

Homeopathic approaches for the management of Psoriasis: A Review

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REVIEW ARTICLE

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ABSTRACT

Psoriasis is a chronic autoimmune disease which not only affects physical but also disturbs psychological and social life of patient. The exact cause of Psoriasis is unknown but it is believed that stress plays a major role in disease pathogenesis. Environmental and genetic factors also contribute towards disease pathogenesis along with disturbed pattern of life style. Psoriasis not only affects health of an individual but also imparts economic burden. It may increase the risk of developing other pathological conditions like heart diseases and diabetes. The science of homeopathy offers various approaches for the management of Psoriasis without any side effect.

Present article explored role of homeopathy in the treatment of Psoriasis as a safer therapeutic option.

Keywords: Psoriasis, Homeopathy, Autoimmune, Lesion, Plaque.

Introduction

Psoriasis is a chronic autoimmune skin disease that changes the life cycle of skin cells. This causes skin cells to multiply up to 10 times faster than normal condition. In normal condition skin cells are regenerated and old cells get replaced after some time of interval but in case of Psoriasis this process becomes fasten. The extra skin cells form scales and red patches that are rough, itchy and sometimes painful. These patches normally localize around the elbow, scalp, knee and lower back but in severe condition these symptoms may appear anywhere on the body. It can start at any age but mostly appear in adults under 35 years of age. The pathogenesis of disease also involves altered auto-immune response in which immune system of body mistakenly attacks on healthy skin cells. Psoriasis is not contagious so it does not spread from one person to another. Reported data revealed that around 125 million peoples suffered with psoriasis globally that means 2-3 percent of the total population suffered with disease. (1,2)

Causative factor of Psoriasis

The etiological factors altered immune response and causes Psoriasis as depicted in **Figure 1**, the major etiological factors of disease are as follows:

- ✓ Stress
- ✓ Infection
- ✓ Allergens
- ✓ Drugs
- ✓ Hereditary
- ✓ Skin trauma
- ✓ Systemic illness

Type of Psoriasis

Psoriasis can be classified on the basis of affected body area & severity of disease as follows:

1. *Mild psoriasis*
2. *Moderate psoriasis*
3. *Severe psoriasis*

The manifestation occurs as per disease severity as shown in **Figure 2**, the clinical symptoms increases with disease progression.

Psoriasis can also be classified on the basis of clinical presentation and prevalence of disease which are as follows:

