

CERTIFIED HOMEOPATHIC ONLINE COURSE - SESSION 8:

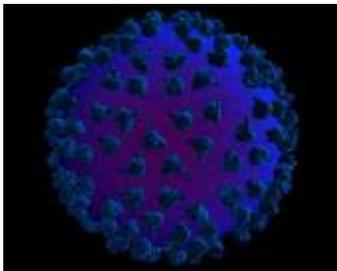


Does homeopathy work? Of course it does! And there is lots of evidence to prove it.

A Homeopathic Perspective on AIDS

(Excepted from [Consumer's Guide to Homeopathy](#), Tarcher/Putnam, 1995)

Although this article was written in 1995, it is still full of useful and insightful information and perspectives on AIDS and the immune system and homeopathy's role in dealing with them. People who want more up-to-date information on homeopathy and AIDS will benefit from reading Dana Ullman's ebook, [Homeopathic Family Medicine: Evidence Based Homeopathy](#).



As horrific as the AIDS epidemic is, it has had one silver lining: it has implanted into the awareness of the medical community and the general public the importance of the body's immune system. Prior to the emergence of AIDS, few people were familiar with or cared about the immune system.

Now more than ever, the general public is interested in exploring ways to bolster immune response to prevent the progression of AIDS, as well as to reduce the number and intensity of opportunistic infections and to improve the overall state of their health. The medical community, however, has focused its AIDS resources on creating antiviral medications, which despite great hope and expectation have not achieved the results anticipated. In fact, the leading AIDS drug, AZT, has been found to prolong the lives of people with AIDS by only seven or eight months, but due to its side effects, the quality of life during this time is not high.

What is yet to be understood by the medical community is that they need to direct more attention and research to ways to augment immune response, rather than ways to inhibit viral replication. By strengthening a person's own defenses, the body is best enabled to defend itself.

Homeopathy is one way to do this. Although no therapy can or will help every HIV+ person or everyone with AIDS, homeopathy is beginning to develop a reputation for helping people at varying stages of this disease. To understand what homeopathy has to offer, it is necessary to learn something about a different approach to infectious disease than simply attacking a pathogen.

Louis Pasteur, who initially suggested that bacteria cause disease, later realized that bacteria may not necessarily be the "cause" of disease as much as the "results" of disease. Like Claude Bernard, the father of experimental physiology, Pasteur came to realize that the susceptibility of the individual, the "host resistance," was a greater determinant of the development of disease than the infective agent itself.

Despite the later recanting by Pasteur, he had already set in motion a medical mind set that focused entirely on eliminating pathogens and that ignored exploring ways to augment immune and defense response. Just as physicians and scientists are finally realizing the limitations and problems inherent in antibiotics as antimicrobial agents, antiviral drugs will inevitably

suffer a similar fate. While physicians tend to know this both rationally and intuitively, they ignore these obvious problems in their clinical practice, in part because they don't know what else to do and in part because their biomedical paradigm limits their vision of alternatives to antimicrobial therapy.

As increasing numbers of physicians learn about homeopathic medicine, they will be exposed to viable alternative treatments which can play an integral role in the care and treatment of people with HIV and AIDS. A recent survey of physicians in the Netherlands verified this possibility. The survey showed that 50% of Dutch physicians instigated and supported the use of homeopathic and natural therapies in the treatment of people with AIDS.

Preventing AIDS

The best and most certain way to prevent AIDS is to avoid exchanging bodily fluids with people who are HIV+. Exposure to these bodily fluids most commonly occurs through sexual activity, sharing needles, or receiving blood transfusions. However, just because an individual is exposed to a person with HIV does not necessarily mean that the individual will get the virus. And further, just because an individual becomes infected with HIV does not necessarily mean that he or she will get AIDS.

The various factors that influence whether exposure leads to infection and whether infection leads to disease remain unknown. However, as with many infectious conditions, a stronger immune system reduces the chances of getting the disease or at least decreases the chances of complications from the infection. It therefore seems prudent to avoid the factors that inhibit immune response and to utilize those that augment it. The factors that inhibit immune response include an unhealthy lifestyle (i.e., smoking, poor diet, significant stress, sedentary habits) and the use of therapeutic and recreational drugs, while those that augment immune response tend to be a healthy lifestyle and utilizing natural therapeutics, including homeopathic medicines.



