

POTENTIAL PREVENTIVE ROLE OF AN AYURVEDIC INTERVENTION IN MILD CASES OF COVID 19: AN EXPERIENCE BASED EVIDENCE

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ABSTRACT

Till present, COVID 19 lacks in specific treatments or vaccines. It is need of an hour to offer to gather evidences of efficacy and safety of Ayurvedic interventions as potential treatment or prevention keeping in view no established treatment or specific vaccine were available. The Health advisory released by The Ministry of Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy (AYUSH) against coronavirus infection included different herbs like Ashwagaandha, Mulethi, Guduchi etc. which may prove beneficial in fighting with coronavirus infection. In the present clinical evidence an Ayurvedic

formulation given as an intervention in mild cases of COVID 19 patients. There was reduction in clinical symptoms, fever and improvement on quality of life. We strongly believe that sharing our clinical experience would help fill the knowledge gap and strengthen the confidence of all stakeholders in Ayurveda research. With limited evidence, our research is expected to assist the identification of a better treatment approach and guide further research.

KEYWORDS: Covid 19, Ayurveda, pandemic.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 has so far affected 213 countries and 31 territories around the world with 26,468,031 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 871,166 deaths worldwide. India has 4,023,179 positive cases from Jan 30 to 5th September 2020 with 86432,269 active COVID-19 cases, according to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India. Despite standard treatment, 10% of the patients' progress to moderate stage out of which 5% deteriorate to severe stage. There is around 3% mortality rate in COVID-19 patients.^[1]

To date, there is no effective antiviral treatment against SARS-CoV-2. Antiviral drugs and systemic corticosteroids used in other viral infections (SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV) have not demonstrated sound validity for SARS-CoV-2.^[2]

It has raised global health concerns. The spread of the corona virus is taking toll of almost whole world, to arrest its spread and come up with treatment modalities to treat positive patients are the challenges. The rapid pace with which researchers have been able to understand this novel strain of virus and undertaking research not only in antiviral category but also the traditional medicines to handle this situation is a testament to the lessons learned from public health emergencies.^[3]

There are many formulations and herbs from Ayurveda that can prove beneficial in prevention, mitigation and treatment of COVID 19. It is need of an hour to compile such evidences and knowledge from herbal alternatives to come up with products for working in corona infection at multiple stages.

Clinical scenario

As per the clinical data available and statistics provided by respective authorities, almost 80% of corona positive subjects are showing up mild to moderate symptoms with an incubation period of 1 to 14 days. These patients are demonstrating recovery without special treatment. Many of asymptomatic infected patients either progress to the diseased or act as a carrier. Old people with certain comorbidity have a higher risk of developing severe disease and adverse outcomes.^[4]

Common symptoms of COVID-19 infection include fever, dry cough, and sore throat. The other less common symptoms are body ache, headache, shortness of breath and rarely diarrhea, nausea or a runny nose.^[5]

Till present, COVID 19 lacks in specific treatments or vaccines. Though, many clinical trials are evaluating probable potential treatments.

Details of intervention with posology

The present paper documents anecdotal evidences of 30 subjects received the Ayurvedic intervention and the clinical recovery observed.

METHODS AND RESULTS

The Above cited formulation provided in tablet form 500 mg 3 times was administered to 100 RT-PCR positive subjects twice a day for 14 days. Following are the results obtained. There were no adverse events during 14 days. This is suggestive of safety of the intervention. There were around 30 % of study population i.e. 30 subjects were with mild to moderate symptoms of cough, fever, weakness and fatigue. Rest all were presenting mild symptoms at baseline like cough and fever. The 50% of the subjects ie around 50 patients with mild symptoms were relieved in 3-5 days' post treatment and rest 50% got their symptoms relieved in 5-7 days. As per the data obtained it is evident that the formulation is possessing effectiveness in reducing symptoms and improving quality of life of patients. This represents the preventive potential of the Ayurvedic formulation given as an intervention.

There is need to explore the product for therapeutic potential in corona positive subjects by careful study design.

We do agree that the follow up in the presented clinical experience was unplanned and hence, lack a strategic data collection and analysis. However, we strongly believe that sharing our clinical experience would help fill the knowledge gap and strengthen the confidence of all stakeholders in Ayurveda research. With limited evidence, our research is expected to assist the identification of a better treatment approach and guide further research.

DISCUSSION

With no established and validated conventional specific treatment or vaccine available for COVID-19 infection, experience-based Ayurvedic medicine should be considered along with the multidisciplinary treatment approach. The Ayurvedic formulation we used as an intervention contains herbs like *Patol*, *Kutaki*, *Tulas Beej*, *Dalchini*, *Lavang*, *Haridra*, *Haritaki*, *Pimpli*, *Jaypatri*, etc which shown promising effects in the treatment and prevention of COVID-19 infection in clinical settings, control randomized trials need to be conducted to confirm the findings.

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