

SEBORRHEIC DERMATITIS AND HOMEOPATHY ŁOJOTOKOWE ZAPALENIE SKÓRY I HOMEOPATIA

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Our Dermatol Online. 2011; 2(4): 207-209

Date of submission: 10.08.2011 / acceptance: 29.08.2011

Conflicts of interest: None

Abstract

Introduction: Seborrheic dermatitis is a common, usually mild skin condition affecting both sexes. Infants as well as adults may be afflicted. It may cause discomfort when not properly treated. Seborrheic dermatitis is in the spectrum of diseases found frequently in HIV infected patients and in people with AIDS. Various treatment modalities exist, all aimed at control and not cure of the disease. Homeopathy is a system of treatment that is cheap, apparently free of side-effects, does not interact with regular medications and is widely applicable in many fields of medicine, including dermatology. Any new, but efficacious, treatment modality is always welcome in dermatology.

Materials and methods: Two patients with seborrheic dermatitis of varying severity and duration were treated with homeopathy and the results documented.

Results: The patients recovered fully and are still in remission years later.

Conclusions: Homeopathy may be of use in the treatment of acute and chronic seborrheic dermatitis. Since it is cheap, free of side-effects and does not interfere with regular medication, it may become an attractive option in the treatment of this disorder, especially in patients with multiple pathologies.

Streszczenie

Wprowadzenie: Łojotokowe zapalenie (ŁZS) skóry jest częstym, zazwyczaj łagodną dolegliwością skórną, występującą u obu płci. Zarówno niemowlęta, jak i dorośli mogą być dotknięci tym schorzeniem. ŁZS może powodować dyskomfort, gdy jest nie właściwie leczone. Łojotokowe zapalenie skóry należy do spektrum chorób często rozpoznawalnych u pacjentów zakażonych HIV i chorych na AIDS. Istnieją różne metody leczenia, wszystkie jednak mają na celu kontrolę, a nie leczenie choroby. Homeopatia jest systemem leczenia, który jest tani, w znacznym stopniu wolny od skutków ubocznych, nie wchodzi w interakcje z regularnie stosowanymi lekami i jest szeroko stosowane w wielu dziedzinach medycyny, w tym w dermatologii. Każdy nowy, pod warunkiem że skuteczny, sposób leczenia jest zawsze mile widziany w dermatologii.

Materiał i metody: Dwóch pacjentów z łojotokowym zapaleniem skóry o różnym stopniu nasilenia i czasie trwania leczono homeopatią, a wyniki udokumentowano.

Wyniki: Objawy ustąpiły całkowicie a pacjenci są nadal w kilkuletniej remisji.

Wnioski: Homeopatia może być użyteczna w leczeniu ostrego i przewlekłego łojotokowego zapalenia skóry. Ponieważ leczenie jest tanie, bez skutków ubocznych i nie koliduje z regularnym podawaniem leków, może stać się atrakcyjną alternatywą w leczeniu tej choroby, zwłaszcza u pacjentów z wieloma patologiami.

Key words: seborrhea; dermatitis; topical steroids; homeopathy; ignatia; magnesia carbonica

Słowa kluczowe: łojotok; zapalenie skóry; miejscowe steroidy; homeopatia; ingatia; magnesia carbonica

Introduction

Seborrheic dermatitis is a common, usually mild skin condition affecting both sexes. Infants as well as adults may be afflicted. It may cause discomfort when not properly treated. Seborrheic dermatitis is in the spectrum of diseases found frequently in HIV infected patients and in people with AIDS. Various treatment modalities exist, all aimed at control and not cure of the disease. Amongst these are topical antiparasitic, antifungal and steroid creams, all with varying efficacy

and limitations of usage. Homeopathy is a system of treatment that is cheap, apparently free of side-effects, does not interact with regular medications and is widely applicable in many fields of medicine, including dermatology. Two cases of seborrheic dermatitis of long-duration treated with homeopathy are presented.

Materials and methods

Two female patients were treated with homeopathy and the results were recorded.

Patient 1

A 25 year-old female, with a facial skin rash that had been on and off for years with a severe flare one month before presentation. She had been treated with methylprednisolone cream, with limited effect. She felt that stress was a major contributing factor to her flares. She had stopped smoking 8 years prior to presentation. Her past medical history was significant for mild hepatomegaly with raised enzyme levels, gastritis and suspected pelvic inflammatory disease. She had also had an appendectomy. On examination, she was found to have a scaling, erythematous rash, with poorly defined borders, concentrated around the central face. There were no body lesions. She received the homeopathic medicine Ignatia, in the M potency, once. She was asked to stop using methylprednisolone and sulphur creams and to use a cream containing aloe vera as an adjuvant to homeopathic treatment. She also received acupuncture treatment for her abdominal pains. An aggravation followed cessation of the steroid creams and one month later, the lesions had remitted and remain remitted today, 2 years after the onset of treatment.

