Homeopathic medicines for the treatment of dairy cows with cystic ovarian disease*

Marco Antônio Rautha Filho1; Lilian Bison2,**

1DVM, Homeopathy specialist.
2DVM, Homeopathy specialist, MSc., PhD. Instituto Hahnemanniano do Brasil

* Monograph of the Postgraduate Course in Veterinary Homeopathy - Instituto Hahnemanniano do Brasil
** Advisor

Abstract

The veterinary that wants to use the homeopathic therapy, usually has a lot of difficulties to find scientific papers published about this therapeutic and the easiest way to find information is reading books or searching in the internet. But in this kind of sources, the explanations and justifications about the prescriptions proposed aren’t clinically and scientifically based. The aim of the present study was to list the homeopathic medicines to treat the cystic ovarian disease in dairy cows, found on the non-scientific and on scientific literature to discuss the justifications the authors gave to indicate the usage of each medicine. The use of homeopathic medicine must be based in proper technical and scientific studies, based on a deep and methodic study of the illness and on the Hahnemann’s Classification of Diseases. The books and any other non scientific source that spreads information about the use of homeopathic medicines that aren’t clinically and scientifically based can’t be considered a source to study about homeopathic therapy.

Keywords: Cystic ovarian disease, Homeopathic treatments, Review.

1. INTRODUCTION

The non-conventional therapies, such as homeopathy and herbal medicine, have been increasingly sought not only for medical use, but also for veterinarian purposes. Mostly that happens because the regulations governing organic animal production in Brazil recommends both therapies for the treatment of organic animals (BRASIL, 1999). However, both of them face some loss of confidence in its scientific seriousness for being denied to the popular domain over many years.

Some of the causes of the small volume of experimental work in the field of veterinary homeopathy are the few researchers who have homeopathy as the main subject of research (BRASILIA VIRTUAL, 2008) and the short time of recognition of the veterinary area as a medical specialty (BRASIL, 1995). However, it is expected that the situation will change with the increasing integration of the Homeopathy as a discipline in the curriculum of undergraduate and postgraduate studies in veterinary Medicine, as observed with regard to herbal medicine and acupuncture.

Currently, the non-scientific literature on homeopathy is very widespread and the several jobs available on the subject are still from field works only. Within such literature, from the scientific point of view, the explanations of the requirements are extremely superficial and inadequate ones.

In this study, the drug indications for the treatment of cystic ovarian disease were chosen for discussion because of the
The importance of that disorder to the organic dairy cows and the ease of acquisition of the literature.

The purpose of this paper was to bring up to discussion the homeopathic medicinal products for the treatment of dairy cows with cystic ovarian disease, from the widespread scientific and non-scientific literature. Thus, discussing the reasons given by the authors for the use of those medications may point out to the rational use of such therapeutic resources.

2. DEVELOPMENT

The ovarian cysts are anovulatory follicular structures exceeding 2.5 cm in diameter and remaining in the ovary(ies) for at least 10 days in the absence of functional corpus luteum (WILTBANK et al., 2002).

The pathogenesis of that disease is still unknown and studies indicate the disease as secondary to an endocrine dysfunction. Such anovulatory condition is observed mainly in high-production dairy cows (WILTBANK et al., 2002).

The main possible causes of cystic ovarian disease are the deficiency of LH receptors in the ovaries, despite the normal release of that hormone in the pituitary or a deficit in the mechanism of GnRH or LH release for failure to produce such hormones (WILTBANK et al., 2002).

Cows with ovarian cysts have ovaries enlarged and resistant to manual pressure, swollen vulva and perineum, mucometra or hydrometra, and enlarged and flabby edematous uterus and cervix. The endometrium of those animals may have hyperplasia and cystic dilatation of the endometrial glands. Some cows with ovarian cysts have relaxation of the pelvic ligaments, gain weight and become lethargic. They also may have an increased tail base and neck thickening, getting a masculine appearance (CASTILHOS et al., 2003).

As a non-scientific source, the book “Homeopathy for pets and production” (TIEFENTHALER, 1996) was chosen, which is widely used by students of veterinary medicine when they become interested in veterinary homeopathy.

Thiefenthaler (1996) listed the following medicines for the treatment of dairy cows showing cystic ovarian disease. The author's explanations for the medicament directions are described below each medicine.

- **Apis mellifica** 4dH, 30dH
  Clinical indication: right ovarian cysts.

