



## An Integrative Review Of Coeliac Disease: Pathophysiology, Diagnosis, And Scope Of Homoeopathic Management

Dr Chandan Moolchandani <sup>1</sup>, Dr Pramod Kumar Singh <sup>2</sup>, Dr Kanchan Bhanwarsingh Rathore <sup>3</sup>, Dr Suveera Bhatia<sup>4</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> Dr Chandan Moolchandani, PhD Scholar, Homoeopathic Pharmacy, Homoeopathy University, Jaipur
- <sup>2</sup> Dr Pramod Kumar Singh (Guide), Professor and Head of Department of Homoeopathic Pharmacy, Homoeopathy University, Jaipur
- <sup>3</sup> Dr Kanchan Bhanwarsingh Rathore, Assistant Professor, Department of Human Anatomy, Madhav University, Sirohi
- <sup>4</sup> Dr Suveera Bhatia, Professor, Department of Practice of Medicine, Homoeopathy University, Jaipur

**\*Corresponding Author:** Dr Chandan Moolchandani

\*PhD Scholar, Homoeopathic Pharmacy, Homoeopathy University, Jaipur Mail Id: [htcmoolchandani@gmail.com](mailto:htcmoolchandani@gmail.com).

### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Coeliac disease is a chronic immune-mediated disorder triggered by gluten ingestion in genetically predisposed individuals, leading to small intestinal damage and systemic manifestations.

**Objective:** To review the current understanding of coeliac disease and explore the potential role of homoeopathy as an adjunctive therapeutic approach.

**Methods:** A narrative review of literature was conducted using databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and Google Scholar focusing on studies published between 2015–2025.

**Results:** Coeliac disease affects approximately 1% of the global population and is characterized by villous atrophy, malabsorption, and diverse clinical manifestations. While a strict gluten-free diet remains the cornerstone of management, a subset of patients continues to experience persistent symptoms. Homoeopathy, based on individualization and holistic principles, may offer supportive management in such cases.

**Conclusion:** Homoeopathy may play a complementary role in improving quality of life and symptom control in coeliac disease; however, further clinical trials are required to establish its efficacy.

**KEYWORDS:** Coeliac disease; Gluten intolerance; Autoimmune disorder; Homoeopathy; Malabsorption; Integrative medicine

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Coeliac disease is an autoimmune disorder characterized by an abnormal immune response to gluten proteins found in wheat, barley, and rye. It results in inflammation and damage to the small intestinal mucosa, leading to malabsorption and systemic complications. The global prevalence of coeliac disease is estimated to be around 0.7–1.5%, with increasing incidence due to improved diagnostic awareness. Despite its prevalence, coeliac disease remains underdiagnosed due to its varied clinical presentation, ranging from classical gastrointestinal symptoms to extraintestinal manifestations such as anemia and osteoporosis.

**Aim:** This review aims to summarize current knowledge on coeliac disease and evaluate the potential role of homoeopathy as a complementary therapeutic modality.

### 2. ETIOLOGY AND PATHOPHYSIOLOGY

Coeliac disease is a multifactorial disorder involving genetic, environmental, and immunological factors.

- Genetic predisposition: HLA-DQ2 and HLA-DQ8 genes
- Environmental trigger: Gluten (gliadin fraction)
- Autoimmune response involving tissue transglutaminase (tTG)

Gliadin peptides undergo deamidation by tTG, enhancing their immunogenicity and triggering T-cell mediated inflammation, leading to villous atrophy and crypt hyperplasia. This mucosal damage results in impaired absorption of nutrients such as iron, calcium, and vitamins.

### 3. CLINICAL FEATURES

Gastrointestinal Symptoms

- Chronic diarrhea
- Steatorrhea

- Abdominal pain
  - Bloating
- Extraintestinal Manifestations
- Iron deficiency anemia
  - Osteoporosis
  - Fatigue
  - Dermatitis herpetiformis

Many patients present with atypical or silent forms, making diagnosis challenging.

#### 4. DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis is based on a combination of:

- Serological tests:
  - Anti-tTG antibodies
  - Anti-endomysial antibodies
- Duodenal biopsy (Gold standard):
  - Villous atrophy
  - Crypt hyperplasia
- Genetic testing:
  - HLA-DQ2/DQ8

Early diagnosis is essential to prevent long-term complications.