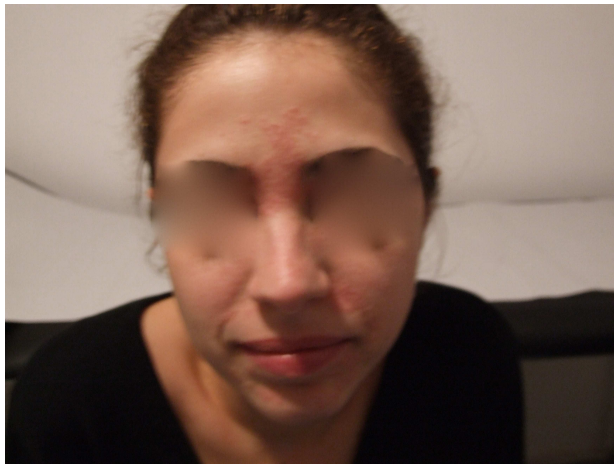


Figure 1. Seborrheic dermatitis



Figure 2. Seborrheic dermatitis

Patient 2

A 42 year-old female presented with an asymptomatic facial and scalp eruption that had been treated for years with methylprednisolone and sulphur creams. The eruption was exacerbated during periods of emotional stress. Her prior medical history was

significant for bilateral mammary dysplasia, which had been treated with hormonal and antiinflammatory creams as well as mild lumbar disc disease. On examination, she was found to have a slightly brown, scaling rash extending beyond the borders of the hairy scalp, with circinate borders. She received the homeopathic medicine Magnesia carbonica at CH200 potency (the M potency was unavailable), on a weekly basis. Two months later, the lesions remitted. She has occasional slight exacerbations during periods of great stress, but is otherwise completely lesion free.



Figure 3. Seborrheic dermatitis

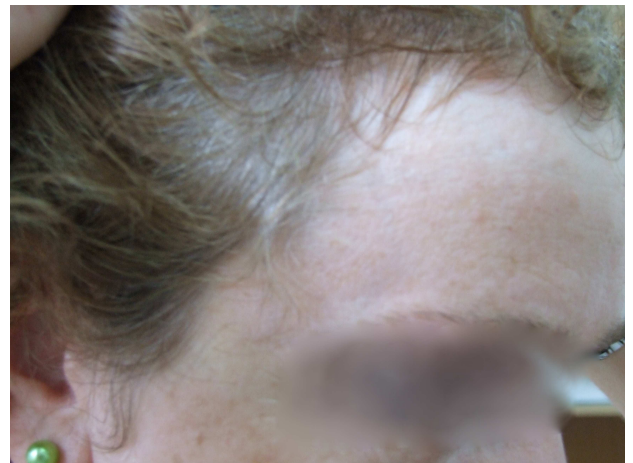


Figure 4. Seborrheic dermatitis

Discussion

Seborrheic dermatitis is a common skin disorder associated with increased activity of the sebaceous glands, though not considered to be a disorder of the sebaceous glands themselves [1,2]. It may affect all ages, but is very common in childhood, affecting about 10% of children, most under 3 months old [3]. It is more frequent amongst HIV-infected individuals¹ and individuals with neurologic disorders [4].

Various treatment modalities have been tried, including topical selenium sulphide, ketoconazole, steroids and topical calcineurin inhibitors, with varying success [1,2,4].

Homeopathy was first started by the German physician S. Hahnemann and its use is widespread in Europe today. It is based on the use of high dilutions of substances and,

until recently, the efficacy of such high dilutions was believed to be scientifically untenable. Recent evidence shows that these dilutions actually work. A team led by the Nobel Prize winner Luc Montagnier showed that bacterial DNA in aqueous dilutions emitted electromagnetic waves [5]. These dilutions of DNA were similar to those dilutions used in homeopathic medicines. The emitted electromagnetic waves were found to be associated with the formation in solution of well-defined polymeric nanoparticles. The presence of nanoparticles of the original substances in high dilutions of homeopathic medicines was clearly shown by other workers using transmission electron microscopy, as well as inductively coupled plasma-atomic emission spectroscopy [6]. They demonstrated that such dilutions contain something after all. Their work, as well as that of the group led by Prof. Montagnier give credence to the value of homeopathic medicines, though do not yet provide a scientific mechanism for how these remedies work in the human body.

We have found homeopathy to be very helpful in the therapy of recalcitrant verucca vulgaris in patients with diabetes mellitus. In these cases it was also found to be

useful improving metabolic control as shown by the reduction in HBA1c levels, though this was not the aim of treatment. It may therefore be of value in improving diabetic control [7]. Homeopathy can also be useful in the treatment of severe acne of long duration [8]. In both situations, homeopathic therapy was found to be free of side-effects, cheap and to not react in any way with the patients concomitant medications, where these were the case.

Conclusions

Seborrheic dermatitis is a common cutaneous disorder and is frequently encountered in children, especially those below 3 months of age. Various treatment modalities exist. Homeopathy may provide a cheap and effective means of treating this disorder. Any new treatment modality that holds the promise of efficacy is always welcome in dermatology. Clinical studies may be required to conclusively establish homeopathy as one of the treatment modalities available to patients for the therapy of seborrheic dermatitis.

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