

Homoeopathy in Renal Stones

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Abstract

Review Article

One of the inherent complaints in the modern times is the issues in kidneys. One of the most common complaints is of kidney stones. Along with gall stones, the duo can be coined as stone problems. The organ duo affected by stones can be mainly the kidney & the gall bladder. The article discusses the stone issues and the related physiology as well as pathology that goes inside the body during an episode of stones in the excretory system. Along with the diagnosis & management approaches, the article elicits the role of Homoeopathy through a suggested treatment protocol. Through the inherent properties of Homoeopathy such as cost effectiveness, clinical effectiveness & zero side effects, the article proposes large scale application of homoeopathy at all levels of kidney stone issues.

Keywords: Renal, Homoeopathy, Calcium Oxalate, Uric Acid, Struvite, Cystine, Materia Medica.

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INTRODUCTION

Living with recurring episodes of excruciating pain & requiring surgery every 5 to 10 years are incidents that people with kidney stones go through. Such people go through chronic inflammations in the body that can lead to life threatening infections & Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) [5-8].

Stones or calculi develop in the kidneys when substances like calcium oxalate, uric acid, struvite crystallize due to high concentration in urine. Such crystals can then aggregate to form stones of various sizes thus causing blockages & blockage in the excretory system [5-8].

Physiology & Pathology

Various factors such as diet, genetics and certain medical conditions usually contribute to the formation of crystals. The kidney stones can be classified based on their chemical composition. Each type of stone has its unique characteristics & may require different therapeutic approaches [5-8].

Epidemiology

Globally, the prevalence of kidney stones is 12%. In India also, kidney stones affect about 12% of the population with higher rates in certain regions. Northern region has 15% prevalence. Around 1% of emergency cases constitute about cases of renal stone & its related complications [1-4].

The Stone types

There are four types of kidney stones. These are Calcium Oxalate stones, Uric Acid stones, Struvite stones & Cystine stones [5-8].

Prevention

For calcium oxalate stones, avoid foods that are high in oxalate such as spinach, rhubarb, nuts, wheat bran. Dairy foods that are rich in calcium should be consumed as these foods bind to oxalate in the digestive tract & reduce its absorption. Limiting salt and animal protein intake also prevents calcium oxalate stone formation [5-8].

For purine stones, limit purine rich foods such as organ meat, anchovies, sardines as these foods increase uric acid levels in the urine. Drinking plenty of fluids that help flush out uric acid is another activity. Further alkalinizing agents such as potassium citrate also help as these increase the urine pH (Potential Hydrogen) thus preventing uric acid stone formation [5-8].

For struvite stones, the main strategy is to avoid recurrent Urinary Tract Infections (UTI). In order to maintain urine volume, adequate fluid intake & treatment of UTI is the key as these stones are formed due to recurrent UTI [5-8].

For cystine stones, reducing cystine excretion in urine is the key. These stones are rare & often hereditary. Treatment should address towards reduction of cystine in urine. Adequate fluid intake & a low sodium diet are other steps to reduce cystine levels [5-8].

Role of supplements & diet

The supplement 'potassium citrate' prevents formation of calcium oxalate & uric acid stones as this supplement reduces the acidity of urine [5-8].

Magnesium prevents calcium oxalate stones by binding to oxalate in digestive tract thus preventing its absorption [5-8].

Vitamin B6 reduces the risk of oxalate stones by decreasing the production of oxalate in the body [5-8].

Adequate hydration helps prevent crystallization of stone forming substances in the urine. Reduce salt intake & increase fiber intake to help prevent stone formation by reducing concentration of stone forming substances in the urine [5-8].

Diagnosis

X-Ray of Kidney Ureter Bladder (KUB), Ultra Sono Graphy (USG) of the excretory system helps to locate the stone. Culture & Sensitivity (C&S) of urine should be done to treat UTI [5-8].

After a stone is removed, it is sent for analysis to determine its composition. Thereafter, appropriate dietary & supplements are to be prescribed as per the composition of the stone as mentioned above should be done [5-8].

Treatment

The treatment depends on the location & size of the stone. Small stones may pass on their own with increased fluid intake while larger stones require medical intervention. Surgical removal is needed in case of large stones as these stones cannot pass naturally & are causing severe symptoms. Quick, precise, minimal pain, faster recovery times, lower risk of complications with improved cosmetic outcomes are the beneficial qualities of the modern methods [5-8].

Some of the methods are Laser Lithotripsy, Shock Wave Lithotripsy, Percutaneous Nephrolithotomy, Endoscopic Retrograde Cholangio-Pancreatography [5-8].

Homoeopathic Approach

Homoeopathy of the ministry of AYUSH has effective & specific cure for kidney stone cases. The treatment does not allow the new stones to form thereby preventing recurrence, the process that has been mentioned above. One of the issues with the kidney stones cases is that it is individualized. This is where Homoeopathy can play an active role as it will nullify the chances of re-attack in each kidney stone case [19, 21].

