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An Open-Label Prospective Study to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Homoeopathic Medicines in the Treatment of Common Flu in Paediatric Age Group (2–12 Years)

Authors

Rekha PG Scholar Department of Pediatrics

Sri Ganganagar Homoeopathic Medical College, Hospital and Research Institute, Tantia University
Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan

Dr. Amrit Pal Singh Associate Professor and Guide Department of Pediatrics

Sri Ganganagar Homoeopathic Medical College, Hospital and Research Institute, Tantia University
Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Background: Influenza (common flu) is a highly contagious viral respiratory illness with increased morbidity in the pediatric age group. Children play a significant role in community transmission. Conventional antiviral therapy is often associated with adverse effects, creating the need for safer therapeutic alternatives.

Aim: To evaluate the effectiveness of individualized homoeopathic medicines in the treatment of common flu in children aged 2–12 years.

Materials and Methods: An open-label prospective clinical study was conducted on 60 clinically diagnosed paediatric cases of common flu. Cases were assessed before and after treatment using the Flu/Influenza-like Illness Symptom Assessment Questionnaire. Statistical analysis was performed using the paired t-test.

Results: Post-treatment assessment showed a statistically significant reduction in symptom scores ($t = 10.60$, $p < 0.001$). Allium cepa was the most frequently prescribed medicine, followed by Arsenicum album, Sabadilla, Belladonna and Aconite.

Conclusion: Individualized homoeopathic treatment was found to be effective in the management of common flu in the paediatric age group.

Keywords: Common flu, Influenza, Homoeopathy, Pediatrics, Sneezing, Open-label study

Introduction

Influenza, commonly known as common flu, is an acute viral respiratory infection affecting people of all age groups, with children being particularly vulnerable. The paediatric population acts as a major reservoir for transmission due to prolonged viral shedding and close contact in schools and households. Seasonal influenza

leads to significant school absenteeism and healthcare burden.Conventional antiviral therapy, though effective, is associated with side effects such as nausea, vomiting and neuropsychiatric manifestations in children. Homoeopathy emphasizes individualized treatment based on the totality of symptoms and aims to enhance the body's immune response. Considering the need for a safer and holistic therapeutic option, this study was undertaken to assess the effectiveness of homoeopathic medicines in paediatric common flu.

Aim and Objectives

Aim

To evaluate the effectiveness of homoeopathic medicines in the treatment of common flu in children aged 2–12 years.

Objectives

- To analyse the various trigger factors associated with common flu in children.
- To identify the commonly indicated homoeopathic medicines in the treatment of common flu.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

Open-label prospective clinical study.

Sample Size

60 paediatric cases.

Study Setting

Sri Ganganagar Homoeopathic Medical College, Hospital and Research Institute, Sri Ganganagar, Rajasthan.

Study Duration

One year.

Inclusion Criteria

- Children aged 2–12 years diagnosed with common flu.
- Informed consent obtained from parents/guardians.

Exclusion Criteria

- Children with advanced pathological conditions.
- Patients with irregular follow-up or refusal of consent.

Assessment Criteria

Assessment was done using the Flu/Influenza-like Illness Symptom Assessment Questionnaire before and after treatment.

Treatment Plan

Medicines were prescribed based on individual case-taking, repertorization and Materia Medica consultation. Potency and repetition were decided as per homoeopathic principles.

Statistical Analysis

Paired t-test was used to compare pre- and post-treatment symptom scores. A p-value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant. For assessing the statistical improvement Flu/Influenza like illness Symptom Assessment Questionnaire was used. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included calculation of frequency and percentage for

demographic variables. For inferential statistics Paired t-test was used to compare pre and post treatment scores with p-value < 0.001 was considered at 5% level of significant.

Calculated t-value = 10.60
Tabulated t-value = 2.000
p-value < 0.001
Level of Significance = 5%

Result: Null Hypothesis Rejected

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Cases According to Age Group

Age Group (years)	Number of Cases	Percentage (%)
2–4	12	20.00
5–7	26	43.33
8–10	14	23.33
11–12	8	13.33
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 2: Distribution of Cases According to Gender

Gender	Number of Cases	Percentage (%)
Male	38	63.33
Female	22	36.66
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 3: Distribution of Cases According to Habitat

Habitat	Number of Cases	Percentage (%)
Urban	48	80.00
Rural	12	20.00
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 4: Distribution of Cases According to Presenting Symptoms

Symptom	Number of Cases	Percentage (%)
Running nose	30	50.00
Fever	24	40.00
Sneezing	23	38.33
Sore throat	22	36.66
Cough	18	30.00

Table 5: Frequency of Prescribed Homoeopathic Medicines

Medicine Name	Number of Prescriptions	Percentage (%)
Allium cepa	13	21.66
Arsenicum album	11	18.33
Sabadilla	9	15.00
Belladonna	8	13.33
Aconite	7	11.66

Medicine Name	Number of Prescriptions	Percentage (%)
Bryonia	6	10.00
Gelsemium	6	10.00
Total	**60**	**100**

Table 6: Statistical Analysis of Pre- and Post-Treatment Symptom Scores

Parameter	Value
Calculated t-value	10.60
p-value	< 0.001

Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate a significant reduction in symptom severity following individualized homoeopathic treatment. The frequent indication of Allium cepa aligns with its classical indications for coryza and nasal discharge. In this study the most of patients presented with common clinical symptoms observed among patients included running nose, fever, sneezing, sore throat, cough, headache, and body ache. Various homoeopathic medicines were prescribed based on symptom similarity, among which Allium cepa was most frequently prescribed, followed by Arsenicum album, Sabadilla, Belladonna, and Aconite.The results support the role of homoeopathy as a complementary therapeutic option in managing paediatric influenza with minimal adverse effects.

Conclusion

The study concludes that homoeopathic medicines are effective in the treatment of common flu in children aged 2–12 years. Individualized homoeopathic intervention may serve as a safe and beneficial therapeutic approach in paediatric influenza.

Future Scope

Further studies with larger sample size, longer duration and multicentric participation are recommended to strengthen clinical evidence.

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