

## Prostatic issues and Homoeopathic Approach

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**Abstract:** *Outline of the article [1, 2, 7-9]:* The current piece deals with the issue of non cancerous obstructive uropathy. It hampers the quality of life in males above 45 years of age. An enlarged prostate gland or Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) is a leading cause of obstructive uropathy in men. In India, prevalence of BPH is around 50% of men by the age of 60 years. The reader will get an idea of the problem of prostatic issues at global & national level through the eyes of clinical health in the beginning sections before delving in to the Homoeopathic system of the AYUSH platform. Currently, the AYUSH platform has regained its value in the era of the current pandemic. The pandemic has further escalated the prostatic issues further. In the absence of effective therapy in the modern medicine, the article peeps through what homoeopathy can offer to deal with prostatic issues that fulfil the triad criteria of essential medicines as per the National List of Essential Medicines (NLEM). The criteria is that these medicines need to be effective clinically, safe clinically and should be without side effects.

**Keywords:** BPH, Homoeopathic Materia Medica, Constitutional medicine, Nosode, Bach Flower Remedy, Bowel Nosode, Miasms.

## BACKGROUND [1, 2, 6-9, 26]

The current article looks into the aspects of prostate disorders during the life period out of which BHP is one of the main challenges.

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The article looks into the brief history of public health programs on prostatic health issues in India & the emergence of Benign Hyperplasia of Prostate (BHP) as an issue. There are three most common prostate problems and these are prostatitis, prostate enlargement and prostate cancer. BHP comes under the enlargement problems.

The article moves on to the current situation on BHP in India & the role of Homoeopathy to deal with these disorders therapeutically as a component of Ministry of AYUSH. The article suggests the integration of medical pluralism in hepatic health through inclusion of Homoeopathy in the gamete of prostatic health.

As each & every drug in Homoeopathy is only proved on human beings, all the drugs have a mental component as it is only human beings who can express their physical & mental symptoms during proving of the drugs as per the guidelines set by the Homoeopathic Research Councils (HRC) of each nation. In India, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, an autonomous body under the ministry of AYUSH lays out such guidelines.

The article gains more relevance during the current COVID 19 pandemic which has precipitated the stress levels of population since March 2020 and most of the aged males are more prone to prostatic disorders during their life stage besides Benign Hyperplasia of the Prostate (BHP).

## **INTRODUCTION [2, 6, 8, 10, 26]**

The prostate gland is a walnut sized gland in men. It is closely linked with the excretory system and has a crucial role in the male reproductive system. The prostate gland in males is situated just below the urinary bladder. Its primary function is in the formation of semen. It makes and stores seminal fluid, a milky fluid that nourishes the sperm. Sperm is a part of the semen, the fluid that is ejaculated. In the semen, secretion of seminal vesicles constitute 69%, testicular secretions 1% and the prostatic secretion constitute the rest 30%. The urethra, a tube draining urine from the bladder, passes through the prostate. This junction functions as a finely regulated passage for either urine or semen as and when required.

The prostate grows with age and this is termed as hyperplasia. It is not cancerous but squeezes the urethra leading to bladder outlet obstruction that results in Lower Urinary Tract Symptoms (LUTS). These symptoms are poor urine stream, straining or pain during urination, prolonged urination, nocturnal urination, inability to control the urge and incomplete emptying of the bladder.

As there is no specific cure in modern medicine for BPH, it is here that the Homoeopathic approach will come handy for the public, private and corporate bodies provided these bodies integrate the therapeutic system in the existing health system while accepting the principle of medical pluralism.

The Ministry of AYUSH since November 2014 is using its network of public and private partners and here homoeopathy as a component is addressing the issue of BPH and the related urinary issues.

### **Public health efforts on prostate health [26]**

Regarding efforts at mass level, the issue of prostatic cancer leads among the three disorders. When research on prostatic cancer came to a dead end, the Indian Prostate Cancer Foundation (IPCF) was established in 1993. IPCF is committed to the cause of relieving the impact of prostate cancer in India through awareness and by supporting those afflicted by the condition.

In order to raise awareness among the masses regarding the prostate problems, the prostate cancer awareness month is celebrated every year in the month of November.

There is no such direct public health program on prostate. It is a cross cutting problem related to the circulatory system, excretory and reproductive system. The programs that are rolled out covering various aspects related to these systems also hold good for the prostate as well.

### **About Prostatic disorders [1, 2, 8, 9, 27, 28]**

As discussed above, prostatitis, BHP and prostatic cancer are the three major problems of the prostate gland. Of these three, BHP is in the forefront. The epidemiology of prostate disorders informs that the pooled prevalence of BPH is that 8% men in the fourth decade of life, 50% in the sixth decade and 80% in the ninth decade suffer from BPH. Around 25% of men above 60 years have concomitant hypertension and BPH thus hinting towards the role of the sympathetic nervous system in the manifestation of both the diseases.

BPH severely affects the quality of life and if left untreated, it can lead to severe complications. The urethra being squeezed the bladder needs to exert extra pressure to push urine. This leads to thickening of bladder wall and further leading to gradual loss of bladder plasticity.

