

COVID-19 vaccination: Hesitancy, side effects and Homoeopathy

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Abstract

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It has been 3 years since the identification of SARS-CoV-2 virus, which has caused more than 6 million deaths worldwide. In the initial days of the pandemic, *Arsenic album* 30 was suggested as a non-specific preventive against the infection. Studies by CCRH have now identified that the strategy did provide a protective effect.^[1-3] Some of these studies are highlighted in the research highlights in this issue as well.

Vaccine hesitancy is a global phenomenon and was identified among the top 10 global threats to health in 2019. COVID-19 pandemic and the race to vaccine development and availability further fuelled this hesitancy amidst rising concerns of the safety of the vaccine versus the protection it accorded. Concern about its long-term effects, side effects and unknown future effects on health were identified as a primary factors responsible for COVID-19 vaccination hesitancy.^[4] Where, the government escalated strategies to enhance vaccine acceptance, studies were also initiated to identify the possible side effects.^[5]

A number of studies from across the globe are reporting vaccine associated side effects ranging from mild pain at injection site, fatigue myalgia, headache, etc.^[6,7] to cardiac^[8] and neurological conditions^[9] varying with the type of vaccine used.^[10-12] In spite of the reported concerns, a recent mathematical modelling estimated a global reduction of 63% in total deaths (19.8 million of 31.4 million) during the 1st year of COVID-19 vaccination.^[13]

Outweighing benefits over risks, the vaccination drive in India and other parts of the world focus on enhancing coverage to maximise protection. A judicious assessment needs to be done to outlay risks and benefits of any new procedures as is being done in case of COVID-19 vaccinations. It is equally desirable that the treatment modalities focusing on minimising the side effects and early recovery are planned, to deal with them, if need be. A review in this issue attempts to identify the adverse effects of COVID-19 vaccination from the published literature and repertorise them to find out indicated remedies for the vaccination side effects, in general, and for COVID-19 vaccines, in particular.^[14]

We need to have an understanding of vaccination from homoeopathic perspective as well as from public health perspective. IJRH provided a platform for discussing this aspect in the previous issue^[15] and in this issue as well.^[16,17] We are still, open to receive case reports, case series or studies on COVID-19, as one reported in this issue^[18] and also on treatment of post-vaccination side effects, if any.

It is important that homoeopathic physicians are more meticulous in taking up their cases and in recording the

evidences, whether in favour or against, as they present themselves without being judgmental or prejudiced. Rather than perspectives, small but incremental research evidence forms large evidence pool, which can lead to recommendations for further treatment plan and further its acceptance or rejection of treatments. The same applies to COVID-19 vaccination.

In this issue, we also report an *in vitro* study that analyses the action of different potencies of *Lycopodium clavatum* for inhibiting the formation of monosodium urate crystals and their dissolution.^[19] A review article synthesises and evaluates the existing literature on the homoeopathic treatment of depression.^[20] Evidence-based case reports on the treatment of plantar psoriasis^[21] and Rinke's oedema^[22] are also featured in this issue.

While Central council for research in homoeopathy is working on collating such research data, on the World Homoeopathy Day held on 10–11 April 2022, the Council brought forth presentations by various homoeopathic physicians in the form of case reports, original papers, perspective papers on issues pertaining to public health, COVID-19 and non-communicable diseases and various other areas. This was one of those times where the research organisation came together with the regulatory and educational bodies that is, National Commission for Homoeopathy and National Institute of Homoeopathy, to collate experiences and work simultaneously on education, research and regulations. The conference report is included in this issue.^[23]

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