While the precise mechanism of action that leads to AIDS isn't known, a new and significant study suggests that homeopathic medicines may have a dramatic effect on some people with HIV. A study performed by a government research center in India with 129 asymptomatic HIV+ patients (120 male and 9 female) showed that during homeopathic treatment over a period of 3 to 16 months, 11 patients changed from HIV+ to HIV-. No conventional drugs of any type were prescribed to these patients.

The medical literature has on rare occasions reported individual patients who for unknown reasons converted from being HIV+ to being HIV-. This study is the first to report more than one.

It should be noted that this writer acknowledges that it does not initially make sense that people can turn from HIV+ to HIV-, because the tests that determine this status are simply evaluating a person's antibodies, not the disease itself. It is generally assumed that people who become HIV+ will remain that way throughout their lives. It therefore seems obvious that the work by the Indian researchers should be more carefully studied to evaluate this potentially significant clinical result. It should also be noted that these researchers have elsewhere published more up-to-date data which shows significant improvement in immune panels and blood work in HIV+ and AIDS patients as the result of homeopathic treatment.

These same researchers also conducted a study on the immunological status of 34 HIV+ patients. After six months of individualized homeopathic treatment, 23 (67%) of the 34 subjects' immune profiles improved. Thirteen patients experienced a 0-10% increase in CD4 lymphocytes

(a higher number of CD4 lymphocytes suggests a stronger immune response) and 10 patients experienced a greater than 10% increase. Because there is a tendency for people with HIV to have continually decreasing CD4 lymphocytes, this study suggests that homeopathic medicines provided a benefit to the subjects.

A San Francisco Bay Area homeopath, Lawrence Badgley, MD, reported on a six month study of 36 patients with AIDS or HIV whom he treated with homeopathic and other natural medicines. He observed a 13% increase in T4 helper cells and an average weight gain of two pounds. AIDS tends to have increasingly degenerating effects on the body, and improvement in the immune profile and weight gain seem to be rarely experienced under conventional medical treatment.

In addition to what homeopathy offers in the prevention of AIDS, other natural therapies that strengthen the body's own defense should also be considered. For instance, a recent study of HIV+ patients who were given only a multivitamin/mineral supplement were found to develop AIDS at a substantially slower rate than those who did not supplement their diet. If this simple addition to one's prevention program is so effective, it isn't hard to imagine what more individualized nutritional and natural medicine programs can do to slow down onset of this dreaded disease.

Treatment of Acute Illnesses during AIDS

Because of the seriousness of this disease, the treatment of people with HIV or AIDS requires professional health care, even when their ailments are seemingly minor. Ideally, they should receive treatment from a homeopath who is an M.D. or a D.O., but otherwise the best care is one that integrates homeopathic treatment with appropriate medical diagnosis and, in emergency situations, with appropriate medical treatment.



People with AIDS are prone to opportunistic infections due to their immunodeficient state, ranging from fungal infections in the mouth to respiratory infections. The use of conventional drugs can provide valuable temporary relief; however, occasional or repeated use of these drugs takes its own toll on their health and immune system, and thus provides short-term relief but longer-term immune complications. Safer therapies that are not as physiologically disruptive as conventional drugs are necessary for the long-term improvement of people with AIDS. Homeopathic medicines can play an important role in the treatment of these opportunistic infections.

One of the advantages of using homeopathy in treating people with AIDS is that they tend to get various unusual symptoms, diseases, and syndromes which evade immediate diagnosis. A homeopath, however, can prescribe a remedy before a definitive conventional diagnosis is made. Because homeopathic medicines are prescribed on the basis of a person's unique pattern of symptoms, a conventional diagnosis is not necessary for a curative remedy to be prescribed.

Treatment of People with AIDS

Despite the seemingly positive results that homeopathic medicines provide for people who are HIV+, for those with early onset of AIDS, and for those with nonextreme cases of AIDS, most homeopaths do not observe significant improvement in treating people who have advanced stages of AIDS. That said, it should also be noted that there are exceptions to this general rule, and numerous homeopaths find that select patients with advanced stages of AIDS experience dramatic improvement in their quality of life.

The experience of Bill Gray, MD, a homeopath in Davis, California, is typical of many homeopaths. He has had 33 AIDS patients, only three of whom have survived. The remaining three patients were the only ones who insisted on avoiding AZT and ddI (another popular AIDS drug).