This process leads to urinary retention which if untreated may create urine retention in kidneys which is called hydronephrosis. This can lead to kidney malfunction and even kidney failure in acute cases. Secondary hypertension and frequent Urinary Tract Infections (UTI) are often associated with extreme cases of urinary retention due to BPH.

Other than BPH, prostate cancer is the second most common cause of cancer and the sixth leading cause of cancer death among men worldwide. The estimated Age Adjusted Incidence Rates (AARs) of prostate cancer in India as a whole was  $3.7/10^5$  persons during the year 2008.

#### **About the diagnosis and stages of Prostate [2]**

The diagnosis of BPH involves a physical prostate inspection by the doctor. This is technically called Digital Rectal Examination (DRE).

Imaging procedures like Ultra Sono Graphy (USG) and Uroflowmetry are other techniques. At times, Cystoscopy is also done to visualize the urethra and the bladder.

The human body has two types of alpha receptors called as A1 and A2. The prostate, urethra, bladder, neck and blood vessels of our body are rich in A1 subtypes such as A1A, A1C, A1B and A1D. The modern medicine treatment plan targets these receptors.

#### **Prognosis and Way Forward [2, 7, 8, 12]**

The modern medicine treatment plan displayed significant side effects with less better effect. Surgical dealing of BHP also leads to side effects.

The way forward is to integrate alternative system and here homoeopathy comes in the forefront. Along with homoeopathy, regular physical exercise, yoga and the diet based on the principle of Ayurveda can significantly retard the progression of the disease. Integration of homoeopathy in the issue of BHP coupled with early diagnosis and early treatment is crucial for prevention of bladder and kidney disease.

#### **Homoeopathic approach [10-25]**

As already mentioned above, all Homoeopathic medicine has physical and mental symptoms as the drugs are proved on human beings. Given below are Homoeopathic medicines that are primarily from four sources. These are H.C. Allen's Key notes, Robin Murphy's *Materia Medica*, Phatak's *Materia Medica & Boericke's Materia Medica*. These four text books are used to teach homoeopathic students who become qualified homoeopaths later. The treatment plans for the prostate disorders mentioned above are given below.

The issues like prostate related problems can be resolved through the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) where the AYUSH systems like homoeopathy can play an active role. The network of private, public and corporate system can come handy here. The inclusion of the traditional systems like homoeopathy can play a vital role to achieve UHC in India as reinforced by a published article on the issue of UHC.

#### **Homoeopathic treatment protocol [10-25, 29]**

These are BHP cases which were on medications for long and subsequently these cases became resistant to treatment post the hyperplasia. Each homoeopath should remember that exercise and diet are the main stay of the treatment. A prescription of exercise of 45 minutes of brisk walking per day and the Indian diet of Sattvic, Tamasik and Rajasik as mentioned in the prognosis coupled with care section are a must along with the homoeopathic medicines.

The treatment plan is on the lines of the physiology, pathology and biochemistry of the prostate patients as mentioned above.

The first approach is the miasmatic approach. In homoeopathic system of medicine, miasms are disease causing dynamic influences that are infectious in nature. Miasmatically, if the patient has physiological issues only, anti Psorics are to be prescribed.

If the patient has pathological changes in prostate, anti Syphilitics are to be prescribed to prevent malignancy in future.

If the patient has conditions like Prostatic Hyperplasia, anti Sycotics are to be prescribed as these cases are at risk to turn to malignancy.

### **Specifics**

Prostate is a gland of the entire urogenital system and it is here that medicines that act on the gland as well as the urinary system are to be prescribed. As mentioned above, the prostate related problems are Prostatitis, BHP, Prostatic cancer, BHP with concomitant hypertension, problems in evacuation of bladder, hydronephrosis and frequent UTI.

The first section deals with the medicines that act on the prostate, bladder, urethra and the kidneys as well.

For Prostatitis- Medicines like Merc Dulcis, Picric Acid, Sabal Serrulata, Staphysagria, Thuja and Triticum Vulgare in high potencies can be prescribed as it is a functional change.

For Prostatic Hypertrophy (BHP)- Medicines like Ferrum Pic in trituritions and potencies, Conium, Thuja, Ferrum Iod in potencies and trituritions, Prostatinum and Selenium. The bowel nosode 'Gaertner' can be prescribed as it contains Flourine in its biochemistry thus addressing hardness of the gland.

BHP with concomitant hypertension- Renine, Resorcinum, Cereus Bonplandi in potencies along with mother tinctures like Boerrahavia Diffusa and Rauwolfia Serpentina.

Problems in evacuation of Bladder- Medicines like Pareira Brava, Chimaphila Umbellata, Hydrangea, Uva Ursi, Oxydendron, Geum Rivale can be prescribed in mother tinctures and potencies.

Frequent UTI- Medicines like Linum Usitasisimum, Squilla, Saururus Cerinus, Quadraple Nosode, Stillngia Sylvatica, Polytrichum Juniperum, Buchu, Doryphora and Cantharis can be prescribed in mother tinctures and potencies.

