

Homeopathy in Dentistry: Is There a Role?

Dear Editor,

Dental health care professionals are facing challenges in managing acute or chronic dental conditions due to failure in regression of symptoms or side effects of traditional treatment regimens. Complementary therapies are now becoming the rule rather than the exception in the management of headache and facial pain. It is incumbent on physicians to be aware of and to have a working knowledge of these increasingly popular modalities. A number of unconventional medical methods are being used in dentistry. These include regulation thermography, homeopathy, nosode therapy, acupuncture, magnetic field therapy, ozone therapy, Mora therapy, and lymph drainage.^[1]

Complementary medicines are defined as herbal medicines, homeopathic remedies, and essential oils. Herbal medicine is completely different from homeopathy, about 65% of whose products from plants, with the others coming from animals (e.g., honeybee) or minerals, such as sulfur. The basic principle of homeopathy is selection of a remedy, which if given to a healthy individual will produce a range of symptoms similar to those observed in the ill patient ("like cures like"). Only minute amounts are given to avoid toxicity. Only one remedy is used at any one time. Dilute tinctures are used rather than concentrated ones. In homeopathic practice, it is common to use medication in tablet form. The standard tinctures used in Western tradition herbal medicine are very different than those used in homeopathy. Alcohol is used to dissolve the plant, and the final product is not diluted. Thus, these remedies are concentrated, highly potent preparations and are usually taken as the unmodified liquid tincture.^[2]

Homeopathy is the second largest system of medicine in the today's world recognized by the World Health Organization.^[3] It is an emerging field of dental medicine that is useful in management of conditions affecting orofacial structures. Belladonna is useful for toothache, early dental abscess, and bruxism as well as in cases of postextraction, for example, dry socket. Natrum muriaticum drug is used in cases which occur due to cold sores and fever blisters, lips and corners of mouth dry and cracked lips. Antimonium crudum, *Aconitum napellus*, *Aranea diadema*, *Calcarea carbonica*, and *Chamomilla* are useful for a toothache. Arsenicum album is useful for unhealthy, bleeding gums, for diseases involving pulp and periapical region. Aconite can be used for panic, fright, and general mental and physical restlessness or sudden violent attacks, trigeminal neuralgia. *Calcarea phosphorica* is useful when mouth cannot be opened without pain. Phosphorous is the drug of choice for conditions related to salivation as well as to control the postsurgical bleeding. For aphthous ulcers, candidiasis, and oral lichen planus, borax can be given. *Calcarea carbonica* is used for a delayed eruption. *Kreosotum* is used for the decay of milk teeth.^[4,5]

Homeopathy is a safe and natural alternative that is effective in both adults and children. Homeopathic remedies are used in dentistry to improve the psychological or emotional condition of patients without the side effects of conventional drugs. The knowledge and understanding

of homeopathic approach of treatment in dental diseases are still an ongoing process, and further research should be carried out in this regard.

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