Dr. Gray has also had 30 HIV+ patients for an average of five years, only one of whom developed AIDS. Although this one patient has suffered from two bouts of pneumocystis pneumonia, he is actually doing quite well under homeopathic treatment.

Dr. Gray and most homeopaths utilize classical homeopathy in the treatment of people with AIDS, using a single remedy prescribed individually to the unique pattern of symptoms experienced by the patient. This highly individualized treatment generally includes the use of homeopathic medicines which are highly potentized (usually higher than the 200th potency).

Because of the urgency of some AIDS patients' situations, some homeopaths experiment with new homeopathic remedies and with nonclassical approaches to homeopathy. For instance, Dr. Elliot Blackman, an osteopathic physician in San Francisco, occasionally prescribes Cyclosporin in homeopathic doses as an intercurrent medicine (an intercurrent medicine is one that is prescribed after another medicine which is individually determined). In conventional doses, Cyclosporin is an immunosuppressing drug, thus suggesting that it can be effective in homeopathic doses for treating people who have an immunosuppressed condition (this prescription is not "classical homeopathy" because each immunosuppressing drug creates its own unique pattern of symptoms, and the classical use of this drug would be more individualized).



In addition to the nonclassical approach, some homeopaths have been experimenting with giving AIDS patients homeopathically potentized doses of their own blood. The clinical benefit of this approach, however, has not yet been systematically tested.

Alan Levine, MD, a San Francisco physician who integrates homeopathic and other natural medicines with occasional prescription of conventional drugs, has one patient who was so sick with AIDS that he developed dementia, a state of mental deterioration that tends to occur in late stages of AIDS. This patient refused all conventional drugs from Dr. Levine and from all other physicians. Using homeopathic medicines, acupuncture, and herbs, the patient is now very healthy, has no signs of dementia, and has not had a single opportunistic infection in several years.

This case is mentioned because, despite the small chances of surviving late stages of AIDS and despite the generally accepted experience that dementia represents an irreversible neurological change, it is inspiring to know that significant and even substantial improvement is sometimes possible.

It should be noted that people with AIDS occasionally develop a fever shortly after taking the correct homeopathic medicine. This fever is considered a beneficial response of the body to the remedy and should not be suppressed. Physiologists recognize the therapeutic value of fever as a response to infection, and homeopathic medicine seems to be one way to augment this healing response.

Homeopathic Treatment of Infectious Diseases and Immunological Disorders

In order to fully appreciate the potential of homeopathic medicine in the treatment of AIDS, it is useful to get some historical perspective as well as to investigate what homeopathy has to offer in the treatment of viral and immunological disorders.

Homeopathy has an impressive history of successes in treating infectious disease, including many of the most serious and potentially fatal infectious diseases known to humankind. The

significant successes of homeopathic treatment of the infectious diseases that raged during the 1800s in the United States and Europe created tremendous support for this natural therapy. Death rates in homeopathic hospitals from cholera, typhoid, yellow fever, scarlet fever, and pneumonia were commonly one half to as little as one eighth those in conventional medical hospitals. Besides hospitals, prisons and insane asylums that employed physicians who specialized in homeopathy experienced a similar success rate compared to other institutions under the care of conventional physicians.

Just as homeopathy became known in the 19th century for its successful treatment of infectious diseases of that era, based on growing clinical and laboratory evidence, it is likely that it will become known in this era for its results in treating contemporary viral infections.

Although homeopathic medicines are not considered to have traditional antiviral action, their ability to augment the body's own defenses suggests that they have antiviral effects. One study on chicken embryo viruses showed that eight of ten homeopathic medicines tested inhibited the growth of the viruses by 50 to 100%. A similar study done by the same researchers did find, however, that none of the four homeopathic medicines tested for their effects on a mouse virus had any effect. Taken together, these studies suggest that homeopathic medicines can have significant antiviral effects, but it is necessary to find the individualized remedy for each situation.

