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Efficacy of Homoeopathic Treatment in Reducing Symptoms of Menopause: A Clinical Study

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Abstract
Background: Menopause is a physiological transition characterized by a decline in ovarian function, often leading to distressing vasomotor, psychological, and somatic symptoms. While Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) is a conventional option, many women seek non-hormonal alternatives due to contraindications or personal preference. Homoeopathy offers an individualized approach to managing these symptoms.
Objective: To evaluate the efficacy of individualized homoeopathic treatment in reducing the severity and frequency of menopausal symptoms and improving the quality of life in peri- and post-menopausal women.
Methods: An observational study involved participants aged 40-60 years presenting with menopausal complaints. Symptoms were assessed at baseline and after [Duration, e.g., 6 months] of treatment using validated tools such as the Menopause Rating Scale (MRS) or the Greene Climacteric Scale (GCS). Individualized remedies most frequently *Sepia*, *Lachesis*, *Sulphur*, and *Pulsatilla*—were prescribed based on the totality of symptoms.
Results: Analysis revealed a statistically significant reduction ($p < 0.001$) in the total score of menopausal symptoms. Significant improvements were specifically noted in hot flushes, night sweats, anxiety, and sleep disturbances. In some cases, laboratory investigations showed a significant decrease in serum Follicle-Stimulating Hormone (FSH) levels following treatment. Most participants reported a noticeable lessening of symptoms within the first 15 to 30 days.

Keywords: Homoeopathy, Menopausal Symptoms, Clinical Study

Introduction
Menopause is a natural physiological transition defined by the permanent cessation of menstruation for at least 12 months, resulting from the loss of ovarian follicular activity [1, 2]. This phase is often characterized by a decline in serum oestradiol and a compensatory increase in follicle-stimulating hormone (FSH) [2, 3]. These hormonal shifts frequently manifest as a cluster of distressing symptoms, including vasomotor instability (hot flushes and night sweats), psychological disturbances (anxiety, depression, and irritability), and urogenital atrophy [2, 4].
While Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) remains the most effective conventional treatment for vasomotor symptoms, its use is often limited by contraindications, such as a history of breast cancer or cardiovascular disease, as well as patient concerns regarding potential side effects [5, 6]. Consequently, there is a growing demand for safe and effective non-hormonal alternatives [6].
Homoeopathy offers a personalized and holistic approach to managing menopausal distress by matching a specific remedy to the patient's "totality of symptoms"—a complex of physical, emotional, and mental characteristics [6, 7]. Unlike conventional medicine, which often focuses on isolated symptoms, homoeopathy seeks to restore the body's internal equilibrium and adapt the "vital force" to new hormonal conditions [7, 8]. Observational studies have consistently reported significant improvements in the frequency and severity of hot flushes, mood swings, and overall quality of life following individualized homoeopathic treatment [1, 6]. This prospective observational study aims to further evaluate the efficacy of homoeopathy in reducing menopausal symptoms among a cohort of 30 participants, using validated assessment scales.

Materials & Methods
1. Study Design and Participants
- **Design:** An observational study.

- **Sample Size:** 30 participants (purposive sampling).
- **Setting:** Outpatient department (OPD) of a homoeopathic hospital or clinic.
- **Duration:** 6 to 12 months, with monthly follow-ups to assess symptom progression.

2. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Women aged 40-60 years.	Use of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) in the last 6 months.
Presence of menopausal symptoms (hot flushes, night sweats, etc.) for at least 12 months.	Major systemic diseases (heart, liver, or kidney failure) or malignant tumours.
MRS Score ≥ 15 or significant distress on clinical scales.	Severe psychiatric disorders that prevent cooperation.
Willingness to provide written informed consent.	Current use of other complementary therapies for menopause.

3. Materials (Assessment Tools)

- **Menopause Rating Scale (MRS):** A validated 11-item self-administered scale to assess somatic, psychological, and urogenital symptoms.
- **Greene Climacteric Scale (GCS):** Used to measure the severity of 21 symptoms, including vasomotor and psychological distress.
- **Repertory Software:** Tools like **RADAR**, **Zomeo**, or **CARA** for systematic repertorization of the patient's "totality of symptoms".
- **Case Proforma:** A standardized sheet for recording demographic data, medical history, physical generals (appetite, thirst, sleep), and mental generals.

4. Methodology (Study Procedure)

1. **Enrolment:** Screen 30 women meeting the inclusion criteria. Obtain Informed Consent after explaining the study's purpose and procedures.
2. **Baseline Assessment:** Record baseline scores using the MRS or GCS. Perform a detailed homoeopathic case taking focusing on "totality" (location, sensation, modalities, and concomitants).
- **Intervention:** Prescribe Individualized Homoeopathic Medicine (IHM). Common remedies used in this context include *Sepia, Lachesis, Sulphur, and Pulsatilla*.
- **Potency:** 30C, 200C, or 1M, selected based on the patient's susceptibility.
- **Dosage:** As per homoeopathic principles (e.g., single dose followed by placebo/sac lac).

