

Narrative

Comprehensive Approach for Treatment of Mumps

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Abstract

This article deals with two aspects of the management of mumps, namely homoeopathic medicines, and other aspects of management including diet, gurgle, hot or cold application. A combined approach may improve the effect of homoeopathic treatment. Special measures needed for special problems in mumps are also described.

Keywords

Mumps; Homoeopathy; Diet; Orchitis; Childhood infections

Introduction

Mumps is one of the important childhood infections with fever and salivary gland enlargement. Often there is difficulty in opening the mouth (trismus), difficulty in chewing, and difficulty in speech (mumbling speech, hence the name mumps). Although the disease is less frequent now than earlier times, it is still very important for the physician to have a comprehensive idea of managing such cases [1]. This article is divided into two parts – first, deals with homoeopathic medicines; and second, deals with other aspects which will help in management. The proper use of knowledge of both these parts will provide a comprehensive approach for the treatment of mumps.

Homoeopathic Medicines

According to homoeopathic philosophy, mumps can be classified under acute disease

with predominant miasm Psora. In progressive cases of the disease with complications like orchitis, oophritis, pancreatitis and encephalitis, the stage of miasm is Sycotic. Homoeopathic medicines are claimed to produce good results in controlling the symptoms of mumps. With help of clinical repertories and materia medica a group of remedies is listed below which can be used in various stages of mumps. In the first stage when parotitis occurs in mumps some important effective medicines are *Trifolium repens*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Jaborandi*, *Belladonna*, *Chamomilla*, *Pulsatilla nigricans*, and *Mercurius*. As prophylactic, indicated remedy is *Trifolium repens*. In complicated cases of mumps in males when orchitis develops, medicines preferred are *Argentum-met*, *Aurum-met*, *Clematis erecta*, *Pulsatilla-n*, *Rhododendron*, *Spongia*, *Sepia* and *Staphysagria*. In complicated

cases of mumps in females when oophoritis develops, medicines preferred are *Aconitum-n*, *Apis-m*, *Belladonna*, *Colocynth*, *Lachesis-m*, *Lycopodium-c*, *Mag-phos*, *Phosphorus*, *Podophyllum* and *Sabina*. The concept of totality must be compromised while making selection of indicated remedy. Indications of some important medicines are mentioned below ^[2]:

- *Trifolium repens*: To be used as prophylactic against mumps. Sensation of congestion in salivary glands, pain and hardening especially submaxillary glands, mouth filled with saliva worse lying down. Taste of blood in mouth and throat.
- *Trifolium pratense*: Produces most marked ptyalism. Feeling of congestion of salivary glands as if mumps coming on. Cancerous diathesis.
- *Jaborandi (Pilocarpus-micro)*: Is a powerful glandular stimulant. Its marked indication in mumps is profuse salivation with abnormal perspiration. This remedy can be used for limiting the duration of mumps.
- *Belladonna*: Well known and effective use in congestion of parotid gland. Indications are hot, red skin, flushed face, glaring eyes, throbbing carotids with facial neuralgias and excited mental state furious rages. Also in oophoritis with dragging pain around loins.
- *Chamomilla*: Indicated in mumps with well marked mental state of peevishness, restlessness, snappish, complaints from anger and vexations.
- *Pulsatilla nigricans*: Indicated in mumps with well marked mental state of mild gentle, yielding disposition, desires for sympathy and caresses. Effective in extremes of pleasures and pains in highly

emotional subjects. Effective to prevent the complication of mumps in males preventing orchitis.

- *Mercurius*: Indicated in mumps with profuse salivation, tongue heavy, thick, moist coating, yellow flabby, teeth indented. Breath excretions and body smell fould.
- *Spongia*: Indicated in mumps in tubercular diathesis patients. In orchitis developed due to mumps with swelling, pain and tenderness of spermatic cord and testicles.

Other aspects of management

- Diet: Liquid diet is recommended for the first few days of mumps. Diet includes plenty of water, fruit juices, and soups. Foods containing vitamin C such as citrus fruits have been recommended by many (as they promote the salivary secretion); but some have expressed doubt about its utility ^[3]. In fact, acidic food items might actually increase the pain as the diseased gland tries to secrete saliva. Decision will have to be taken on individual patient basis. Giving large amount of plain water is not a problem and is recommended by all. After a few days, soft diets (with mashed items) are recommended as these are easy to swallow and easy to digest. One should avoid meat (difficult to swallow and digest) and avoid fatty foods which may increase the abdominal complaints. Some feel that black pepper, ginger and garlic may alleviate some symptoms.
- Warm water gargle: This has been recommended. In modern medicinal practice, salt is added to the warm water and this improves the effect further. It is for the homoeopathic physician to decide whether salt will be added for the patient; but even without salt, the warm water itself is beneficial.

- Local application: Local application of cold (ice) or warm gives some relief of the pain. Which one to use, cold or warm, will have to be decided in individual cases by observing the effect.
- If orchitis develops, though this is generally not a problem in childhood, use of suspensor bandage gives relief from pain. It lifts the swollen scrotum and makes the patient feel less pain during walking. Cold compress (such as ice pack) is also helpful to reduce the swelling but ice should be applied (after wrapping it in a cloth to avoid skin damage) at regular intervals for about 10-15 minutes at a time several times in a day. After one or two days the frequency of ice pack application can be reduced. Some patients might get relief by warm rather than cold.
- If pain abdomen occurs due to pancreatitis in male, and due to either oophoritis or pancreatitis in female, pain and high temperature are found in both cases; but in case of pancreatitis diarrhoea is also a feature. That helps to pin-point the cause.

Few special points need further elucidation:

1. In case of all children suffering from mumps, rest is mandatory. Even if the child is symptomatically improved, then also, he or she should take rest because there is a chance of developing meningoencephalitis or (aseptic) meningitis. One of the commonest causes of aseptic meningitis is mumps [4].
2. Preventing transmission of infections to others, especially to other children in home or in school, is an important responsibility of the physician. In this regard, keeping the child at home for at least 7 to 10 days will ensure that the child does not expose other children in school to the mumps infection.
3. It is thought that sterility is a common problem. It must be remembered that the problem of epididymo-orchitis occurs in post-pubertal males and is a rare manifestation in pre-pubertal children [1]. Hence the problem of subsequent sterility is not of that much importance in dealing with cases of mumps in children. Two factors are important for developing sterility – one is that both testicles should be affected extensively and other is that the orchitis is severe. The mechanism could be both hormonal and the mechanical effect of the swelling on the sperm-producing parts of the gonad. That problem need not be for the gonads as a whole. So sterility is much less likely that thought [5].

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to highlight how a better understanding of the pathological problems, clinical manifestations and use of non-medicinal methods can improve the effect of treatment with homoeopathic medicines (rather than use such medicines alone) in management of a patients of mumps.

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