

Complementary Therapy of Pranic Healing in Managing Moderate Panic Disorder with Mild Agoraphobia during COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case Report

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ABSTRACT

Panic disorder refers to recurrent unexpected panic attacks, including symptoms such as dizziness, chest pain or discomfort, a feeling of unreality, fear of losing control, and fear of dying which could last for few minutes. Here, authors presents a case of 71-year-old male during Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) lockdown experienced moderately distressing panic attack symptoms and feared going out by himself, due to the worry of future attacks. These symptoms made significant interference with social activities. The subject was under homeopathic medication and later referred to take Pranic Healing as an add-on therapy. Panic disorder severity (panic disorder severity scale-self report) and severity of agoraphobia (severity measure for agoraphobia-adult) were measured at day 0, day 60 and day 240. Moderate panic disorder (raw score was 12) with mild agoraphobia (raw score was 10) was reduced after 14 pranic healing sessions given in two months duration. No symptoms of agoraphobia or panic disorder were found after six months follow-up. Pranic healing along with homeopathic treatment were found effective in reducing moderate panic disorder with mild agoraphobia. Psychological therapies, combined with medication can be used as gold standards in treating panic disorder.

Keywords: Coronavirus-19, Panic attacks, Pranic psychotherapy, Prana, Vital energy

CASE REPORT

A 71-year-old male reported discomfort in the chest, heart pounding, feeling of unreality and fear of dying since one month. Fifteen days back, the subject had panic attack experiences for 10-15 minutes. The subject refrains to go on strolls, fear of going out of the house, fear of riding a scooter, due to the occurrence of panic attacks. Due to current symptoms, the subject could not go for temple visits and meet friends and experienced social isolation. The subject had earlier served in a private industry and now leads a retired life along with his wife. Fifteen years back, the subject experienced panic attacks at the work place. Subject could not go out of home because of the fear of getting a panic attack. The problem got resolved after 15 days of homeopathic treatment. In family his son, brother and mother are having anxiety problems in the past five years.

In COVID-19 initial lockdown period (May 1st week, 2020) the subject had difficulty of sleeping, fear of losing control of his mind, and experienced detachment from surroundings. In July 2020, the subject had visited a homeopathic doctor seeking relief for the above issues. Homeopathic medicine was taken daily three times during the treatment. Initially, the homeopathic practitioner had prescribed Conium 1M, Chelidonium 1M, Arsenicum album 200, and Gelsemium 1M for a week and changed to Aspen 1M, Mimulus 1M. The condition slightly improved after taking homeopathic medicine. However, still, the subject had a fear of going out alone and had symptoms of the panic attack. Hence, considered complementary therapy of pranic healing to hasten the recovery.

In July 2020, the subject visited World Pranic Healing Foundation, India-Research Centre and reported his symptoms, and was willing to undergo pranic healing as a complementary therapy. The Electrocardiogram (ECG) and blood investigations showed no abnormality. Blood pressure was 140/90 mmHg, and the patient was taking hypertension medication from 10

years (metoprolol 50 mg and telmisartan 20 mg along with Pan max DSR). A qualified Psychologist carried out the interview and administered the self reported version of the Panic Disorder Severity Scale (PDSS-SR) [1,2]. Severity of agoraphobia was measured using severity measure for agoraphobia-adult [3]. Based on the severity scale, moderate panic disorder (raw score was 12) with mild agoraphobia (raw score was 10) was observed [4].

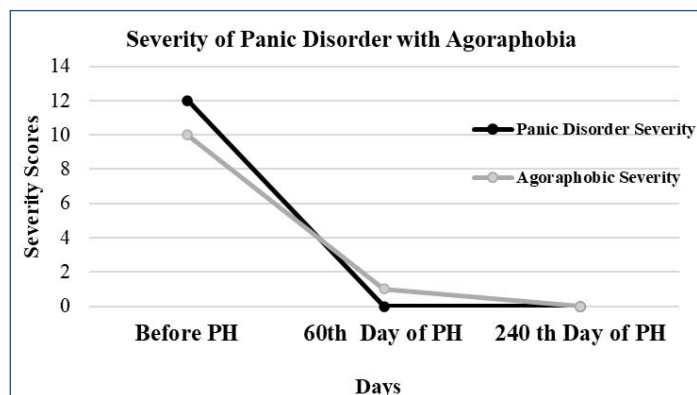
The mental status examination of the subject denoted casual dress, normal grooming, and cooperative. During the interview, the speech started with a normal rate, rhythm and volume, and later the volume level increased. Affect was reactive but, anxious mood with low confidence was observed. There was an absence of suicidal ideation, delusion, obsession/compulsion, hallucination, and orientation issues. Short term and long term memory was intact insight and judgement was found to be good.

