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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Cantharis is not an uncommon homoeopathic remedy for Urinary Tract Infections (UTI), but this case was unique as it was a case of rapidly progressing acute UTI. The patient was a 4-month-old infant and the pediatrician of modern medicine had already suggested that administration of antibiotics was the only way of treatment, but Cantharis 30CH could cure the case, within a short period.

Case Profile: The four-month-old male baby presented on 5th Jan.2018, with the symptoms of: incessant crying, especially more before and while urinating; irritability and total loss of appetite. The routine and microscopic examination (RE&ME) of urine done on 4th Jan. 2018 showed plenty of leucocytes and subsequent culture of urine sample collected on 5th Jan. 2018 revealed growth of *E.coli* >100000 CFU/ml. So the case was a confirmed case of UTI. The parents first visited an allopathic pediatrician on 4th Jan.2018 and he prescribed antibiotics and advised to start immediately, but the parents were reluctant to give antibiotics to their 4-month-old baby, so they visited our OPD and requested for homoeopathic treatment. After thorough case taking and analysis, Cantharis 30CH was selected; it was advised to dissolve one globule in the breast milk and give thrice daily. There was significant improvement of symptoms within 3 days; microscopic examination of urine showed decrease in leucocytes and there was complete disappearance of all symptoms within 6 days.

Conclusion: It can be concluded from the case report that a well-selected homoeopathic simillimum, in right potency and dosage can cure awful cases of *E.coli* infections even in infants and can replace antibiotics and save the little ones from the adverse effects of antibiotics. Clinical trials on the efficacy of Cantharis on infantile UTI are suggested.

KEYWORDS: Urinary tract infection, Infants, Homoeopathy, Cantharis

INTRODUCTION

After respiratory and gastrointestinal infections, urinary tract infections (UTI) are the third most common infections experienced by humans. UTIs are classified as Lower and Upper UTI. Cystitis and Urethritis are lower UTIs whereas upper UTI includes pyelonephritis.(1) The incidence of UTI varies from infancy to old age.(2) Around 1% of boys and 3% of girls develop UTI during childhood and around 50% of women have a history of at least one episode of UTI. (3) Male infants have a relatively higher incidence of UTI, reflecting congenital abnormalities. A male child with recurrent UTI should be studied for intravenous pyelography and micturating cystourethrography to rule out congenital bladder neck obstruction and vesico ureteric reflux.(2) The commonest organism of UTI is *E.coli*; these are the gram-negative, gut organism. (3) More than 90% of acute UTI in children is by *E.coli* and 80% of the first instance of UTI is due to *E.coli*. (4) Classical symptoms of UTI are usually not seen in pediatric practice, so there is a considerable problem in the diagnosis of UTI, especially in the younger patients. Clinical features of UTI in childhood are often different from those found in adults. UTI can occasionally produce life-threatening illness, especially in very young infants, who may present severely with shock and septicaemia. Though UTI is a common problem, there is no established consensus on investigations and management in childhood.(5) UTIs are one of the major causes of antibiotic usage and antibiotic resistance.(1) High recurrence rates and increasing antimicrobial resistance threaten to greatly increase the economic burden of these infections. (6) Also
administration of antibiotics to children before the age of two increases the risk of obesity,(7) which in turn may lead to different lifestyle disorders in future. Homoeopathy is a system of therapeutics basing upon the law of similium, which states that a drug, capable of producing in a healthy person a diseases state exactly similar to that observed in a diseased person, acts as a curative agent if the disease is in a curable state.(8) This system provides efficient solution for many diseases with cost-effective medicines.(9,10) Also Homeopathy pills being very palatable for children can be real solution for various pediatric problems including infantile UTI.(11) Homeopathy is considered as the ideal treatment option for infants owing to the safety of homeopathic medicines. Homoeopathic medicines work by strengthening a child’s immunity. Along with relieving common acute problems of children it can prevent recurrent episodes of ill-health.(12) Cantharis vesicatoria is a widely used homeopathic medicine from animal kingdom, prepared from the Spanish flies. These flies are commonly found in Spain, Italy, Hungary, Russia and India. To prepare the medicine, the flies are killed by exposing them to fumes of boiling vinegar, then they are dried and powdered. The powdered flies are triturated with sugar of milk or mother tincture is prepared in alcohol. Higher potencies are prepared from trituration or mother tincture of the flies. For preparation of medicine, the flies are dissoved in the mother’s milk to be used in the mother’s milk. The potency, one globule is sufficient number of leucocytes reduced to 10<sup>15</sup> 1) The urine was analyzed after 48 hours of incubation (Fig.2). So the case was diagnosed as UTI and the causative organism was E.coli. For this the parents had first visited the nearest paediatrician on 4<sup>th</sup> Jan,2018, who prescribed some antibiotics to start immediately. But the parents were reluctant to administer antibiotics to the small baby. So in search of some alternative therapy, they came to the hospital of this institute. On physical examination, the baby was thin, clinging to his mother. There was no fever; palpation of lower abdomen made the child to cry suggesting tenderness of bladder area; other parameters were normal. As this was an acute case of 4 month old infant and there was not much to elicit from the case, the acute totality was portrayed considering the following symptoms (Table-1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl no.</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aggravation of pain before and during urination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Irritability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Loss of appetite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Incessant crying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Disturbed sleep</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The suffering of the small baby and the anxiety of the parents demanded a speedy recovery of the case. So considering the acute totality, sphere of action and important modality, i.e. aggravation of pain before and during urination, Cantharis was selected as the single individualized medicine. It was prescribed in the 30<sup>th</sup> centesimal potency, one globule dissolved in the mother’s milk to be administered thrice daily. Parents were advised to continue the medicine for 3 days without any interruption.

