

Ronak J. Shah

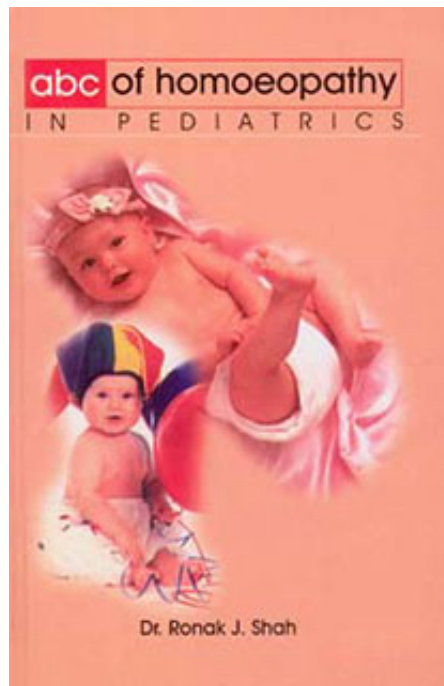
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Chapter IX

DISORDERS OF GASTRO- INTESTINAL SYSTEM

CONSTIPATION

I) Definition:

Abnormally infrequent and difficult evacuation of feces - dry or soft, with unsuccessful straining.

In infants the intestinal movements being very soft, a bowel movement occurring once in two or three days does not necessarily indicate constipation.

Constipation is more commonly encountered in artificially fed babies compared to breast fed babies.

II) Causes:

1. Ineffective colonic peristalsis; as in Hypothyroidism, Bad effects of opium.
2. Painful spasm of intestine due to intestinal carbohydrate dyspepsia known as spastic constipation.
3. Insufficient quantity of feces due to inadequate intake of food (common in bottle fed children), loss of appetite, obstruction in esophagus/pylorus.
4. Decreased quantity of water/fluid intake.
5. Lack of dietary fibers in food.
6. Acute illness (temporary constipation).
7. Psychological problems like;
 - Fear of pain due to anal fissure, stricture.
 - Indifference to urge to stool.
 - Laziness.
 - Insanitary toilet conditions.

III) Complications:

Long standing constipation may lead to:

Anal fissures. Hemorrhoids.

- Trigger conditions like asthma, nephritis, and epilepsy.
- Intestinal intoxication (headache, flatulence, colic, loss of appetite etc).

IV) Clinical Inquiry:**A) History:**

Points to be asked:

- a) Stool: Character, frequency of stool.
- b) Pain: Duration, intensity, frequency, modalities-pressure, positions.
- c) Duration of illness.
- d) Psychological make up, fear of going to toilet.
- e) Any associated complaint e.g. painful anal or peri anal conditions like fistula, fissure, and abscess.

B) Physical examination:

- a) Local examination for fissures, abscess,
- b) Per rectal examination in cases like Hirschprung's disease etc.
- c) Neurological examination in spinal cord lesions.

C) Investigation:

- a) Barium enema for Hirschprung's or obstructive lesion.
- b) Rectal biopsy- Aganglionic segment in Hirschprung's disease.

V) Management:

A) Household tips for constipation:

- a) Lemon juice in cold or warm water early morning and night.
- b) Add 1 tablespoon ginger juice + 1 tablespoon lemon juice + 2 table spoon honey in warm water and drink it daily.
- c) Eat 1 banana at night daily before sleep.
- d) Give child mixed vegetable soup esp. tomato, spinach.

B) Homoeopathic Management:

1. ALUMINA:

It is useful when constipation is due to dryness of the intestinal tract, and non-peristalsis action of the intestines. **No desire for and no ability to pass stool until there is a large accumulation.** Great strain required must grasp the seat of closet tightly. Stool hard, knotty. **Even a soft stool is passed with difficulty.** It gives very good result in constipation of infants.

2. ANACARDIUM:

When ineffectual desire is felt in the rectum. Rectum seems powerless, as if plugged up. There is sensation of pressure on the rectum after stool.

3. BRYONIA:

Stool dry as if burnt, with great thirst. **Constipation in warm weather.** Feces hard, large and devoid of mucus. **Constipation on every spell of hot weather.**

4. CALCCARB:

I am using this remedy more as constitutional remedy. Here stool **at first is hard, then pasty then liquid.** There is obstinate constipation. **Stool has to be removed mechanically.**

5. COLLINSONIA:

This is my favorite remedy for constipation in. I am using with very good results. Constipation of children from intestinal atony. Alternate constipation and diarrhoea.

It is almost specific for constipation.

6. NUX-VOMICA:

It is adapted to children those are thin, highly irritable and very sensitive to noise and draft of air.

Constipation with ineffectual desire felt in abdomen. Hence frequent ineffectual desire for passing but small quantities at each attempt. ***Absence of desire for defecation is contrary.***

7. OPIUM:

Constipation due to inaction of the intestines. There is no desire for stool. Stools round, hard, black balls. There is inaction as well as dryness in the intestines. ***Child feels no discomfort by not passing stools for days together.*** There is no urge for stool.

8. PLUMBUM MET:

It is a head remedy for chronic constipation. It resembles opium in constipation, but there is some action in the intestines.

Stool is hard, black and urging and spasm of anus. There is urging to stool but it is passed with great difficulty.

CASES

A CASE OF CONSTIPATION

A male child of 2^{1/2} years old came to me with the complaint of constipation since 1 month. Before they consulted me they had tried all the home remedies without any relief. Then they had tried with ayurvedic medicines also, but in vain. They started giving suppository with the help of

which he used to pass stool for 3-4 days and again the condition was same.

The child was not passing stool for 4-5 days. He was very restless and moving around due to his disability to pass stools. He used to strain a lot when the urge came. The child was in acute agony, crying with pain in the anus. He used to pass hard, ball like stool. He could not sit after passing stool due to pain.

On Examination I found cracks around anal opening and the skin was very dry.

Considering the acute totality I prescribed COLLINSONIA 200 BD for 4 days.

After 4 days they consulted me again and now the child was feeling 50% better because there was no pain while passing stool. But he had to strain while passing stool. So I continued Collinsonia 200 BD for another 4 days.

After 4 days he was 80% better and I continued it for another 7 days and then was called for homoeopathic history and shifted on to constitutional treatment.

A CASE OF CONSTIPATION

Here is a case of a 7-year-old girl who was suffering from obstinate constipation since last 5 years. She used to pass stool once in a week, sometimes the time period lasted for 10 days also. The stools were passed in balls, hard and very offensive. The girl had to strain a lot and used to literally weep during defecating.

Past History:

She was kept on artificial feeding since she was two months old. Once she had got dehydrated and was hospitalized.

Family History:

Fa: Healthy. Mo:
Constipation.



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