

RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS, IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE - A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

A comparative study of the clinical status has been made among equal number of patients treated with modern system of medicine and with homoeopathic medicine since detection of the problem. Patients receiving multiple therapies are totally excluded from the study. Clinical condition based on significant symptomatology have been monitored regularly at certain intervals. Results has been critically analyzed and conclusion is drawn.

MATERIAL

A comparative assessment of the effectiveness and cost effectiveness in the treatment of Rheumatoid arthritis patients by Modern system of medicine and by Homoeopathic system of medicine has been made.

- Selection of the patients :
- Age Group - 40 - 50 yrs.
- Onset - Gradual (Symptoms developed for > 6 weeks)
- Sex - Predominantly female.

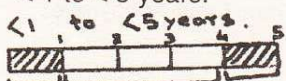
- Diagnosing criteria (Four or more) by

● Morning stiffness > 1 hour
● Arthritis of 3 or more joints
● Arthritis of hand & wrist joints
● Symmetrical arthritis

The above four criteria must be present for six weeks or more

● Subcutaneous nodules
● A (+ve) serum RA factor
● Typical radiological changes

American College of Rheumatology 1987 revision

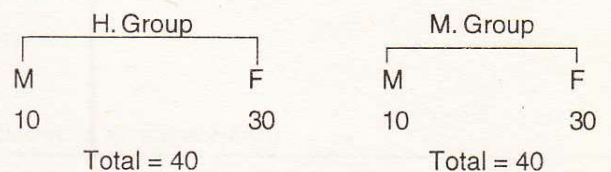
- Duration of illness < 1 to < 5 years.
- 

METHOD

2 groups are made

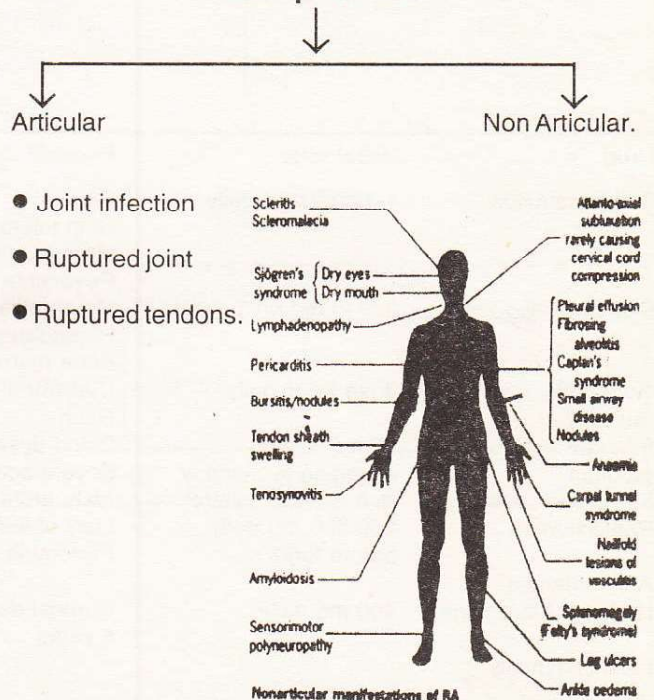
- i) M = Modern medicine group patients.
- ii) H = Homoeopathic medicine group patients.

No. of patients :



- Total period of Assessment - One Year.
- Interval - Monthly.

