



DEPRESSION : A SCIENTIFIC STUDY AND EFFICACY OF HOMOEOPATHIC TREATMENT FOR IT

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ABSTRACT

Depression is a common mental disorder and one of the main causes of disability worldwide. Globally, an estimated 300 million people are affected by depression. The objective is "To report the efficacy of Homeopathic treatment in patients with depression". Research underscores the idea that holding positive beliefs about Homoeopathic Treatment for the treatment of depression with good results.

Key words: *Depression, Homeopathic treatment*

INTRODUCTION:

Depression is a common disorder, which often leads to poor quality of life and impaired role functioning. It is known to be a major contributor to the global burden of diseases and according to World Health Organization (WHO), depression is the 4th leading cause of disability worldwide and it is projected that by 2020 that will be the 2nd most common leading cause of disability. So 7 April 2017 – WHO is leading a one-year global campaign on depression. ¹

EPIDEMIOLOGY:

At a global level, over 300 million people are estimated to suffer from depression, equivalent to 4.4% of the world's population and by 18.4% increased between 2005 and 2015. ² WHO's new global health estimates on depression said while over 5 crore Indians suffered from depression. ³ In India prevalence of depression in India is 4.5% and health loss or disease burden is 7.1%.²

Depression is a major public health problem in India, contributing to significant morbidity, disability as well as mortality, along with significant socioeconomic losses.⁴

Depression is more common among females (5.1%) than males (3.6%). Prevalence rates vary by age, peaking in older adulthood (above 7.5% among females aged 55-74 years, and above 5.5% among males). Depression also occurs in children and adolescents below the age of 15 years, but at a lower level than older age groups.²

Prevalence reached its peak in the adult age group, with above 3.5% in females and above 3% in males aged 40 and above.⁴

CLASSIFICATION:

Depressive disorders include two main sub-categories:²

- *major depressive disorder / depressive episode*, which involves symptoms such as depressed mood, loss of interest and enjoyment, and decreased energy; depending on the number and severity of symptoms, a depressive episode can be categorized as mild, moderate, or severe;²
- *Dysthymia, a persistent or chronic form of mild depression*; the symptoms of dysthymia are similar to depressive episode, but tend to be less intense and last longer.²

SIGN AND SYMPTOMS:

Criteria and symptoms of depression

The symptoms need to be present for a minimum period of at least 2 weeks.

*Major symptoms*⁴

- Feeling sad or depressed, sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt most of the day, nearly every day⁴
- Markedly reduced interest or pleasure in almost all activities i.e. substantially impairing an individual's ability to function at work or school or cope with daily life most of the day nearly every day⁴
- Loss of energy or fatigue nearly every day.⁴
- At its most severe, depression can lead to suicide⁴.

AS per WHO suicide accounted for close to 1.5% of all deaths worldwide, bringing it into the top 20 leading causes of death in 2015 and "Suicide occurs throughout the lifespan and was the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year olds globally in 2015,"³

*Minor symptoms*⁴

- Loss of self-confidence or self-esteem; unreasonable feelings of guilt nearly every day; recurrent thoughts of death or suicide, or suicidal behaviour⁴
- Diminished ability to think or concentrate, bodily agitation or slowness,
- disturbed sleep (reduced or increased sleepiness) nearly every day⁴
- Gloomy and unhappy views of the future,⁴
- increased or decreased appetite and/or weight⁴

CAUSES AND RISK FACTORS:

Depression affect people of all ages, from all walks of life due to multiple factors resulting from complex mechanisms; there can be no single identifiable cause. ⁴

- **Biological factors:** About a third of depression cases are linked to genetic factors and the rest to non-genetic or environmental factors. In females biological and hormonal factors are found to be playing a greater role. ⁴
- **Psychological factors:** Exposure to negative parental influences such as a critical and condemning parental style during early childhood may give rise to negative feelings about oneself. The long-term consequences of separation or early loss of the maternal attachment bond or death of a loved one or a relationship break-up are many causes depression. ⁴
- **Social factors:** Distressing social relationships such as familial, marital and parental relationships have been associated with the onset of depression. ⁴
- **Cultural factors:** Culture plays a significant role, such as religion, caste, beliefs, attitudes, interpretations and symptom thresholds, which vary across different parts of India and world. ⁴
- **Economic factors:** People who experienced acute (sudden economic crisis) or chronic (poor income households) economic adversities, unemployment, are more vulnerable to developing depression. ⁴
- **Nutritional disorders or deficiency and physical illness** an very important cause. ⁴
- It is also adversely associated with chronic communicable diseases like TB, HIV, CVD, DM and others. ⁴
- Abuse of alcohol and drug ⁴
- **Neurotransmitters disorder:** Depression is linked to imbalances in the brain, specifically with the neurotransmitters serotonin, norepinephrine, and dopamine. ⁵
- The neurotransmitter serotonin is involved in controlling many important bodily functions, including sleep, aggression, eating, sexual behaviour, and mood. Serotonin is produced by serotonergic neurons. Current research suggests that a decrease in the production of serotonin by these neurons can cause depression in some people, and more specifically, a mood state that can cause some people to feel suicidal. ⁵

