

ACTION OF HOMOEOPATHIC DRUGS ON HELMINTHIASIS- A STUDY*

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Summary

Intestinal helminthiasis, a common malady affecting the third world, calls for a greater attention by the medical personnel. Scores visit daily, a practising clinician, diagnosed as suffering from this ailment. The present study is a compilation of over 1042 cases/diagnosed as suffering from intestinal helminthiasis over a period of 8 years & deals with the epidemiology, clinico-pathological findings, miasmatic background & treatment modality, in these subjects.

Aims/Objectives of the Study

The project was mooted to reveal the efficacy of Homoeopathic Drugs in expulsion of Intestinal Helminths, and in turn to confirm the symptomatology, potency and time required for treatment with full laboratory support.

Introduction

Intestinal helminthiasis has been for long an important health problem in the countries of third world where safe, potable wholesome drinking water remains out of reach for a large percentage of population due to poor public health measures. Statistics are not wanting to show that disease rates are drastically cut down by an improvement in the quality of water supply. Helminthiasis falls into this category and its incidence may be brought down remarkably by an improvement in the environment & personal hygiene. Mass prevention can only be achieved by treatment-cum-sanitation, because treatment only reduces the worm load, leaving the person exposed to a risk of re-infestation.

To establish the efficacy of homoeopathic drugs in treating various intestinal helminthiasis with or without symptoms, a pilot study was undertaken at Clinical Research Unit, Jaipur under the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy.

Place & People

The unit is located in the Jaipur city of Rajasthan, India, which is an extremely arid zone with minimum rainfalls. Supply of safe, potable wholesome drinking water is scarce in this part of the country.

The patients attending the hospital comprise of urban population because of its location.

Material

The cases of helminthiasis, the raw base for the pilot project were selected from the patients attending the OPD on the basis of "Presence of ova during microscopic examination of stools" or "presence of adult worm in macroscopic examination of the same."

The work was started in 1982-83 with an object of evaluating a minimum of 1000 cases. The number gradually swelled over the years & 1042 cases infested with helminths were studied from an overall OPD attendance.

Fig. 1 will also convey the monthly modulation in attendance of OPD in respective years of working showing the efficacy of Homoeopathic mode of treatment.

To make it more intelligible & understandable a further break-up has been put forward by the Fig.3 in new & old patients distribution.

The follow-up of old cases is one of the real landmark providing the base for any sort of clinical research work. This also reveals the efficacy of the treatment instituted.

Depending upon the OPD attendance the collection of project cases too had seen the variation in various years as shown in Fig.4.

So far after working for 8 years, altogether 1042 had been collected over the yard stick mentioned above. This was constituted by cases belonging to two groups i.e.

- (a) Cases clinically manifested to be of helminthiasis & stool examination physically/microscopically found positive.
- (b) Cases coming for other complaints, found to have the helminths during the routine investigations.

This does not rule out in any way that rest of the patients attending the OPD do not harbour the helminths till a mass screening with strict care is not undertaken and microscopic examination of stool is not done by concentration method. Only

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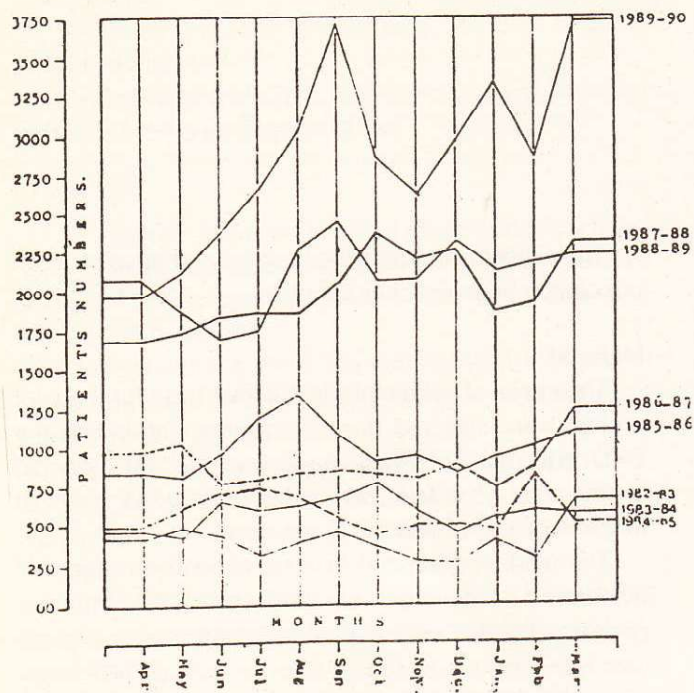


Fig. 1 - Showing attendance pattern.

