



Gustatory Homoeopathy

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.13903898

Submission Date: 28 Aug. 2024 | Published Date: 08 Oct. 2024

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Abstract

The current article looks into the scientific aspects of hot & cold foods. Although the nose has a role in the preference of hot & food foods, the article focuses upon the tongue & its role primarily. Individuals have different preferences regarding hot & cold foods. Here, the article links homoeopathy which use the preference of hot foods & cold foods by each individual to prescribe differently for each individual based upon their hot & cold preferences.

Besides, the nose & the tongue, the skin also has a role in the process of preference of hot foods. Here also, homoeopathy has different prescriptions based upon the process of sweating & eating. Hence, the science of bio chemistry in hot & cold foods becomes an individualistic feature while seen through the homoeopathic lens.

In the distal part of the article, there is a suggested treatment protocol based on the preference of hot & cold foods for individuals. These drugs are suitable to the individuals for any issue that they may face in their lives. These drugs become constitutional, polychrest, deep acting for these individuals. The population at large should involve a professional homoeopath while using these therapeutic approaches.

Keywords: Gustatory, Olfactory, Perspiration, Starch.

Introduction

When Dal (Pulse) boils, the temperature is close to 100⁰ Celsius. The temperature in the human mouth is 37⁰ Celsius. By the time the dal (Pulse) is served, the difference in temperature is still large. Most hot meals tend to be served at 60⁰ Celsius. The question arises why we do like food this hot & how does the body cope with this heat.¹⁻⁶

There are some steps that we do without even knowing these steps. If we pay attention, upon taking a bite of some food item that is hot & steaming, we stuck in a vortex of air in the first step. This reflex helps cool food before it touches the palate or tongue. The second step is perspiration. As hot food causes temperatures to rise in parts of the body, perspiration starts to cool the body. The coolness phenomenon is through runny nose & watery eyes. This phenomenon is known as 'gustatory sweating'.¹⁻⁶

This is why most of us or especially our elders in hot summer like the hot rice/roti (Flat Bread) & hot dal (Pulse) combo or hot rice & hot sambar (curry with mix vegetable & spices especially for this item) combo. Although they were sweating profusely while eating, they use to wipe sweat with a towel or 'Gamcha' (towel made from thin cotton cloth) while eating these hot combos. We usually like the hot combo because of the 'aroma'.¹⁻⁶

Aroma molecules are tiny, airborne particles that drift off a dish & into the nose & mouth & here they are detected by the olfactory receptors. The hotter the dish, the more aroma molecules are diffused as heat gives the particles themselves more energy for movement & their primary vehicle is steam. Aromas play a key role in our experience of flavor. That's why a food that is usually served as a hot dish does not taste the same when cooled.¹⁻⁶

Hot meals are preferred as food is safe when served hot. Bacteria flourish in temperature of 4⁰ to 60⁰ Celsius. When temperature crosses the 60⁰ Celsius marks, bacteria die. This is the reason why in a buffet, food is either served hot or cold. Cold foods have temperatures that are usually less than 4⁰ Celsius.¹⁻⁶

Another issue is the factor of 'mouth feel'. Food does not taste the same or feel right when the texture of the food has changed. Most starches start to retrograde below 55⁰ Celsius. They eject more water content & bond more closely rice gets gluggy, potatoes turn to a lump, rotis (flat bread) & naans (flat bread made from refined wheat flour) get stiff & dry. Dal (pulse) also gets congealed because of this phenomenon. Similarly, fats like ghee (clarified butter) solidify, melted cheese begins to cake & meats turn rubbery.¹⁻⁶

Exceptions to this phenomenon are 'Sandwiches', 'Wraps' & 'Chaats' (mixture of tangy items & spices) that taste good at room temperature. These items rely solely on textures & crunch. Without texture & crunch, the items would taste like 'mush' & no one would enjoy eating these items.¹⁻⁶

