



Homoeopathic Management of Anal Fistula

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ABSTRACT

An anal fistula is a tract or canal with 2 openings, one on the skin of the anal region & the other internal opening inside the anal canal. It is prone to recurrent infections due to the fecal matter entering the tract through the internal opening. Hence there are recurrent episodes of pain & pus discharge through the external opening. It forms either due to the pus not being completely removed during the surgery for anal abscess or an anal abscess bursting by itself. A burst abscess rarely heals & fistula is the usual consequence. Surgery is often advised for a fistula but the rate of recurrence is quite high. If there is significant amount of pus giving rise to severe pain & fever surgery is necessary but otherwise homeopathy can cure it permanently.

Homeopathy can help avoid fistula formation, when anal abscess is properly treated with Homeopathic medicines. Treatment for fistula should be started at the earliest, to heal it before gets granulations in the tract so that it can heal completely without giving any residual gaps or chances of recurrences.

Keywords: Anal Fistula, Anal abscess, Homeopathy and Homoeopathic Materia Medica

Introduction

Homeopathy usually cures fistula by controlling infection and helping the wound to heal. It aids natural cure. Patients need patience while getting treated for fistula since the fistula opening looks like it has healed but opens suddenly on strain or with a new anal abscess. Since faecal matter is full of microorganisms, no one can avoid getting infection unless they have gained resistance to infection. Homeopathy can provide this. Also, for complete healing, fistula should get healed or closed from within first. Otherwise, the outer opening can reopen anytime or open a new tract to a new place.

Homeopathy can abort the tendency to abscess formation and suppuration by increasing resistance. So it can thus avoid the hindrances to cure by helping the healing process to continue naturally without interference. Also, to heal the fistula, first of all, the flow of fluid must get stopped since the draining fluid itself acts as a layer of separation to resist healing. For that, the tendency to fluid collection and suppuration must be stopped. Homeopathy provides this without any surgical measure. If the flow gets stopped, the pathway dries up naturally and shrinks to get close approximation for better healing.

The advent of Homeopathy and its holistic concept opened a new era in the world of medicine. The holistic concept of disease takes not only the clinical symptoms of anal fistula into cognizance, but also the biological, social, psychological aspect of man to give the appropriate treatment. Holistic concept of cure gives a special meaning to the word *cure*. It means not just relieving the clinical symptoms of the disease but the removal of the whole of the perceptible signs and symptoms, the totality of symptoms and annihilation of the morbid derangement of vital force.

Material and Methods

Sources of data:

The subjects for this study have been selected from those patients with the complaints of Anal Fistula who attended in the O.P.D. as per the inclusion criteria.

Method of collection of data:

- Clinical history.
- All the patients were subjected based on the
- Clinical presentation
- Clinical examination and
- ◆ All cases were recorded and processed on the standardized case record.

- ◆ Treatment has been given Homoeopathically,
 - ◆ A total of 30 cases were selected for this study from the OPD.
 - ◆ The similimum has been selected by appropriate methods.
 - ◆ The samples were divided randomly into high and low potency groups.
 - ◆ The follow-up criteria have been drawn up in advance, to study the manner and rate of response of the symptoms in both the groups.
 - ◆ In most of the cases a start was made with low potency and observed for 3-4 weeks or more. Then they were switched on to high or higher potencies to find out the speed of improvement and duration of the period of relief.
 - ◆ In this study I have considered the potencies upto 30c as lower potency and the potencies 200C and above as higher potency.
1. Data receiving: Each patient will be given adequate time and data will be elicited in comprehensive manner as to elicit proper Patient's picture in the disease.
 2. Processing of the case will be done as per the principles and guidelines of Homoeopathy.
 3. References from Repertory will be availed for the selection of a remedies. All the cases will be followed up for sufficient period required as per the guidelines from Organon of Medicine and Homoeopathic Philosophy.
 4. References from materia medica will be availed for selection of a single remedy out of indicated group of remedies.
 5. Summary will be drawn after study of all relevant patients.
 6. Result and discussions.
 7. Summary and conclusion will be drawn by applying the statistics in concern to the post pregnancy Haemorrhoids.

