve the subcutaneous, connective and bone tissue.
- 4) Deep mycoses are able to infect internal organs and become widely disseminated throughout the skin and can even be fatal.

Prevalence

Annual prevalence of all types of mycoses increased from 6.9% to 7.4% in 2013.

Pathogenesis

The pathogenesis of fungal disease involves an interplay between fungal virulence factors and host immune response. Pathological fungi invade hosts environment by ingesting some of the environment so that the fungi may enter into the host. phagocytes and t - lymphocytes are important defenses in controlling fungi, low white blood cell count promotes fungal infection. Fungi two basic structures are hyphae and yeasts. Generally this type of fungi will enter through open wounds or by being inhaled. Filamentous forms can multiply extracellularly, but the spherical yeasts multiply within cells.

Candida albicans fungus is normally found on the mucous membranes, the skin, the gastrointestinal tract and in the vagina. The resident bacteria on the skin mainly cocci, usually inhibit the proliferation of candida albicans. When the fungus c. albicans is proliferating system is activated. This system is activated to destroy pathogenies directly. This

is when inflammation, pustules, collection of inflammatory cells and whitish yellow curd - like substance may form.

Clinical features

- 1) Lesions are scaly, clear in the Centre and may occur in the exposed area of the body
- 2) Itchy lesions are found in the axillae and under the breast in females
- 3) Baldness, scaling and itching in the scalp, hair becomes frizzy
- 4) Dryness, rigidity and discoloration of the nails and formation of black streaks on the nail surface
- 5) Stinging, blisters and burning on the affected parts

Types of fungal infections

- 1) Dermatophytosis or ringworm- most common of all fungal infections, main symptom include ring shaped rash with slightly raised edges
- 2) Athlete's foot or tinea pedis - affects the skin of the foot, often between the toes, mainly itching and burning with red, scaly, dry flaky skin
- 3) Jock itch or tinea curies - happens in the area of groin and thighs, most commonly seen in adolescent boys, main symptoms include scaly, flaky and cracked skin
- 4) Tinea capitis - affects the skin of the scalp, most commonly seen in children including symptoms like localized patchy bald patches, associated scaling, tenderness and pain upon the patches
- 5) Tinea versicolor - also called as pityriasis versicolor causes oval discolored patches to develop on the skin, caused by an overgrowth of specific type of fungus called Malassezia, skin may look black, darker, itchy and scaly
- 6) Cutaneous candidiasis - caused by candida fungi, naturally present on and inside its overgrowth leads to infection, symptoms includes small red pustules, red rash, itching
- 7) Onychomycosis or tinea unguis - fungal infection of nails, symptoms are discolored, typically yellow, brown or white, brittle nails, thickened nails

Risk factors

- 1) Living in a warm or wet environment
- 2) Sweating heavily
- 3) Not keeping skin clean and dry

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- 4) Wearing tight clothing
- 5) Sharing items like towel, footwear etc.
- 6) Taking part in activities like skin - to - skin contact
- 7) Having weak immune system
- 8) Coming in contact with pets and animals
- 9) Immunosuppressant drugs consumption

Prevention of fungal skin infections

General management

- Keeping your skin clean and dry
- Take off your shoes and expose your feet to the air
- Avoid walking barefoot in public places.
- Don't wear thick clothing for long period
- Keep a check on your pets hair loss
- Make sure shared exercise equipment
- Don't let people use your towel, clothing, accessories etc
- Dry your skin carefully

Homeopathic Management

Homeopathy works best in all the skin cases especially in fungal infections when given according to symptoms similarity. Following Medicines are being proved useful in fungal infection cases.