Besides these the Bowel Nosode 'Sycotic Compound' can be prescribed in potencies. Anti Sycotics like 'Medorrhinum' can be prescribed in potencies. 'Colibacillinum' can also be prescribed in potencies as E.Coli is the leading bacteria in UTI. 'Toxoplasma Gondi' can also be prescribed in potencies.

For Hydronephrosis- Berberis Vulagaris (Left Kidney), Medorrhinum (Right Kidney if the patient is thirsty), Lycopodium (Right Kidney if the patient is thirstless), Sarsaparilla (Right kidney if burning urination), Tabacum (Any kidney if the patient has vertigo, vomiting, nausea), Oxydendron, Geum Rivale, Eel Serum are other medicines.

For Prostatic Cancer- Along with the indicated medicines and the medicines from the list given above, prescribe prednisolone, cortisone, curcuma longa, colchicinum so that inflammatory markers are reduced and Prostatic Specific Antigen (PSA) levels come down there by reducing the spread of cancer.

To prevent metastasis, Viscum Album and Cundurango are to be prescribed in mother tinctures along with carcinosin. The lead author has an article on prostate cancer through a case study which is given in the reference number 29.

### **Conventionals**

Here, medicines that act on Glands are to be prescribed so that the chronic effects of the prostatic health are addressed.

For action on glands like prostste, it is possible that these cases would have taken the common homoeopathic medicines before they became BPH chronic cases. Hence, the treatment plan suggested here is different.

Medicines like Alnus Rubra, Belladonna, Kali Iod, Merc Iod, Phytolaca, Baryta Iod, BCG Vaccine, Calcarea Flour, Aconitum Lycotomum, Agraphis Nutans, Ferrum Pernitricum, Argentum Iod, Aethiops Mercurialis Mineralis, Scrophularia Nodosa can be prescribed in potencies.

### **Burden of Disease [11, 22, 24, 25]**

**Table 1: Percentage of men above 15 years having high or very high blood sugar and hypertension in India or are taking medicine to control blood sugar and hypertension (Source- NFHS 5, 2019-21)**

Indicator	Gender	Urban	Rural	Total
Percentage of men age 15 years and above who have high or very high blood sugar level and taking medicine to control blood sugar level	Male	17.9	14.5	15.6
Percentage of Men age 15 years and above who have elevated blood pressure or taking medicine to control blood pressure	Male	26.6	22.7	24.0

The above table implies that hypertensive and diabetic people are at risk of being prostate related cases. This reflects the magnitude of the problem in the country as well as the steps that the nation needs to take to deal with the crisis. So 39.6% of males in the age group of 15 years and above currently are the target groups to be converted to BHP cases or the prostate related problems. These are the high risk cases as they have hypertension and high blood sugar. It is significant to note that rural India is more hypertensive than urban India. As mentioned above, concomitant hypertension is prevalent among 25% of cases in 60+ population.

In India, Homoeopathy is the third preferred system of treatment after Allopathy and Ayurveda. About 10% of the population depend on Homoeopathy for their health issues.

Homoeopathy is used by 10% of the population in India. So, out of the 1300 million populations, 130 million use Homoeopathy or 130 million use Homoeopathy for their health issues. These 130 million consist of all age groups i.e. infant to old age. A section among the 15+ age group suffers from BPH as per the epidemiological studies. Considering that, this group is 8% of the population in India (65+ year age group) or 10.4 crore or about 100 millions. Out of this 100 millions, 25% have concomitant hypertension or 25 million have this condition. 100 million people are at risk of BPH. So the total Chronic prostatic disease cases will be 100 millions. As 10% of total population use homoeopathy, 10 million of this population use homoeopathy currently. So if homoeopathy is integrated in to the prostatic Health (PH) battle in India, 100 million people can be saved from being cases related to prostate problems like prostate cancer.

## CONCLUSION [9-25]

As all drugs in homoeopathy have a group of mental symptoms, Homoeopathy is and will be effective against prostate disorders in general. The current article adds another feather in the Homoeopathic cap as it can deal with the probable upcoming of large number of cases of prostatic disorders in view of high stress levels due to the ongoing COVID 19 crisis. However, it should be also seen that along with constitutional/deep acting/polychrest homoeopathic medicines, specific medicines are also required to deal with the cases. Simultaneously, nutrition, counselling and all psychic health modalities like life style modification and stress reduction are adhered in each case.

In fact, the detailed case taking of a case & empathetic hearing are the elements of supportive therapy as prostatic cases are chronic and resistant. The Homoeopathic approach of case-taking/anamnesis exactly fits into the criteria of supportive therapy. Hence, as a part of treatment, the supportive therapy is inherent in Homoeopathic treatment.

The Homoeopathic fraternity should be ready to cover the masses as there is no other therapeutic system that can cover the masses effectively while being economical and cost effective. Simultaneously, it has a wide range of medicines as seen in the contents of the sections mentioned above.

### Declaration of the lead author

Prof. Shankar Das was the Ph.D. guide of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. 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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