Guys with 'sweet tooth' eating a dessert dull their taste buds because the cold food tends to dull the buds & nerves in the mouth. Hence, the perception of sweetness is lowered when we eat a dessert. That's why 'Kheer' (sweet dish made from rice, sugar & milk) when served hot needs less sugar. Ice cream when melted tastes very sugary as ice cream being cold needs more sugar. This is why as we all are sugar conscious persons; we should opt for warm foods over cold foods.¹⁻⁶

Homoeopathic Perspective

The issue comes under the domain of 'Psoric Miasm' as it is a function of the taste buds & the olfaction. Miasms in homoeopathy are the disease causing dynamic agents that are infectious in nature.⁷⁻⁸

As per the homoeopathic angle, the 'desire' or 'craving' for a food item in any form is considered a 'general' symptom. This means no individual says my tongue likes 'sweets', a particular taste. The individual says 'I' like sweets. This means the liking of sweet taste is not restricted to the mouth cavity only but to the 'whole' individual in general. Similarly, the 'disliking' to a particular taste is also a general symptom. In the same manner, when a person's body does not agree to a food item or his/her body is intolerant to a particular food item it is also a general symptom.⁷⁻⁸

There are drugs for desire/craving a food item, disliking a food item, intolerant to a food item. All drugs are registered in the Homoeopathic Materia Medica after going through Human Clinical Trials (HCT). It is only human beings who can tell us whether they like a food item, dislike a food item or the body does not agree to a food item during HCT. No other therapeutic system can boast of this unique advantage.⁷⁻⁸

It is in this context that the current article dwells upon the concept of liking hot food, liking cold food & the related perspiration mentioned above is related to the homoeopathic system of therapeutics. Given below are the drugs related to liking of hot food, liking of cold food & related perspiration during eating.⁷⁻⁸

As per the Allen's key notes, the list mentions the following drugs.

If there is 'Desire for hot food', the drug is 'Lycopodium'. Similarly for the desire of 'cold food & ice cream', the drugs are 'Calcarea Carb', 'Phosphorus'.⁹

If there is 'thirst for very cold water', the drugs are 'Veratrum Album' & 'Phosphorus'.⁹

When we peep into the repertory by Boericke, he mentions the drugs 'Ang', 'Case', 'Cast-V', 'Chel', 'Lyc', 'Med', 'Sabad', 'Spig' that crave hot drinks. Similarly, those drugs that crave cold drinks are 'Acon', 'Ant T', 'Ars', 'Bry', 'Cupr', 'Merc', 'Verat'.¹⁰

Similarly, the drugs who crave cold food are 'Bry', 'Phos', 'Puls', 'Sil'. Those drugs that cannot digest cold drinks are 'Ars', 'Caladium', 'Digitalis', 'Elaps', 'Kali I', 'Verat'. Those drugs that cannot digest warm & hot drinks are 'Bry', 'Graph', 'Phos', 'Puls', 'Pyrog'.¹⁰

Dr. S.R. Phatak mentions the following drugs.

If there is 'craving for hot things', the drugs are 'Arsenic', 'Bryonia', 'Chelidonium', 'Ferrum', 'Lac Can', 'Lycopodium', 'Sabadilla'.¹¹

Similarly, if there is 'craving for cold things', the drugs are 'Aconite', 'Arsenic', 'Bismuth', 'Bryonia', 'Cadmium', 'Chamomilla', 'China', 'Cina', 'Diphtherinum', 'Eup P', 'Flu Ac', 'Lept', 'Manc', 'Merc Cor', 'Nat Sul', 'Onos', 'Phosphorus', 'Rhus Tox', 'Thuja', 'Ver Alb'.¹¹

If there is desire for very cold water, the drug is 'Oleander'.¹¹

The repertory of Bio-Chemic medicines by Dr. Phatak mentions the following drugs.

If there is 'craving for cold things or cold food', the bio-chemic medicines are 'FP, KM, KP, KS, NM, NP, NS, Sil'. Similarly, for 'craving of warm food', the bio-chemic drug is 'Silicea'. If there is craving for warm soup, the drug is 'Natum Mur'. Similarly, if there is 'craving for icy foods, the drug is 'NM'.¹²

It is to be noted that the liking, disliking & disagree of a food item to a particular individual is the base of a prescription for any complaint that the individual face as it is a 'general' symptom.