- **Aristolochia clematis** 1dH, 5dH e 30dH

- **Aurum metallicum** 4dH, 12dH, 30dH, 200dH
  Clinical indication: animals are quiet, apathetic, if left alone; anything is reason to make them angry, aggressive. Cows moo and take all that is on the way with their horns, and decay back into lethargy. As a rule, such cows have swollen lips of the vulva, vaginal discharge, loose pelvic ligaments, and ovarian cysts. Presence of ovarian cysts in cows mooing too much. Nymphomania with or without ovarian cysts.

- **Graphites** 12dH, 30dH
  Clinical indication: for short and weak heats, long estrous intervals indicated for heavy and slow cows which are prone to suppuration and have soft hoof membrane.

- **Iodum** 4dH, 12dH, 30dH
  Clinical indication: hyperplasia, but also atrophy of the ovaries, cycle disturbance and acyelia in the case of small non-functional ovaries.

- **Kalium iodatum**
  Clinical indication: similar to *Iodum*, but not so intense and sterility.

- **Lilium tigrinum** 3dH, 30dH, 200dH, 1000dH

---

**Homeopathic treatment of cystic ovarian disease in dairy cows according to the non-scientific literature**

www.ihb.org.br/ojs/index.php/artigos
Clinical indication: ovarian cysts associated with vaginal prolapse.

- *Platinum metallicum* 12dH, 30dH, 200dH
  Clinical indication: ovarian cysts with nymphomania and evil.

- *Pulsatilla* 2dH, 4dH, 30dH, 30dH, 200dH
  Clinical indication: anestrus, with *Aristolochia* for low heat (*Pulsatilla* regulates the functions; *Aristolochia* stimulates the disruption of the follicle).

**Homeopathic treatment of cystic ovarian disease in dairy cows according to the scientific literature**

There are few studies in the scientific literature on the treatment of cystic ovarian disease by homeopathic medicines. Silva *et al.* (2001) used the medicine *Pulsatilla nigricans* to reduce postpartum in beef and dairy cows. The product was administered in an acupuncture point located between the coccygeal muscle and the anal sphincter, at a depth of 7 to 10 cm. Of the 353 animals used in the study, a total of 127 cows reduced the period of anestrus in the immediate postpartum period. However, the authors did not indicate whether any of these animals had the cystic ovarian disease as a determinant of prolonged postpartum.

Cech *et al.* (1999) described the use of *Ovarium compositum®* administered subcutaneously and intramuscularly in the treatment of cows that had cystic ovarian disease. Such product is widely known by those who use homeopathy to treat animals, probably influencing the authors chose of this medicine. Nevertheless, it is indicated for humans, to use it orally, once to three times a day (HEEL, 2005).


In the work of Cech *et al.* (1999), 38.50% of the treated animals showed signs of estrus after treatment, but that value did not differ from the one observed in the group receiving the placebo.

Pinto (2001) described a methodology based on the Hahnemann’s Classification of Diseases and on the medical rationale. That protocol was used for determining the homeopathic products to be used in the work of Castilhos *et al.* (2003) for the treatment of dairy cows diagnosed with cystic ovarian disease (Homeocyst Protocol).

The methodology described by Pinto (2001) consisted of:

- Clinical study of the disease, especially of its clinical symptoms and its physiopathological mechanism, resulting in what is called clinical picture of the disease.
- Study of homeopathic products that can be used for the treatment of the disease. They are obtained by consultation of clinical symptoms in the Homeopathic Repertory, which is a symptom index that displays all the drugs produced in experiments on healthy bodies. That study shows what is called repertorial image.
- Correlation of the clinical picture of the disease with the repertorial image of the homeopathic products in order to obtain the medicine that corresponds to the physiopathology and to the symptoms of the disease, and to the biotypology of the studied breed. That is called pathogenetic picture of the disease.

The Homeocyst Protocol obtained from the above methodology is the use of the homeopathic products *Apis mellifica* and *Oophorinum* for the treatment of dairy cows with right ovarian cysts, and *Thuja occidentalis* and *Oophorinum* when the animals have cysts in the left ovary or both ovaries (CASTILHOS et
al., 2003). In such protocol, the homeopathic potency 6CH is adopted in hydroalcoholic vehicle with alcohololure of 70%.

In the study of Castilhos et al. (2003), each animal received a total drug volume of 2mL, corresponding to 1mL of each product per animal and per administration. The products were administered once daily in the vagina after previous cleaning of the vulva and surrounding regions. The medicaments were administered using 3mL syringes and artificial insemination sheaths cut to 20cm from the blunt tips, singles and previously cleaned with soap and water, and then with ethyl alcohol at 92.8° GL. The products were administered until the clinical manifestation of estrus, and animals were artificially inseminated after eight to twelve hours.