Complications



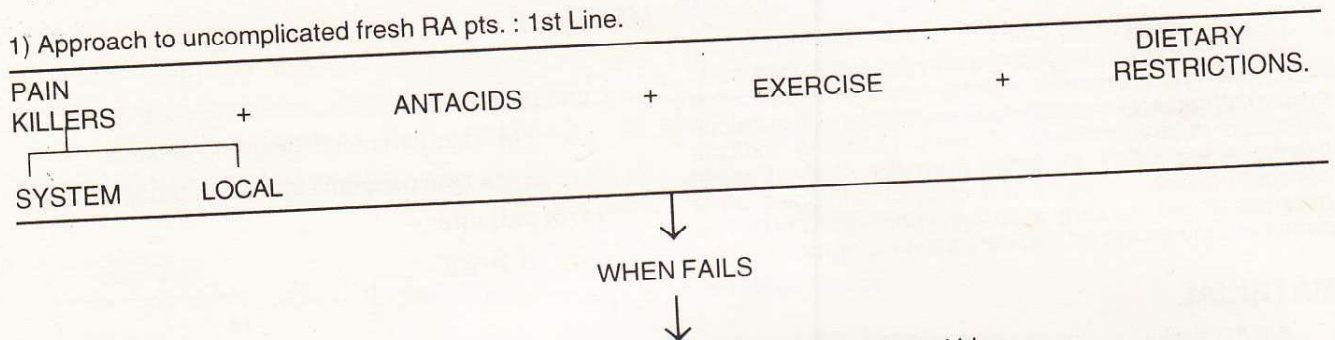
Relapse of the inflammatory features: [Arbitrary Gradation]

Grade II - Moderate relapse - relapse within a month
Grade III - Severe relapse - relapse within 24 hours

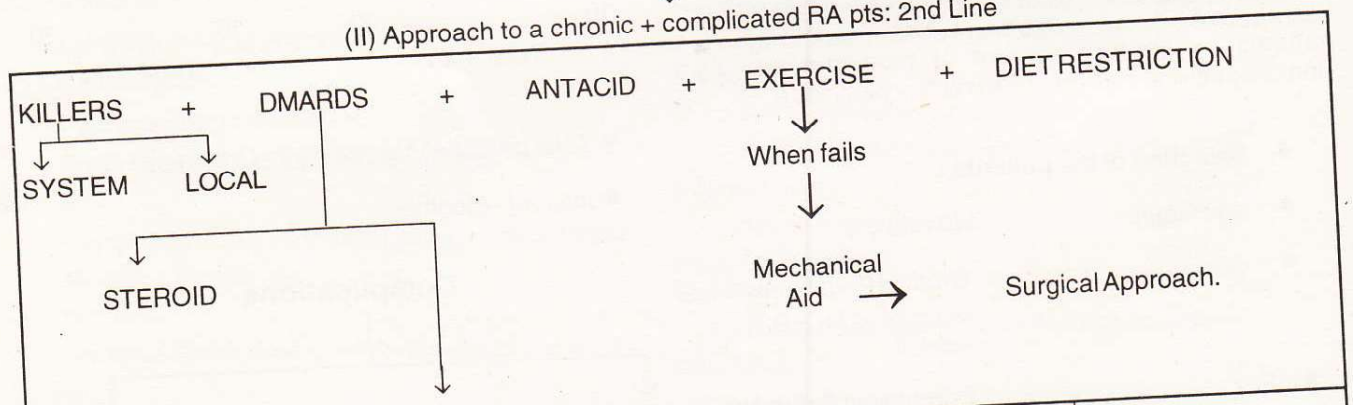
Grade I - Minor relapse - relapse within a month

Approach - in Modern Medicine

1) Approach to uncomplicated fresh RA pts. : 1st Line.



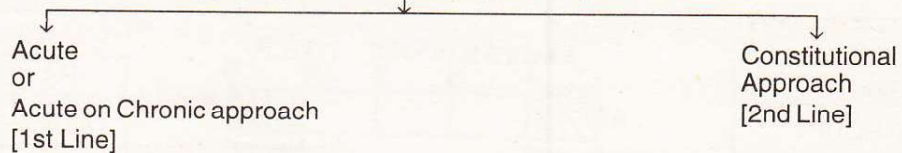
(II) Approach to a chronic + complicated RA pts: 2nd Line



Drug	Usual dose	Possible side effects	Treatment of complications of the disease.
Sulphasalazine	1-1.5 g twice daily	Rash GI intolerance Marrow suppression Reversible oligospermia	+
Methotrexate	2.5-15 mg once weekly	Mouth ulcers Hepatotoxicity Bone marrow suppression	
Gold oral (auranofin)	3 mg twice daily	Diarrhoea Rash Blood dyscrasias	Treatment of Complication ↓ Include Hospitalization
Intramuscular (sodium aurochiomalate) Penicillamine	50 mg weekly, changing to monthly with disease control 250-500 mg daily before food	Severe action in up to 5% rash, proteinuria, blood dyscrasia Loss of taste, Thrombocytopenia, Proteinuria, Rash	
Anti-malarials Hydroxychloroquine	400 mg daily	Corneal deposits, rarely retinopathy after 6 years	
Less commonly used drugs Asathioprine Cyclophosphamide Cyclosporin			

HOMOEOPATHIC APPROACH

Analyzing the pattern of prescriptions.