1. *Plaque Psoriasis*
2. *Guttate Psoriasis*
3. *Erythrodermic psoriasis*

4. Palmoplantar psoriasis

5. Inverse psoriasis

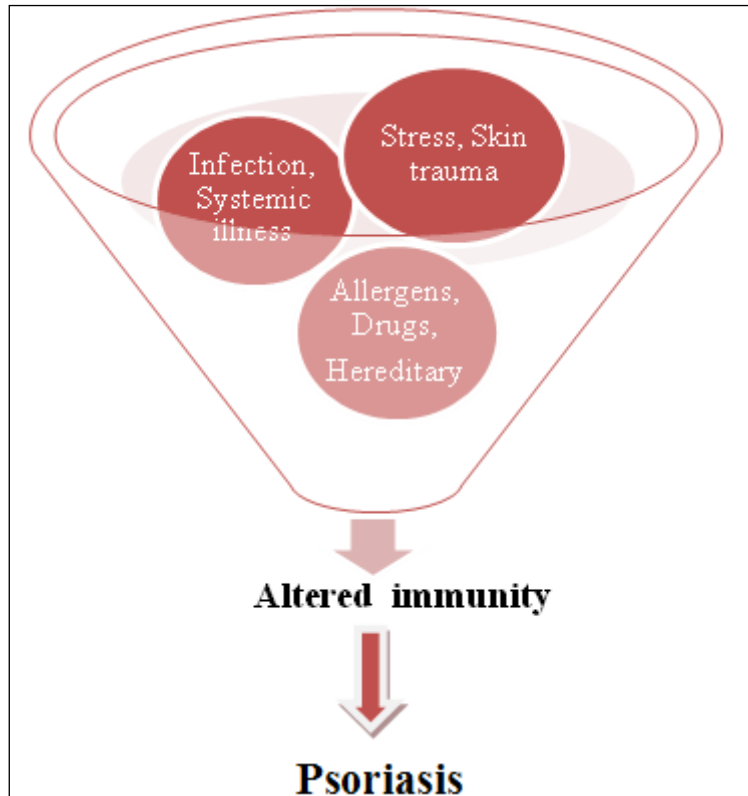


Figure 1. Showing different causes of Psoriasis.

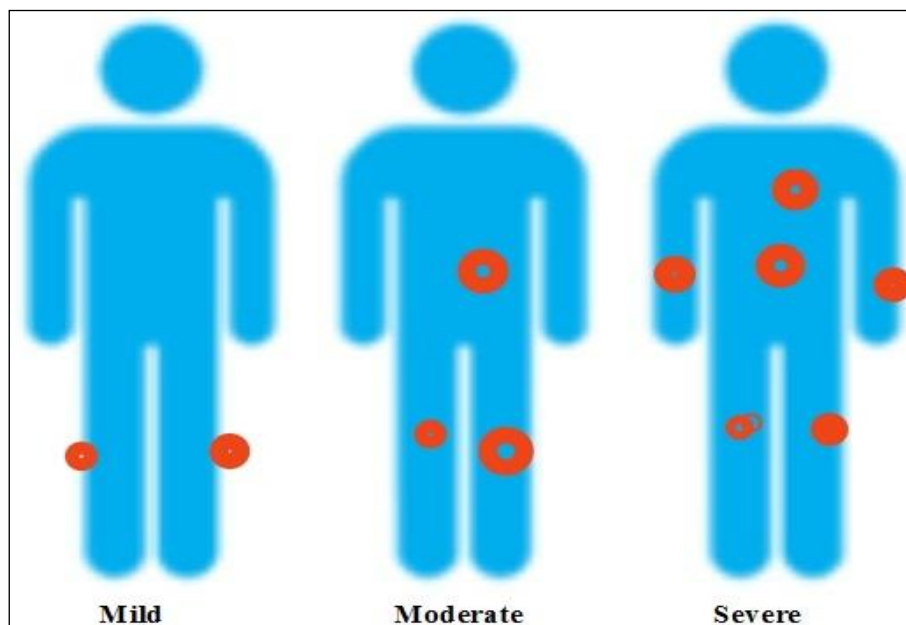


Figure 2. Severity and clinical symptoms of disease.

Plaque Psoriasis

This type of Psoriasis affects 90% of total Psoriatic cases as depicted in **Figure 3**. It is mostly observed as erythematous plaque with sharp boundaries. The lesion distribution is symmetrical in nature, which is mostly localized on the scalp, elbow, knee and lower

back. Early stage of plaque psoriasis involves changes in upper layer of dermis.

Guttate Psoriasis

This type of Psoriasis frequently occurs in children and young, it appears like a small droplet. It generally occurs after streptococcal

infection. The onset of rash occurs suddenly within 2-4 weeks after the bacterial infection. Lesions are mostly seen in the trunk, extremities, face and scalp, sometimes eruption are enlarged and take the shape of plaque psoriasis.

Erythrodermic psoriasis

It is one of the rarest forms of psoriasis which observed as erythematous lesions with or without scaling that covers 80% of the skin surface. The lesion causes severe burns, itching and spreads quickly. Erythrodermic psoriasis damages skin surface, causes serious complications like fluid retention, inflammation, sepsis and heart failure.

Palmoplantar psoriasis

Palmoplantar psoriasis involves symmetrical distribution of main features in

the palm of hands and soles of the feet. This is not a very common form of Psoriasis, the lesions are very thick and dry which cracks and bleeds easily. Palmoplantar psoriasis affects routine activities badly since it imparts difficulty in walking and household work. It is believed that 10-25% of people with palmoplantar psoriasis turned to chronic plaque psoriasis.

