

Aplastic Anemia and Homoeopathy

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Synonyms:

Anemia - Idiopathic Aplastic

Definition

Idiopathic aplastic anemia is a failure of the bone marrow to properly form all types of blood cells (Psora/Syphilis). Idiopathic aplastic anemia is a condition that results from injury to the stem cell, a cell that gives rise to other cell types after it divides. Consequently, there is a reduction in all cell types—red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets, which is called pancytopenia.

Aplastic anemia occurs when the bone marrow produces too few of all three types of blood cells: red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets. These three cells while scarce effect the body in following ways-

- A reduced number of red blood cells cause hemoglobin to drop.
- A reduced number of white blood cells make the patient susceptible to infection.
- A reduced number of platelets cause the blood not to clot as easily.

Causes

Aplastic anemia has multiple causes. Some of these causes are idiopathic, meaning they occur sporadically for no known reason. Other causes are secondary, resulting from a previous illness or disorder. Acquired causes, however, may include the following:

- history of specific infectious diseases such as infectious hepatitis
- history of taking certain medications, such as antibiotics and anticonvulsants
- exposure to certain toxins such as heavy metals
- exposure to radiation
- history of an autoimmune disease inherited condition

Aplastic anemia has been clearly linked to radiation, environmental toxins, insecticides, and drugs.

Benzene-based compounds, airplane glue, and drugs such as chloramphenicol have been linked to aplastic anemia. In some individuals, aplastic anemia is believed to be caused by a virus. To date the exact cause of the disease in over half the cases is unknown, or idiopathic.

The main cause of idiopathic aplastic anemia is unknown, but it is thought to be due to an autoimmune process (Pseudopsora) (the body reacting against its own cells).

Causes of other types of aplastic anemia may be chemotherapy, radiation therapy, toxins, drugs, pregnancy, congenital disorder, or Systemic Lupus Erythematosus.

Symptoms

Symptoms arise as the consequence of bone marrow failure.

- Low red blood cell count (anemia) leads to fatigue and weakness.

- Low white blood cell count (leukopenia) causes an increased risk of infection.
- Low platelet count (Thrombocytopenia) results in bleeding, especially of mucus membranes and skin.

The disease may be acute or chronic, and is almost always progressive. Risk factors are unknown.

The following are the most common symptoms of aplastic anemia. However, each individual may experience symptoms differently (Fundamental of Homoeopathy Supported).

Symptoms may include:

- headache
- dizziness
- nausea
- shortness of breath
- bruising
- lack of energy or tiring easily (fatigue)
- abnormal paleness or lack of color of the skin
- blood in stool
- nosebleeds
- bleeding gums
- fevers
- sinus tenderness
- enlarged liver or spleen
- oral thrush - white patches on a red, moist, swollen surface, occurring anywhere in the mouth.

The symptoms of aplastic anemia may resemble other blood disorders or medical problems.

Diagnosis

In addition to a complete medical history and physical examination, diagnostic procedures for anemia include additional blood tests and a bone marrow biopsy.

- Low red blood cells (anemia)
- Low white blood cell count
- Low reticulocyte count (red blood cell precursors)
- Low platelet count
- Bone Marrow Biopsy shows few blood cells

Treatment

Specific treatment for aplastic anemia is based on:

- age, overall health, and medical history
- extent of the disease
- tolerance for specific medications, procedures, or therapies
- expectations for the course of the disease

Supportive therapy may include

- blood transfusion (both red blood cells and platelets)
- preventative antibiotic therapy
- meticulous hand washing
- special care to food preparation (such as only eating cooked foods)
- avoiding construction sites which may be a source of certain fungi
- medications (to stimulate the bone marrow to produce cells)
- immunosuppressive therapy
- hormone therapy
- There are several alternative therapies that can be tried and some are successful to some extent. These include the use of cytokines (growth factors) or granulocyte monocyte colony stimulating factor (GM-CSF) or erythropoietin (EPO). Interleukin 3, monocyte colony stimulating factor, stem cell factor (SCF)

or C-kit ligand) and IL-6. Several newer cytokines are being developed and will be available for study in the near future.

Prognosis

Untreated aplastic anemia is an illness that leads to rapid death. Bone marrow transplantation has been successful in young people, with long term survival of 80%. Older people have a survival rate of 40 to 70%.

Precautions

- Patients with low red cell counts should avoid excessive exercise, going to high altitudes or any activity that brings on a fast heart rate, any chest pain or severe shortness of breath.
- Patients with low white counts may be more susceptible to infection with bacteria not viruses. These are usually acquired from cuts in the skin or lining of the mouth or throat, which might result from dental work, burns from hot food, etc.
- Patients with low platelets should avoid activities that result in trauma, especially head trauma. These would include contact sports such as football, skiing, hockey, etc.

Homoeopathic Treatment

Cardinal Rubrics:

1. GENERALS - ANEMIA
2. GENERALS - WEARINESS
3. GENERALS - WEAKNESS
4. GENERALS - WEAKNESS - ANEMIA, IN
5. GENERALS - HEAT - LACK OF VITAL HEAT
6. VERTIGO - VERTIGO
7. HEAD - PAIN
8. GENERALS - SOFTENING BONES
9. GENERALS - HEMORRHAGE
10. SKIN - DISCOLORATION - PALE
11. ABDOMEN - ENLARGED - LIVER
12. ABDOMEN - ENLARGED - SPLEEN
13. STOMACH - NAUSEA
14. RESPIRATION – DIFFICULT

Some Remedies for Aplastic anemia in decreasing order of their applicability:-

Ferrum met > China > Ferr-phos > Nit-acid > Plumbum met > Phosphorus > Kali-carb > Nat-mur > Ars-iod

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