



The Homeopathic treatment of *Lichen planus* patients' : Clinical Case

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INTRODUCTION

Lichen planus is a common inflammatory disease that affects the skin and/or inside the mouth and vagina where it resembles a white spider web may ulcerate, and rarely can become cancerous. Lichen planus of the skin usually causes itching.

There seems to be a relationship between the oral form and the skin form of lichen planus. Almost half of those with the oral version also have skin lesions. The onset may be gradual or quick, but the exact cause of the inflammation that leads to lichen planus is not yet fully understood. It is important to note that lichen planus itself is not an infectious disease. Therefore, this disease is not passed from one person to another by any means. Lichen planus is not a type of cancer.

It is estimated that lichen planus affects 1-2% of the population worldwide and is more common in adults over the age of 40.[1]

Lichen planus of the skin affects men and woman equally. However, oral lichen planus is more common among females. The mouth is affected in around 50% of all cases of lichen planus (oral lichen planus).

Lichen Planus affects 6 to 7 times more females than men. For the majority of individuals, onset usually occurs around 40 to 50 years of age; however, cases have been described in individuals between 30 to 60 years of age. In rare cases, children may be affected.

CAUSES OF *Lichen planus*

The cause of Lichen Planus is unknown. The initial occurrence may persist for weeks or months, and recurrences can continue over many years.

Some metals such as arsenic, bismuth, gold, or exposure to certain chemicals used in developing color-photographs, may cause an eruption indistinguishable from Lichen Planus. Quinacrine (Mepacrine) taken for a

long period of time may produce Lichen Planus of the lower legs, as well as other dermatological and systemic disturbances. Some other drugs, among many, that may cause Lichen Planus-like eruptions are thiazide diuretics, topical beta-blockers, antimalarial, and phenothiazine. It is uncertain if there is a genetic predisposition to the disorder.

RISK FACTORS

A risk factor is something that increases chances of developing a disease or condition. Lichen planus is more likely to occur in the presence of -

- Liver disease
- Systemic lupus erythematosis ("lupus")
- Certain prescription medications
- Graft vs. host disease

The condition is more common in females and in those 30 to 60 years old (rare in children and the elderly).

SIGN AND SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of Lichen Planus may begin abruptly or gradually. The initial attack may persist for weeks or months; intermittent recurrences may occur for years. The primary spots are 2 to 4 mm in diameter with angular borders, a violet color and a distinct sheen in cross-lighting. Rarely, blisters may develop. Moderate to severe itching may be present which frequently fails to respond to treatment.

The lesions are usually distributed symmetrically, most commonly on the joint surfaces of the wrists and on the legs, palms and soles, trunk, glans penis, and mucous membrane of the mouth, anus, and vagina. Lesions are occasionally generalized, but the face is rarely involved.

Symptoms vary depending on the site of the condition. The first attack can continue for weeks, and even months, while recurrences can go on for years. Recurrences are more common in cases of oral lichen planus.

Symptoms take the following forms when appearing in certain areas.[2]

Lichen planus of the skin

- The rash appears abruptly and usually lasts for several months.



- There are clumps or patterns of shiny, raised, red, pink, or purple, flat-topped bumps.
- Papules are approximately 3 to 5 millimeters (mm) in diameter.
- White streaks may sometimes appear on the papules, called Wickham's striae.
- Intense itching may occur, especially at night.

Most affected areas are the wrists, elbows, ankles, and lower back. However, other parts of the body may be affected. The shins can be affected by thickened lichen planus, while the armpits might have ring-shaped lichen planus.

Oral *Lichen planus*

- White streaks appear on the inside of the cheeks. The gums, tongue, and lips may also be affected.
- The streaks are not usually painful or itchy.
- The white streaks do not go away.
- Possible redness and blistering of the gums.
- Sore mouth ulcers can develop and recur.
- The individual's sense of taste may become blunted, and some people experience a metallic taste.
- The individual can have a dry mouth.
- Spicy foods, crispy foods, and tomato products can make symptoms worse.

Lichen planus of the penis

- Purple or white ring-shaped patches appear around the head of the penis.
- They are not usually itchy.
- Symptoms are similar to thrush, and often mistaken for it.

Lichen planus of the vagina and vulva

On the vulva, white streaks develop, similar to those that appear in the mouth. They are usually neither itchy nor painful.

The skin may be red. Lichen planus on the inner lips, or labia minora, and the entrance to the vagina may keep returning, and the affected mucous membrane is bright red and raw. The labia minora may also shrink and stick to each other or the outer lips, also known as the labia majora.

