

Efficacy of Homoeopathic Medicine in the Management of Diabetic Gangrene

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Abstract

The following paper describes the positive outcome of homoeopathic treatment in case of diabetic gangrene in feet which causes a large non healing ulcer followed after surgery. According to symptoms Secale cornutum and Tuberculinum bovinum in LM potency was given to the patient and the gangrene was healed successfully with the homoeopathic remedy.

Material and Methodology: *The case of a 65years old gentleman presented here a known case of diabetic gangrene in feet which causes a large non healing ulcer followed after surgery. The ulcer was healed and gangrene removed considered the efficacy of homoeopathic remedy in case of gangrene.*

Conclusion: *Following the concept of individualization homoeopathic medicine Secale cornutum followed Tuberculinum bovinum was seen in the treatment of diabetic gangrene.*

Keywords: Homoeopathy, gangrene, Ulcer, Secale cornutum, Staphisagria, Tuberculinum bovinum.

INTRODUCTION:

Gangrene refers to the death of body tissue due to either a lack of blood flow or a serious bacterial infection. Gangrene commonly affects the extremities, including your toes, fingers and limbs, but it can also occur in your muscles and internal organs.

Your chances of developing gangrene are higher if you have an underlying condition that can damage your blood vessels and affect blood flow, such as diabetes or hardened arteries (atherosclerosis). In the allopathic or modern system of treatments for gangrene include surgery to remove dead tissue, antibiotics and hyperbaric oxygen therapy [1].

SYMPTOMS:

When gangrene affects your skin, signs and symptoms may include:

- Skin discoloration — ranging from pale to blue, purple, black, bronze or red, depending on the type of gangrene you have
- Swelling or the formation of blisters filled with fluid on the skin
- A clear line between healthy and damaged skin
- Sudden, severe pain followed by a feeling of numbness
- A foul-smelling discharge leaking from a sore
- Thin, shiny skin, or skin without hair
- Skin that feels cool or cold to the touch

If you have a type of gangrene that affects tissues beneath the surface of your skin, such as gas gangrene or internal gangrene, you may notice that:

- The affected tissue is swollen and very painful
- You're running a low-grade fever and generally feel unwell

A condition called septic shock can occur if a bacterial infection that originated in the gangrenous tissue spreads throughout your body.

Signs and symptoms of septic shock include:

- Low blood pressure
- Fever, possibly, though temperature may also run lower than the normal 96.8 F (36 C)
- Rapid heart rate
- Lightheadedness
- Shortness of breath
- Confusion [1].

CAUSES:

Gangrene may occur due to one or some of the following causes:

- **Lack of blood supply.** Your blood provides oxygen, nutrients to feed your cells, and immune system components, such as antibodies, to ward off infections. Without a proper blood supply, cells can't survive, and your tissue decays.
- **Infection.** If bacteria thrive unchecked for long, infection can take over and cause your tissue to die, causing gangrene.
- **Trauma.** Wounds that are traumatic, such as gunshot wounds or crushing injuries from car crashes, can cause bacteria to invade tissues deep within the body. When such tissues are infected, gangrene can occur [1].

TYPES OF GANGRENE:

- **Dry gangrene.** Dry gangrene is characterized by dry and shriveled skin ranging in color from brown to purplish blue or black. Dry gangrene may develop slowly. It occurs most commonly in people who have arterial blood vessel disease, such as atherosclerosis, or in people who have diabetes.
- **Wet gangrene.** Gangrene is referred to as "wet" if there's a bacterial infection in the affected tissue. Swelling, blistering and a wet appearance are common features of wet gangrene. It may develop after a severe burn, frostbite or injury. It often occurs in people with diabetes who unknowingly injure a toe or foot. Wet gangrene needs to be treated immediately because it spreads quickly and can be fatal.
- **Gas gangrene.** Gas gangrene typically affects deep muscle tissue. If you have gas gangrene, the surface of your skin may initially appear normal.

As the condition progresses, your skin may become pale and then evolve to a gray or purplish red color. A bubbly appearance to your skin may become apparent, and the affected skin may make a crackling sound when you press on it because of the gas within the tissue.

Gas gangrene is most commonly caused by infection with the bacterium *Clostridium perfringens*, which develops in an injury or surgical wound that's depleted of blood supply. The bacterial infection produces toxins that release gas — hence the name "gas" gangrene — and cause tissue death. Like wet gangrene, gas gangrene can be life-threatening.

- **Internal gangrene.** Gangrene that affects one or more of your organs, such as your intestines, gallbladder or appendix, is called internal gangrene. This type of gangrene occurs when blood flow to an internal organ is blocked — for example, when your intestines bulge through a weakened area of muscle in your abdomen (hernia) and become twisted. Internal gangrene may cause fever and severe pain. Left untreated, internal gangrene can be fatal.
- **Fournier's gangrene.** Fournier's gangrene involves the genital organs. Men are more often affected, but women can develop this type of gangrene as well. Fournier's gangrene usually arises due to an infection in the genital area or urinary tract and causes genital pain, tenderness, redness and swelling.
- **Progressive bacterial synergistic gangrene (Meleney's gangrene).** This rare type of gangrene typically occurs after an operation, with painful skin lesions developing one to two weeks after surgery [1].

