Review Article

Role of Synthesis Repertory in the Individualized Management of Scabies

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ABSTRACT

Scabies is a highly contagious parasitic dermatosis caused by Sarcoptes scabiei var. hominis, characterized by intense pruritus, nocturnal aggravation, and polymorphic skin eruptions. Despite its easier clinical diagnosis, management remains challenging due to recurrence, reinfestation, and associated psychosocial distress. Homoeopathy approaches scabies as a manifestation of underlying constitutional imbalance rather than merely a local infection. Individualization forms the cornerstone of treatment, requiring careful evaluation of mental, physical, and clinical symptoms. Repertorisation serves as a scientific method to achieve this individualization. The Synthesis Repertory, developed by Frederik Schroyens, represents an advanced and expanded version of Kent's repertory, integrating classical sources with contemporary clinical additions. Its structured organization, detailed rubrics, and precise modalities make it particularly useful in dermatological conditions such as scabies, where characteristic symptoms must be differentiated from common pathological features. This review aims to explore the role of the Synthesis Repertory in the individualized management of scabies by analyzing its application in symptom conversion, totality formation, and remedy differentiation. The findings suggest that systematic repertorial analysis using the Synthesis Repertory facilitates structured case evaluation and supports individualized remedy selection. When combined with classical homoeopathic principles, it provides a rational framework for managing scabies beyond symptomatic relief.

Key words: Scabies, Skin Diseases, Complementary Therapies.

Scabies is a common parasitic infestation affecting millions worldwide, particularly in resource-limited settings and overcrowded environments [1, 2]. It is caused by Sarcoptes scabiei var. hominis, which burrows into the stratum corneum, leading to hypersensitivity reactions manifested as intense itching and characteristic skin eruptions [3]. Transmission primarily occurs through prolonged skin-to-skin contact, although indirect transmission via fomites may also occur in certain conditions [4]. Clinically, scabies presents with nocturnal pruritus, papular or vesicular eruptions, and typical involvement of interdigital spaces, wrists, axillae, abdomen, and genital regions [5]

Persistent itching often results in excoriations, secondary bacterial infections, and impaired sleep, contributing to reduced quality of life [6]. Studies have shown that scabies significantly affects physical comfort, social interaction, and psychological well-being, particularly among adolescents and young adults[7]. Conventional management includes topical scabicides such as permethrin and systemic agents like ivermectin; however, recurrence and resistance remain concerns [8].

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In contrast, homoeopathy emphasizes a holistic approach, considerin scabies as an external manifestation of internal imbalance,particularly related to psoric miasm [9]. Hahnemann strongly cautioned against suppressive local treatments, advocating constitutional prescribing based on the totality of symptoms [10]. Repertorisation plays a central role in translating individual symptoms into a structured format for remedy selection. The Synthesis Repertory, with its expanded rubrics and integration of classical and modern sources, offers a comprehensive tool for this purpose [11]. This review aims to critically analyze the role of the Synthesis Repertory in the individualized homoeopathic management of scabies, focusing on its application in case analysis, rubric selection, and remedy differentiation, while evaluating its relevance in contemporary clinical practice. Emphasis is placed on repertorial methodology, clinical relevance of rubrics, and integration with Materia Medica. Available literature on scabies and homoeopathic management is also reviewed to evaluate the relevance of repertorial prescribing in achieving consistent outcomes.

2. HOMOEOPATHIC UNDERSTANDING OF SCABIES

Hahnemann described chronic diseases as dynamic derangements of the vital force, where external manifestations

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serve as indicators of internal imbalance [10]. Suppression of these manifestations without addressing the underlying cause may lead to deeper pathological states [12]. In scabies, this concept is particularly relevant as suppression of itching or eruptions may alter disease expression without resolving the susceptibility.

Modern interpretations emphasize that individual susceptibility, immune response, and environmental factors contribute to the variability in clinical presentation [13]. Homoeopathy integrates these factors through individualization, considering mental state, general modalities, and characteristic symptoms. Thus, management extends beyond eradication of the parasite to restoration of systemic balance.

3. IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUALIZATION IN SCABIES

Although scabies has a characteristic clinical presentation, variations in symptom expression are significant among individuals [5]. Factors such as intensity of itching, modalities (aggravation from warmth, night, or sweating), distribution of lesions, and associated systemic symptoms differ from patient to patient.

Individualization in homoeopathy involves selecting a remedy that corresponds to the totality of symptoms rather than the disease label alone [14]. In scabies, reliance solely on common symptoms like itching may lead to non-specific prescribing and inconsistent results. Mental and emotional aspects, such as irritability due to disturbed sleep or anxiety related to persistent itching, often provide valuable individualizing features [15]. Physical generals, including thermal preference and sweating patterns, further refine remedy selection. Repertorisation facilitates this process by systematically organizing symptoms and identifying remedies that correspond to the totality. This ensures a scientific and unbiased approach to remedy selection [11].

4. NEED FOR REPERTORIAL APPROACH

Repertory serves as an essential tool that bridges case-taking and Materia Medica [16]. In conditions like scabies, where pathological symptoms are prominent, it helps in identifying characteristic features necessary for individualization.Without repertorial analysis, physicians may rely on clinical experience or common remedies, which may not always correspond to the individual case. Repertory provides a structured method for evaluating symptoms, assigning appropriate weightage, and minimizing subjective bias [17].

Additionally, repertorial analysis enhances reproducibility and consistency in clinical practice, which is particularly important in research settings. It also facilitates a comparative evaluation of remedies, enabling differentiation based on subtle variations in symptoms [18].