MANAGEMENT AND TREATMENT:

WHO's comprehensive mental health action plan 2013-2020 was adopted by the 66th World Health Assembly. There are four major objectives of the action plan are to: ⁶

- Strengthen effective leadership and governance for mental health. ⁶
- provide comprehensive, integrated and responsive mental health and social care services in community-based settings. ⁶
- implement strategies for promotion and prevention in mental health.
- strengthen information systems, evidence and research for mental health. ⁶

PREVENTION

There's no sure way to prevent depression. However, these strategies may help.⁷

- Take steps to control stress and to increase your resilience and boost your self-esteem.⁷
- Reach out to family and friends, especially in times of crisis, to help you weather rough spells.⁷
- Get treatment at the earliest sign of a problem to help prevent depression from worsening.⁷
- Consider getting long-term maintenance treatment to help prevent a relapse of symptoms⁷

TREATMENT:

➤ *Medicinal (Antidepressants)*¹

Large numbers of antidepressants are available for management of depression

➤ *Psychotherapeutic interventions*¹

A specific, effective psychotherapy may be considered as an initial treatment modality for patients with mild to moderate depressive disorder.

➤ *Psychoeducation to the patient and, when appropriate, to the family*¹

Education concerning depression and its treatments can be provided to all patients. When appropriate, education can also be provided to involved family members.

➤ *Combination of pharmacotherapy and Psychotherapy*¹

There is class of patients who may require the combination of pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy.

LYFESTYLE MODIFICATION

- ***Exercise:*** Regular exercise can be as effective at treating depression as medication.⁸
- ***Social support:*** Strong social networks reduce isolation, a key risk factor for depression. Keep in regular contact with friends and family, or consider joining a class or group.⁸
- ***Nutrition:*** Eating well is important for both your physical and mental health. Eating small, well-balanced meals throughout the day will help you keep your energy up and minimize mood swings. While you may be drawn to sugary foods for the quick boost they provide, complex carbohydrates are a better choice. They'll get you going without the all-too-soon sugar crash.⁸
- ***Sleep:*** Sleep has a strong effect on mood. When you don't get enough sleep, your depression symptoms will be worse. Sleep deprivation exacerbates irritability, moodiness, sadness, and fatigue. Make sure you're getting enough sleep each night. Very few people do well on less than seven hours a night. Aim for somewhere between seven to nine hours each night.⁸
- ***Stress reduction:*** Make changes in your life to help manage and reduce stress. Too much stress exacerbates depression and puts you at risk for future depression. Take the aspects of your life that stress you out, such as work overload or unsupportive relationships, and find ways to minimize their impact.⁸

HOMEOPATHIC TREATMENT FOR DEPRESSION

Homoeopathy is a science of therapeutics and system of medicine with the concept of health, sickness and cure are set forth in the philosophy of this healing system as processes occurring on the dynamic plane.⁹

Disease is a dynamic alteration of health *caused by dynamic influence upon it of an inimical morbid agent, partly physical, partly psychical and manifested by the perceptible signs and symptoms* described in §-11 of Organon of Medicine.¹⁰ Homeopathic treatment for depression is a great form of alternative medicine.