RISK FACTORS:

Several factors increase your risk of developing gangrene. These include:

- **Dyslipidemia:** High level of total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL and low level of HDL level causes narrowed arteries and also a role in diabetes and hamper the blood circulation to an area of the body.
- **Diabetes.** If you have diabetes, your body doesn't produce enough of the hormone insulin (which helps your cells take up blood sugar) or is resistant to the effects of insulin. High blood sugar levels can eventually damage blood vessels, decreasing or interrupting blood flow to a part of your body.
- **Blood vessel disease.** Hardened and narrowed arteries (atherosclerosis) and blood clots also can block blood flow to an area of your body.
- **Severe injury or surgery.** Any process that causes trauma to your skin and underlying tissue, including an injury or frostbite, increases your risk of developing gangrene, especially if you have an underlying condition that affects blood flow to the injured area.

- **Smoking.** People who smoke have a higher risk of gangrene.
- **Obesity.** Obesity often accompanies diabetes and vascular disease, but the stress of extra weight alone can also compress arteries, leading to reduced blood flow and increasing your risk of infection and poor wound healing.
- **Immunosuppression.** If you have an infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or if you're undergoing chemotherapy or radiation therapy, your body's ability to fight off an infection is impaired.
- **Medications or drugs that are injected.** In rare instances, certain medications and illegal drugs that are injected have been shown to cause infection with bacteria that cause gangrene [1].

PREVENTION:

Here are a few suggestions to help you reduce your risk of developing gangrene:

- **Maintain lipid profile:** Maintaining optimum level of total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL & HDL cholesterol by strictly control diet habit and adequate physical exercise.
- **Care for your diabetes.** If you have diabetes, make sure you examine your hands and feet daily for cuts, sores and signs of infection, such as redness, swelling or drainage. Ask your doctor to examine your hands and feet at least once a year, and try to maintain control over your blood sugar levels.
- **Lose weight.** Excess pounds not only put you at risk of diabetes but also place pressure on your arteries, constricting blood flow and putting you at risk of infection and slow wound healing.
- **Don't use tobacco.** The chronic use of tobacco products can damage your blood vessels.
- **Help prevent infections.** Wash any open wounds with a mild soap and water and try to keep them clean and dry until they heal.
- **Watch out when the temperature drops.** Frostbitten skin can lead to gangrene because frostbite reduces blood circulation in an affected area. If you notice that any area of your skin has

become pale, hard, cold and numb after prolonged exposure to cold temperatures, call your doctor [1].

CASE STUDY:

A gentleman age 65 years Muslim with fair complexion presented with high diabetes with gangrene in toe and large ulcer by amputation up to metatarsal bone of left feet. He first admitted in BERDEM hospital and had amputation of great toe due to gangrene. After amputation his surgical wound does not heal but next two fingers change blackish color and start gangrene. Now he goes to Apollo hospital Dhaka and had amputation of another two fingers. But the new surgical wound was not healing to form a large ulceration. Then the doctor did a CT angiogram of legs. CT angiogram results show lack of blood supply up to mid-thigh. So doctors are decided to amputate his leg from mid-thigh. The patient does not agree with this and is released from hospital and came to my chamber for treatment without amputation.

Chief complaints:

- Large surgical wound in left feet.
- Severe burning pain.
- Pain temporarily ameliorated by cold application.
- Blackish discoloration of tip of 4th finger of same feet.
- Diabetes not controlled 18gm/dl in empty stomach.

Physical general symptoms:

- Sweat: Profuse.
- Thirst: Thirsty
- Urine: Normal.
- Stool: Normal regular.
- Bath: Regular don't wet the feet according to doctor advice.
- Sensitiveness: Hot patient.
- Mouth & Tongue: NAD
- Appetite: Normal.
- Desire/aversion on food: Desire sweet, milk.
- Long history of smoking.

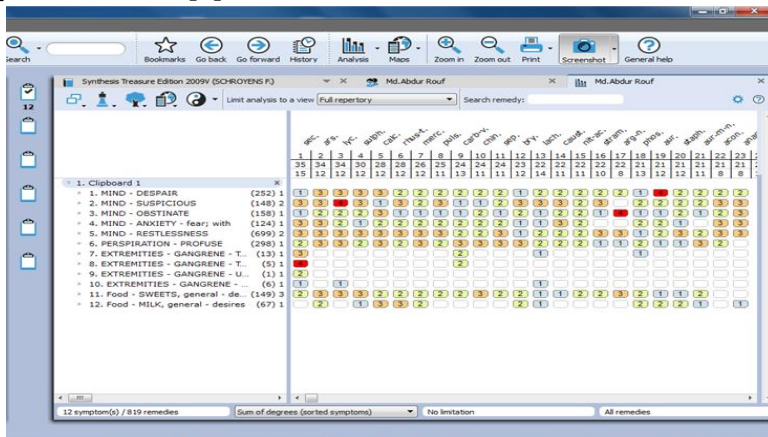
Mental symptoms:

- Restlessness.
- Despair.
- Suspicious.
- Obstinate.
- Anxiety fear with.