Despite this preliminary work, it is conjectured that homeopathic medicines do not have traditional antiviral effects but have immunomodulatory effects ("immunomodulatory effects" refers to a tonification of the body's immune system--that is, an ability to augment immune response when it needs to be stimulated and to depress an already over stimulated immune system). One laboratory study showed that the homeopathic medicine **Silicea** had dramatic effects on *stimulating* macrophages, an important part of the body's immune system, by 55.5% to 67.5%. On the other hand, another clinical trial showed the efficacy of individualized homeopathic medicines on the treatment of people with rheumatoid arthritis, an autoimmune disease, which is when a person's immune system is overly active, leading the body to attack itself. This study suggests that homeopathic medicines *decreased* the overly active immune system.

Other studies have shown the immunomodulatory effects of homeopathic medicines, though their description is too technical for this book (See P. Bellavite and A. Signorini, **Homeopathy: A Frontier in Medical Science**. Berkeley: North Atlantic, 1995).

In Summary

The history of homeopathy's successes in treating infectious disease epidemics, the research that suggests the immunomodulatory effects of homeopathic medicines, and the clinical research on HIV+ and AIDS patients that indicates beneficial response to homeopathic medicines should command attention by physicians, scientists, and public health officials. Despite this body of work, it is both surprising and depressing that homeopathic medicine has been consistently ignored as a viable part of a comprehensive program in treating HIV+ and AIDS patients.

Homeopathy is not the only alternative that is being ignored by the AIDS medical community. Even though a large number of people with AIDS, especially long-term survivors, are using one or more alternative treatments, there is little data on their use or success. The leading AIDS organizations are likewise ignoring any serious investigation of their use. Until AIDS activists, the concerned general public, and open-minded health professionals start insisting that research on alternatives be performed, the potentially valuable therapies will continue to be ignored, and the AIDS epidemic will continue to devastate our society. When these alternative therapies are integrated within a comprehensive program which includes public health measures that seek to prevent infection, the AIDS epidemic will finally begin to recede.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Allergies (respiratory)

(Excepted from [Homeopathic Medicines for Children and Infants](#), Tarcher/Putnam)

The information provided here is not only applicable to children but to most people with allergies.



REMEDIES LISTED IN CAPITAL LETTERS ARE MORE FREQUENTLY INDICATED REMEDIES

Research has shown that homeopathic medicines are often effective in treating the acute symptoms of allergies, though professional constitutional care is usually necessary to achieve a deeper level of cure of the chronic allergic state.

ALLIUM CEPA: Children who will benefit from Allium cepa experience a profuse, fluent, burning nasal discharge which is worse in a warm room and better in the open air. They have a profuse, bland (non-burning) tearing from the eyes with reddened eyes, and will desire to rub their eyes frequently. They experience a raw feeling in the nose with a tingling sensation and violent sneezing. A frontal congestive headache may be concurrent with their allergy symptoms. These symptoms tend to exacerbate after damp winds.

Ambrosia: This is the primary remedy for hay fever after exposure to ragweed (Ambrosia is a homeopathic dose of ragweed). These children experience a watery nasal discharge and tearing and itching of the eyes. They may also have irritation of the throat and asthmatic breathing.

Apis: Swelling of the throat which is worse by heat is a common allergic reaction of these children. They cannot stand anything around the neck and have a sense of constriction of the chest. They may also experience hives and have puffiness around the face, swollen eyelids, and swelling under the eyes. They can have intolerable itching, especially at night in bed, and their skin may feel full, tense, tight, and hypersensitive to touch.

ARSENICUM: Burning tears and nasal discharge which are often worse on the right side characterize the symptoms related to this medicine. These children's symptoms are worse at and after midnight. They toss and turn in bed and become very anxious, frightened, and restless during breathing difficulties. They are very chilly and feel better in general in a warm room. They usually have a great thirst but only take sips at a time. These children are sensitive to light, have violent sneezing, and may develop asthmatic breathing.

EUPHRASIA: Children who need Euphrasia have the opposite symptoms as those who need Allium cepa: they have profuse burning tears from the eyes and a bland nasal discharge. Their eyes water so much the children look awash in tears. The whites of the eye and the cheeks become reddened from the burning tears. The eye symptoms are worse in the open air. The profuse bland nasal discharge is worse at night, while lying down, and in windy weather.