#### 5. CONVENTIONAL MANAGEMENT

The primary treatment is a lifelong gluten-free diet (GFD), which leads to mucosal healing and symptom improvement. However, studies suggest that up to 20% of patients continue to experience symptoms despite adherence to GFD (non-responsive coeliac disease). Challenges include:

- Dietary compliance
- Hidden gluten exposure
- Nutritional deficiencies

#### 6. ROLE OF HOMOEOPATHY

##### 6.1 Conceptual Basis

Homoeopathy is based on the principle of “Similia Similibus Curentur” and emphasizes individualized treatment considering physical, mental, and emotional symptoms.

##### 6.2 Therapeutic Scope

Homoeopathy may serve as a supportive therapy in coeliac disease by:

- Improving gastrointestinal symptoms
- Enhancing general well-being
- Addressing constitutional tendencies

##### **Important:**

It should be used only as an adjunct, not as a replacement for gluten-free diet.

##### 6.3 Commonly Indicated Remedies

Remedy	Indications
Nux vomica	Indigestion, constipation, irritability
Lycopodium	Bloating, gas, evening aggravation
Arsenic album	Diarrhoea with weakness and anxiety
Natrum muriaticum	Emaciation, anemia
China officinalis	Weakness after fluid loss
Calcarea carb	Defective Nutrition, Malabsorption and impaired assimilation

##### 6.4 Evidence Perspective

Currently, evidence supporting homoeopathy in coeliac disease is limited to case reports and observational studies. There is a lack of large randomized controlled trials, highlighting the need for further research.

##### 6.5 Advantages

- Holistic approach
- Individualized treatment
- Minimal side effects

##### 6.6 Limitations

- Limited scientific evidence
- Lack of standardization
- Cannot replace dietary management

### **6.7 Rubrics related to Coeliac disease**

In homoeopathic practice, coeliac disease is approached through symptom totality rather than disease labelling. Relevant rubrics from the Synthesis repertory include gastrointestinal symptoms such as chronic diarrhoea, abdominal distension, and malabsorption, along with general features like emaciation and weakness. Mental and constitutional symptoms further guide individualized remedy selection.

#### **1. MIND (Mental Generals)**

- Mind – Irritability
- Mind – Anxiety – health about
- Mind – Apathy
- Mind – Weakness of memory
- Mind – Sadness

#### **2. STOMACH**

- Stomach – Appetite – diminished
- Stomach – Aversion – food
- Stomach – Fullness – after eating
- Stomach – Eructation

#### **3. ABDOMEN**

- Abdomen – Distension – after eating
- Abdomen – Pain – cramping
- Abdomen – Flatulence
- Abdomen – Emaciation

#### **4. RECTUM & STOOL (KEY SECTION)**

- Rectum – Diarrhea – chronic
- Stool – Undigested
- Stool – Offensive
- Stool – Fatty (steatorrhea-like condition)
- Stool – Pale
- Rectum – Ineffectual urging

#### **5. GENERALITIES**

- Generalities – Emaciation
- Generalities – Weakness
- Generalities – Food – aggravation – wheat
- Generalities – Malnutrition
- Generalities – Anaemia

#### **6. SKIN (Associated Conditions)**

- Skin – Eruptions – vesicular
- Skin – Itching

#### **7. CHILDREN (If paediatric case)**

- Children – Emaciation
- Children – Abdomen – distended
- Children – Diarrhoea – chronic

### **7. DISCUSSION**

Coeliac disease is a complex autoimmune condition with increasing global prevalence. While gluten-free diet remains the mainstay of treatment, persistent symptoms in some patients highlight the need for complementary approaches. Homoeopathy offers a patient-centred approach that may improve quality of life, but its role remains adjunctive and requires further validation through clinical research.

### **8. CONCLUSION**

Coeliac disease is a significant global health concern requiring early diagnosis and strict dietary management. Homoeopathy may provide supportive care in symptom management and overall well-being. However, robust scientific studies are needed to establish its role in integrative care.

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