For perspiration related to eating, Allen mentions the drug 'Ignatia' with the symptom 'Sweat on a small spot on the face only while eating'. It is to be noted that this sweating is related to all kinds of foods whether hot or cold foods.⁹

Murphy's Materia Medica & repertory mentions the following drugs with respect to 'perspiration & eating'. If there is more perspiration during drinking irrespective of hot or cold, the drugs are 'Calc', 'Merc', 'Puls', 'Sel', 'Vert'.^{13,14}

If there is more perspiration on taking warm drinks, the drug is 'Merc'. Similarly, if perspiration is less in a person who usually perspire more after drinking, the drugs are 'Caut', 'Chin S', 'OP', 'Phos'. If there is less perspiration in a person who use to perspire more after drinking wine, the drug is 'OP'.^{13,14}

Similarly, if the perspiration is more during eating, the drugs are 'Carb An', 'Carb V', 'Carb Sul', 'Kali C', 'Merc', 'Nit Ac', 'Sep', 'Merc'.^{13,14}

If the perspiration is more after eating, the drugs are 'Bry', 'Calc', 'Carb An', 'Carb V', 'Carb S', 'Nit Ac', 'Phos', 'Sep', 'Sulph'.^{13,14}

On seeing less perspiration after eating, the drug is 'Lach'. If it is after breakfast, the drug is 'Carb V'. If it is after dinner, the drug is 'Carb An'. If it is after warm food, the drugs are 'Phos', 'Sul Ac'.^{13,14}

If there is amelioration in general after perspiration while eating or drinking, the drugs are 'Phos', 'Lach'.^{13,14}

The Bowel Nosode 'Flavus' can be prescribed as it covers olfaction, throat & mouth regions.^{15,16}

As the perspiration is involved in the eating & drinking of hot & cold foods & drinks, the related Bach Flower remedy is 'Impatience' as the nature of being impatience is associated with this phenomenon.¹⁷

Homoeopathy has already proved its efficacy in the COVID 19 pandemic.¹⁸ Here it is also significant to note that the Essential Medicine (EM) properties of homoeopathy like cost effectiveness, therapeutic effectiveness & no side effects will come handy for masses.^{19,20}

Conclusion

Here it is seen that just as physiology of nutrition can explain the relation between taste buds, olfaction & hot or cold food, homoeopathy goes much beyond the concept of physiology in nutrition. The subject of taste & smell is highly qualitative in nature that goes much beyond the domain of anatomy & physiology.

The article is not only for homoeopaths but also common population at large. To help people comprehend, the issue of nutrition, bio-chemistry & physiology related to hot & cold foods is discussed in the beginning section. Thereafter, the concept is linked to the homoeopathic therapeutics that is highly qualitative in nature, subjective as well as individualistic.

Since individualistic therapeutics is coming up on a large scale in the scientifically therapeutic domain, homoeopathy can fit in the bill as far as taste & smell issues that the current article touches upon.

Acknowledgement

The lead author thanks all the coauthors who are Homoeopaths for their contribution in the Homoeopathic section & all other coauthors for their contribution in the non Homoeopathic section. Professor Shankar Das was the Ph.D. guide of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai during 2011-2018. Dr. D.P. Singh was the teacher of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai during 1995-1997. Prof. Mohanty was the teacher of the lead author during his Homoeopathic graduation days in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest regarding the article.

Declaration

The lead author declares that the Homoeopathic protocol given here is only suggestive in nature.

Funding

There was no funding received for the article.

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CITATION

Tridibesh T., Shankar D., Rakesh D., Niranjana M., D.P. Singh, Byomakesh T., D.R. Sahu, Umakant P., Pramod B.P., Jeevan K.P., S.N. Pandey, & Sanskriti T. (2024). Gustatory Homoeopathy. In Global Journal of Research in Medical Sciences (Vol. 4, Number 5, pp. 64–67). <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.13903898>