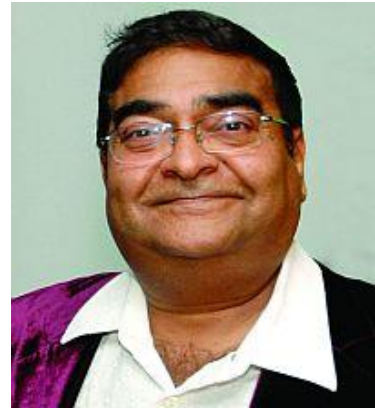


# THE HOMEOPATHIC PERSPECTIVE IN CANCER TREATMENT - By Dr MUKESH BATRA

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**“Homeopathy is mind-body, holistic medicine. It focuses on the individual that presents with illness — and, not merely the illness in isolation. In other words, it looks at the individual, or patient, through two lenses. One, to perceive their complete health and illness picture; and, two, to differentiate what makes each of us as unique and as different as our fingerprint, or signature.”**



There is a glut of general, specific and preventative information, right from advocating the use of diets rich in antioxidants — such as fruits and vegetables — to other lifestyle measures for the early detection of cancer. Yet, not much information has percolated to the grass root level, although efforts to nab the cancer ‘bug’ early have expanded in their scope, thanks to technological advance. This includes screening, viz., prostate specific antigen (PSA), pap smears, mammograms and so on. In addition, the use of non-invasive and safe infrared technology, or thermography, has enabled us to spot suspicious cancer cells, up to ten years prior to the development of breast cancer.

The big question: is all of this enough to battle the various forms of cancer before they raise their ugly heads? The answer is no.

The fact actually is cancer prevention or ‘early’ recognition strategies are keyed to the crusade of avoiding tobacco use, smoking, sun-bathing and reducing excess fat, when one is on the higher end of the weighing scale. Yet, the reality is smoking, for example, continues to be a nuisance in many communities, despite the fact that several nations have banned its use in public.

Worse still, passive smoking is a big cancer risk. In addition, it may be possible for certain nutritional deficiencies to trigger the onset of cancer in certain individuals. More importantly, there is the open danger of toxic exposure to environmental pollutants, contaminated water, food additives and hormonal imbalances — which may cumulatively lead to increased risk of cancer.

## Gene glitch

It is suggested that an over-expressed cancer gene (oncogene) ‘triggers’ cancer in certain instances — more so, when there is a strong family history of the malady. Besides, there are some forms of non-familial cancers, where environmentally-induced mutations provoke the disease state. When such a sequel happens, certain genetic anomalies tend to build up. It is a matter of time, thereafter, for the

gene expression to change. The next level is devastating, as the disease begins to get a firm foothold and intensifies with diabolic intent.

Notwithstanding the gloom, it is yet possible to prevent cancer, even though its incidence differs from one population to the other; or, affects one more than the other. In Japan, for instance, there has traditionally been a high incidence of gastric cancer, unlike the US, where the incidence of colon cancer is high. Ironically, Japanese immigrants, in the US, have seen a dramatic change in the pattern. Researchers say that this could be due to a change in dietetic habits — from soy to Western diet — but not necessarily genetics. Besides, it is also changing lifestyles, as researchers suggest, that has brought about such a palpable alteration. The implication is obvious; also avoidable.

## **Achievable prospect**

Though there is no foolproof plan, with which one can ‘effectively’ prevent cancer, one practical way of doing it, perhaps, is by asking the cells in our body not to divide. This is, of course, a gigantic task. Cell division is far too complex than any other composite entity known to us. Research, therefore, suggests that it would be practical if one sticks to a regimen that lowers the risk of cancer — this includes taking good care of one's health, eating a balanced diet, with 4-5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables, taking appropriate antioxidant/nutritional supplements, doing exercise, yoga and meditation, and, most importantly, giving up, or not smoking, and avoiding alcohol. The catch, again, is all of this is no security, or ‘insurance cover,’ yet it is certainly an achievable plan of action, when augmented with holistic homeopathic treatment — along with lifestyle changes, which work well, without side-effects — than accepting the idea that cancer is something one has learnt to expect, if not accept.

