

HOMOEOPATHY AND HEMORRHOIDS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

**Namrata Singh Kushwaha*, Kumari Sulekha, Aayushi Gupta, Siddhi Jain and
Vikrant Rana**

PG Scholar, Department of Organon of Medicine and Homoeopathic Philosophy, Dr. M.P.K.
Homoeopathic Medical College Hospital and Research Centre (Under Homoeopathy
University) Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

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***Corresponding Author**

**Dr. Namrata Singh
Kushwaha**

PG Scholar, Department of
Organon of Medicine and
Homoeopathic Philosophy,
Dr. M.P.K. Homoeopathic
Medical College Hospital
and Research Centre (Under
Homoeopathy University)
Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.

ABSTRACT

Haemorrhoid is a condition characterized by the prolapse of an anal cushion that may result in bleeding and pain from the rectum or anal canal. It is said to be the fourth leading outpatient gastrointestinal diagnosis. In this review article, information from modern surgery texts and articles in view of definition, etiology, risk factors, clinical features, and classification of disease and a gist of some homoeopathic therapeutic medicines used in cases of hemorrhoids.

KEYWORDS: Hemorrhoids, Homoeopathy.

INTRODUCTION

The term “hemorrhoid” comes from the Greek word “*haimorrhoides*,” meaning bleeding (haima = blood, rhoos = flowing). “Pile” originates from the Latin word “*pila*,” which means a ball. Over time, the terms hemorrhoids and piles have been used interchangeably. Hemorrhoids are caused by the dilation of submucosal vascular tissue in the distal anal canal. When the connective tissue supporting this vascular tissue weakens, it can result in the descent or prolapse of hemorrhoids.^[2]

EPIDEMIOLOGY: Hemorrhoidal disease is a prevalent anorectal condition frequently seen by general practitioners, general surgeons, and gastrointestinal surgeons in India. It is estimated that around 50% of people will experience hemorrhoids at some point in their lives, typically by the age of 50, with approximately 5% of the population affected by hemorrhoids at any given time.^[3]

ETIOLOGY^[4]

- a) Hereditary
- b) Anatomical- The adaptation to an erect posture, the absence of valves in veins, and the fact that veins pass through the rectal musculature about 10 cm above the anus can lead to vein occlusion and congestion during defecation.
- c) Exciting causes - Constipation, hard stool, straining during defecation.
- d) Physiological cause- Hyperplasia of the corpus cavernosum rectum.
- e) Diet- Low roughage, excess use of all-purpose flour and spices, etc.

RISK FACTORS: Factors that raise intra-abdominal pressure, such as prolonged straining, constipation, pregnancy, and ascites, can lead to the dilation, engorgement, and prolapse of hemorrhoidal vascular tissue.^[2]

CLASSIFICATION^[3]: The consensus committee of the Association of Colon & Rectal Surgeons of India (ACRSI) proposed a new classification of hemorrhoids as.

GRADE	CHARACTERISTICS
I	Remaining inside the anal canal
II	Protrude during defecation and reduce spontaneously
III	Need further manual reposition
IV	Piles that remain prolapsed outside and external hemorrhoids

Each of the above primary grades of hemorrhoids is categorized further, depending on the number of piles, and presence of circumferential piles or thrombosis, by the suffix as below:

- a) Single pile mass
- b) Two piles but <50% circumference
- c) Circumferential piles occupying more than half the circumference of the anal canal
- d) Thrombosed or gangrenous piles

CLINICAL FEATURES AND DIAGNOSIS

Internal and external hemorrhoids can lead to anal discharge and itching due to hygiene difficulties. Internal hemorrhoids are often associated with prolapse or painless rectal bleeding, especially during bowel movements. External hemorrhoids can cause anal discomfort due to engorgement, and if thrombosed, they can result in acute pain. Diagnosing hemorrhoidal disease relies heavily on patient history and physical examination. Common symptoms include rectal bleeding, prolapse, perianal swelling, and itching, while pain typically indicates complicated hemorrhoids. Symptoms like a feeling of incomplete

evacuation, changes in bowel habits, and weight loss warrant further investigation to exclude other conditions such as anal and rectal carcinomas, anal condylomata, and inflammatory bowel disease. Proctoscopy and sigmoidoscopy are used for diagnosis.^[3]

DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS^[2]

