



"Effective Management of Arthralgia Using Individualized Remedy: A Case Study with Homoeopathic Approach to Pain Relief"

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ABSTRACT:

Arthralgia, commonly known as joint pain, is a prevalent ailment affecting millions worldwide. Arthralgia manifests as discomfort, stiffness, or inflammation in one or more joints, impairing mobility and quality of life. It can arise from various sources, including degenerative conditions like osteoarthritis, autoimmune disorders like rheumatoid arthritis, infectious diseases, injuries, or overuse. The symptoms of arthralgia range from mild discomfort to debilitating pain, stiffness, swelling, and reduced range of motion. However, complementary and alternative therapies offer additional avenues for managing arthralgia which includes acupuncture, chiropractic care, dietary supplements, and lifestyle modifications such as exercise, weight management, and stress reduction techniques. Homoeopathic medicines like *Gaultheria procumbens* or wintergreen have potential therapeutic benefits due to its anti-inflammatory and analgesic properties.

Key Words: Arthralgia, Osteoarthritis, Autoimmune disorders, Rheumatoid arthritis, Homoeopathic medicines, *Gaultheria procumbens*

Abbreviations: Neck Pain (NP), Confidence Interval (CI), Osteoarthritis (OA), Aggravation (<), Amelioration (>)

Introduction:

As it stated above that, arthralgia simply means joint pain. When arthralgia occurs, evaluation is made to determine whether the pain is –

1. Originating in the articulation or not
2. Whether they are inflammatory or not
3. Duration, either acute or chronic
4. Distribution, either localized (monoarticular) or extensive (polyarticular)

Generalized pain in the muscles and arthralgias varies from modest to severe resulting in significant muscle pain, various non-specific pain regions, problems sleeping and functioning, and frequently, depression and chronic exhaustion. Fibromyalgia is one of the most common causes of this illness.^[1]

Gaultheria procumbens, commonly known as wintergreen is one of the lesser-known but beneficial drug in our Materia medica. Methyl salicylate, the constituent found in the plant which has pain-relieving properties similar to aspirin. The medicine has anti-inflammatory properties, analgesic effects, improves blood circulation for faster healing and pain reduction, acts as muscle relaxant easing tension and stiffness around joints and the tincture can be applied topically for quick relief by penetrating through skin and delivering its active compounds directly to the site of pain. Symptoms of *Gaultheria* includes sensation of soreness, bruised feeling in the joints, stiffness aggravated by motion, in cold, damp weather or with sudden changes in temperature and relief from warmth or pressure, gentle motion or application of heat.

The most prevalent kind of persistent pain is Musculoskeletal pain, particularly joint and back pain. Arthritis is the most frequent cause of joint discomfort, and it comes in several forms. Joint pain is one of the main causes of disability and is frequently treated medically. Osteoarthritis ranked twelfth, low back pain ranked first, neck pain ranked fourth, and other musculoskeletal illnesses ranked sixth in terms of years lived with disability worldwide.^[2] Additionally, these impacts held true across the various geographic regions. As a result, musculoskeletal disorders, including joint pain, significantly contribute to global public health issues. These conditions not only cause pain, but they also have a correlation with disability, functional limits, and participation constraints. Moreover, a number of arthritis illnesses have been linked to higher death rates; these associations may be due to the underlying arthritis, associated comorbidities, unfavourable drug-related events, or bad outcomes.

A thorough analysis on shoulder pain was carried out. Eighteen studies on prevalence and one on incidence fulfilled the inclusion criteria. 0.9–2.5% incidence rates were discovered for various age groups. The prevalence ranges for point prevalence were 6.9 to 26%, 1-month prevalence was 18.6–31%, 1-year prevalence was 4.7–46.7%, and lifetime prevalence was 6.7–66.7%.^[3]

About 4.9% of people worldwide reported NP, and between 1990 and 2010, the number of people with disability-adjusted life years rose from 23.9 million to 33.6 million. When it comes to YLDs, NP ranks fourth highest in terms of disability and 21st overall burden.^[4] The frequency of the six most common forms of NP that have been reported are – lifetime (13%), point (13%), 1-year (39%), 6-months (11%), 1-month (10%), and 1-week (10%). In terms of the 1-month and 1-year prevalences, children report less NP than adults, but in terms of the 6-month prevalence, they report higher pain.