Homeopathic products listed in the Homeocyst Protocol have affinity for the reproductive organs, especially the ovaries, determining cell proliferation, cyst formation and its clinical consequences. Thuya occidentalis had effect on the left ovary mainly and Apis mellifica on the right ovary. Moreover, Oophorinum, which is prepared from the extract of healthy bovine or ovine ovaries, was used as a homeopathic drainage remedy, based on the Principle of Biological Identity. Such principle states that a diseased organ is electively sensitive to its healthy counterpart by cell, glandular and tissue specificity (CASTILHOS et al., 2003).

In the study of Castilhos et al. (2003), the treatment duration was approximately 13 days, and 87.50% of the treated animals became pregnant after the second artificial insemination, showing significant difference from the control group, where only 31.82% of the animals became pregnant.

3. DISCUSSION

The cystic ovarian disease in cows can be classified as a diathesical chronic dynamic disease of sycotic nature. The particulars of the non-scientific work of Thiefenthaler (1996) include medicines compatible with sycotic diathesis, such as Graphites, Apis mellifica, Platinum, Pulsatilla nigricans and Lilium tigrinum. However, the reasons for the medicament indications are simply based on the experience of the author, who does not report any scientific literature nor describes the pathophysiology observed in the disease to base the statements. Such a lack of theoretical basis also resulted in drug information incompatible with the disease under study, as in the case of Aurum metallicum, Iodium and Kali iodatum, products that are predominantly composed of syphilinism characteristics.

Cech et al. (1999) used the Oarium compositum®, which is a drug compound that includes organotherapy remedies and various diathetical products, including the main anti-syphilinism (Mercurius solubilis). Probably, the unimpressive results of the treatment may be explained by the incorrect choice of medication.

Nevertheless, in the work of Castilhos et al. (2003), two products of sycotic nature were adopted for the treatment of cystic ovariopathy: Apis mellifica and Thuya occidentalis. The Oophorinum, as an organotherapy remedy, could not be assessed on diathesis. The use of that medication, which is consistent with assessments of the disease, according to the Hahnemann’s Classification, may justify the positive outcome of the treatment. That fact confirms the importance and need to adopt rational methods for determining a treatment protocol and in-depth study of the disease for understanding the pathophysiological process involved and for the correct product indication.

The acquisition of scientific journal articles on homeopathy is such a hard task for veterinarians in Brazil, specially for those in the countryside. Most of the titles are not available online free of charge and are not easily found in national libraries. Moreover, the amount of research in the area is still very small, not only in Brazil. Thus, the major bibliographic sources used by those who want to use the homeopathic therapy in livestock are still the non-scientific books or sites available on the internet. That undermines both the professional treatments and the credibility of the study field, as the works have not undergone a thorough scientific assessment. Most books on medicine indications in veterinary homeopathy do not use the experimental evidence, and there is no basis on clinical protocol experimentally tested to obtain the product proposed as a source of
published bibliographic information. Therefore, there is an urgent need for greater involvement of researchers in producing works allowing the judicious use of the therapy.

4. CONCLUSION

The cystic ovarian disease may be classified as a diathesical chronic dynamic disease according to the Hahnemann’s Classification of Disease, and should be treated by a product of sycotic nature.

Non-scientific literature showed no judicious theoretical basis for drug information, thus indicating the use of products of syphilinism nature. The drugs that were consistent in a diathesical way with the disease under focus weren’t shown experimentally and the reasons presented by the author were absolutely superficial.

In the scientific literature, Ovarium compositum®, a complex using medicine of several diathesis and organotherapy remedies, proved ineffective for the treatment of animals with ovarian cysts. However, the controlled clinical trial showed extremely satisfactory results by using two drugs of sycotic nature (Apis mellifera and Thuja occidentalis) associated with the use of an organotherapy remedy (Oophorinum).

In conclusion, homeopathic indications should be performed only with the appropriate scientifically based knowledge. That is, there is the need of theoretical references based on the thorough and methodical study of the disease, respecting the Hahnemann’s Classification of Disease. The “guides” of drug indications not meeting such criteria in fact are spreading information of dubious quality and therefore should not be considered as reliable sources for the dissemination of knowledge on Homeopathy.

5. REFERENCES


Support: no.
Conflict of interest: no.
Correspondent author: Lilian Bison – lilianbison@terra.com.br
How to cite this article: RAUTHA FILHO, M. A.; BISON, L. Homeopathic medicines for the treatment of dairy cows with cystic ovarian disease. *Brazilian Homeopathic Journal* [online], v. 11, n. 2, p. 8 - 13, 2009.