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REVIEW ARTICLE

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ROLE OF HOMOEOPATHY IN RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS

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ABSTRACT

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic, systemic autoimmune disorder characterized by inflammation of synovial joints, pain, stiffness, swelling, and progressive joint destruction. It commonly affects small joints symmetrically and may lead to deformity and disability if untreated. Conventional treatment includes NSAIDs, corticosteroids, DMARDs, and biologics. Homoeopathy aims to provide individualized treatment by considering the totality of symptoms and improving the patient's overall health. This article discusses the role of homoeopathy in the management of rheumatoid arthritis, including constitutional remedies, symptom-based prescribing, and supportive care.

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INTRODUCTION

Rheumatoid Arthritis is a chronic inflammatory disease affecting approximately 0.5–1% of the world population. It occurs more commonly in females and usually begins between 30–50 years of age. The disease primarily targets synovial joints, causing pain, swelling, morning stiffness, and restricted movements. RA is considered an autoimmune condition in which the immune system attacks healthy joint tissues. Over time, it may involve cartilage, bones, tendons, and extra-articular organs such as lungs, heart, eyes, and skin. Homoeopathy approaches RA holistically by treating the patient as a whole rather than focusing only on the diseased joints.

Etiology: The exact cause of RA is unknown, but several factors contribute to its development:

Genetic predisposition

- Autoimmune dysfunction
- Hormonal influence
- Emotional stress
- Infections
- Environmental factors
- Smoking and unhealthy lifestyle

Clinical Features: Common symptoms of RA include:

- Pain and swelling in joints

- Morning stiffness lasting more than 30 minutes
- Symmetrical involvement of joints
- Fatigue and weakness
- Restricted joint movement
- Joint deformities in chronic cases
- Rheumatoid nodules
- Loss of appetite and weight loss

Commonly affected joints:

- Wrist
- Fingers
- Knees
- Ankles
- Elbows

Diagnosis: Diagnosis is based on:

- Clinical examination
- Rheumatoid factor (RF)
- Anti-CCP antibodies
- ESR and CRP levels
- X-ray and MRI findings

General Management

- Lifestyle and Supportive Measures
- Regular mild exercise

- Physiotherapy
- Balanced nutritious diet
- Adequate rest
- Stress management
- Avoidance of smoking and alcohol

Role of Homoeopathy in Rheumatoid Arthritis

Homoeopathy plays a supportive and complementary role in the management of RA. It aims to:

- Reduce pain and inflammation
- Improve joint mobility
- Decrease stiffness
- Enhance quality of life
- Improve immunity and general health
- Slow disease progression in some patients
- Reduce dependency on painkillers in selected cases under medical supervision

Homoeopathic treatment is individualized according to

- Constitution
- Mental and emotional state
- Modalities
- Thermal reaction
- Associated symptoms

Important Homoeopathic Remedies

• **Rhus Toxicodendron**

Severe stiffness on first movement
Better by continued motion
Worse in cold and damp weather
Restlessness

• **Bryonia Alba**

Joint pain aggravated by slightest movement
Better by complete rest
Swollen hot joints
Irrability and dryness

• **Ledum Palustre**

Ascending rheumatism
Cold yet relieved by cold applications
Small joint involvement

• **Causticum**

Deforming arthritis
Contractures and stiffness
Better in damp weather

• **Actaea Spicata**

Small joint arthritis
Wrist and finger swelling
Pain on slightest exertion

• **Pulsatilla**

Wandering joint pains
Worse from heat
Mild emotional temperament

• **Calcarea Carbonica**

Chronic arthritis in obese, chilly patients
Profuse perspiration
Weakness and fatigue

• **Arnica Montana**

Sore bruised sensation
Muscular tenderness

Useful in painful flare-ups

Advantages of Homoeopathy

- Individualized holistic treatment
- Minimal side effects when properly prescribed
- Improves general well-being
- May help reduce frequency of flare-ups
- Suitable for long-term management

Limitations

- Severe deformities may not be reversible
- Advanced RA requires multidisciplinary care
- Homoeopathy should not replace emergency medical treatment
- Regular monitoring is necessary

CONCLUSION

Homoeopathy offers a holistic and individualized approach in the management of rheumatoid arthritis. It may help relieve pain, stiffness, and improve quality of life when used alongside proper medical care and lifestyle modifications. Early diagnosis, regular follow-up, physiotherapy, and constitutional homoeopathic treatment together can contribute to better disease management and patient comfort.

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