Elderly persons do, however, report higher NP in the point prevalence than do the other adult categories. Women report NP at a higher rate than men do.^[5]

For middle-aged and older adults (aged 45 and above), the prevalence of foot and ankle pain is about 24%, whereas the prevalence of frequent ankle pain is 15%. According to descriptions from previous research, women are more prone to this than men. The toes and forefoot are the most common anatomical sites of discomfort, with two-thirds of individuals reporting substantial difficulty in a daily function.^[6]

The global prevalence of Knee OA was found to be 16.0% (95% CI, 14.3%–17.8%) in people over the age of 15, and 22.9% (95% CI, 19.8%–26.1%) in those over the age of 40. In 2020, there will be approximately 654.1 (95% CI, 565.6–745.6) million people (40 years of age and older) suffering from knee OA worldwide.^{[7][8]}

Case Study:

A male of 38year old male came on OPD dated 17 June 2023 for homoeopathic treatment of joint pain with following symptoms.

Presenting Complaints:

- Pain in both knee joint especially the right knee for 3 months
- Pain in shoulder joint – mostly the right sided
- Pain aggravates by motion and in cloudy weather, sitting, standing and ameliorates by warmth, pressure, resting on bed and hot fomentation
- Complaints first started on right side

History of Presenting Complaints:

The pain in right knee started after a fall on the knee joint 3 months back. He slipped in bathroom while bathing. After that, he couldn't get up by himself and by the help of his wife he got up and settled down. Patient had taken pain killers for 2 months but from last one month he is avoiding taking pain killers and for shoulder joint, he is under physiotherapy.

Past History: Nothing Particular Found

Family History:

Father: Diabetes Mellitus (II)
Mother: Hypothyroidism

Under Allopathic Treatment

Physical Generals:

Appetite : Good (3 times/day)
Thirst : 4-5L/day
Desires : Sweets (craves all the time)
Aversion : Milk
Stool : Satisfactory (once/day)
Urine : Clear
Perspiration : Profuse on Scalp
Thermals : Extremely Hot

Mental Generals:

The patient desires company all the time. Very mild, gentle and cheerful nature. Consolation relieves the patient but only from his wife and closed ones. Little things hurt, weeps easily on little things but weeps only in front of his wife. Angry only when things are not done according to him and something wrong said against him but never say anything to anyone, just keeps within himself. Fastidious (everything should be well arranged all the time, either it is books, bedsheets or clothes). Highly ambitious and hardworking as patient stated that, 'I want a good life for my children and family even if I am no more, my family should not face anything at least financially'. Loves to travel and explore new places.

Analysis of Symptoms:

Prescription:

DATE	SYMPTOMS	PRESCRIPTION
17 June 2023	Pain in both knee joint especially the right knee. Pain in shoulder joint (right sided). Pain < by motion and in cloudy weather, sitting, standing and > by warmth, pressure, resting on bed and hot fomentation. Desires sweets, averse to mil and profuse perspiration on scalp. Advice: hot fomentation avoid long continuous walk.	Pulsatilla 200 x BD x 1 day

Follow up:

DATE	SYMPTOMS	PRESCRIPTION
27 June 23	Relief in complaints on motion.	Phytum 30 x TDS x 10 days
7 July 23	Intensity of pain increased on sitting and standing since last 5 days.	Pulsatilla 1M stat Phytum 30 x TDS x 10 days
17 July 23	Patient condition was better	Phytum 30 x TDS x 10 days
27 July 23	Relief in all complaints. No new symptoms.	Phytum 30 x TDS x 10 days
6 August 23	Relief in all complaints. No new symptom appeared.	Phytum 30 x TDS x 10 days

Conclusion:

Homoeopathy is a creative medical system that addresses the patient's entire condition rather than simply the illness. In this case, two doses of Pulsatilla nigricans 200, an individualized homoeopathic medication, were used to effectively treat this trauma-related knee joint pain which was followed up by Pulsatilla 1M in the second follow up. The significance of choosing a treatment based on Individualization through proper case taking and repertorization is the main takeaway from this case study.

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