

Homoeopathic Management of Acute Behavioral Disturbance of Athletes: A Case Report

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Abstract

The athletes are most vulnerable to suffer from any mental disorders. The competitive nature of this genre leads to lot of societal pressures and self-esteem issues. Data suggests that there is a broadly high prevalence of mental disorders in elite athletes as compared to the general population.¹ The acute behavior disturbance due to performance failure is an emergency area, often visible among elite athletes and demands a careful management. A case of such critical situation was treated with Homoeopathy, following Dr. Hahnemann's treatment guidance on acute mental disease management, without any Psychotherapy. The significant improvement was observed within reasonable time without any recurrence reported even after one year. *Belladonna* was found useful for acute behavioral disturbance management.

Keywords: Athletes, Acute behavioural disturbance (ABD), *Belladonna*, Homeopathy, Sports Psychiatry.

Introduction

Mental health is a complete state of well-being in which an individual is able to cope with normal stresses of life, has a productive contribution towards the family and society. The person realizes one's own abilities and has a positive approach towards life.² Mental health is not merely absence of mental disease but an integral part of health. Physical, mental and social wellbeing of anyone can get disturbed. The National Mental Health Survey conducted by the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in 2016 concluded that 1.9% population in India are affected with severe mental disorders during their lifetime and 10.6 % of the population in India requires immediate intervention.³ This is true for persons involved in

strenuous exercise⁴ and recreational sports activities as well.⁵ Those people active in sports and rigorous physical hobbies pay more attention towards physical health. However, it is the mental health of any individual that also that impacts their performance. The pressures to perform and excel in every play are certainly stress factors for all involved in sports activities. Other stressors like staying fit, heavy exercises, injury during sports, etc. also impact their mental wellbeing.⁶ The mental health in sports persons is generally overlooked and they are supposed to be sufficiently fit. In situations, when any individual is deprived of their hobby or passion, their state of mental health gets affected and subsequently causes impact on their level of confidence along with significant adverse effect on physical health. Evidence suggests that improving mental health can lead to substantial improvement of physical health⁷ and for the humans, whether they opt sports as hobby or a career option a good mental health is must to perform well and stay motivated.⁸ The common health issues faced by the athletes are anxiety and depression. Due to the excessive need to perform well every time anxiety issues develop and subsequently depression

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ensues with the inability to do so. Body image issues, overtraining, eating disorders and substance abuse are other major concerns with people involved in sports.⁹⁻¹⁰

Early detection of mental health problems and suitable interventions is essential to maintain the complete health with overall wellbeing and excellence in performance.¹¹ Although the conventional mode of treatment in the area of acute mental illness is found effective, but with the involvement of anti-psychotic drugs; which have several adverse effects on the health of any individual¹² including deterioration of quality of life.¹³ Among the available alternative therapeutic approaches, Homoeopathy is a medical science where the treatment is provided by holistic consideration of mind and body of the patient and the selection of remedy is done on the basis of individualization principle.¹⁴ Homoeopathy has been substantially assessed for its effectiveness in mental health problems.^{15,16} However, no research designed study is available to understand the role of Homoeopathy in Sports Psychiatry. The following case is of an athlete who attended the private Homoeopathic OPD with an acute behavioral disturbance (ABD). The case was registered with the prime objective to explore the role of homoeopathy in the area of handling emergency under Sports Psychiatry.

Methodology of Treatment Plan

Medicine and dose have been selected following the acute mental illness management strategy from aph. 221 to 223 of Organon of Medicine, advised by Dr. SFC Hahnemann¹⁷ after thorough interrogation of the case, followed by repertorisation.¹⁸ Medicines were procured from standard homoeopathic manufacturers.

Patient information

First visit: 08.04.2017

A 14-year-old boy was brought with the complaint of violent behavior since a day. He was behaving like this after he was not selected as finalist in interschool swimming competition. He started shouting in anger and crying when he came back home from school. Parents and relatives complained that he was not taking food or drink since yesterday after that incident.

The boy is a passionate swimmer and stands topper in swimming and horse-riding competitions at school level. He is also good in studies.

On observation, his countenance was full of anger with flushed face, eyes were reddened and he was very restless.

On interrogation, attendant revealed that after coming back from school he confined himself in his study and started hurting himself and throwing books and chairs, banging head on floor, crying loudly and saying that he wants to kill himself. Even after repeated request he was not ready to open the door. They broke the door lock and brought him to the clinic.

On examination, he complained of pounding feeling in chest, heaviness in head with blurred vision. His pulse was quick and feeble.

On verbal communication with the patient through few words of consolation to boost up his morale, there was a firm reply from patient that he had decided to stop playing sports and other related activity after this.