Review of Literature

Anal complaints -

People often suffer from anal complaints when they suffer from digestive disorders. It can also happen vice versa. To understand all about anal complaints, everyone should know about the anus and its functions. Any complaint of the anus makes everyone restless and won't let them take their seat. Also, most of the anal complaints are left untreated or maltreated due to shyness or shamefulness to discuss/show the thing. For example, people may complain of pile mass in anus, but it may actually be a residual of fissure (sentinel pile - skin tag of linear crack). Likewise, some others may complain of pus discharging boil near the anus, but actually it may be an opening of fistula (tunnel passage from anal canal).

For normal good defecation, a good digestion is ultimately necessary i.e. all the way starting from the mastication of food in the mouth. Our digestive tract starts from the mouth (entry door of food) and ends in the anus (exit door). Any food which enters the stomach needs to pass through the coiled small intestines, where most of the nutrients get absorbed. For getting the nutrients and water absorbed, food passes slowly through this long route by swaying motion of the intestines. After reaching the caecum (first part of the large intestine), food has to ascend with ascending colon and arches left with transverse colon and descend with descending colon of large intestines. Finally it will enter the rectum and anal canal to get expelled.

In clinical practice solitary cases of Anal fistula are uncommon more often mixed presentation are seen.(pile, fissure and fistula)

Anal Fistula (Anal abscess)

Definition

An anal abscess is a puss-filled glandular cavity near the anus, either deep in the rectum or close to the anus opening. Eight-to-nine people out of 10,000 will experience an anal abscess.

Causes

Abscesses result when bacteria infect a mucus-secreting gland in the anus or rectum, causing blockage and damage to surrounding intramuscular tissue. The reason why the infection occurs in the first place is unknown because, normally, this area is free from infection.

Risk Factors

A risk factor is something that increases your chance of getting a disease or condition.

The following factors increase your chance of developing an anal abscess. If you have any of these risk factors, discuss them with your doctor:

Symptoms

If patient experience any of these symptoms do not assume it is due to an anal abscess. These symptoms may be caused by other health conditions. If patient experience any one of them.

Symptoms include:

In the case of an abscess near the surface of the skin on the buttocks:

- Pain and tenderness radiating from the location of the abscess
- Visible redness and swelling
- Fever

In the case of an abscess located deeper within the rectum:

- Pain in the lower abdomen
- Swelling in the rectum that can be seen during examination of the rectum
- Fever

Anal abscesses may be accompanied by pain with stool and/or stool incontinence (inability to restrain stools)

Diagnosis

On enquiring symptoms and medical history, and perform a physical exam of the patient. You will be able to see an abscess near the surface of the skin; you may need to exam the rectum with a gloved finger to determine the presence of a deeper abscess.

Treatment

Treatment normally consists of draining the abscess, which is done by making an incision through the skin near the anus into the abscess. For this, a patient is given local anesthesia. Rarely, a patient will need to be admitted to a hospital for this procedure and will be given general anesthesia. Antibiotics may be given to reduce fever or under other special circumstances.

Complications of Treatment

Following drainage (or natural rupture) of an abscess, more than half the cases will develop into anal *fistulas* —usually weeks but sometimes years later. In this condition, a permanent abnormal channel is formed from the site of the original abscess to the surface of the skin near the anus. This channel (fistula) allows for the continuous drainage of the abscesses' puss-like fluid. In the case of a fistula, surgery to remove/close-up the channel is normally recommended. Following surgery, recurrence of a fistula is common, and stool incontinence problems may result.

