

Efficacy of Drosera & Kali Sulphuricum In The Management of Whooping Cough



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Abstract-Whooping cough (pertussis) is a highly contagious bacterial respiratory disease caused by *Bordetella pertussis*. Despite the widespread use of vaccination, pertussis remains a significant global public health concern due to waning immunity, incomplete vaccination coverage, and periodic outbreaks. The disease is characterized by severe paroxysmal coughing episodes that may lead to complications such as pneumonia, apnea, seizures, and respiratory failure, particularly in infants and young children. Conventional management primarily involves antibiotics, supportive care, and immunization. Homoeopathy has traditionally been used as a complementary therapeutic approach in respiratory illnesses. Among the remedies frequently prescribed for pertussis are *Drosera* and *Kali sulphuricum*, selected based on characteristic symptom similarity. This review examines the clinical features of pertussis, available evidence regarding homeopathic management, and the therapeutic indications of *Drosera* and *Kali sulphuricum* described in homeopathic literature. Current evidence remains limited, highlighting the need for well-designed randomized controlled clinical trials to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of these

remedies.

Keywords-Pertussis, Whooping cough, *Drosera*, *Kali sulphuricum*, Homoeopathy, Respiratory infection.

Introduction-Pertussis, commonly known as whooping cough, is an acute infectious disease of the respiratory tract caused by *Bordetella pertussis*. It spreads through respiratory droplets and is highly contagious, particularly among unimmunized individuals. Although vaccination has markedly reduced disease incidence, pertussis continues to occur worldwide because immunity decreases over time and vaccination coverage remains incomplete in some populations.

The disease typically progresses through three stages: the catarrhal stage, the paroxysmal stage, and the convalescent stage. The characteristic symptom is repeated episodes of severe spasmodic coughing followed by a forceful inspiratory "whoop." Infants are particularly vulnerable to severe complications including apnea, pneumonia, seizures, encephalopathy, and death.

Current standard management includes macrolide antibiotics, supportive care, and preventive vaccination. Homoeopathy has been employed by many practitioners as a complementary approach based on individualized prescribing. Among the remedies traditionally indicated for pertussis, *Drosera* and *Kali sulphuricum* are commonly selected

because of their symptom profiles. However, robust clinical evidence supporting their efficacy is currently limited, necessitating further scientific evaluation.

Epidemiology-Pertussis remains a significant public health problem despite extensive immunization programs. Cyclical outbreaks occur every three to five years because vaccine-induced immunity gradually wanes. The disease affects individuals of all age groups; however, infants younger than six months experience the highest rates of hospitalization and mortality. Adolescents and adults frequently act as reservoirs of infection, transmitting the organism to susceptible infants.

Etiology-The causative organism of pertussis is *Bordetella pertussis*, a small Gram-negative coccobacillus transmitted through respiratory droplets. After entering the respiratory tract, the organism adheres to ciliated epithelial cells using adhesins such as filamentous hemagglutinin and pertactin.

Pathophysiology-Following colonization of the respiratory epithelium, *Bordetella pertussis* produces several virulence factors including pertussis toxin, adenylate cyclase toxin, tracheal cytotoxin, and dermonecrotic toxin. These toxins impair mucociliary clearance, damage respiratory epithelium, and interfere with host immune responses. The

resulting inflammation and epithelial injury contribute to the persistent spasmodic cough characteristic of pertussis.

Clinical Manifestations-The illness progresses through three stages.

A) Catarrhal Stage-Patients initially present with symptoms resembling a common cold, including rhinorrhea, lacrimation, mild fever, sneezing, and a nonproductive cough.

B) Paroxysmal Stage-After one to two weeks, the cough becomes severe, repetitive, and spasmodic. Characteristic features include:

- Repeated coughing fits
- Inspiratory whoop
- Post-tussive vomiting, •Cyanosis
- Difficulty breathing
- Nocturnal worsening
- Exhaustion following coughing attacks
- Convalescent Stage
- Gradual reduction in coughing episodes occurs over several weeks to months, although recurrent coughing may persist after viral infections.

Diagnosis-Diagnosis is established through clinical assessment supported by laboratory investigations including:

- Nasopharyngeal swab culture
- Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)
- Serological testing
- Complete blood count demonstrating lymphocytosis
- Chest radiography in complicated cases

Complications-Complications are

particularly common in infants and include:

- Pneumonia, •Apnea
- Respiratory failure
- Seizures, •Encephalopathy
- Weight loss
- Pneumothorax, •Hernia
- Rib fractures in adults

Homoeopathic Perspective-Homoeopathy is based on the principle of "Similia Similibus Curentur" (like cures like). Remedies are selected according to the totality of symptoms exhibited by the patient. In respiratory diseases characterized by spasmodic cough, remedies such as *Drosera* and *Kali sulphuricum* have been traditionally recommended.

Drosera-*Drosera rotundifolia* is regarded as one of the principal homoeopathic remedies for whooping cough.

Characteristic Indications

- Violent spasmodic cough
 - Rapid successive coughing fits
 - Inspiratory whooping
 - Cough worse after midnight
 - Vomiting after coughing
 - Nosebleeds during cough
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Sensation of a feather in the larynx
 - Cough aggravated by lying down, talking, laughing, singing, and warmth
- According to Allen, Phatak, Boger, and other classical authors, *Drosera* is particularly useful when cough occurs in prolonged paroxysms with little opportunity for inspiration between

attacks.