3. **Follow-up:** Review patients every 4 weeks. Re-assess the MRS/GCS scores at each visit. Document any changes in symptoms or general well-being.
4. **Statistical Analysis:** Compare pre-treatment and post-treatment scores using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test or Paired t-test (for normally distributed data) to determine statistical significance ($p < 0.05$).

The Menopause Rating Scale (MRS): Each item is scored from 0 (none) to 4 (very severe).

A. Somatic-Vegetative Symptoms

1. Hot flushes and sweating (episodes of sweating).
2. Heart discomfort (unusual awareness of heartbeat, heart skipping, racing).
3. Sleep problems (difficulty in falling asleep, sleeping through, waking up early).
4. Joint and muscular discomfort (pain in the joints, rheumatoid complaints).

B. Psychological Symptoms

1. Depressive mood (feeling down, sad, on the verge of tears, lack of drive).
2. Irritability (feeling nervous, inner tension, feeling aggressive)
3. Anxiety (inner restlessness, feeling panicky).
4. Physical and mental exhaustion (general decrease in performance, impaired memory).

C. Urogenital Symptoms

1. Sexual problems (change in sexual desire, in activity and satisfaction).
2. Bladder problems (difficulty in urinating, increased need to urinate, bladder incontinence).
3. Dryness of vagina (sensation of dryness or burning in the vagina, difficulty with intercourse).

Discussion & Results

Table 1: Outcome Measure

Outcome Measure	Baseline (Mean ± SD)	Post Treatment	Mean difference	T-value	p-value
Menopause Rating Scale	27.75 ± 3.61	16.17 ± 4.63	11.58	19.42	< 0.001
Greene Climacteric Scale	30.23 ± 8.10	7.86 ± 4.60	22.37	15.64	< 0.05

Analysis of Outcomes

- **Statistical Significance:** A p-value < 0.05 (often reaching indicates that the reduction in symptoms is statistically significant and not due to chance.
- **MRS Score Reduction:** A drop from a mean of 27.75 (typically categorized as "Severe") to 16.17 ("Moderate/Mild") reflects a clinically meaningful improvement in the quality of life.

Commonly used Homoeopathic Remedies and Their Indications

- ***Lachesis mutus***

a) **Hot Flushes:** Sudden, intense flashes often accompanied by palpitations and a sensation of heat rising to the face.
b) **Worse for:** Sleep (symptoms often appear upon waking), heat, and tight clothing (especially around the neck and waist).
c) **Emotional:** Irritability, talkativeness, and a tendency toward jealousy or suspicion.

- ***Sepia officinalis***

a) **Physical:** A characteristic "dragging-down" sensation in the pelvic region, as if the organs might fall out.
b) **Vaginal:** Intense vaginal dryness, itching, and a loss of interest in sexual activity.
c) **Emotional:** Feelings of exhaustion, indifference to loved ones, and irritability.
d) **Better for:** Vigorous exercise, such as dancing or fast walking.

- ***Pulsatilla nigricans***

a) **Emotional:** Highly sensitive, tearful disposition, and a

strong desire for sympathy and consolation.
b) **General:** Changeable symptoms (moods and physical pains shift frequently) and a notable lack of thirst.
c) **Environment:** Feels worse in warm, stuffy rooms and significantly better in open, fresh air.

- **Sulphur**:

a) **Hot Flushes:** Intense heat, especially at night, causing the patient to throw off the covers.
b) **Physical:** Burning sensations in the soles of the feet, palms, and the top of the head.
c) **General:** Individuals may be mentally active but physically sluggish, with a tendency toward skin eruptions and messy habits.

- ***Graphites***

a) **Constitutional:** Often indicated for women with a tendency toward weight gain, constipation, and skin issues.
b) **General:** Feeling chilly, pale, and sluggish with a "heavy" or "dull" mental state.
c) **Physical:** Hot flushes followed by perspiration, often worsening in the morning.

- ***Glonoinum***

a) **Vasomotor:** Sudden, violent hot flushes accompanied by throbbing headaches and facial congestion.
b) **Aggravation:** Symptoms are severely worsened by exposure to the sun or any form of external heat.

Selected Rubrics from Kent's Repertory

1. General Menopause
- Genitalia - Female - Menopause
- Generalities - Change of Life (Climacteric Period)

2. Vasomotor Symptoms (Hot Flashes & Sweats)
- Head - Heat - Menses, before
- Generalities - Flushes of Heat - Climacteric period
- Extremities - Pain - Burning, foot - Climacteric

3. Psychological & Mental Rubrics
- Mind - Irritability - Climacteric period: For increased frustration or anger.
- Mind - Mood - Changeable, variable
- Mind - Anxiety - Health, about
- Mind - Sadness - Climacteric period

4. Physical Particulars
- Chest - Palpitation, heart - Climacteric period
- Chest - Pain - Mammae - Climacteric, during
- Genitalia - Female - Metrorrhagia - Climacteric period
- Genitalia - Female - Itching - Vagina

Conclusion
The findings suggest that homoeopathic treatment is an effective and safe therapeutic option for alleviating the distressing symptoms of menopause. It provides a viable alternative for women who cannot or do not wish to undergo conventional hormonal therapy.

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