Totality of symptoms for repertorisation:

- Despair.
- Suspicious.
- Obstinate.
- Anxiety fear with.
- Restlessness.
- Perspiration profuse.
- Gangrene feet.
- Gangrene toe.
- Gangrene toe old people in.
- Gangrene diabetic.
- Food - sweet desire.
- Food – milk desire.

Repertorization [4]



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Date of visit	Symptoms	Remedy	Comments
09-11-2015	Large ulceration due to amputation of three toes. Watery oozing from wound. Severe pain and burning[2].	<i>Staphisagria-LM2</i> Morning and evening for 3 days	For ill effect of amputation. Insulin should be continued. Zero oil food with low carbohydrate & high protein diet are advised.
12-11-2015	Stop watery oozing from wound. Severe pain and burning reduced[2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM2</i> Daily morning for 7days	According to totality and after reparorization. Diet habit are same as before.
19-11-2015	Severe pain and burning reduced gradually. Escape of blood after dressing [2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM3,LM4,LM5</i> Daily morning for 21 days.	According to totality rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before.
14-12-2015	Severe pain and burning much reduced. Blood glucose level also reduced [2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM6, LM7</i> every alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to reduce insulin level according to glucose level.
15-01-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are shrink in size. Blood glucose level also reduced[2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM8, LM9</i> every alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to reduce insulin level according to glucose level.
17-02-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are shrink in size. Blood glucose level also reduced [2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM10, LM11</i> every alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to reduce insulin level according to glucose level.
27-02-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are shrink in size. Blood glucose level some time below normal level [2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM12, LM13</i> every alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to reduce insulin level according to glucose level
29-03-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are shrink in size. Blood glucose level always below normal level[2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM12, LM13</i> every alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to avoid insulin.
05-05-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are healed but oozing of blood where bony partout side the skin especially when walking. Blood glucose level always normal level [2,4].	<i>Secale cor - LM14, LM15</i> every alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to avoid insulin.
18-06-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are healed but oozing of blood where bony partout side the skin especially when walking. Blood glucose level always normal level [2,4,7,8].	<i>Tuberculinum bovi LM2, LM3</i> alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy anti miasmatic remedy prescribed. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to avoid insulin.
02-08-2016	Less pain and burning. Wound area are healed, no oozing of blood, bony part are dropped. Blood glucose level always normal level [2,4,7,8].	<i>Tuberculinum bovi LM4, LM5</i> alternative morning for 28 days.	According to rules of homoeopathy anti miasmatic remedy prescribed. Diet habit are same as before. Advise to avoid insulin.
07-09-2016	No pain and burning. Wound area are healed ad good looking. Blood glucose level always in normal level.	<i>No medicine advise, and follow-up after 3 month or if any complain arise.</i>	Diet habit are same as before. Regular physical exercise or walking for 45 minutes.

Pictures during treatment period



Follow up after long time, Date 05-01-2019



DISCUSSION:

The first remedy *Staphisagria* was used as complication for surgical wounds, then *secale cor* was prescribed based on the general symptoms that the patient exhibited (especially severe burning pain with coldness of affected part relief by cold application which was strong). After development gradually increasing the potency according to the law of organon of medicine [2,3,5]. His diet habit is change (low carbohydrate, more protein with zero oil cooking) [6] blood sugar gradually reduced and insulin doses also reduced. Above treatment continue up to complete wound healing and blood sugar in optimum level.

As diabetes and atherosclerosis / dry gangrene are arises from tubercular miasm for this according to totality *Tuberculinum bovinum* is given [7,8].

CONCLUSION:

It is illogical to say that every 'so-called surgical' diseases are true surgical. A boil, carbuncle or abscess may be surgical to an allopath. But from very beginning in holistic science, homoeopathy does not believe the reductionists.

Homoeopathic approach towards gangrene is more totalistic and holistic. Rather than considering gangrene as a local problem, they are considered to be an affection of the constitution. Homoeopathic treatment is based on some constitutional approach for management of

any disease. Not only does homoeopathy help in resolving the gangrene that have already formed, it also helps to preventing the recurrence of gangrene.

Declaration of patient consent:

The authors certify that they have obtained all appropriate patient consent forms. In the form the patient(s) has/have given his/her/their consent for his/her/their images and other clinical information to be reported in the journal. The patients understand that their names and initials will not be published and due efforts will be made to conceal their identity, but anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

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