Homeopathic Therapeutics of Anal complaints

Homeopathic approach - "Best of all the medicines" is rest, water and diet without which no treatment will be helpful. Treatment of anal fistula often has hindrances since it is often exposed to irritants or frictions of stool. Usually, external treatment such as pain relieving creams and ointments containing anaesthetic agents and moisturisers can help only to pacify the discomfort, but it has very little or no value in treatment of anal fistula. This way of localised approach or treatment will usually suppress/mask the complaint for the time being only. Also, one should be aware of recurrence of anal fistula even after surgical intervention. This confirms that the cause is not localised and it is the effect of internal derangements. So suppression usually lead to serious progressive internal diseases.

Keeping in mind holistic approach in homeopathy to treat the current problem, as well as to prevent recurrences.

Boenninghausen and Kent both believed that it is man who is sick and not th part, there was a gulf of difference between the approaches adopted by the two in evaluating the sick man. One said the part expresses the language of the whole hence it is important in totality. The other said that whole can be made known by expressions related to the part is only a fragment of the process. Kent believed in understanding the man in all these conditions and this is the did by relating to man's generals. His holistic approach to the study of the phenomena of disease and the proving of drugs as well as his explanation of the principles of Homeopathy has clearly defined the guidelines in forming the totality of disease.

As disease first affects at dynamic plane and then only functional followed by structural, he advised to study all symptoms from within outwards. A man consists of mind, the symptoms into General, Particular and common to understand the person, part and disease respectively. He lays stress on general symptoms and on uncommon symptoms both at the level of Generals and Particulars, which characterizes the man in his sickness.

Among the generals he gave prime importance to mentals as he posts out that loves, hates and desires and aversions are the deepest mental symptoms.

According to kent mentals, physical generals and characteristic particulars constitute the totality. But many times strong characteristic particulars may over rule weak generals in information of totality. Where generals are prominent, where symptoms are well defined and qualified with Modalities, Sensations etc. (Name of the book is REPERIRE-Author-Dr. Vidyhar R. Khanaj)

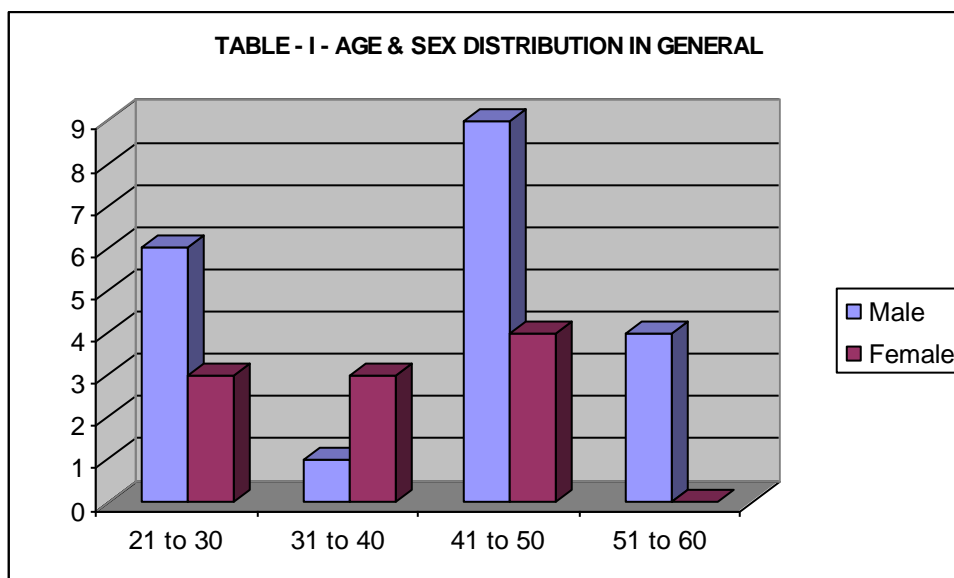
In Homeopathy, anal fistula is not considered a pure surgical disease. It is considered as the outburst of an internal disease, which should be treated internally only.