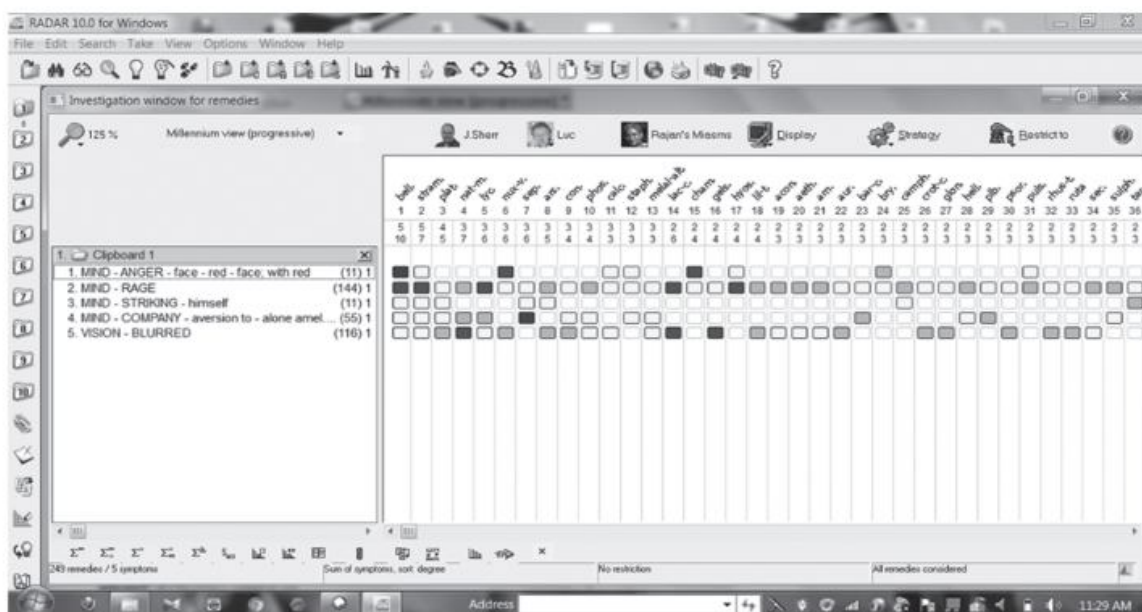
On repertorial analysis, "*Belladonna*", "*Stramonium*" and "*Platina*" scored the higher grade and considering the highest indication *Belladonna* was selected for first prescription.

Belladonna 1M, gtt 2 in 30 ml aqua dist. was prescribed divided in 4 doses. Each dose was administered after 10 succussions of bottle at 15 minutes interval.

Patient was kept under observation for some time. After the second dose the boy looked much settled and calm but was shedding tears. He wanted to go back home as he felt sleepy. He was allowed the same. The next morning father of the patient reported that after taking the 3rd dose of the medicine, he had consumed some light food and slept thereafter. Patient's father also reported that he was sobbing during the time of eating. Patient was called on next day for follow-up.

On 2nd visit dated 08.05.2017, the patient was calm and was replying to the questions attentively. After further analysis by exploring his past history, family history, mind and disposition, physical general including desire, aversion, intolerance, thermals preference of body and other essential parameters to understand miasmatic predominance; antipsoric medicine *Sulphur* 1M single dose, was administered orally.

On 09.06/2017, the second dose of *Sulphur* 1M was repeated. The dose was administered in aqua dist., followed by 10 succussions. In that follow up visit



patient had regained his confidence. He joined his swimming training again and was performing well. There was no remarkable mental or physical complaint reported within a month, except mild military rashes that came up on the chest and back, which disappeared after few days without any medication. On examination, his mental state and cognitive assessment were normal.

On 08/10/2017 the 3rd dose of *Sulphur* 1M with supportive Psychotherapy were provided to the patient, as he informed that he was experiencing mild performance anxiety with fear of failure for his upcoming state level swimming competition. The dose was prescribed in aqua dist., followed by 10 succussions for enhancing the power slightly from the previously administered potency. Placebo and few other short acting medicines for common cold, fever etc. were prescribed in between during the course of treatment.

Even after one year there was no recurrence of acute attack of behavioral disturbance. It was reported by parents later that he is getting reasonable success in his sports career as well as doing good in academic performance.

Discussion

In this case of ABD, the indicated medicine was selected from the non antipsoric group of homeopathic

medicines to manage the acute exacerbation of the latent psora in the first phase of treatment. When the altered behavioral outbreak of the patient settled down, he was prescribed a well indicated antipsoric medicine immediately after, as per the treatment strategy guided by Dr. Hahnemann for acute mental illness management. There was a significant improvement observed in the case following the guidelines noted in Organon of Medicine regarding treatment strategy, selection of the medicine, its potency with repetition in case of acute emergency management under the domain of Sports Psychiatry.¹⁷ *Belladonna* was prescribed for the ABD management, which has been reported in the homeopathic literature as a useful medicine for the treatment of psychiatric complaints.¹⁹⁻²¹

Conclusion

The above case brings to light the usefulness of homeopathy in emergency management of acute behavioral disturbances as well as the competence of the therapy in the domain of Sports Psychiatry. During the entire career of any sports person, there are failures as well as achievements, but the state of the mind needs to be healthy to ensure a productive career and successful life. Homeopathic literature is enriched with medicines that are capable of altering any state of disposition of mind as well as chronic disease of psychic origin, that shall be favorable to fulfil the mental

health needs of a sportsperson. Extensive research with appropriate study design is required to understand the role and effectiveness of Homoeopathy in Sports Psychiatry.

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