## **Healing with homeopathy**

Homeopathy is mind-body, holistic medicine. It focuses on the individual that presents with illness — and, not merely the illness in isolation. In other words, it looks at the individual, or patient, through two lenses. One, to perceive their complete health and illness picture; and, two, to differentiate what makes each of us as unique and as different as our fingerprint, or signature.

Homeopathy aims to evaluate, analyse and understand these two unique features, while focusing at different levels of reactions, or responses, in the individual. This is in sharp contrast to conventional or allopathic treatment, which only looks at the individual or patient in compartments, or segments — not as one, unified whole.

To treat homeopathically, one needs to know how healthy or ill one is or was. This will enable the professional homeopathic physician to determine what each individual's symptoms signify and what to expect from homeopathic treatment.

Homeopathy looks at the big and small picture and this, as we all know, is not too difficult to understand. Besides, it's rightly said that it's all in the mind. Without clarity of mind, everything else is beside the point. This holds good for emotional pain, too — it can be as strong as physical pain, or even more powerful. After the mind, come the vital organs. You cannot feel, think, or do anything if you did

not have a brain, or heart, lungs, or liver. This is reason why our body tries to convey its problems at the most superficial level — if not at the deepest plane, to begin with. This is also reason enough why the body aims to heal itself, naturally. This is again what homeopathy strongly relates to and aims at — the fundamental notation, or natural inclination, of the human body to protect the core of its being in both health and illness.

## CASE STUDY

John (name changed), a Canadian citizen of Irish origin, who had settled with his spouse in Goa since 1984, came to us with chronic skin complaints. This, we deduced, was the outcome of excess sun exposure in his younger days. He also had a number of warts and moles. His scalp and back were areas of concern too, because of severe itching and redness. He was suspected to be having basal cell carcinoma by a local physician, who was also treating him for diabetes. His case, along with clinical history, was 'scaled-up' for evaluation by our in-house dermatologist, who confirmed the diagnosis.

John was in the habit of taking drugs in Canada, which he had given up in India for fear of the law. But, he continued with his 'routine' of drinking whiskey and strong unsweetened tea, which he gulped liberally, instead of water, the entire day.

His upbringing was traditional Roman Catholic, but he led a dual life while professing celibacy as a priest, on one hand, and engaged in sexual activity on the other. This was his way of life till he married the woman of Indian origin from Canada, who he had lost recently, following which he had returned to Canada.

Based on his symptom-picture, case details, clinical history, lifestyle, habits and temperament, we prescribed him the homoeopathic remedy, *Natrum Muriaticum*.

We asked him to E-mail us his progress from Canada. His response, after six months of homeopathic treatment, "I'm keeping quite well. Actually, I can say that the complaints I originally brought to you — breaking skin patches on the forepart of my scalp — have improved very much, to the point, I think, [as my medical progress also indicates] of saying it is 'cured.' I do miss beautiful, warm Goa, but I feel that coming back to my home country and family circle has been the right decision."

As Dr Bruce Semon, MD, a physician and psychiatrist, at the Wisconsin Institute of Nutrition, US, who also specializes in homeopathy, notes homeopathy was developed in an era when conventional (allopathic) medicine could do but little to battle cancer. He suggests that the 'vital principle' of any patient, opting for surgery alone, will not essentially recuperate because the cancer is surgically 'removed.' The underlying cause of the illness, he emphasizes, needs to be addressed, not suppressed, to ensure that cancer does not reappear. Current medical thinking, he argues, does not really take into consideration the frequency with which a woman with cancer in one breast may possibly develop a tumour later in the other. Homeopathy, he evidences, can be effectively synchronised with conventional treatment, in order to reduce the dangers of recurrence.

There are a handful of specialized treatment approaches that homeopathy applies to treat individuals with cancer. One is the individualistic approach — treating the individual at their core, or constitutional

level, and not just the illness in isolation. Another specialty approach is targeting the cancer — at its roots. In the approach, a suitable homeopathic remedy, in micro-doses, that is in conformity vis-à-vis the symptom-picture the individual presents with, is prescribed. To cull a classical example: *Conium maculatum* for hard, 'fixed' tumors that develop gradually.