Will the anal fistula disappear completely with Homeopathy treatment? You should understand one thing: that a blown balloon will never return to its original size, i.e. a deviation from nature will never track back in perfection or to its complete normal anatomy. It will always have its traces of incidences as history. If Homeopathy treatment is opted in the initial disfiguring period, we can surely aim for total cure or complete disappearance of the anal fistula. Otherwise, the size of the anal fistula will get reduced to have traces even without any sufferings.

Homeopathic medicines commonly used in case of anal fistula are Nitric acid, Aloes, Apis mel, Calc carb, Graphites, Hamamelis, Hepasulf, Hypericum, Ficus.R, Ignatia, kali carb, Lachesis, Lycopodium, Mag Phos, Mer cor, Millefolium, Muriatic acid, Nat Sulp, Nux Vomica, Paonia, Phosphorus, Podophyllum, Ratanhia, Silicea, Sulphur, Thuja, etc.

Observations

| Sl No. | Age Group | Male | Female | Total |
|--------|-----------|------|--------|-------|
| 1 | 21 to 30 | 06 | 03 | 09 |
| 2 | 31 to 40 | 01 | 03 | 04 |
| 3 | 41 to 50 | 09 | 04 | 13 |
| 4 | 51 to 60 | 04 | 00 | 04 |
| | Total | 20 | 10 | 30 |

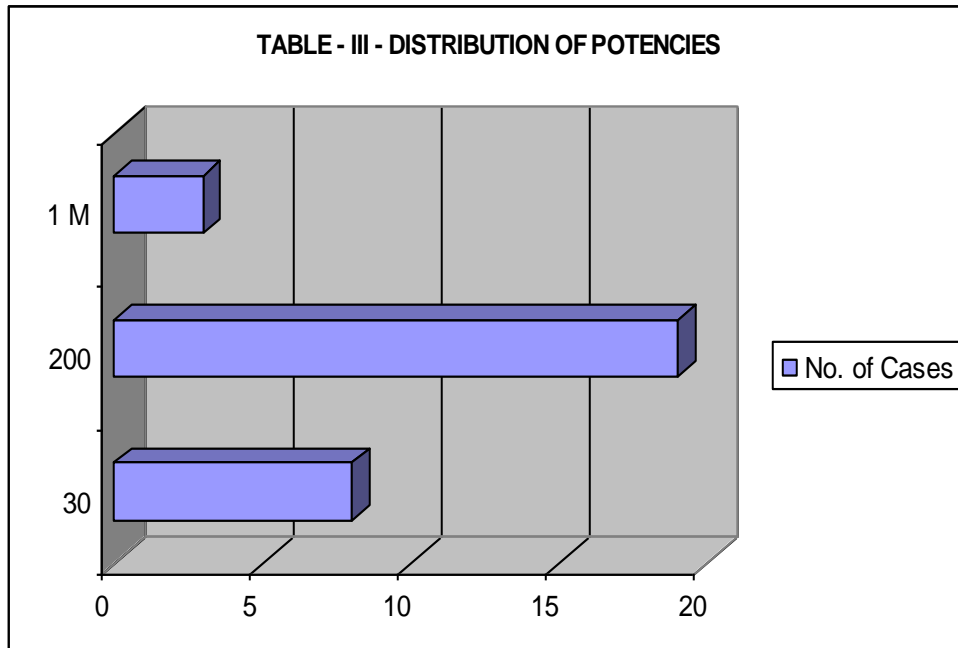


From the study of 30 cases of anal fistula Male predominance was observed than female.

The prevalence of anal fistula is more in males [66.66%] than in females [33.33%]

- Prevalence of Anal fistula is found more frequently in the age group of 41-50 years (43.3%)
- 26 patients (87.00%) were found improved with well selected simillimum.