1st LINE APPROACH

Indication : Fresh case presenting with acute sometime Acuteness on Chronic patient.

Symptomatic Prescription + Dietary restrictions + Local Care/exercise.

Possible Remedies Used :

- Rhus tox.
- Ledum pal
- Formic acid
- Formica rufa
- Stellaria media
- Stillingia
- Urtica urens

Potency - (6-200) : Low Potency - Repeated doses. mainly

2nd LINE APPROACH

- Indication :
- When inspite of best selection - frequent relapse.
 - When well selected remedies fail to respond.
 - To obtain a permanent cure.
 - During intermission of a problem.

Possible Remedies:

- CALCAREA CARB
- CALCAREA PHOS
- BACILLINUM
- TUBERCULINUM
- MEDORRHINUM
- SYPHILINUM
- MERC. SOL
- SULPHUR
- PSORINUM
- SILICEA



POTENCY : > 200 - <10 M\m (mostly)		
FREQUENCY: Every 15 days Interval	Monthly	Once in every months
Doses : (4-8)		

RESULTS & ANALYSIS

1st Line Approach

40 Patients - all of them treated - in this line

<p>16, RA + ve < 1yr : NEWER GROUP (FRESHER GROUP) M = 6, F = 10</p>	<p>ASSESSMENT YEAR. 1 2 3 4 5</p>	<p>(RA + ve) 4 & < 5 yrs., 24 OLDER-FOLLOW-UP GROUP M = 4, F = 20</p>
<p>Statement After One year</p> <p>M = 4 (67%) F = 8 (80%)</p> <p>Primarily responded well for 8-11 months then onward unsatisfactory resolution of symptoms.</p>	<p>Statement + Follow-Up Records (F/U)</p> <p>M = 4 (100%) F = 14 (70%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compelled to accept 2nd Line within < 11 months. - Among the previous 24 pts only F = 6 (30%) under 1st Line on 5th year of F/U. 	
<p>Assessment of the status of Pain : (Newer) Complaint Started From Grade-I Level After One year</p> <p>[M=4 (67%) F = 8 (80%)] in Grade III</p>	<p>(Older /F/U - Group) Initially in all 24 pts started from Gr. -I Statement + F/U Records Only F = 6 (30%) in Gr-I on 5th yr.</p>	
<p>Assessment of the Mental Status : (Newer) Initially in all -Grade-I After One year</p> <p>[M = 2 (33%) F = 4 (40%)] progressed to Grade II</p>	<p>(Older/F/U - Group) Initially in all Grade I On 5th Year</p> <p>only F = 5 (25%) Gr-I</p>	
<p>Progression of the Lesion (Newer) Initially in all - lesion started from Grade-I After One Year</p> <p>M = 2 (33%) F = 2 (20%) - Gr-II M = 1 (17%) F = 3 (30%) - Gr-Ia</p>	<p>(Older/F/U - Group) Initially in all patients started from Gr-I From statement + follow up records of physical examination (After one year) it showed [M = 2 (50%) F = 11 (50%)] Progression of the lesion</p>	
<p>Assessment of Complications (Newer) Initially c/o - relapse- Grade-I Within 1 year</p> <p>[M = 4 (67%) F = 8 (80%) Gr-II [M = 3 (50%) F = 4 (40%)] GI complications F = 2 requires hospitalization</p>	<p>(Follow - up) Initially relapse - Grade - I Statement + F/U records just within one year showed [M = 1 (25%) F = 7 (35%)] progression to Grade-II and on 5 th year [M = 3 (75%) F = 15 (75%)] progression to Grade-III</p>	
<p>Estimated Cost : Analgesic = 4 Rs + Antacid = 4-5 Rs + Physio therapy = 50 Rs Per day</p>	<p>Total 60 Rs (Approx)</p>	