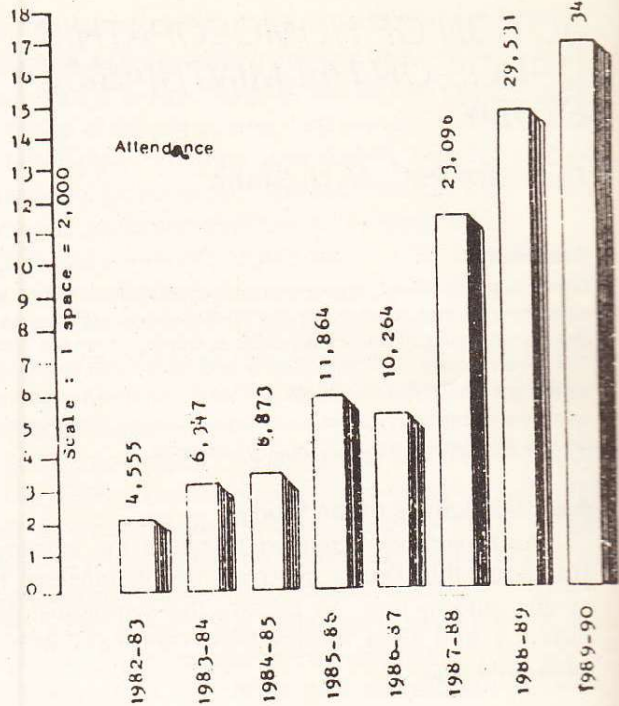


Fig. 2 - Showing collection in various years.

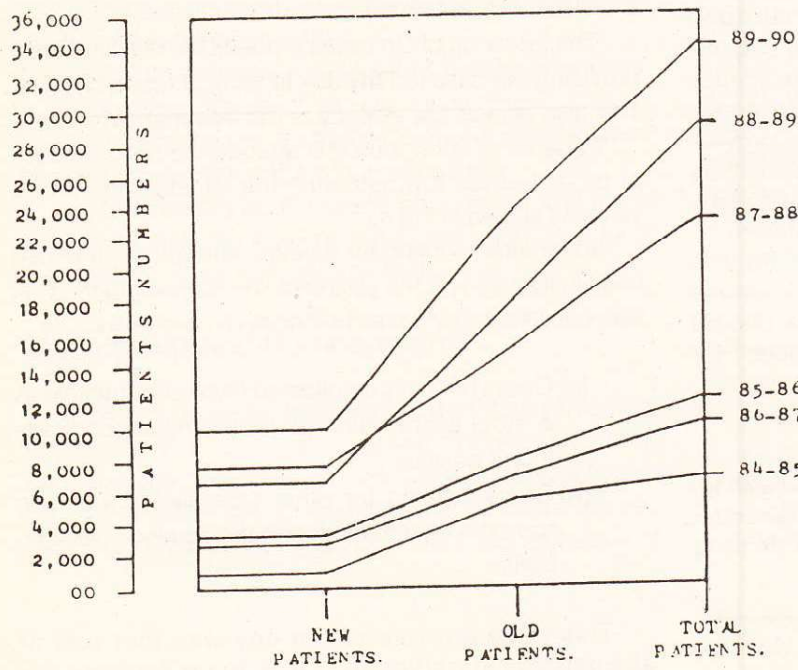


Fig. 3 - Showing the pattern of New, Old & Total patients.