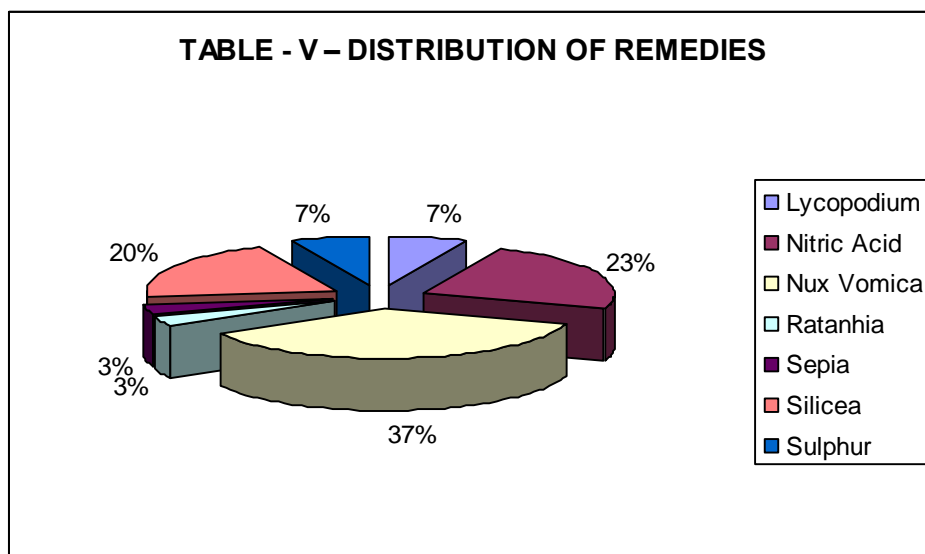
| Sl. No. | Potencies | No. of Cases | % |
|---------|-----------|--------------|-----|
| 1 | 30 | 08 | 27% |
| 2 | 200 | 19 | 63% |
| 3 | 1 M | 03 | 10% |



From 30 cases of anal fistula treated following observation were made base on statistical analysis. Most commonly emerging potency was 200. Nineteen patients responded with a good improvement with infrequent repetition. (63%) cases were in improved condition clinically were founded.

TABLE - III – DISTRIBUTION OF REMEDIES

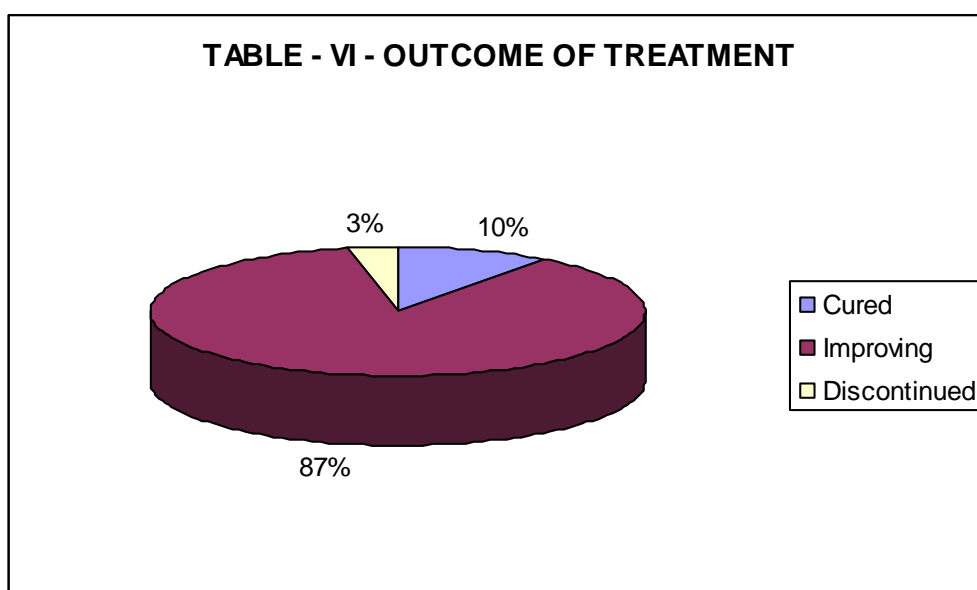
| Sl. No. | Remedy | No. of Cases | % |
|---------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Lycopodium | 02 | 07% |
| 2 | Nitric Acid | 07 | 23% |
| 3 | Nux Vomica | 11 | 37% |
| 4 | Ratanhia | 01 | 03% |
| 5 | Sepia | 01 | 03% |
| 6 | Silicea | 06 | 20% |
| 7 | Sulphur | 02 | 07% |
| | Total | 30 | 100% |