2nd Line Approach

Possible ● Where 1st Line fails to produce optimal results.

indications: ● Encountering complications of the disease

● Encountering side effects of the drugs as well

DMARDS+ Pain killers + Antacids + Physiotherapy + Dietary if fails then Mechanical Aid leading to Surgery.

Total pts of F/U group = 24 [M = 4 + F = 20] - Now [M = 4 (100%) F = 14 (70%) T = 18 (75%)] under 2nd Line treatment- for last 3 years.

Assessment of the status of pain :

1) [M = 4 (100%) F = 10 (71%)] = 14 (78%) responded well in first 18 months.

2) [M = 4 (100%) F = 4 (29%)] = showed no response.

Initially in first 18 months after institution of 2nd Line - pain in Gr-I then onwards to Gr-II - III in above 14 pts.

Assessment of the mental status :

[M = 4 (100%) F = 12 (86%)] In spite of remission of pain for first 18 months - it prevailed at Grade II and III

Progression of the Lesion

Among 18 F/U patients

M = 4 F = 14

Progression in

M = 2 (30) F = 9 (64%)

Total = 11 (61%)

Type of Progression

M = 1 Gr-I Span of 3 yrs. Gr Ia

M = 1 Gr-I Span of 3 yrs. Gr IIa

F = 3 (1) Gr-I Span of 3 yrs. Gr Ia

(2) Gr-I Span of 3 yrs. Gr II

F = 5 (2) Gr-Ia Span of 3 yrs. Gr Ia

(1) Gr-II Span of 3 yrs. Gr IIa

(2) Gr-II Span of 3 yrs. Gr IIa

F = 1 (1) Gr-IIa Span of 3 yrs. Gr IIa

Complications :

[M = 4 (100%)

F = 14 (100%)] = Complications

F = 4 (29%) with upper GI - bleeding

leading to Hospitalization.

F = 5 (36%) eye + other Complications.

Cost:

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|----------|
| 1) Sulphasalazine - | 500 mg | |
| | 1- 1.5g/q | 12 Rs/Q |
| 2) Methotrexate - | 2.5 mg | 4 Rs/Q |
| | (2.5 - 15 mg) | |
| + Physiotherapy | | - 50 Rs. |

Homoeopathic Group

Total - 40 pts [M = 10 F = 30] under (H) Group - treated in 1st Line
 [M = 06 F = 08] - RA + ve for < 1 yr [**Newer Group**]
 [M = 04 F = 22] - RA + ve for > 4 yr < 5 yr [**Older Group**]