Inverse psoriasis

It is localized in skin folds of the body like armpits, groin and under the breast. Disease does not possess scaly nature due to the presence of sweat in skin folds. Patches are red and sometimes moist in touch. The disease involves risk of infections due to the moist patches. The major symptoms are irritation, itching and burning eruption. (3,4)

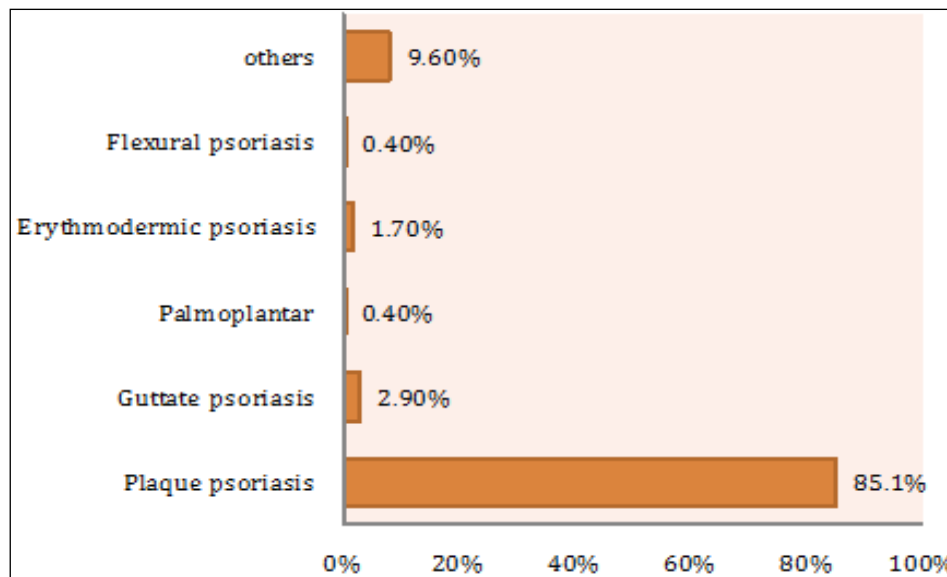


Figure 3. Prevalence of Psoriasis (Percentage Distribution)

Treatment

Natural herbs may be useful in homeopathic treatment:

✚ Aloe

Aloe-vera is a stem cell plant belonging to the family *Liliaceae*, Recent study suggested that active agent of Aloe can be used for the treatment of Psoriasis. Aloe-vera possesses wound healing and anti-inflammatory properties thus can be used in the form of mother tincture as homeopathic medicine for the management of Psoriasis.

✚ *Curcuma longa*

Turmeric belongs to the *Zingiberaceae* family which reduces puffiness, pain and inflammation associated with psoriatic arthritis. Therefore it can be used in the form of mother tincture as homeopathic medicine for the treatment of psoriatic arthritis.

✚ *Silybum marianum*

The common name of this herb is milk thistle and recent research showed that this herb stops Psoriasis outbreak by regulating and improving liver function. It helps to inhibit human t-cells activation and offers anti-inflammatory properties thus decrease improper proliferation of skin cells. Homeopathic physicians used this

drug in the form of mother tincture for improving liver function so this herb can also be used for the treatment of Psoriasis associated with liver dysfunction.

Berberis vulgaris

This herb belongs to the *Berberidaceae* family and used as an antioxidant and anti-inflammatory drug which also prevent toxin formation in the bowel. It offers antimicrobial properties, used in homeopathy for the treatment of urolithiasis and urinary tract infection therefore can also be used as mother tincture or potentized form for the treatment of Psoriasis induced from infection. (5-7,3)

Conclusion

Psoriasis is not an incurable disease, the science of homeopathy stimulates energy of body to regulate healing process and helps to control auto immune disharmony. This article aimed to highlight some useful options for the future research in the field of homeopathy especially for the management of skin disorders like Psoriasis.

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Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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