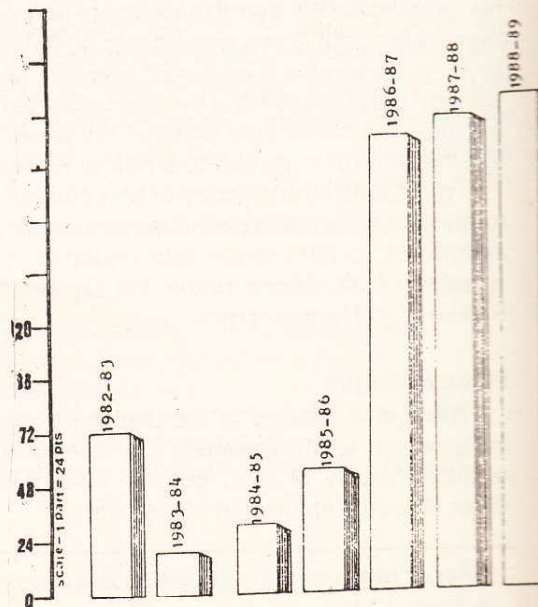


Fig. 4 - Shows the number of the Helminth cases in 8 years.

the variation may be in respect of worm load. However, according to the attendance in the General OPD & number of helminthic cases in the O.P.D. is as follows:

TABLE - I

Incidence of helminths in r/o O.P.D. attendance

YEAR	GENERAL OPD ATTENDANCE	HELMINTHIC CASES		
		TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
1982-83	4,555	72	49	23
1983-84	6,347	18	10	08
1984-85	6,873	26	16	10
1985-86	11,864	51	32	19
1986-87	10,264	199	133	66
1987-88	23,096	200	135	65
1988-89	24,531	217	140	77
1989-90	34,576	259	166	93

Sex Variation

Of the total 1042 cases studied there were 681 males & 361 females; the sex ratio being nearly 2:1. The lower incidence in females can be accounted for by lesser outdoor activity with comparatively lowered exposure to contaminated water supply.

Age Groups

The collected cases belonged to various age groups

(1)	upto 20 years	493	47.31%
(2)	between 20 to 40 years	420	40.30%
(3)	over 40 years	129	12.39%

Types Of Helminths Encountered

TABLE-II

	HELMINTHS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
(1)	Ascaris lumbricoides	754	466	288
(2)	Enterobius vermicularis	401	239	162
(3)	Taenia (hymenolepis nana)	67	46	21
(4)	Trichuria trichuris	07	03	04
(5)	Ankylostoma duodenale	02	01	01

Associated Infections

Entamoeba histolytica	401	224	177
Giardia intestinalis	91	52	39
Iodoamoeba	14	09	05

Infestation with Ascaris lumbricoides was found to be the highest followed by Enterobius vermicularis. But it is to be kept in view that symbiotic phenomena plays an important role in cases of intestinal infections i.e. between helminths & protozoa or among helminths itself.

Duration of Disease

The assessment of duration of disease was based on symptoms narrated by the patient. In other cases where detection was made during routine investigations for some other problem, an approximate period depending upon the patient's state of health was deduced. This work out revealed the fact that the cases harboured the worms for months together until an optimum level was reached to produce the clinical manifestations. Accordingly, it was found out that 75.71% of cases collected harboured the worms for over one year.

Miasmatic Study

This has been deduced by close scrutiny of individual cases in relation with the main complaints and associated complaints. For this special care was undertaken and comparison was made system-wise with Philip Speight's Chronic Miasms and J.H. Allen's narration of Chronic Miasms.

TABLE - III

MIASM	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
Psora	731	492	239
Sycosis	158	94	64
Tubercular	124	83	41
Mixed	21	07	14

Clinico-pathological Findings

The clinical manifestations were varied & are tabulated below

FINDINGS	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
01. Dyspepsia	699	483	216
02. Loeffler's Syndrome	106	57	49
(pyrexia cough, dyspnoea, haemoptysis)			
03. Steatorrhoea	47	37	10
04. Malnutrition & symptoms of night blindness.	321	170	151

