



Understanding the Modus Operandi of Homeopathic Remedies in Managing Alcohol Use Disorders

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Abstract

Alcohol use disorder (AUD) is a chronic bio-behavioral disease that is related to high health, social, and economic costs. Even with advances in conventional treatments, Homeopathy provides promising adjunctive benefits. The present article outlines the modes of action and effects of different homeopathic products in people with AUD with the aid of experimental and pilot studies.

Introduction

Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) is a widespread global problem that complicates chronic diseases and leads to preventable death. AUD is characterized by physiological, behavioral and cognitive dependence on alcohol and is classified as mild-moderate-severe under DSM-5 (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders) diagnostic criteria and dependence syndrome under ICD-10 (International Classification of Diseases) diagnostic criteria. Alcohol consumption is prevalent in India with 14.6% population aged 10–75 years consuming alcohol, predominantly male (27.3%) vs female (1.6%) [2]. It is essential to comprehend the detailed motivators of alcohol use and to create actionable solutions to dampen this epidemic⁵.

Motives for Drinking and Treatments for AUD

The reasons why individuals drink alcohol are manifold and can be classified into social, psychological, and physiological factors¹. Intervening effectively requires identifying the underlying causes. Homeopathic remedies² (for example : Nux Vomica, Aconitum Napellus, Arsenicum Album, Gelsemium Sempervirens, Phosphorus, Pulsatilla Nigricans, Sulphur) exert their pharmacological activity through specific physiological and neurological pathways⁶ and have shown effectiveness in reducing AUD symptoms.

Modus Operandi of Nux Vomica

In preclinical studies, Nux Vomica, sourced from the seeds of the *Strychnos nux-vomica* L. tree, has exhibited beneficial results in these aims regarding CNS diseases due to anticipated effects of alcohol. For research on the effects of the potentized Nux Vomica 30c, prepared with 90% ethanol, on sleep induced by severe intoxication with ethanol in male albino mice indicated that, compared to controls, ethanol-induced sleep was prolonged in control mice, whilst significantly reduced by 44% in potentized Nux Vomica 30c - prepared with 90% ethanol - between 15 and 48 min post-intoxication in the treated mice ($p < 0.01$)^{3,5}. The remedy returned the righting reflex, a marker of CNS function, indicating its potential to reverse alcohol-induced CNS depression.

Nux Vomica was effective only when it was prepared with 90% ethanol. The solvent dynamics remained crucial towards preserving the structural specificity of the remedy, which signified its therapeutic action. The interaction between ethanol and water molecules in the binary solvent mixture was crucial factors to drug potency preservation which highlights the importance of preparation methods in homeopathy⁵.

The Effects on Heart Rate and Blood Flow Variability

A general exploration of 77 healthy participants, examined the effects of homeopathic remedies in heart rate variability (HRV) and blood flow variability (BFV). Remedies like Aconitum Napellus 30c, Gelsemium 200c and Sulphur 200c gave rise to a high autonomic response with specific potency effect. HRV was influenced mainly by lower potencies; BFV was influenced mainly by higher potencies. In contrast, the HRV modulation was 62.5% vs 16.6%⁵ for the group subject to a placebo. Such specific actions of homeopathic interventions on health parameters underscore their effectiveness in the modulation of autonomic regulations⁴.

Modus Operandi of Opium

Opium is a substance made from the opium poppy plant and it is used in conventional and homeopathic medicine, but in two ways that are different. In contemporary medicine, it is classified as a CNS depressant although homeopathic dilutions show contradictory effects. Experiments in mice showed that high dilutions of Opium (30c and 200c) were CNS stimulants that reversed alcohol-induced CNS depression⁷.

Locomotor activity, pain response and opioid-like effects Evaluations were performed as described previously. Greater dilutions of Opium did not only lessened CNS depression but showed secondary curative actions mimicking homeopathic principles that higher potencies cause opposite effects of crude substance⁷.

Physiological Mechanisms of Homeopathic Medicines

The nerve endings are stimulated by low doses of homeopathic remedies and the hypothalamus works through the autonomic nervous system thereby creating an effect through the central nervous system. This in turn activates hormones and has potential gene regulatory significance. Although preliminary research indicates that homeopathic medications may interact with DNA repair systems, modulate immune processes, and inhibit protein-DNA binding⁸—mechanistic effects that could have a molecular basis for their proposed therapeutic actions —this theory makes testable predictions that have not yet been validated.

Conclusion

The physiological and neurological components of AUD make homeopathy a different paradigm for its management. (Nux Vomica, Aconitum Napellus, Opium) are exhibiting promise in the modulation of CNS functions and autonomic responses. There is also promising data from preclinical and exploratory studies; however, continued investigation is required, as these findings must be validated in clinical settings and homeopathy must be incorporated into AUD management strategies used in mainstream practice.

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