

Management of Optic Neuritis with a Rare Medicine *Xantoxylum fraxineum* – A Case Report

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Abstract

Optic neuritis is an inflammatory demyelinating disorder of the optic nerve characterized by pain, visual disturbances, and impaired neural conduction. It commonly affects young adults and may present with retrobulbar pain, visual loss, and neurological manifestations. Conventional management mainly includes corticosteroids and supportive care; however, individualized homoeopathic treatment may offer symptomatic relief and improvement in overall health status. This case report highlights the successful management of optic neuritis in a 28-year-old male patient treated with the rare homoeopathic remedy *Xantoxylum fraxineum*. The patient presented with severe left-sided facial and head pain, fullness and heat sensation in the head, dull aching pain in the eyes, facial swelling, and numbness aggravated by sunlight and pressure. Detailed case taking and repertorial analysis using Synthesis Repertory led to the selection of *Xantoxylum fraxineum*. Marked improvement was observed in pain intensity, facial swelling, sleep, and general well-being, along with normalization of elevated serum LDH levels. This case emphasizes the importance of individualized homoeopathic prescribing and demonstrates the clinical utility of rare remedies in difficult neurological conditions. The case was managed according to homoeopathic principles and followed HOM-CASE guidelines for clinical reporting.

Keywords: Optic neuritis, *Xantoxylum fraxineum*, Homoeopathy, Rare remedy, Serum LDH, Case report

Introduction

Optic neuritis is an inflammatory disorder affecting the optic nerve and is commonly associated with demyelination². It presents clinically with pain in the eye, diminished vision, altered colour perception, and visual field defects. Acute inflammation of the optic nerve head is termed as papillitis, whereas inflammation occurring behind the eyeball is known as retrobulbar neuritis. The condition is more common among young adults and children².

The optic nerve consists of axons of retinal ganglion cells and forms part of the central nervous system.

Since it lacks a neurolemmal sheath, regeneration after injury is minimal. Clinical signs include sluggish pupillary reaction to light, congestion of retinal veins, blurred optic disc margins, and swelling of the optic disc. Early treatment may prevent permanent damage and restore vision³.

In neuritis and inflammatory neurological disorders, elevated serum lactate dehydrogenase (LDH) levels may indicate tissue inflammation and nerve damage. Studies have demonstrated abnormal serum LDH isoenzyme patterns in patients with optic neuritis and demyelinating disorders.

Homoeopathy considers the individual as a whole and prescribes medicines based on the totality of symptoms. Rare remedies may become the similimum when symptom similarity is accurate and individualized.

Case Report

A 28-year-old unmarried male working as a Medical Representative and residing in Belagavi presented with complaints of severe pain on the left side of the face and head since six months. The patient experienced a sensation of heat and heaviness on the left side of the head associated with dull aching pain in the eyes. Tingling, numbness, and heat sensation on the left side of the face were also present. Symptoms were aggravated by exposure to sunlight, looking downward, and pressure.

The patient also complained of generalized sensitivity over the left side of the face and left eye.

On Examination

- Swelling present on the left side of face
- Ophthalmoscopic examination suggested optic neuritis
- Fundoscopy showed no abnormality
- Error of refraction in left eye: -0.75

Physical Generals

- Diet: Pure vegetarian
- Appetite: Reduced
- Thirst: 1–2 litres/day
- Bowel and bladder habits: Normal
- Sleep: Normal
- Dreams: Flying in the sky