Kali bic: When children with an allergy experience a thick, gluey, stringy, yellow nasal discharge, this medicine is invaluable. They may also experience post-nasal drip with tenacious mucus, and pain at the root of the nose which is better from applying pressure there. There may be a constant inclination to blow the nose. The discharge, along with the sneezing, is worse from exposure to cold or in the open air. A cough may also occur concurrently, and sometimes these children get a swollen throat which is relieved by warm liquids.

Natrum mur: This remedy is most often given to children who get recurrent hay fever attacks every spring and fall and who develop their symptoms after an emotional experience, especially after grief. Death, divorce, unrequited love, or homesickness often create feelings that are not fully expressed, eventually leading to various physical complaints that this medicine is effective in treating. These children experience frequent sneezing, a profuse watery discharge from the nose and eyes, and a loss of taste and smell. Eventually, the nasal discharge may lead to a state of chronic nasal congestion and thick white mucus. Their symptoms are worse in the morning, at which time they usually hawk up much mucus. Dry and cracked lips or a cold sore may accompany the hay fever symptoms.

NUX VOMICA: These irritable and chilly children tend to have a fluent nasal discharge during the day and congestion at night. Their symptoms tend to be worse indoors and better in the open air. They are sensitive to the cold and to being uncovered. Frequent sneezing may be experienced. Their symptoms sometimes begin after being irritated, vexed, or fatigued.

PULSATILLA: These children have a nasal discharge during the day and congestion at night. Their congestion is worse in a warm room, hot weather, or while lying down, and is relieved in cool rooms, open air, or with cool applications. They tend to have itching at the roof of their mouth at night. These children are emotionally moody, weepy, and impressionable. They tend to be without thirst.

SABADILLA: These children are worse being in the cold air. They have spasmodic sneezing, running nose, itching in the nose, and red, runny eyes. They may also have a headache in their forehead and a feeling of a lump in their throat with a constant desire to swallow. Like Pulsatilla children, they will have a dry throat but do not have a thirst. They are very chilly.

Sulphur: Aggravated by heat and sun, these children have hay fever in the summer. They have nasal obstruction when indoors and a fluent nasal discharge when outdoors. The nose and eyes are reddened, and the nasal discharge burns. As the condition develops, the nasal discharge becomes offensive smelling. The allergy can develop into asthma, especially after exertion.

Wyethia: The distinct symptom that these children experience is an irritable itching behind the nose and/or at the roof of the mouth. They also have a tickling sensation that creates a dry, hacking cough. Their throat feels swollen. They have a constant desire to swallow saliva but have difficulty swallowing.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Asthma

(Excepted from [Homeopathic Medicine for Children and Infants](#), Tarcher/Putnam)

The information provided here is not only applicable to children but to most people with asthma.



Asthma is a potentially serious and even life-threatening condition. Infants and children with asthma should receive medical attention. Conventional drugs used for treating asthma, particularly steroids, can impair immune function and lead to more serious health problems. Homeopathic constitutional care is necessary to achieve a lasting cure of asthma, while the following remedies can often be helpful in reducing the distress that an acute attack can create.

Aconitum: This remedy is very useful at the very beginning stages of onset of asthmatic breathing. Noticeably present is anxiety, fear, and restlessness with the asthma.

Antimonium tart: The characteristic symptom of children who need this remedy is a rattling cough with an inability to expectorate mucus. Their condition is sometimes precipitated after being angered or annoyed. They feel drowsy, weak, and feeble, and their symptoms are usually worse at 4 a.m. Their difficulty in breathing may cause them to sit up rather than lie down. Concurrent with these breathing difficulties is anxiousness, restless, and irritability. They feel chilly but are averse to stuffy warm rooms and desire cool rooms and open windows. This remedy is rarely given at the beginning of an illness.

ARSENICUM: Restlessness and anxiety are prominent with asthmatic children who need this remedy. As the asthma continues, they get more and more frightened and agitated. Their symptoms are worse from midnight to 2 a.m., and they will toss and turn in bed, unable to find a comfortable position. Their breathing is best when sitting erect. Despite their restlessness, they are tired and weak. They are very chilly and better by warmth. They are noticeably thirsty but for only sips of water at a time.

Chamomilla: This remedy should be considered for asthma brought on after a tantrum. Chamomilla children are very impatient during their suffering. They have a hard, dry cough during sleep, and their difficult breathing is relieved from bending their head backwards, being in cold air, or drinking cold water.

