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Case Report

Naturopathy and yoga in ameliorating multiple hormonal imbalance: a single case report

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ABSTRACT

Hormonal imbalances are common among the women who are in the halfway of their reproductive age. There are lot of factors like stress, diet, lifestyle etc. which contributes to this hormonal dysfunctions. However these factors are merely addressed by the existing management strategies. A 37 year old female presented with hypothyroidism and associated hyperprolactinemia had undergone Naturopathy and yoga interventions for a period of 18 months. Her baseline TSH and prolactin levels were 9.2 U/ml and 34 ng/ml respectively. Her anti-mullerian hormone (AMH) levels also fell down to 0.3 ng/ml. Naturopathy and yoga based lifestyle interventions including hydrotherapy, mud therapy, yoga therapy and acupuncture were given for different durations has streamlined the hormone levels to normal range (TSH-4.6 U/ml, prolactin- 19.6 ng/ml, AMH-2.6 ng/ml). The results indicate that naturopathy and yoga has a positive role in reinstating the hormonal homeostasis. However large scale studies are warranted to bestow better care.

Keywords: Hormonal Imbalance, Naturopathy, Yoga, Hypothyroidism, Hyperprolactinemia

INTRODUCTION

Hypothyroidism is common among the women in reproductive age. Thyroid dysfunction can affect fertility in various ways resulting in anovulatory cycles, luteal phase defect, high prolactin (PRL) levels, and sex hormone imbalances.¹ Hormonal imbalances even affect the mood and day to day activities of the female. There are many contributing factors such as diet, stress, improper lifestyle etc for these hormonal imbalances which are scarcely addressed by the current management strategies. This is a single case report of a patient with multiple hormonal imbalances who underwent naturopathy and yoga treatments.

CASE PRESENTATION

A 37 year old female visited our Out-patient department of National Institute of Naturopathy, Pune on May 2014,

pre diagnosed with hypothyroidism (TSH level >9.0 U/mL) and elevated Prolactin levels (34 ng/ml). She has been diagnosed with hypothyroidism since 22 years and presented with swelling pain and tingling sensation all over the body. She also complained of hot flashes in the body with irregular menstrual cycles, bloated abdomen with gas and constipation since 22 years. The patient complained about dryness in her vagina during intercourse and also had a history of two miscarriages. She was under Thyronorm (levothyroxine sodium) 125 mcg when she visited our clinic. She narrated that every time she takes some drugs she will develop some trouble like improper libido, hair fall, mood swings etc. At the later stage she was also diagnosed with a lowered level of anti-mullerian hormone-AMH (0.3 ng/ml).

Our patient was initially given a counseling session to make her understand the naturopathy and yogic approach towards hormonal imbalance. She was then provided with

naturopathy and yoga based life style modification program (NYLMP) in which she was asked to cut down leafy vegetables from her diet. 50-60% portion of her diet was converted as raw fruits initially and later supervised therapeutic fasting on tender coconut water was introduced for 2 days in a week regularly. Besides these dietary changes she underwent Naturopathy treatments like full immersion bath, mud bath, cold hip bath, neutral water throat pack and cold abdominal pack. These treatments were provided on the basis of naturopathic principles which supports the healing forces with in the body.² Additionally she underwent yoga interventions like *Anulom vilom* for (Alternate Nostril breathing), *Kapalapathi* (Fast abdominal breathing) and *Surya namaskaras* (Sun salutations) for one hour every day. She developed a drop in her AMH during the course of treatment, she was then intervened with acupuncture for 21 days in which Du (Du-20), Ren (Ren-2, Ren-3, Ren-5, Ren-6, Ren-9, Ren-12), gall bladder (GB 24, GB-25), spleen (Sp-6), stomach (St-36) and kidney (K-3) meridians were punctured.

DISCUSSION

The patient responded well to the NYLMP. Her baseline data and post intervention data were tabulated in Table 1. She gradually bettered from her symptoms. She underwent naturopathy and yoga interventions for 18 months in which her weight reduced to 51 kg from 63 kg. She expressed that she is feeling lighter and fresh than before. She reduced the dosage of her thyronorm from 125 mcg to nil.

Table 1: Changes in the hormones before and after the Interventions.

Parameters	Baseline data	Post intervention data
Height	157 cms	157 cms
Weight	63 Kg	51 Kg
Thyroid stimulating hormone	9.2 U/ml	4.6 U/ml
Prolactin	34 ng/ml	19.6 ng/ml.
Anti-mullerian hormone	0.3 ng/ml	2.6 ng/ml

Naturopathy can be defined as a drugless, non-invasive, rational and evidence-based system of medicine imparting treatments with natural elements based on the theories of vitality, toxemia and the self-healing capacity of the body, as well as the principles of healthy living.² Naturopathy considers human body as a complete unit and the treatments are based on panchamahaboothas (Five great elements- air, water, space, fire and earth).² The main areas to address in any case of hormonal balance are the contributing factors like stress, diet, lifestyle etc. Naturopathy modalities helps in bringing balance in these impaired mechanisms of the body and regulates the hormonal cycles as demonstrated in this

case. Cold water immersion baths (55-65 °F) will help in reducing excess stress in the body. Shevchuk NA 2007 has shown that cold exposure has shown to temporarily increase the plasma level of beta endorphin³ which may aid in relieving stress. Other hydrotherapy modalities like hip bath, local packs not only induce circulatory changes but also dissipate algogenic chemicals and influences the sympathetic activity in the body.⁴⁻⁶ The efficacy of yoga in asserting hormonal homeostasis is well known. Mud therapy has shown to improve the membrane potential and activates the hormones⁷ which may aid in regulating impaired hormone levels. Yogic techniques like *Pranayama*, *Asanas* and meditation practices are being used extensively for a wide range of endocrine dysfunctions.⁸ Empirical evidences suggests that acupuncture can enhance women's reproductive functioning and mitigative fertility issues.⁹ Naturopathy is a wholesome approach intended to heal the underlying cause by averting the root cause of the disease. It also provides a healthy internal environment to the body to accelerate its healing mechanisms. Future medical approach towards hormonal imbalances should be in such a way that the person has to be considered as a whole entity than merely treating the symptoms. However large scale studies are needed to justify better results.

CONCLUSIONS

Naturopathy and yoga, a non-pharmacological approach as demonstrated in this case has shown better prognosis in balancing the altered hormonal mechanisms. As per the knowledge of the author this is the first study explaining the efficacy of naturopathy and yoga in ameliorating hormonal imbalance. This inference is based on a single case study; larger randomized control trials are warranted to endorse the results further.

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