Homeopathic Therapy for Gastric Complaints

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Summary

Therapeutic properties are attributed to the preparation Nux vomica-Homaccord, a homeopathic combination drug for functional disorders in the gastro-intestinal-hepatic region in cases of meteorism and disorders relating to the intake of nicotine, alcohol, and coffee.

The homeopathic ingredients contained in the preparation are Nux vomica, Bryonia, Lycopodium, and Colocynthis. These are conventional homeopathic remedies which are used on the basis of the results of homeopathic drug tests (AMP)for digestive tract disorders amongst others. The prescription of these single constituents, however, does demand that the therapist has extensive knowledge of their total effective homeopathic characteristics, in order that the similimum found is appropriate for the patient and corresponds to his symptoms. A homeopathic combination drug enables the doctor who is not so well acquainted with classic, single-constituent homeopathy, to use these drugs even in response to multisystem indications, as in gastritis, for example. Whether such a combination of drugs results in an extended spectrum of action (as an additive or synergistic effect) would have to be studied within the constraints of an experimental, clinical investigation.

Patients and Methods

The aim of the present study was to test the preparation for its efficacy under practical conditions. In order to define the indication range specified by the manufacturer, i.e. "Functional disorders of the gastro-intestinal-hepatic region, meteorism and disorders relating to the intake of nicotine, alcohol, and coffee", acute and chronic gastritis were chosen as the indications.

As part of an observation study, 30 patients (average age: 39.2 years; 21 women, 9 men) suffering from gastritic complaints were treated with the above-mentioned preparation. All those patients who, at the start of the study, came to the practice with the symptoms of recent acute gastritis or an acute attack of a known chronic gastritis were included in this study. In addition, no other drugs, such as antacids or H2 receptor blockers etc., were prescribed. The daily dose was 3 x 10 drops, to be kept in the mouth for a short time, if possible, in order to guarantee good contact with the mucosa and hence good absorption of the active ingredients.

Using a point assessment system (0 = none, 1 = slight, 2 = moderate, 3 = severe symptoms), the following characteristics were checked before and during treatment and documented on a standard treatment sheet: hunger pain, night pain, nausea (retching, vomiting) and pain in the upper abdomen (burning, compressive and spasmodic).

A weekly follow-up of the above parameters was provided for each patient. However, some patients did not appear at the prescribed examination times laid down in the test schedule. This meant that unfortunately not all 30 patients could be examined at weekly intervals.

Results

The overall therapeutic results were assessed by the doctor as follows: treatment was highly successful in 26 cases, moderately successful in one case and unsuccessful in 3 cases.

Apart from one case, this assessment coincided with the assessment of the patients treated (treatment was highly successful in 25 cases, moderately successful in two cases and unsuccessful in 3 cases).

The cases which were unsuccessful were chronic cases of gastritis in patients who were 50, 60, and 81 years old. The therapy failure in the 50 year old was clearly explained by the patient's inability to stop smoking 30-40 cigarettes a day. The 81 year old patient had formed a recurring ventricular ulcer. These patients had suspended treatment after 2 weeks.

In the case of one patient, only moderate success was recorded. A sensation of fullness and nausea had, indeed, subsided, but distinct hunger pains were still diagnosed. However, the female patient suspended the drug after only one week, which is too short to make a final judgment on the efficacy of the drug in this case.

In the case of a 22 year old male patient, the verdicts of doctor and patient differed with regard to the overall therapeutic results (doctor: good, patient: moderate). Hunger and night pain, as well as nausea and sensation of fullness, had completely subsided in this case during a 2-week treatment, but a pressing and spasmodic pain in the upper abdomen were still felt.

The remaining 25 patients were treated very successfully (patients' assessment): in 2 cases of chronic gastritis, treatment was even ended after one week due to its great success. 11 patients were able to stop treatment after 2 weeks, 9 patients after 3 weeks and 3 patients after 4 weeks of taking the drug. If one considers the intensity of the symptoms prior to treatment with Nux vomica-Homaccord drops, then measured against the average total point value, a correlation can be established between this value and the duration of treatment. The higher the initial point value was, the longer treatment was necessary.