IPECAC: Persistent nausea with a loose cough and a rattling in the chest but an inability to expectorate are characteristic of children who need this remedy. They have wheezing and tenacious mucus that is blood-streaked. Vomiting provides some relief of their symptoms because it helps to eliminate some mucus. Their symptoms are worse in hot, humid weather and are aggravated by the least motion. They experience cold perspiration of the extremities. They may also have difficulty sleeping and excessive salivation.

Lobelia: This remedy is known for curing asthmatic breathing concurrent with nausea and vomiting. These children usually have prickling sensations all over, even on the fingers and toes, that precedes the asthma. The asthma is aggravated by exposure to cold. The child may feel weakness in the pit of the stomach and a sensation of a lump above the sternum (the chest bone).
Nux vomica: This remedy is good for treating asthma when children have fullness in the stomach, especially in the morning or after eating. They have asthma with choking, anxiety, pressure in the pit of the belly, humming in the ears, quick pulse, and sweating. Their attack is sometimes incited by hay fever. They feel they must loosen clothing around their waist. Emotionally, they are more irritable than fearful.

PULSATILLA: These children have asthmatic breathing in warm or stuffy rooms, in warm weather, or after eating fatty or rich foods. They want windows opened and cool air. They are more apt to have breathing difficulties in the evening, especially after a meal. They crave sympathy and the company of others. They are very clingy and needy. They are highly impressionable: if parents are anxious about the child, the child becomes more anxious, but if parents are confident in the child's ability to get healthy soon, the child will be soothed.

Sambucus: These children get their asthma attack during sleep, commonly awakening them at 3 a.m. Their breathing is obstructed when they lie down and partially relieved when they sit up as they gasp for air. Their breathing improves while they sit up, but then is aggravated when they lie back down to sleep, only to rise again gasping for air. They sweat profusely during their waking hours but tend not to perspire during sleep.

Spongia: This remedy is known to be helpful for children with asthma who have a dry, barking, croupy cough. Their air passages are dry, the sputum is absent, and the voice is hoarse. The asthma and coughing can be exacerbated by cold air, warm rooms, tobacco smoke, talking, lying with the head low, drinking cold fluids, or eating sweets. The symptoms also tend to be worse in the early part of the night. Warm food or drinks, even in small doses, provide some relief, as does sitting up and leaning forward.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Bites and Stings

(Excepted from [Homeopathic Medicine for Children and Infants](#), Tarcher/Putnam)



The information provided here is not only applicable to children but to most people with bites and stings.

APIS: This medicine is good for red, inflamed insect bites from which children experience burning or stinging pain that is worse by heat or warm applications and relieved by cold or cool applications.

Hypericum: If children develop sharp or shooting pains from a bite or sting, consider this remedy.

LEDUM: This is the most common medicine for itching bites or stings from mosquitoes, bees, wasps, spiders, and rats. The itching from the bite or sting is relieved by cold applications and is sensitive to touch.

Staphysagria: When mosquito or other insect bites itch excessively or become large welts, this medicine should be given.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Burns

(Excepted from [Homeopathic Medicine for Children and Infants](#), Tarcher/Putnam)



The information provided here is not only applicable to children but to most people with burns.

The most common type of burn is a first-degree burn which creates reddening of the skin and pain. A second-degree burn creates blistering, along with redness and pain. A third-degree burn has occurred when all the layers of skin are burned through and the skin appears white or charred black. Medical attention is important for any third-degree burn and whenever any first or second-degree burn extends over a significant part of the body. Although some people do not think about seeking medical attention for sunburns, extensive sunburns in children should receive medical care.

CALENDULA: This is the first remedy to consider for first degree burns and for scars from previous burns. It is a good external remedy for sunburns. Apply the diluted tincture, spray, or gel externally.

CANTHARIS: This remedy is for pain of a burn, especially more severe burns such as second or third degree burns. It should be taken internally in potency and/or externally, though access to the tincture requires a doctor's prescription (this is because the tincture is toxic if taken internally). Internal or external applications of Cantharis are good for sunburns.

Causticum: This internal remedy should be considered for second degree burns.