Newer Group	Older (F/U) Group
<p>[M = 6 F = 8] = 14</p> <p>After one year Statement</p> <p>[M = 4 (67%) F = 5 (63%) Contrast M = 67% F = 80%</p> <p>-Satisfactory improvement -Some even having no diet restriction -Some even having no regular exercise -Necessity of taking remedies -Initially - (4-8) doses /week for (2-4) months, then fortnightly - (4 - 8) doses/week for (4 - 6) months and monthly - (4 - 8) doses/week and onward</p>	<p>[M = 04 F = 22] = 26</p> <p>After one Year Statement +F/U-Document</p> <p>[M = 3 (75%) F = 15 (68%)]</p> <p>→ Same as Newer Group Contrast : [M= 100% F = 70%] going to 2nd Line</p>
<p>Pain Status : (Newer Group)</p> <p>- c/o - in all started from - Grade I</p> <p>After one year</p> <p>[M = 4 (67%) F = 5 (63%) - in Gr-I</p> <p>Contrast : M = 67% F = 80% Gr III</p>	<p>(Older Group)</p> <p>→ Same</p> <p>→ Same - from documents</p> <p>[M = 2 (50%) F = 15 (68%)] in Gr. I (Still on 5th year)</p> <p>Contrast : Only F = 30% on 5th yr.</p>
<p>Mental Status</p> <p>c/o - Started - from Gr-I</p> <p>After one Year</p> <p>[M = 5 (83%) F = 7 (88%)] in Gr-I</p> <p>[M = 1 (17%) F = 1 (13%)] - in Gr-II</p> <p>Contrast M = (33%) F = 40% - in Gr II</p>	<p>(Older group)</p> <p>→ Same</p> <p>→ Same - (From Document)</p> <p>[M = 2 (50%) F = 12 (55%)] in Gr I</p> <p>[M = 1 (25%) F = 10 (45%)] in Gr II</p> <p>Also same on 5th year</p> <p>Contrast F = 25% - in Gr-I</p>
<p>Progression of the Lesion (Newer Group)</p> <p>[M = 6 F = 8] - initially Gr-I</p> <p>After one Year</p> <p>[M = 4 (67%) F = 5 (63%)] - in Gr-I</p> <p>Contrast : M = 50% F = 50% → Progression to Deformity - in 25%</p>	<p>(Older Group)</p> <p>[M = 4 F = 22] - initially Gr I</p> <p>After one Year</p> <p>[M = 2 (50%) F = 12 (55%)] still in Gr-I</p> <p>After 5th year</p> <p>[M = 2 (50%) F = 12 (55%)] still in Gr I</p> <p>Contrast : M = 50% F = 55% Progression with or without deformity</p>

Complications (Newer Group)

After one Year



- No side - effects of drugs
- Only F = 2 (25%) - Disease related complications
- Relapse - still on Gr - I [M = 4 (67%) F = 5 (68%)

All started from Gr-I

Contrast : M = 67% and F = 80% progressed to Gr II

M = 50% F = 40%

- GI complications

F = 20% needed Hospitalization

(Older Group)

After one Year - (from Document)



- No remedy related side-effects
- Only F = 5 (23%) - disease related complications

Contrast : M = 75% F = 75%

Gr-II complications + others

2nd Line

From Older Group = Total = 26 [M = 4 F = 22]



After one Year



Compelled to Take - 2nd Line



[M = 2 (50%) F = 7 (32%)] - on 2nd Line

Contrast : After 1st year in allopathic system [M = 4, F = 8] 12 pts (75%) among 16 compelled to receive 2nd Line within one year of starting 1st Line Therapy.

Assessment of Pain

[Older Group M = 4, F = 22]

[M = 2 F = 7] - pain started from Gr-II-III
After (6-10) months of treatment



[M = 1 (50%) F = 3 (43%)] - Gr I-II and continuing

Contrast : Total = 8% patients showed improvement upto - Gr-I for first 18 months then gradually moving to Gr II and III

Mental Status

[M = 2 F = 7] - Started from Gr-II-III



After 6 months



[M = 1 (50%) F = 3] - improved to Grade I-II

Contrast: M = 100% F = 86% - inspite of remission of pain, mental status worsens

Progression of the Lesion

M = 1	started from	Gr I	Span of 5 years	Gr IIa	Deformity only in 2 pts.
M = 1	started from	Gr I	Span of 5 years	Gr II	
M = 6	started from	Gr I	Span of 5 years	Gr I	Progression only in 5 pts.
M = 1	started from	Gr I	Span of 5 years	Gr IIa	

Contrast - Total = 24 pt of F/U initially - 18 pts. in 2nd Line for last 3 yrs.

(H) Total = 26 pt of F/U initially - 9 pts. in 2nd Line for last 3 yrs.

Among - 18 patients - 61% - progression, Among 9 patients - 56% - Progression

Complications

M = 2 F = 7

No GI disturbance only in F = 3 - Disease related complications

Contrast : 100% GI → 29% - Hospitalization, 36% - other complications

CONCLUSION

- Supremacy of Homoeopathy on modern system of medicine
- Microscopical suppression is not the answer of treating RA
- Side Effects worsen the quality of life
- Poor patient compliance
- Mental status
- Cost effectiveness
- A better quality option