The vagina may be red. Scar tissue may distort the shape of the vagina. Lichen planus can affect deeper areas within the vagina, causing desquamative vaginitis. Discharge can occur when the surface cells in the vagina peel off. The eroded vagina may easily bleed when touched.

Sexual intercourse may become painful, difficult, or impossible.

SOME CASES

Case - 1

Complaint :Geographical Tongue & white lesion on tongue

Sex :Male; **Age** : 36 Years

He started his treatment using allopathic drug (Drug group :Triamcinolone) and continued for 4 months. During that period he felt some problems like dryness in the mouth and thirstiness. His lesion didn't improve noticeably and buccal mucosa was affected newly. As per advice of Allopathic Doctor, he was prescribed for some oral medicine like Anti-malaria drug and Riboflavin. It was continued upto 5 months. But there was no drastically change in his geographical tongue.

Then I took that case.

Observation :

- Time to time lower abdominal pain
- Gastritis
- Constipation
- High blood pressure
- White lesion on tongue and buccal mucosa was mostly affected

I started with *Kali Mur 200*, then, *Mag Phos 12x*. Within 2 months, I found there was a change in his tongue. Lesion was going to reduce and abdominal pain had been minimized. I repeat the drug *Kali Mur* with 1M power, then to reduce the high blood pressure I used the drug "*Rauwolfia Serpentina*". The patient got relief from his problem within 5/6 months.

Case - 2



Complaint : White lesion on tongue

Sex : Female; **Age :** 39 Years

She started her treatment from an allopathic physician (Drug group : Nystatin) and along with oral medicine (Drug group : Miconazol) and continued for 3 months. Her burning feeling has been reduced, but lesion didn't improve majorly. As per advice of Allopathic Doctor, she was further prescribed for use antiseptic mouth wash. After 7 months, burning of her ulcerate tongue has been reduced, her hair growth has increased and deeper area of vagina has been affected. Affected mucous membrane of Vagina was bright red and raw.

Then I took that case.

Observation :

- She feels pain during urine discharge
- Feels pain, during sexual intercourse (Stated)
- Sense of taste became blunted
- White color & reddish dotted tongue
- The labia minora stick to each other (Stated)
- Hairy scalp

I started with *Borax*. After 1 month, she was feeling better than previous status. Then I applied the drug "*Ignatia*". Within 4/5 months, the patient cured 80%-85%. Lastly, I used "*Natrum Mur*". The patient got relief from her problem by 8 months.

Some relevant homeopathic medicine for treatment of *Lichen planus*

Sulphur

- Skin is dry and unhealthy
- Skin ailments are associated with lot of itching and burning that becomes worse on scratching and washing.
- Itching more in the evening.
- Skin becomes dry and hard.

- Mentally suited to people who are nearly always irritated and depressed. They are very forgetful. They are either too busy or they dare lazy and do not feel like doing work. Some of them may have a feeling that they are immensely.

Borax

- It is suitable for oral Lichen planus with unhealthiness of the skin.

Arsenicum Album

- There is small purplish spot in the skin. There is blisters after scratching. Greatly itching

Apis

- There is burning and swelling in skin. Prickly heat; Lichen urticatus.

Natrum Mur

- Dry eruptions, especially on margin of hairy scalp and bends of joints. Itching skin, raw, red, and inflamed; worse, eating salt, at seashore.

Thuja

- These patients are better in dry weather and worse from humid climate and damp conditions. Good for inveterate skin troubles and chronic stubborn skin conditions like lichen planus, psoriasis, eczema, warts, pyoderma, etc.

Arsenicum Iodatum

- It is a very good remedy for skin conditions like lichen planus, eczema and psoriasis where there is marked itching and exfoliation of the skin.

Ignatia

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- Sensitive to draught of air. Excoriation, especially around vagina and mouth.

CONCLUSION

The homeopathic treatment for Lichen Planus is based on the individual case of the patient's disease, its cause, its spread, the area affected, the genetic pattern, etc. The treatment plans thus designed is addressed towards correcting the immune system, in turn treating Lichen Planus from within.

The total duration of treatment varies depending on 1. Duration of Lichen Planus 2. Areas affected (Skin, mouth, genitals, nails, scalp) 3. Extent of spread (Only skin or only mouth or skin with mouth, etc.) 4. Previous medication (Extensive use oral cortisone may delay the course of treatment).

Lichen planus can be accompanied with other diseases. It is thought to be the result of an autoimmune process with an unknown initial trigger.

REFERENCE

- [1] <https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/skin-hair-and-nails/lichen-planus>
- [2] <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/184866.php>

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