- 1) **Antimonium Crudum:** It is given for type of lesion includes papules, vesicles, white scales, thickened skin, itching and burning, hard callosities over hands and feet.
- 2) **ARSENICUM ALBUM:** It is used for various types of lesions including ulcers, dryness and scales, lesions also have itching, oedema, redness, excoriating.
- 3) **BACILLINUM:** It is used for chronic eczematous lesions over skin folds, recurrent boils which are extremely painful, appearing with fetid greenish fluid discharges.
- 4) **CALCAREA CARBONICUM:** It is used unhealthy skin, tendency to ulcerations, small wounds that do not heal quickly, glands swollen, petechial eruptions, abscesses in deep muscles and warts on hands and face.
- 5) **CALCAREA SULPHURICA:** It is used for glandular swellings, cystic tumors and suppurative process, when the pus is yellow, thick and lumpy in character.
- 6) **GRAPHITES:** It is used for unhealthy skin lesions every little injury suppurates, old cicatrices break open, eruptions upon ears, fingers, toes etc.
- 7) **HEPAR SULPHURICUM:** It is used for various types of skin lesions, slightest injury causes suppuration, abscess, suppurating glands, papule - pustular lesions and deep cracks on hands and feet. Ulcers with pus discharge mixed with blood, smelling like old cheese, surrounded by little pimples, very painful, splinter like pain and better by warmth. Chronic and recurrent wheals better by warmth.
- 8) **KALI SULPHURICUM:** It is used in diseases with profuse desquamation, yellow mucous and serous discharge. Skin symptoms include itching, burning, popular eruptions, pustular lesions with thick yellow discharge, thick yellowish scales, ringworm of scalp and beard with abundant scaling. It is indicated in dermatophytosis.
- 9) **KREOSOTUM:** The discharges are excoriating, burning and offensive. Itching is worse towards evening, burning soles, small wounds bleed freely.

ecchymoses, pustules, vesicles and eczematous lesions on external cars, car lobule, over hands and dorsal surface of fingers.

- 10) **MEZEREUM:** Sensitive to cold, air, neuralgic pain after herpes zoster, chilliness and skin lesions with intolerable itching, thick leather like crusts under which thick yellow pus collects, hair glued and matted. Offensive pus with maggots, vesicular lesions with burning surrounded by shining fiery redness are characteristics.
- 11) **NATRUM ARSENICUM:** Skin symptoms include thin, white scales. Itching worse from warmth and exercise. It is indicated in pityriasis versicolor.
- 12) **PETROLEUM:** Itching is worse at night, painful sensitiveness of whole body, slightest injury suppurates, rough, cracked, fissures, painful lesions especially on hands, fingertips, soles.
- 13) **PSORINUM:** Filthy smell of body, great sensitiveness to cold air or change of weather, canon like odor of discharges, hungry in the middle of the night, better after sweating and despair from itching are the leading indications.
- 14) **RHUS TOXICODENDRON:** It is used for the dermatitis with erythema, oolemma, cellulitis, vesicular, bullous lesions, pustules, burning, itching or stinging pain better by warmth. It is also indicated for wheals after getting wet and in hardness and induration of skin.
- 15) **SEPIA OFFICINALIS:** It is used in ring shaped lesion especially over upper parts of body appear every spring, itching worse on bends of elbow and knee, hyperpigmented spots over face and wheals worse in open air and better in warm room.
- 16) **SILICEA TERRA:** It is used for suppurations primary as well as secondary, the lesions are sensitive to cold air and better by warmth and covering, suppuration progress slowly, offensive pus, painless swelling of glands, old fistulous ulcers and crippled nails.
- 17) **SULPHUR:** It is used in every type of skin lesions, marked itching. want to scratch, burning after scratching worse by heat of bed, recurrent boils, eruptions dry, scaly, pustules, cracks and excoriation in skin folds.
- 18) **SULPHURIC ACID:** It is used for aphthae with offensive breath and bleeding gums, bluish, red, itchy plaques, ecchymosis, chilblains gangrenous tendency, carbuncle, be and other infection.
- 19) **TELLURIUM METALLICUM:** It is used for ring shaped, circular lesions over upper parts of body, face, chest and neck. Itching of hands and feet, eczematous lesion over face, behind ear with offensive acrid discharge Offensive sweating on foot, smell like garlic, craving for apples and weak empty feeling with heartburn are the other useful indications.
- 20) **THUJA OCCIDENTALIS:** It is used for every type of warty growths, polyps, tubercles, ulcers around an - genital areas, dry skin with brown spots on hands and arms, painful glandular swellings, brittle and soft nails crippled, burning after scratching and eruptions are more marked on covered parts.

2. Conclusion

Fungal infection produces persistent itching, cracking, dryness, burning and discoloration of skin in majority of

cases. It's a serious disabling disease with the potential for major complication and can be fatal because if not treated on time and with proper medications then the infection can invade or transfer to internal organs and can cause serious disease.

Homoeopathic medicines have a wide scope in treatment of fungal disease. The holistic and scientific system of medicines visualize every patient as a unique individual. The scientific approach needs to be blended with the art of case taking, diligent recording and processing to arrive at a complete diagnosis; the person diagnosis, the disease diagnosis that will ultimately help in selection of simillimum.

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