After initial assessments, 14 Pranic Healing (PH) sessions for 20 minutes were administered in two months by a pranic healer from World Pranic Healing Foundation, India- Research Centre, Mysuru. Complementary therapy of pranic healing is a holistic approach that uses 'Prana' or Chi or 'ki' - the universal force to accelerate the healing process. PH sessions were performed thrice a week for the first two weeks. Based on the energy levels on aura and chakras, healing sessions were reduced to two sessions per week and later to weekly once after four weeks [5]. Four booster PH session was administered once in a month after two months to maintain the pranic energy level. Severity assessments were recorded before PH at day 0, day 60 and day 240 (after PH).

Treatment protocol

The subject was seated comfortably on a chair, with palms facing upwards. The healer measured the pranic energy levels of the subject using hands. The solar plexus, heart, basic, throat, ajna, and crown chakras were cleansed and energised

using pranic psychotherapy protocols [5]. After two months of PH, the severity of panic disorder was reduced to 0, while for agoraphobia was found to be 1. On day 60, the panic disorder severity score reduced from 12 to 0 compared to the initial assessment and the subject maintained the same condition till day 240. On day 60, the agoraphobic score reduced from 10 to 1 compared to the initial assessment and it has come to 0 at day 240 [Table/Fig-1].



[Table/Fig-1]: The assessment of panic disorder severity score and agoraphobic score on day 0, 60th and 240th.

Response from the Subject: Post PH, the subject reported that “In my mind, anxiety was there before PH, now I feel better. When I visit here, I feel more confident, taking the regular medicines for blood pressure and I have stopped the medicines for gastric problems, completely and body became normal.” During the follow-up session after six months, “Now I am comfortable and doing regular activities, including twenty minutes of exercise. I don’t have fear of riding a scooter or getting out of the house, everything going normally and PH benefitted me well.”

Response from the Healer: During scanning, “inner aura found to be depleted and dense form of energy was present. During general sweeping, the healer felt heavy, pricking energies coming out of the subject’s energy field. In the post PH session, the energy was found to be balanced.”

DISCUSSION

Emerging research studies have revealed that COVID-19 pandemic situations cause mental health issues related to stress and frustrations, which may cause overwhelming symptoms of anxiety and panic attacks [6,7]. Repeated psychological assessments and feedback collection on a weekly basis have to pertain to better identify the exact point where the PH affected panic symptoms and agoraphobic condition of the subject. Identifying or measuring the cognitive changes of the subject during the PH may provide more accurate findings to the problem studied. In case of psychological therapies, relaxation and cognitive change is the main key in dealing the cases of panic disorder with agoraphobia [8]. Here in PH, balancing the energies of the heart and solar plexus chakra by the healer makes the subject more calm or relaxed [9]. Chakra is the pranic energy focal points that are cleansed and energised during a healing session. The holistic approach of homeopathy supports maintaining the health of a person in line with vital energy balance [10].

Psychological therapies combined with medications are considered a superior treatment for panic disorders [11]. During the COVID-19 pandemic situation, PH helped in reducing stress and anxiety, breathing practice and meditation practice along with PH mitigated the panic disorder symptoms and migraine

headache [12]. PH was found effective in reducing pain, stress, anxiety, depression and insomnia [13-15]. An experimental study of PH on adult zebrafish evidenced a reduced state of anxiety and increased locomotory speed when compared to a control [16].

The complementary approach of PH with the application of homeopathy helped the subject to attain a balanced state. The Bach Flower remedies in the form of homeopathy was found useful in treating symptoms of anxiety or fear [17]. Depending on the psychological issues and individuals’ energy level, the number of PH sessions applied was varied. In testimonials, healers followed the respective protocol for 20 minutes for treating the anxiety symptoms [5]. The moderate level of panic disorder with mild agoraphobic symptoms got improved after attending PH sessions.

CONCLUSION(S)

Pranic healing along with homeopathic treatment was found effective in easing the condition of moderate panic disorder with mild agoraphobia. Further controlled study is required to confirm the effectiveness of PH on panic disorder with agoraphobia under the broad category of anxiety disorders.

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