In the current study the following group of remedies found to be of useful in anal fistula is as under:

1. Constitutional: Nux-vomica, Nitric Acid, Silicea, Lycopodium.
2. Organopathic one are: Sulphur, Ratanhia and Sepia.

| Sl. No. | Out Come of Treatment | No. of Cases | % |
|---------|-----------------------|--------------|-----|
| 1 | Cured | 03 | 10% |
| 2 | Improving | 26 | 87% |
| 3 | Discontinued | 01 | 03% |



Cured cases

Review - - Cure- -Confirm- -Surgical opinion

After 6 months of regular followup with recovery sign/symptoms a overall improvement of patient. Patient was send for surgical opinion and clinically confirmed of being cured of ana l fistula.

Following observation were made based on statistical analysis 3 patients reported significantly improvement in there complaints after6 months of regular follow up based on the final surgical opinion they were label on cure.

26 cases reported improvement(87%).

Summary & Conclusion

Anal fistula has emerged as a common disease is developing as well as developed nations. Its prevalence is rapidly increasing in India. In this country thousands of Homoeopathic Practitioners are serving the common man at their door-steps and providing primary health care. These practitioners can play a major role in the outcome of lifestyle disorders like Anal fistula by early identification and patient education and judicious medical intervention.

This study was included to affirm the efficacy and management of Homoeopathic science in anal fistula .Study various cases of anal fistula treated with Homoeopathic medicine.

Thirty different cases of anal fistula of males and females belonging to different age group have been considered. Their histories were analyzed according to the Homoeopathic principles. Various diseases have been observed in family history ,past history and personal history with their miasmatic background. The efficacy of constitutional Homoeopathic treatment has been observed.

Medicines which were used for the treatment are indicated remedies. In order to treat a case Homoeopathically, each case has been studied, individualized and the remedy is selected accordingly.

On the basis of discussion earlier, the scope of this study is limited to

- Improvement in sign and symptom of anal fistula.
- Improvement of the chief complaint.
- Relief from other associated complaints.

Out of thirty cases selected 26 had recovered satisfactorily and shown good improvement and 3 cases clinically cured totally and one was discontinued the treatment.

Other auxiliary treatment like Yoga, Sitz bath, quality of food habit and personal hygiene etc. Along with Homoeopathic treatment have also proved to be helpful. Homoeopathic treatment not only modulates and improves the general immunity of an individual. But also halt the natural progress of disease condition then preventing any further complication, aiding the natural recovery of the anal fistula.

Results of the present study comprising 30 patients of anal fistula indicate that symptomatic relief and local healing is possible. The role and scope of homoeopathic treatment is immense in the management of anal fistula at first and second stage. The treatment is not only cost effective but easily available, readily acceptable to the patients with virtually no side effects. Homoeopathy has a definite role in the Treatment of Anal fistula. The judicious use of homoeopathic medicine along with the conventional therapy in Late Phase and can make a marked difference in the outcome of anal fistula.

In the current study the following group of remedies found to be of useful in anal fistula is as under:

1. Constitutional: Nux-vomica, Nitric Acid, Silicea, Lyco.,

Organopathic one are: Sulphur, Ratanhia and Sepia

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