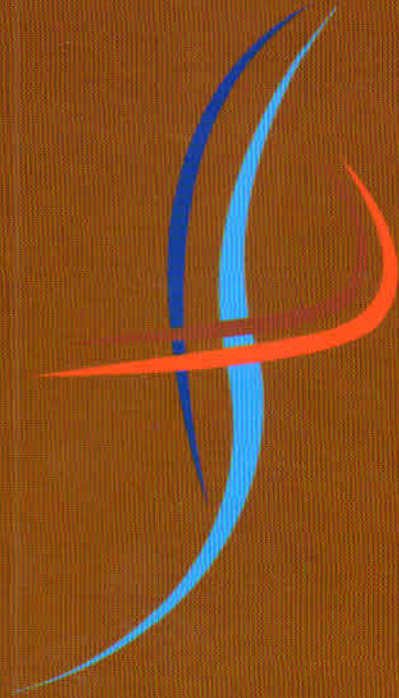


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CONTENTS

Editorial	4
Meaning of Important Rubrics from Dr. Bogers Synoptic Key	5
Palliative Care in Homoeopathy	8
Parkinsonism and Homoeopathy	13
A Common Elimination Disorder-Bedwetting & its Homoeopathic Management	18
Efficacy of Homeopathy In Cases Of Sciatica	23
Crossword	28

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PALLIATIVE CARE IN HOMOEOPATHY

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Abstract

Both the healthcare provider and the patient are stressed by deciding to treat symptoms rather than the underlying problem. The patient, their family, and their family doctor must be involved in palliative care. Awareness of the physician's and society's views towards death and dying, education, constructive denial, knowing when to palliate, patient selection, and palliative care as an alternative to 'curative' therapy are all necessary components of proper care. To make choosing a patient easier, check lists are provided along with a definition of the family doctor's responsibilities. In the final stages of the patient's life, the patient must remain in charge of the situation, with the healthcare professional serving as an advisor, informant, and care coordinator. Palliative method of treatment is most discussed topic among homoeopathy.

Keywords: palliative care, curative therapy, homoeopathy

Introduction

Word meaning of Palliation

Palliation = to relieve, to ease

Definition:

Palliation is define as temporary relieving of most annoying symptoms of the disease in order to ease the distressed state of patient.

Palliative mode of treatment is also known as antipathy mode of treatment.

ANTIPATHY = ANTI (opposite) + PATHOS (suffering)

Principle:-

CONTRARIA CONTRARIIS CURANTER

Opposite cures opposite.

Palliation in Homeopathy

In treatable naturally occurring miasmatic sick states, homoeopathy is a curative medicine. Only when the vital force is prepared to respond to the same and stronger treatment supplied is a cure conceivable. Vital force attempts to restore health by using similar medicine to help the afflicted

organ resume its normal functioning. But in some cases, there may be no cure since the affected organs are either congenitally absent or injured. In such conditions like:

1. Incurable Cases

In incurable cases with gross tissue damage, where deep-acting constitutional remedies cannot be used and where permanent cure is not possible, only palliative homeopathic remedies are recommended.

H.A.Roberts says, "In incurable conditions, the administration of the similar remedy almost always ameliorates the situation, at least for three or four days, and usually for a long period. Then we may have a return of symptoms, when the indicated remedy will be called into use again". H.A.Roberts confidently summarizes, "in incurable cases or seemingly incurable cases, we must not put a limitation on the possibilities of the similimum remedy, for in many seemingly incurable conditions the similimum will so completely meet the situation as to obliterate the symptomatology of disease and the pathology, and will restore the patient to health."

2. Cure cannot be achieved

In cases where the most vital parts of the body are lacking or are damaged like congenital atrophy of kidneys, some cases after the surgical removal of the organs, etc, palliation is the only possible method.

For example: In cases where the thyroid gland is removed either partially or in total because of any malignant conditions, a cure cannot be achieved, as the patient is lacking the organs to be stimulated.

The patient has to depend on palliative or supplementary medications throughout his life. In the case where the palliative remedy is recommended, the palliative homeopathic remedy must also be selected based on the symptom similarity only.

Dr. J.T.Kent says "the physician who applies the single remedy in potentized form under the law of cure for any length of time will easily be convinced that there is no other way of palliation that holds out permanent hope for the patient." H.A.Roberts says "the basis of cure is the fundamental law of similia. The law of similia is the fundamental law also in the palliation of incurable states".

Hahnemann also allows the application of Antipathy measures, according to the footnote to aphorism 67,

The antipathic palliative measures like gentle electrical shocks, strong coffee, and application of heat can be given to stimulate the irritability and sensitivity of the vital force.

1. In the most urgent cases, where there is a danger to life and no time for the homeopathic remedy to act.

2. Sudden accidental cases resulting in the life-threatening state of the patient, for example, asphyxia, suspended animation from lightning, suffocation, freezing, drowning, etc.

3. In acute poisoning cases.

The Pros and Cons of Palliation

Pros of Palliation

1. In life-threatening conditions, some initial relief is possible by palliation.

Cons of Palliation

1. Palliation is not a curative process, it is an extremely faulty method. After initial relief, the disease recurs again either in
2. The condition of the patient becomes worse after the initial relief of symptoms. To relieve the patient progressively increasing doses of drugs will be needed repeatedly.
3. Repeated use of palliative remedies in progressive doses might lead to the production of artificial drugs or iatrogenic diseases.
4. Palliation is a one-sided symptomatic treatment; only a few troubling symptoms are covered to relieve the patient. Removal of the symptoms in total is only a cure; hence palliation is an extremely unscientific treatment.
5. Prolonged palliative treatment will aggravate the symptom at every step of repetition of the remedy.