The course of intensity of the parameters tested can be easily read from Figure 1. Since some patients did not keep various interim examination appoint-

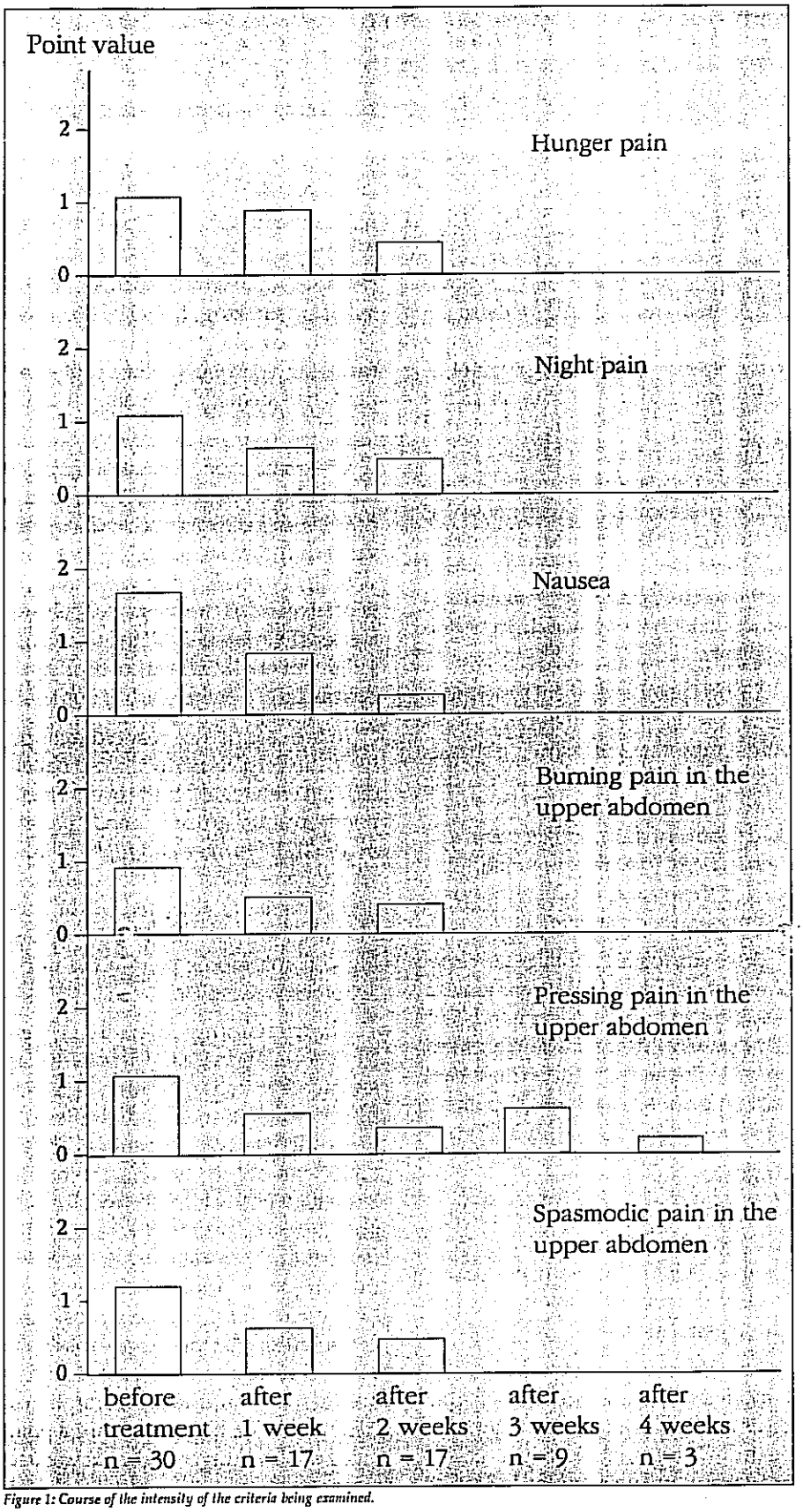

Figure 1: Course of the intensity of the criteria being examined.

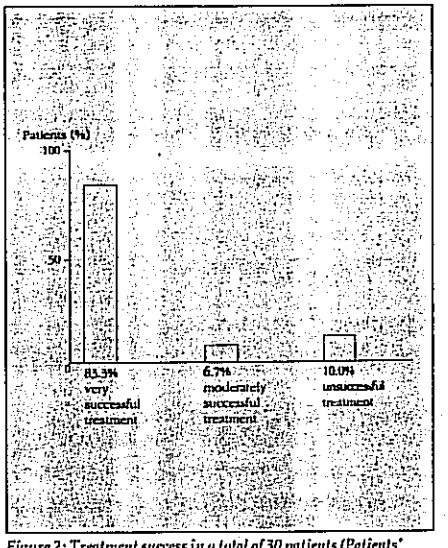

Figure 2: Treatment success in a total of 30 patients (Patients' assessment).

ments, but particularly because 43% of all the patients examined were able to terminate the treatment successfully within 2 weeks, the number of patients was reduced accordingly during the course of the observation period.

It can be clearly seen from the diagram that the severity of the majority of symptoms had declined to assessment number "0", i.e. there were no further symptoms, after 2 weeks' treatment with the homeopathic drug.

Overall, 83.3% of the 30 patients examined showed a good success rate, 6.7% a moderate success rate and 10% no success at all (Fig. 2).

Tolerance to the preparation was excellent and no undesirable effects were observed in any patient.

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