- ✚ **Arnica:** Arnica is the most used homeopathic remedy for depression after physical and emotional injury is the most common reason. Fears another physical and emotional bruising but keeps struggling.¹¹
- ✚ **Arsenicum album:** Anxious, insecure, and perfectionistic people who need this remedy may set high standards for themselves and others and become depressed if their expectations are not met. Worry about material security sometimes borders on despair. When feeling ill, these people can be demanding and dependent, even suspicious of others, fearing their condition could be serious.¹²
- ✚ **Aurum met. :** It is a well indicated for major depression with suicidal thoughts prevail. Great depression with profound hopelessness, loss of love for life and suicidal thoughts. The person is tired of life; thinks that life is a burden and for him, future seems dark with no hope left. There is a strong sense of worthlessness. They also have self-criticizing and self-reproaching behaviour, cannot bear slight contradiction. They get angry very quickly.¹³
- ✚ **Carcinocin:** Carcinocine are often employed to treat chronic and serious forms of depression. Deep depression; suicidal depression; depression with a family history of cancer. Excessive parental control, or an abusive sibling, spouse or loved one, long lasting grief, prolonged fear are the main cause of depression.¹⁴
- ✚ **Ignatia amara** – Ignatia Amara is one of the top grade homeopathic medicines for treating depression of recent origin. The person with extreme sadness and weeping, desire loneliness and avoid meeting people, grief and intense hopelessness also prevails. They also get offended very easily and may have with sudden mood fluctuations.¹³
- ✚ **Kali phos** – Kali Phos is suitable for treating depression attended with extreme weakness. The symptoms are sadness, gloominess, aversion to talking, continual weeping, moaning, negative thinking and excessive weakness/fatigue. Sleeplessness is also there along with these symptoms. There is include weak memory, dullness of mind and anxiety about future.¹³
- ✚ **Natrum mur** – Natrum Mur is for treating chronic depression. The constantly dwells on the past unpleasant memories with intense sadness and crying spells. They bear their grief in loneliness and they isolate themselves. They are reserved personalities with Consolation <.

Easily irritated and offended with major disappointments in life, disrupted relationships after a loss of loved ones.¹³

- ✚ **Pulsatilla:** People mainly females who needs this remedy depression with weeping mood where fresh air, and gentle exercise usually improve their mood. Depression around the time of hormonal changes (puberty, menstrual periods, or menopause) can often be helped with Pulsatilla.¹²
- ✚ **Sepia** – Sepia is a recommended for depression when the patient shows marked indifferent behaviour. The indifference is more towards family members/ friends and towards life. There is averse to do any work, lack interest in any activities or entertainment which they were previously fond off. They desire solitude and often sitting quietly in loneliness. Extreme irritability with intense sadness, gloominess is also present. Sepia also stands among top grade homeopathic medicine for depression in women arising after childbirth or around their menopause time.¹³
- ✚ **Staphysagria:** Quiet, sensitive, emotional people hurt easily; shame, resentment, and suppressed emotions lead them to depression. If under too much pressure, they can sometimes lose their natural inhibition and fly into rages or throw things and may suffers from insomnia (feeling sleepy all day, but unable to sleep at night), toothaches, headaches, stomach-aches, or bladder infections that are stress-related.¹²
- ✚ **Homeopathic Solution for Depression caused by Menopause.:** Menopause can be a major turning event in the life of a woman . Sepia and Lachesis are the best homeopathic remedies for depression during menopause.¹³

RESEARCH IN HOMOEOPATHIC TREATMENT FOR DEPRESSION

- Individually selected homeopathic remedies were used on an outpatient basis to treat 12 adults who had major depression, social phobia, or panic disorder. Duration of treatment was 7 to 80 weeks. Response was monitored by using a clinical global scale (n = 12), the self-rated SCL-90 scale (n = 8), and the Brief Social Phobia Scale (n = 4). The **result was:** Overall response rates were 58% according to the clinical global improvement scale and 50% according to the SCL-90 or the Brief Social Phobia Scale. The **conclusions was:** Homeopathy may be useful in the treatment of affective and anxiety disorders in patients with mildly to severely symptomatic conditions.¹⁵
- Thirty patients (twenty female and ten male) with the mean age of 45 (range 22-67) were selected randomly and classified in two experimental and controlling groups. The patients were evaluated based on Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) and Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI)-Y. The Pretest – posttest, and follow-up pattern was designed, homeopathic remedies were used and analysis of covariance with repeated measures is used for data analysis. **Result was:** findings depict significant differences (P<0.01) between two stages of

intervention and sustaining of this effectiveness is shown in following-up procedure.

Conclusion was : These findings suggest that homeopathic therapy can be used as an effective method to treat anxiety and depression disorders. ¹⁶

CONCLUSION:

Depression is not a normal part of growing older, and it should never be taken lightly. Unfortunately, depression often goes undiagnosed and untreated in older adults, and they may feel reluctant to seek help. Depression may require long-term treatment. But don't get discouraged. Most people with depression feel better with medication (*Homoeopathic system of medicine*), *psychotherapy or both*.

Sl.No Reference

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