The treatment protocol is described according to the symptoms & manifestations mentioned in the previous sections. This treatment protocol becomes the need of the hour in view of the metabolic issues that lingers on in kidney stone cases because of COVID 19. The protocol adheres to all the qualities of Essential Medicines as per the NLEM & the NLEAM [19-22].

As it is a metabolic & inflammatory issue, the drugs for the cases are 'Prednisone', 'Cortisone', 'Acetanilidum', 'Septicimin', 'Sulphur Hydrogenisatum', 'Staphylococin', 'Streptococin', 'Curcuma Longa'.

Among mother tinctures, 'Bryophyllum' & 'Coelus Aromaticus' can be prescribed [9-17].

For ureteric stones & stone pains, drugs like 'Hydrangea', 'Ocimum Can', can be prescribed both in mother tinctures & potencies [9-17].

Some cases suffer from nausea & vomiting. For nausea 'Cascarilla' & for & vomiting, drugs like 'Amygdalus Persica', 'Symphoricarpus Racemosa' & 'Acetic Acid' can be given in mother tinctures & 'Cerium Metallicum', 'Tabacum' can be prescribed in potencies [9-17].

For bladder stones & related pains, drugs like 'Causticum', 'Squilla', 'Xanthium Spinosum' & 'Pulsatilla' in mother tinctures can be given [9-17].

For kidney stones & pain in the left kidney, drugs like 'Berberis Vulgaris', 'Tabacum', 'Ipomea' & 'Thuja' can be prescribed [9-17].

For kidney stones & pain in the right kidney, drugs like 'Lycopodium', 'Medorrhinum', 'Sarsaparilla', 'Mag Phos' can be prescribed [9-17].

For either side kidneys, drugs like 'Cantharis', 'Anthracinum' & 'Buchu' can be prescribed [9-17].

To ensure that oxalates, uric acid, cystines & struvites go down, drugs like 'Acid Nitro Muriatic' & 'Oxalic Acid' for oxalate stones, For uric acid stones. 'Colchicine', 'Colchicum', 'Uric Acid', 'Urtica Urens', 'Thlapsi Bursa Pastoris', ' can be prescribed. For cystine stones, drugs like 'Echinacea' & 'Azadirachta Indica' can be prescribed in mother tinctures. For struvite stones, anti sycotics like 'Thuja', 'Toxoplasmin', 'Sycotico' & 'Medorrhinum' can be prescribed as this miasm reduces the recurrence of UTIs [9-17].

As the process involves metabolic & digestive issues, drugs like 'Abies Can', 'Abies Nigra', 'Nux Vomica', 'Colococynth', 'Clerodendron Infortunatum', 'Mutha' can be prescribed. In Mother Tinctures, 'Embelica Officinalis', 'Terminalia Batterica' & 'Terminalia Chebula' can be prescribed [9-17].

In case of altered kidney that is confirmed through KFT, drugs like 'Renine', 'Adrelanine', 'Solidago', 'Zingiber' & 'Boerrhavia Diffusa' can be prescribed [9-17].

Among bowel nosodes, 'Coccal Co' can be prescribed as it will reduce infection. 'Morgan Co' can be prescribed to reduce the acute congestion in the body [22].

Among Bach Flower Remedies, 'Mimulus' & 'Rescue Remedy' can be given to reduce fear of kidney stones [18].

It is to be noted that this is an 'Acute Miasm' in emergency cases where the total intervention period is only one day. Along with rehydration management at home, all these set of drugs have to be considered. The homoeopath has to decide the preferred drug from each category. Here, the 'Similimum' or the single remedy approaches will not work. Medicines have to be given as per the symptoms [9-17].

We do not know the immunity level of each individual. In order to ensure that the body produces enough immune globulins/antibodies to fight the kidney stone related inflammation, all the members of the Homoeopathic fraternity needs to adhere to the treatment protocol.

CONCLUSION

As all drugs in homoeopathy have a group of mental as well as physical symptoms, Homoeopathy is and will be effective against all kidney stone cases in general as it takes care of not only the mental/psychological issues but also the internal inflammation as well. However, it should be also seen that along with constitutional/deep acting/polychrest Homoeopathic medicines, specific medicines that cover all aspects of kidney health are also required to deal with the cases.

It should be ensured that nutrition, counseling, rehydration and all psychic health modalities like life style modification, diet and stress reduction are adhered in each case. In fact, the detailed Materia Medica of Homoeopathy has drugs for each of the phenomenon or complications that occur in the body during acute exacerbation of kidney stone case. Hence, as a part of treatment for kidney health, the supportive therapy like rehydration & dietary control is to be prioritized in each case.

To get optimal results, the Homoeopathic fraternity should be ready to cover the kidney stone cases among masses as there is no other therapeutic system that can cover the masses effectively both therapeutically & economically.

Declaration of the lead author

Prof. Shankar Das, Pro Vice Chancellor, TISS, Mumbai, a co-author of the current article was the Ph.D. guide of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Prof. D.P. Singh was the teacher of the lead author at TISS, Mumbai during 1995-1997. The lead author also certifies that he has expressed his personal opinion based upon his public health and clinical experiences. The treatment approach or the medicines suggested are only suggestive in nature.

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