Vitals

- Height: 5'7"
- Weight: 68.07 kg
- Blood Pressure: 120/80 mmHg

Investigations

MRI Brain and Cervical Spine

- Normal findings

Blood Investigation

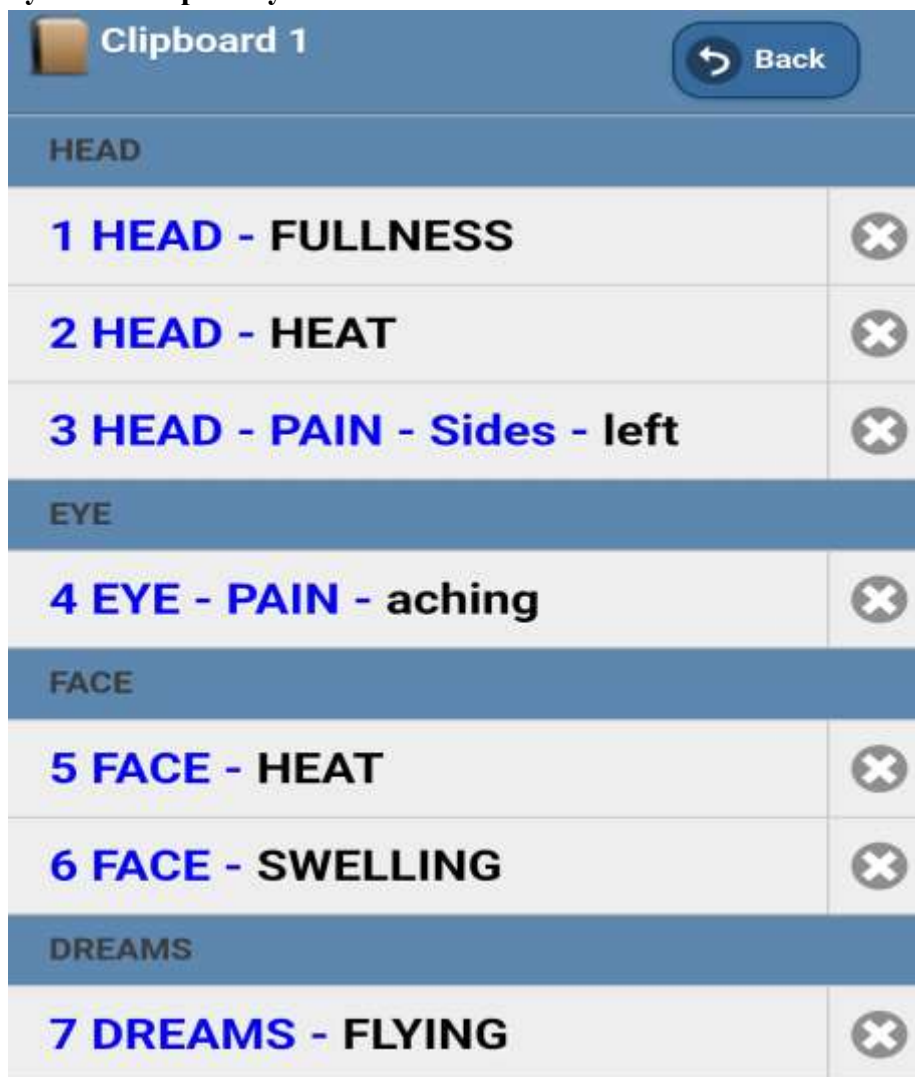
- Serum LDH: **398** U/L (Elevated)

Totality of Symptoms

1. Dreams of flying in the sky
2. Fullness sensation in head
3. Heat in head
4. Pain in left side of head
5. Constant aching pain in eyes
6. Heat sensation in face
7. Swelling of face

Repertorial Analysis

Repertory used: **Synthesis Repertory**



Clipboard 1	
HEAD	
1 HEAD - FULLNESS	✕
2 HEAD - HEAT	✕
3 HEAD - PAIN - Sides - left	✕
EYE	
4 EYE - PAIN - aching	✕
FACE	
5 FACE - HEAT	✕
6 FACE - SWELLING	✕
DREAMS	
7 DREAMS - FLYING	✕

Remedies	ΣSym	ΣDeg	Symptoms
bell.	7	16	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
apis	7	15	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
xan.	7	11	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
lyc.	7	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
thuj.	7	10	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
dulc.	7	8	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
acon.	6	15	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
bry.	6	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
graph.	6	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
lach.	6	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
phos.	6	13	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Repertorial Result

Remedy	Marks
Belladonna	7/16
Apis mellifica	7/15
Xantoxylum fraxineum	7/11
Lycopodium	7/10
Thuja	7/10

Although Belladonna scored highest repertorially, the characteristic neuralgic symptoms with numbness, tingling, left-sided affection, and nerve involvement strongly indicated *Xantoxylum fraxineum*.

Prescription and Follow-Up

Date	Observation	Prescription
05/04/2025	Case taken and analyzed	Belladonna 1M single dose
12/04/2025	Complaints aggravated; severe pain and sleeplessness due to heaviness and pain	Xantoxylum fraxineum 200 every morning for 7 days

Discussion

Optic neuritis is a demyelinating inflammatory condition of the optic nerve producing pain and neurological disturbances. In homoeopathy, medicine selection is based on individualization and totality of symptoms rather than diagnosis alone.

In this case, the characteristic symptoms included:

- Left-sided neuralgic pain
- Heat and fullness in head
- Tingling and numbness of face
- Eye pain
- Facial swelling
- Dreams of flying

Though repertorial analysis showed Belladonna as the highest-ranking medicine, the peculiar neuralgic presentation and modalities corresponded closely with *Xantoxylum fraxineum*, a comparatively rare remedy known for nerve pains, numbness, facial neuralgia, and sensory disturbances⁴.

Initial prescription with Belladonna failed to improve the patient and aggravated the symptoms. Subsequent prescription of *Xantoxylum fraxineum* resulted in marked improvement in pain, swelling, sleep, and general well-being. Laboratory findings also demonstrated normalization of serum LDH levels after treatment.

This case highlights the importance of accurate case taking, evaluation of characteristic symptoms, and consideration of rare remedies in homoeopathic practice.

Conclusion

This case demonstrates the successful management of optic neuritis using individualized homoeopathic treatment with *Xantoxylum fraxineum*. Significant improvement was observed clinically as well as biochemically with normalization of serum LDH levels. The case further emphasizes that rare remedies may act as the similimum when prescribed on the basis of totality of symptoms and individualization.

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