## HOMEOPATHIC CLINICAL STUDIES

A study, published in *The International Journal of Oncology* (Feb 2010; 36(2): 395-403), evidences that homeopathic remedies have a beneficial effect on breast cancer cells. The study, conducted at M D Anderson Cancer Center at the University of Texas, US, showed that certain homeopathic remedies have preferentially elevated cytotoxic (killing) effects on breast adenocarcinoma (cancer) cells compared with cells derived from normal breast epithelium (cellular tissue). The researcher's report that the homeopathic remedies, in the study, appeared to have similar activity to that of paclitaxel (Taxol), the most commonly used conventional drug for breast cancer, but without its toxic effects on normal cells. The experiments were conducted in triplicate and repeated at least twice in each case of remedy. The homeopathic remedies tested included *Carcinosin* 30C; *Conium maculatum* 3C; *Phytolacca decandra* 200C; and, *Thuja occidentalis* 30C. The strongest effects were found from *Carcinosin* and *Phytolacca decandra*. The researchers concluded, "The ultra-diluted natural homeopathic remedies investigated, in the study, offer the promise of being effective preventive and/or therapeutic agents for breast cancer and worthy of further study."

In another study, conducted at the same centre, researchers investigated the brain cancer cell-killing activity of the homeopathic remedy, *Ruta*, isolated from the plant, *Ruta graveolens*. They treated human brain cancer and HL-60 leukemia (blood cancer) cells, normal B-lymphoid cells, and melanoma (skin cancer) cells in mice, with different concentrations of *Ruta* in combination with Ca<sub>3</sub>(PO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>, a nutritional supplement.

Fifteen patients diagnosed with intracranial tumours were also, likewise, treated with *Ruta* 6C and Ca<sub>3</sub>(PO<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>. Of the 15 patients, 6 of the 7 glioma — tumor that starts in the brain or spine — patients showed complete regression of tumors.

Other interventions include injecting suitable homeopathic remedies at the tumour site itself — this is suggested to aggressively stimulate a healing response. Some homeopaths also favour a homeopathic 'detox' programme to repel the cancer from its 'base.' This includes aiding the individual's detox channels, such as the kidneys, urinary tract, lymphatic system and liver, by way of cell detoxification, with select homeopathic medicines.

Whatever the approach, homeopathic treatment aims to look at, evaluate and analyse other symptoms too, such as the individual's temperament, likes and dislikes, sensitivities, sensibilities, idiosyncrasies, and so on. Besides, the purpose of homeopathic treatment is essentially keyed not only to target the tumor (cancer) and reverse its growth, but also to restore and optimize one's optimal health and well-being.

## INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

Several homeopathic remedies have been found to be as effective as chemotherapy, according to clinical trials. Besides, thousands of cancer cases are being 'reversed' by homeopathy alone.

In one review of the work at the Prasanta Banerji Homeopathic Research Foundation, Kolkata, India, 21,888 patients with malignant tumors were treated only with homeopathy — they had neither chemotherapy nor radiotherapy — between 1990 and 2005.

Clinical reports reveal that the tumors regressed completely in 19 per cent — or, 4,158 — of patients and stabilized, or improved, in another 21 per cent (4,596) of patients. Patients whose tumors had stabilized were followed-up for between two and ten years afterwards to monitor the improvement. The inference is obvious — that homeopathic remedies on their own are reversing, or certainly stabilizing 40 per cent of all cancers, a success rate that matches the best results for conventional medicine — more so, without the debilitating effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

There is a growing body of alternative, complementary, or integrative physicians and therapists who favour the use of homeopathic treatment as an adjuvant, along with nutritional, immune, diet and detoxification programmes, or as supplementary therapy for cancer. Besides, evidence-based studies and reports suggest that professional homeopathic treatment has resulted in the resolution of certain tumors, reversal of the cancer process and demonstrable, tangible recuperation — from the depths of cancerous hopelessness to good health and well-being.

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