URTICA URENS: This is one of the primary medicines used to reduce the pain of first degree burns, including sunburns, and to speed up the healing process. It can be taken internally in 6th or 30th potency as well as applied in a external tincture.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Headaches (Migraine)

(Excepted from *The One Minute or So Healer*, Tarcher/Putnam)



There are several types of migraine headache, but most are characterized by severe pain on one or both sides of the head (which may move to the other side), nausea, dizziness and visual disturbances caused by dilation and constriction of the blood vessels in the head

#ADAM

This book does not primarily focus on how to use homeopathic medicines but instead provides information on various natural health strategies to treat common ailments.

WARNING: This book is a lighthearted practical health guide. Laughter may be a side effect.

- It is accurate to tell a person with a migraine that the pain is all in their head. Considering that a migraine sufferer's head usually feels like it is the size of a city block, that's a lot of pain.
- During a migraine headache, blood vessels first become overly constricted, then abnormally widened. You usually experience this pain on one side of the head, which can make you feel lopsided.
- Migraines are often triggered by psychological stress, but unlike tension headaches, migraines tend to begin after a stressed person is finally able to relax; then that "relaxing" weekend or vacation becomes relaxation hell.
- Other triggers of migraines are sleeping too long, bright lights, too much time between eating, and fluctuations in hormone levels (some women get migraines during menstruation or during ovulation). Certain foods, drinks, and drugs can also set off a migraine.
- When a migraine is triggered, your head can seem to explode. It feels like there's an alien being in there trying to get out through your eyes. It feels like there's someone knocking at a door inside the head, and no one is home to answer, so the knocking just goes on. These are but some of the exciting experiences inside the torture chamber of a migraine sufferer's heads.
- Some migraine sufferers experience symptoms that warn them of an impending headache. Most commonly, these warning symptoms are disturbances of vision, slurred speech, dizziness, floating visual images, or weakness or numbness of one side of the body. If you are having a headache or any of these warning symptoms (and it's not from drinking alcohol), consider these strategies.

Strategy #1: Loosen up. Family therapist Virginia Satir once said, "If you have a stiff body, it's no wonder you're numb upstairs." Loosen your body. Try to move every joint in your body, one joint at a time, through its full range of motion. If you have access to a pool, do it in water.

Strategy #2: Around your head in a couple of minutes. While sitting up, relax your head and allow it to be as limp as possible, letting your chin touch, or almost touch, your upper chest. Slowly rotate the head clockwise several times and then counterclockwise the same number of times.

Strategy #3: Exercise to exorcize your migraine. Exercise can be effective in preventing a migraine. When you feel a headache coming on, exercise it out of you. If it hurts to move too much, try gentle motion exercise such as yoga, tai chi, or slow swimming.

Strategy #4: Headache-few with feverfew. New research published in **The Lancet** has shown that the herb feverfew is very helpful for vascular headaches. Scientists have proven that feverfew stops the blood platelets from releasing an excessive amount of serotonin, which seems to be one of the causes of migraines. Make an herbal tea of it, or simply take feverfew capsules.

Strategy #5: Headache food. Certain foods can trigger a vascular headache. No food will cause EVERYBODY'S headache, but many migraine sufferers recognize that there are foods that do aggravate their problem. The most common offenders are nuts, chocolate, coffee, sauerkraut, wheat, cheese and other dairy products, hot dogs, luncheon meats that contain nitrites, citrus, MSG, and alcohol (especially red wine).

Strategy #6: As above, so below. The congestion you feel in your head may be connected, in part, to the congestion you feel in your gut. Read the constipation section.

Strategy #7: As below, so above. Stand on your head or shoulders or hang upside down. Remember to breathe regularly. This exercise stimulates circulation and helps to break up head congestion. Do this for a minute, and then with practice, try to extend it. Don't do it if you have back problems or if it makes your head hurt too much.

Strategy #8: Hot bathing and cold water torture. Fill a bathtub with hot water and add several teaspoons of Epsom salts. Soak in the tub for 10-20 minutes; melt and relax in this comfort. Dry off, drain the water, get back in the tub, and take a cold shower for about three minutes. Dry off, dress in warm bedclothes, and relax in bed. This strategy is not for everyone; some people are hypersensitive during headaches to heat or cold. If you can stand to do this hot and cold bathing, you'll receive the benefits of improved circulation and reduced head congestion and head pain.

Strategy #9: Learn to circulate. With the aid of biofeedback, you can learn to directly affect blood circulation in your body, including the head congestion of a migraine headache. Courses in biofeedback are often available at community colleges, hospitals, and health centers.