Conditions where Palliative Mode is permissible

(According to footnote to § 67)

In the footnote to § 67, Hahnemann explains the conditions where a homeopath can make use of antipathic principles. Homeopathy, as a rule, is a method intended to cure dynamic miasmatic conditions. The homeopathic medicines, by producing the primary action upon the vital force, induces the secondary curative response.

In this process, the vital force takes a vital and active role in the production of secondary curative action. But there are certain conditions where the stimulation of vital force is either impossible or the vital force has lost the reactive capacity itself.

Example: cases like asphyxia, problems due to lightning, suffocation, freezing or drowning, etc. In such conditions, homeopathic medicines prove ineffective as the secondary curative response cannot be induced.

Hahnemann says, "Only in the most urgent cases, where danger to life and imminent death allow no time for the action of a homeopathic remedy- not hours, sometimes not even quarter hours, and scarcely minutes", it is admissible to apply palliative means.

Palliative procedures like gentle electrical shocks, clusters of strong coffee, a stimulating odour, the gradual application of heat, etc. can be employed. Various antidotes in case of poisoning, like alkalis for mineral acids, Hepar sulphur for metallic poisons, coffee and Camphor for poisoning by Opium, etc. also can be kept into this category.

This is admissible here because when sufficient stimulation is effected, the vital force regains its strength again. But there is a new sect of homeopaths (Mongrel Sect = cross bread dog), which neither practice homeopathy according to its fundamental principles nor treat the patient by other laws. This group of homeopaths does not try hard to find the simillimum to the patient's sufferings to cure them. Due to this, when an ill-selected remedy fails to cure the patient they directly put the blame on homeopathy as unsuitable to such and such cases.

Then they directly administer the allopathic medicines. Selecting a homeopathic remedy is a very laborious process. It demands sincerity and hard work on the physician's part. The selected remedy must cover the entire totality of the patient's symptoms in a similar manner. But these new sects of homeopaths, without giving much importance to the similarity of the symptoms prescribe the medications. Naturally, when the medicine fails to cure the patient, they blame homeopathy and resort to allopathic remedies. This type of practice is neither profitable to the patient nor to the physician.

Palliation & Homoeopathic Medicines

Palliation is usually considered a "medical evil" in homeopathic philosophy.

Palliation of symptoms for incurables is part of our homeopathic literature and history. There are countless references in our books on the uses of homeopathic palliation when a person is incurable. James Tyler Kent told us in Kent's Lectures on Materia Medica, "When we have given up all hope, then we pay more attention to the most painful parts; we pay more attention to the local symptoms, to the group which causes the most suffering and attempt to do patch work...patch him up a little and make him feel more like life, and he will go on to the end with more comfort"

Terminal Stages of Cancer" and outlines indications for 11 pain remedies. These remedies include *Aconite*, *Arsenicum Album*, *AurumMetallicum*—which is used for bone pains, *Cadmium Sulph*—especially for stomach cancer and after bad effects of chemotherapy, *Chelidonium*—especially for pain of cancer that has metastasized to the liver, *Euphorbium* for burning pains of cancer (like *Arsenicum*) but better from cold applications, *Hydrastis*, *Magnesia Phos*, *Nux Vomica*, which Dr. Ramakrishnan says is a good remedy to try when *Arsenicum* has ceased to help, *Opium*, and *Plumbumiodatum*.

Murphy also wrote that *Tarantula* is to be given "to palliate death pains and agony".

Kali Phos "Homeopathic Valium"

Ignatia amara is used during the acute, initial phase of grief immediately before and after death. *Ignatia* is called the "funeral remedy" and is the number one remedy for acute grief. The sooner it is given, the better—not to suppress the grief but to allow for better coping and avoiding consequences of prolonged grief on the body and mind. The intense grief of *Ignatia* can bring

spasmodic weeping, sadness that is inconsolable and despairing, and contradictory feelings like acute rage. A silent grief, suffered inwardly, needs Ignatia also, and symptoms frequently include a lump in the throat. Ignatia assists grief-stricken people and even a home prescriber can successfully use it to help someone through this distressing time. The effects of cumulative loss are known to be especially trying, when spouse, family and friends are lost and loneliness takes over.

Cocculus is known to help those who have been care takers of the sick and now have grief and health problems.

Phosphoric Acidum is for grief when there is very low energy and debility of the nervous system.

Conclusion

Homoeopathy has beneficial effect in treating symptoms including pain, nausea, and weariness, and it can be a useful therapy to the patient's other palliative care alternatives. There is requirement for further study to better comprehend homeopathy's effectiveness in palliative care and to determine the most efficient treatment modalities. Patients with serious or life-threatening conditions have the option of receiving supplementary treatments like homoeopathy. We must research the difficulties that come with using homoeopathy in palliative care, such as problems with standardisation of homoeopathic remedies, the need for more thorough clinical trials, comparative effectiveness studies, and analyses of the best ways to administer and dose homoeopathic medicines.

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