Diagnosis	Historical Features	Physical Examination Findings
Anal cancer	Pain around anus, weight loss in advanced stages	An ulcerating lesion in the anus
Anal condylomata	Anal mass, no bleeding; history of anal intercourse	Cauliflower-like lesions
Anal fissure	Tearing pain and bleeding with bowel movement	Painful rectal examination with fissure
Colorectal cancer	Blood in stool, weight loss, abdominal pain, change in bowel habits, family history	Abdominal mass or tenderness
Inflammatory bowel disease	Constitutional symptoms, abdominal pain, diarrhea, family history	Normal findings external rectal examination; rarely, fistula; colitis on anoscopy
Perianal abscess	Gradual increase in pain	Tender mass covered with skin as opposite to rectal mucosa
Skin tags	No bleeding; with a history of resolved hemorrhoids	Tags visible around the anus are covered with skin, not mucosa

HOMOEOPATHIC THERAPEUTIC MEDICINES^[5,6,7,8,9,10]

1. ***Aloe Socotrina***: Hemorrhoids appear blue, resembling a bunch of grapes, with constant rectal pressure, bleeding, soreness, tenderness, and heat, relieved by cold water, along with intense itching.
2. ***Ammonium Muriaticum***: Hemorrhoids are sore and smarting, with burning and stinging sensations in the rectum lasting for hours after a bowel movement, particularly following suppressed leukorrhea.
3. ***Apis Mellifica***: Hemorrhoids with stinging pain occurring after childbirth.
4. ***Arsenicum Album***: Painful, spasmodic rectal prolapse with tenesmus. There is burning pain and pressure in the rectum and anus. Hemorrhoids feel like they are burning and are relieved by heat. The skin around the anus is excoriated. Hemorrhoids cause stitching pain when walking or sitting, but not during bowel movements; they prevent sitting or sleeping and have burning pain worsened by heat. Fissures can make urination difficult.
5. ***Baryta Carb***: Hemorrhoids protrude whenever the individual urinates.

6. ***Capsicum Annum***: Suitable for individuals with weak, lax fibers and reduced vital heat. There is bloody mucus with burning and tenesmus, thirst after bowel movements accompanied by shivering and bleeding piles with soreness of the anus.
7. ***Carbo Vegetabilis***: Causes itching, gnawing, and burning in the rectum with acrid, corrosive discharge. White hemorrhoids lead to excoriation of the anus, bluish burning piles, and pain after bowel movements.
8. ***Carduus Marianus***: Primarily affects the liver, causing hemorrhagic piles and rectal prolapse, with burning pain in the anus and rectum, and hard, knotted, clayey stools.
9. ***Chronicum Acidum***: Results in internal and bleeding hemorrhoids, weakness in the lumbosacral region, and watery, frequent, copious stools with nausea and vertigo.
10. ***Collinsonia Canadensis***: Causes pelvic and portal congestion leading to hemorrhoids and constipation, particularly in women. Produces a sensation of sharp sticks in the rectum, obstinate constipation with protruding hemorrhoids, and hemorrhoidal dysentery with tenesmus.
11. ***Copaiva Officinalis***: Causes mucus colitis with stools covered in mucus, accompanied by colic and chills, and burning and itching in the anus due to piles.
12. ***Graphitis***: Results in burning hemorrhoids, a smarting, sore anus with itching, lumpy stool intertwined with mucus threads, and rectal varices.
13. ***Magnesium Muraticum***: Acts as a liver remedy with notable constipation, producing stools that are knotty like sheep dung and crumble at the anus, and painful, smarting hemorrhoids.
14. ***Magnetis Poli Ambo***: Causes intense hemorrhoidal pain in the anus after bowel movements, erosive sensations as if sore and constricted rectum, burning at the anus when sitting, itching hemorrhoids, and blind hemorrhoids after soft stool with sore varices on the anus margin, both when sitting and walking.
15. ***Muriaticum Acidum***: Swollen, blue, sensitive, and painful to touch; appears suddenly in children; too sore to bear the least touch, even the sheet is comfortable. Prolapse while urinating.
16. ***Nux Vomica***: Itching blind haemorrhoids, with ineffectual urging to stool; very painful; after drastic drugs. Constant uneasiness in the rectum.
17. ***Paeonia Officinalis***: Hemorrhoids, fissures, ulceration of anus and perineum, purple, covered with crusts. Atrocious pain with and after each stool. Sudden pasty diarrhea, with faintness in the abdomen.

- 18. *Ratanhia Peruviana*:** Protrusion of hemorrhoids followed by long-lasting aching and burning in anus, bowel inactive, pain after stool as if splinters of glass were sticking in anus and rectum.
- 19. *Sulphur*:** Haemorrhoids that have been treated with ointment. Hemorrhoids oozing and belching. Itching and burning in the anus; piles dependent on abdominal plethora.
- 20. *Wyethia Helenoids*:** Useful in hemorrhoids when stool is loose, dark, and at night. Itching of anus, constipation with hemorrhoids without bleeding.

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