05. Allergic manifestations	257	179	78
06. Epigastric pain & tenderness	126	81	45
07. Nausea & vomiting	83	44	39
08. Pruritis ani	280	183	97
09. Pruritis Vulvae & leucorrhoea	85	—	85
10. Mucous diarrhoea & blood-streaked stools.	293	203	90
11. Pain abdomen	390	260	130
12. Anaemia	451	279	172
13. Perverted appetite (PICA)	147	84	63
14. Constipation	247	159	88
15. Anorexia	608	403	205
16. Skin eruptions	291	202	89
17. Boring of nose	239	124	115
18. Grinding of teeth	172	109	63
19. Stool Examination. Microscopic/ Naked Eye.	- as given in types of helminths.		
20. Blood Examination.	- Hb% was less than 12 gm in - 451 cases & Eosonophilic count was above 4% in 259 cases. ESR above 20mm at the end of first hour was found in 179 cases.		
21. Urine Examination	- Urobilinogen was detected in 94 cases & oxalate crystals were found in 111cases.		

Drugs Used

The following drugs were used during the course of study. Out of the 6 drugs, two drugs i.e. Cina & Teucrium were deployed only in the last two years i.e. 1988-89 & 1989-90 only after their therapeutic efficacy was established unequivocally.

NAME OF DRUG	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
01. Chelone	441	290	151
02. Cuprum oxydatum	310	212	98
03. Embelia ribes	84	57	27
04. Cina	139	81	58
05. Teucrium	55	34	21
06. Thymol	13	07	06

Potencies Used

- (A) Chelone Q,6
(B) Cuprum oxydatum nigrun 3X, 200
(C) Embelia ribes Q, 6
(D) Cina Q, 30, 200, 1M
(E) Teucrium 6, 30, 200
(F) Thymol 6

Doses

Children Mother Tincture. 3 to 5 drops BD/TDS
Potency. 5 Glb. No 20 BD/TDS
Adult Mother Tincture, 5 to 10 drops BD/TDS
Potency. 5 to 8 Glb. No 20 BD/TDS

Duration Of Treatment

It was an assessment of fact that how many days it took us, to see the expulsion of the helminths in individual cases confirmed by three consecutive negative weekly stool examinations. Here too, the concentration method proved better.

TABLE-V

PERIOD	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
1 day to 1 week	193	111	82
1 week to 15 days	214	121	93
15 days to 1 month	278	197	81
1 month to 2 months	215	158	57
2 months to 3 months	89	62	27
3 months to 6 months	43	30	13
6 months to 1 Year	10	02	08

Results

It is to be seen in the light of the criteria fixed for the project under the protocol formulated during the mooting of the project, i.e. expulsion of helminths and weekly three consecutive negative stool specimens regarded as cure. Symptomatic relief with expulsion of worms was seen but stool examinations were still labelled as infested.

The results reveal that more than 80% of cases studied showed expulsion of worms with negative stool specimens over the prescribed period. In few cases the stools could not be made completely negative probably because of constant re-infestation. However, the results were encouraging.

TABLE - VI

	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE
01. Cured	830	536	294
02. Improved			
- Markedly	107	68	39
- Moderately	08	07	01
- Mildly	—	—	—
03. Not improved	—	—	—
04. Worse	—	—	—
05. Not reported	86	61	25
06. Dropped out	11	09	02

Conclusion

The work out over the project has unfolded various facts of interest pertaining to Homoeopathic therapeutics, epidemiology of Helminthiasis and its miasmatic background.

This has been noticed that the administration of homoeopathic drugs do have an important role in inactivating the helminths but the expulsion process gets enhanced manifold by the administration of purgatives later.

In the light of efficacy observed in expulsion of worms by homoeopathic medicines, a project under which an in-vitro study of the mechanism of action of drugs is in offing which would furnish further details.

Acknowledgement

The project study presented in this paper is the fruit of the intensive efforts put in by the Research team working in Clinical Research Unit, Jaipur, which is duly acknowledged. The acknowledgement is also due to Assistant Research Officer (H) Dr. B.S. Arya whose contribution may not be under estimated.

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It is our duty to remember at all times and anew that medicine is not only a science, but also the art of letting our own individuality interact with the individuality of the patient.

Albert Schweitzer