**FOLLOW-UP & OUTCOME**

After completion of three days of medication, the parents came for follow up on 8<sup>th</sup> Jan,2018. There was significant decrease of the symptoms, irritability reduced, food intake improved, crying reduced and sleep improved, but occasional crying during urination was there. The urine report of 8<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2018 showed that there was no albumin and number of leucocytes reduced to 10-15 (Fig.3). Since there was significant improvement of symptoms but the patient had some complaints of less intensity, it was decided to continue the same medicine in 30<sup>th</sup> potency, one globule thrice daily for a few more days. The parents were asked to
come after 3-4 days with urine report and to continue the medicine till that time. They turned again after 4 days on 12th Jan. 2018; there was no unusual crying, no irritability, food intake was normal, sleep was normal. Urine report of 12th Jan. 2018 showed absence of leucocytes (Fig.4). The recovery was full and complete. The parents were utmost happy as their child recovered without the administration of antibiotic. There were no adverse events during the process of treatment; instead, the improvement of symptoms was steady in regard to frequency, intensity and duration. Also, there has been no recurrence of the symptoms till date.

**TIMELINE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Symptoms</th>
<th>Investigation Reports</th>
<th>Medicine Prescribed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Table 2. First prescription and Follow-up**

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**Fig.1** Urine Report (RE&ME) before treatment  
**Fig.2** Urine Culture Report before treatment
Homoeopathic Medicine ‘Cantharis 30CH’ Substituted Antibiotic: A Case Report of Infantile Urinary Tract Infection

DISCUSSION

UTI is a common disease of all age groups but its management in newborns or infants becomes more challenging due to lack of symptoms, non-specific symptoms or difficulty in eliciting the symptoms. The commonest way to treat a UTI in the modern school of medicine is through antibiotics. But the adverse effects of antibiotics and emergence of antibiotic resistance are now a real challenge in the field of medicine especially in developing countries like India, and it also exerts a negative effect on progressing economy. Apart from other adverse effects, administering antibiotics in an earlier age also increases the risk of obesity, which may lead to different lifestyle diseases in future. (7) As per literature, 1% of boys can develop UTI during their childhood and this is one of such cases. The revelation of E.coli as the causative organism in this case also corroborates with the available literature that more than 90% of acute UTI in children and 80% of the first instance of UTI are due to E.coli. In this case, the parents preferred Homeopathy over antibiotics. The case was approached simply by selecting the remedy on the basis of acute totality, the sphere of action and important modality ‘aggravation of pain before and during urination’. Cantharis, one of the leading homoeopathic medicines for urinary tract infections as per homoeopathic literature emerged as the prominent medicine and it was selected and administered. Disappearance of symptoms and complete recovery of the baby in the short span of time justifies the selection of Cantharis and proves its efficacy, and also confirms the golden words of Farrington that Cantharis is indicated more frequently than all other remedies put together in acute cystitis. (16) The case of a 4-month-old baby, the absence of any other prominent symptoms and demand for a speedy recovery were the main challenges in this case.

CONCLUSION

Although non-specific symptoms of infantile UTI may be a challenge to treat, proper selection of remedy can lead to a rapid, gentle and permanent cure. In this particular case, when Cantharis was selected on the basis of acute totality, sphere of action and important modality, the disappearance of symptoms occurred and there was complete cure. This further suggests that it can be a very good remedy for infantile UTI, and also can avert the use of antibiotics. Thus, Homeopathy can be a better option for the treatment of cases of infantile UTI, which can prevent or replace the early use of antibiotics in these cases. Homeopathy has also been found effective in the treatment of other urological disorders like Urolithiasis and Benign Prostate Hyperplasia. (19–23) Randomized controlled trials to evaluate the efficacy of Cantharis in infantile UTI with a suitable sample size are suggested.

INFORMED CONSENT

The parents of the patient provided written informed consent for use of the investigation reports and publication of the case report.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.
REFERENCES