5. SYNTHESIS REPERTORY

The Synthesis Repertory is an enlarged, revised, and improved version of the sixth American edition of Kent's Repertory of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica. It includes all rubrics and remedies from Kent's repertory and incorporates additions from other reliable sources. The repertory was designed to make the content more precise, systematic, and easier to use, improving both the language and structural organization. During the early 1980s, a team of international homoeopaths recognized the need for a repertory that could evolve continuously in response to new clinical findings and research [11].

Under the guidance of Dr. Frederik Schroyens, a large volume of data was collected from many homoeopathic practitioners around the world. This data was initially used to develop the Rapid Aid to Drug Analysis and Repertorization (R.A.D.A.R) software, which is a computerized repertory system. Upon request from practitioners, the repertory data was later compiled in a book form, resulting in the publication of Synthesis Repertory.

5.1 Structure and Arrangement

The Synthesis Repertory follows the Kentian structure, maintaining the general-to-particular order and logical arrangement of chapters and rubrics. The main characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Synthesis Repertory

No.	Characteristics
1	It contains 39 chapters, starting with Mind and ending with Generalities.
2	Each chapter is subdivided into rubrics, subrubrics, and cross-references arranged in a hierarchical format.
3	The language is simplified and standardized for easier understanding.
4	Cross-references and synonyms are provided to guide repertorization accurately.
5	Remedies are given in different grades (bold, italics, etc.) to indicate the level of confirmation or intensity of symptom verification.

One of the major strengths of Synthesis Repertory lies in its detailed skin section, which includes extensive sub-rubrics for various types of eruptions, modalities, and anatomical locations. This is particularly useful in dermatological conditions like scabies, where precise localization and modalities are crucial for treatment differentiation.

The repertory also integrates mental and physical generals with symptoms, allowing holistic analysis of the case. Its compatibility with digital repertorisation software further enhances its usability in clinical practice [19].

6. ROLE OF SYNTHESIS REPERTORY IN SCABIES

6.1. Conversion of Symptoms into Rubrics

The initial step in repertorisation involves translating patient complaints into repertory language. The Synthesis Repertory provides well-defined rubrics for common scabies symptoms such as "itching – night," "eruptions – warmth – aggravation," and specific anatomical locations [11].

6.2. Formation of Totality of Symptoms

A complete totality includes mental generals, physical generals, and characteristic particulars. The repertory facilitates integration of these aspects, ensuring adherence to homoeopathic principles [14].

6.3. Differentiation Between Remedies

Many remedies share common rubrics. The Synthesis Repertory allows differentiation based on finer modalities and concomitant symptoms, improving accuracy in remedy selection [17].

7. IMPORTANT RUBRICS FREQUENTLY USED IN SCABIES

The main rubrics commonly used in scabies is given in Table 2.

Table 2. Rubrics commonly used for Scabies

Section	Rubric
SKIN	Eruptions – scabies Eruptions – scabies – moist Eruptions – warmth – aggravation Eruptions – warmth – bed of Eruptions – red Eruptions – blotches Itching – night
EXTREMITIES	Itching – fingers – between Eruptions – hands – between first and second finger Eruptions – hands – between the index finger and thumb Eruptions – hands – between the second and third finger Eruptions – hands – between fingers Itching – thigh – inner side Itching – hip Eruptions – itching Itching – elbow – bend of Itching – wrist – back of Itching – wrist – front of Itching – wrist – inner side Itching – wrist – outer side Itching – foot – back of Itching – foot – night Itching – foot – warming up – aggravation Itching – foot – inner side Itching – foot – outer side
CHEST	Itching – mammae – nipples
	Itching – axilla
BACK	Eruptions – itching
ABDOMEN	Itching – night
MALE GENITALIA / SEXUAL ORGANS	Eruptions – itching
FEMALE GENITALIA / SEXUAL ORGANS	Eruptions – itching

Judicious selection of rubrics based on the patient's expression of disease leads to precise individualization.

8. CLINICAL APPLICATION AND OBSERVATIONS

Clinical observations suggest that repertorially selected remedies provide structured guidance in case management. In the cases of Scabies, patients often show improvement in itching intensity, sleep quality, and lesion healing over time [20].

However, variability in outcomes exists, and factors such as hygiene, contact treatment, and reinfestation risk must be considered. Therefore, homoeopathic management should be integrated with general preventive measures.

DISCUSSION

Several studies have evaluated the burden and management of scabies, particularly in developing countries, highlighting its prevalence and impact on quality of life [2, 6]. Conventional treatment remains effective but is often associated with recurrence due to reinfestation or incomplete treatment of contacts [8].

Homoeopathic literature emphasizes individualized treatment; however, high-quality clinical trials specifically evaluating repertorial approaches in scabies are limited. Some observational studies suggest improvement in symptoms and quality of life with individualized remedies, but methodological limitations restrict generalization [20, 21]. The Synthesis Repertory provides a structured framework for remedy selection, aligning with classical principles. Its advantage lies in detailed rubrics and integration of modern terminology, which improves applicability in current clinical settings [11]. However, its effectiveness depends largely on the physician's skill in case-taking and rubric selection. Contrasting views exist regarding the role of homoeopathy in infectious diseases. While some researchers argue for its supportive role in improving host response, others emphasize the need for robust evidence through randomized controlled trials (RCTs) [22, 23].

Therefore, while repertorial prescribing offers a systematic approach, further research is required to establish its efficacy in scabies management.

CONCLUSION

The Synthesis Repertory provides a structured and comprehensive tool for individualized homoeopathic management of scabies. Its detailed rubrics and systematic approach support accurate symptom analysis and remedy

selection. However, further clinical research is required to substantiate its effectiveness in evidence-based practice.

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