Kali Sulphuricum-Kali sulphuricum is traditionally indicated in respiratory conditions accompanied by catarrhal inflammation.

Characteristic Indications

- Yellow or yellow-green expectoration
- Loose rattling cough
- Thick mucus
- Chronic bronchial catarrh
- Throat irritation
- Hoarseness
- Symptoms worse in warm rooms
- Improvement in cool, fresh air

Kent describes Kali sulphuricum as particularly beneficial in the later stages of respiratory infections when yellow mucus predominates.

Current Evidence-Several studies have investigated homeopathic interventions for respiratory tract infections. A Cochrane review evaluating oral homeopathic medicinal products in children with acute respiratory tract infections concluded that existing evidence is insufficient to establish clear clinical effectiveness because of limited study quality and heterogeneity.

Another randomized placebo-controlled trial evaluating a homeopathic cough syrup in patients with acute upper respiratory tract infections reported reductions in cough severity compared with placebo. However, the findings cannot be directly generalized to laboratory-confirmed pertussis, and further

disease-specific studies are required.

Overall, current evidence does not provide conclusive support for the efficacy of Drosera or Kali sulphuricum in pertussis, emphasizing the importance of rigorous randomized controlled clinical trials.

Knowledge Gap-Although Drosera and Kali sulphuricum are frequently prescribed in homeopathic practice for whooping cough, high-quality clinical studies specifically evaluating their efficacy in pertussis are scarce. Most published studies involve nonspecific respiratory tract infections rather than confirmed pertussis. Furthermore, the mechanisms through which these remedies may influence disease outcomes remain unclear. Well-designed randomized controlled trials with standardized outcome measures are necessary to strengthen the evidence base.

Conclusion-Whooping cough continues to be an important respiratory disease despite advances in vaccination and antibiotic therapy. Homeopathic medicines such as Drosera and Kali sulphuricum have a long history of traditional use in patients with spasmodic cough and pertussis-like symptoms. Classical homeopathic literature provides detailed indications for their selection; however, contemporary scientific evidence remains limited. Future randomized controlled clinical trials are required to determine whether these remedies provide additional clinical benefit when evaluated using rigorous scientific methodology and appropriate ethical standards.

Case-O.P.D. Registration No.: B309

• Date: 19/05/2026

• Patient's Name: Rutika Shankar Dhone

• Sex: Female

• Address: N-3, Ganesh Society, 1301, CIDCO

• Age: 15 years

• Occupation: Student

• Weight: 35 kg

• Provisional Diagnosis: Whooping Cough

Chief Complaints-

• C/o cough since 1.5 months

• Deep, sounding, hoarse barking cough × 1.5 months

• Difficulty in breathing × 7–8 days, on and off

• < After midnight

• > On lying down

• > Early morning

• Yellow-greenish coloured sputum × 2 weeks

Personal History

• Appetite: Normal

• Desire: Sweets

• Aversion: Milk

• Thirst: Thirsty

• Thermals: Chilly

• Bowels: Satisfactory

• Urine: 2–3/day

• Perspiration: Scanty

• Sleep: Disturbed

• Dreams: N.S.

• Menses: NA

Past History: No any major illness in past.

Family History:

• Mother – DM

• Father – Healthy

Mental Symptoms-

• Easily angry and impatience

• Anxiety and mood swings

• Mistrusts in others

Physical Symptoms-

• Desire: Sweets

• Aversion: Meat

• Thermally: Chilly

Physical Examination-

• Skin: Normal

• Growths: Normal

• Hair: Black

• Nails: Round

• Face: Red

• Ears: No wax

• Eyes: Watery

• Nose: Blocked

• Mouth & Tongue: Dry, coated

• Throat: Congestion

• Neck: Long

G/E (General Examination)-

• Temperature: 98°F

• Pulse Rate: 112/min

• Respiratory Rate: 28/min

• SpO₂: 97% on RA

Clinical examination-

• Inspection – tachypnea, Nasal laring

• Palpation – Normal

• Percussion – Resonant percussion note over both lung fields.

• Auscultation – Wheezing +

A/E – RS – AEBE, mild wheeze

• CVS – S1 S2, no murmur

• CNS – Conscious

• PA – Soft, NT

Totality of Symptoms-

• Deep, sounding, barking cough

• Difficulty in breathing

• < Lying down

• > Early morning

• Anxiety and mood swings

• Mistrusts in others

• Desire: Sweets

• Thermally: Chilly

Treatment-Rx

• **Drosera 30 SD**

• 4 globules – STAT

• SL

• 4 – 4 – 4 × 7 days

Follow-up (26/05/2026)-

• Deep sounding barking cough ↓ by 40%

• Difficulty in breathing ↓ by 40%

• Yellow-green coloured sputum ↓ by 40%

• PR: 84/min

• Treatment

• Rx

• **Drosera 30 SD**

• 4 globules – STAT

• SL

• 4 globules × 8 hourly

• For 7 days.

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