Strategy #10: Magnesium magic. Magnesium relaxes the constriction of blood vessels and helps to lower blood pressure. Some studies have shown that 200 mg. of magnesium helps relieve migraines. Try taking this dose three times a day with meals.

Strategy #11: Have sex! Although some people use headaches as an excuse for not having sex, a researcher at Southern Illinois University has found that sex may actually provide some relief for migraine sufferers. The researcher found that the more intense the orgasm, the more intense the relief.

Strategy #12: Read and try some of the strategies for Tension Headaches too.

Strategy #13: One useless idea. Two-thirds of all people who suffer from migraines come from a family of fellow sufferers. Because changing one's parents is not a one minute strategy, it is best to consider the previous strategies.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Headaches (Tension)

(Excepted from *The One Minute or So Healer*, Tarcher/Putnam)



This book does not primarily focus on how to use homeopathic medicines but instead provides information on various natural health strategies to treat common ailments.

WARNING: This book is a lighthearted practical health guide. Laughter may be a side effect.

- Approximately 90% of all headaches are tension headaches. Perhaps they should be called "tension neck- and backaches" because it's the tightening of the neck and back muscles that usually creates the head pain. The old Persian proverb that says, "The bigger a man's head, the worse his headache,"

may be correct after all: the extra weight on the neck and the extra ego that comes with a big or swollen head may be enough to make anyone feel top heavy.

- Tension headaches seem to be an equal opportunity affliction. They can be caused by almost any type of stress: too much or too little exertion, too much or too little excitement, too hot or too cold temperature, too much or too little sleep, too erect or too limp posture, too much or too little food, and so on.
- A tension headache can lead to irresponsible behavior. Even these, though many do have a practical value. It allows you to tell your spouse, "I can't do the dishes, honey." You can tell your employer, "I can't finish that project." You can tell your children, "Shut-up and stop having fun." This selfish behavior, of course, will hopefully lead you to rest and to take care of your headache. Sometimes it seems that a headache is nature's way of telling you to relax.
- If, however, your teeth are clenched so tightly that people think you're doing a Clint Eastwood impersonation, if your neck is so tight that U.S. Steel wants to patent this musculature, and if your eyeballs hurt when you move them, even across this page, then you are paying the price of not resting enough and enjoying yourself. You now have some catch-up to do.
- If your eyes are not cooperating with you, get someone to read you the following strategies to you.

Strategy #1: Don't relax...at least not yet. An effective technique for reducing tension headaches is to tighten the muscles in the head, neck, and jaw for 5-10 seconds...and then release them. You may find that you will be able to achieve a deep level of relaxation and relief from this simple exercise.

Strategy #2: Get in touch with the temples. Remember the old aspirin commercials showing a furrow-browed man with an awful headache? As you may recall, he is seen massaging his temples. There are important acupressure points at the temples which can be used to relieve tension. Place four fingers (not the thumb) along both temples and do a circular massaging motion. Massage for a minute...and call me in the morning.

Strategy #3: Head to acupressure. The head and neck are full of invaluable acupressure points which can release tension when they are pressed firmly. Search your head and neck for "hot" points, that is, points that seem to be sensitive to pressure. Press them for at least five seconds, then relax for five seconds. Repeat several times.

Strategy #4: Your head is in your hands. There is an acupuncture point just barely under the bottom of the nail of your middle finger. If the pain is primarily on one side, then press the point on the hand of that side, and if it's on both sides, then alternate pressing this point on each hand.

Strategy #5: Pretend to yawn. Chew a bit. Relax that jaw! If the jaw is tense, muscles in the head and neck can impede blood flow to the head and aggravate tension headaches.

Strategy #6: Run away. Exercise can help loosen you up and release head, neck, and back tension. Exercising outside, as long as it is not too smoggy, carries the extra benefit of health breathing fresh air.

Strategy #7: Take a break from your coffee. Drinking coffee is known to cause headaches in many people. It is also common to experience headaches while going through caffeine withdrawal. Don't drink coffee; break away from it.

Strategy #8: Head for the herbs. Various herbal teas can help you to relax. Place a tablespoon each of chamomile and scullcap into a cup of boiling water and let steep for five minutes. Another good combination of herbs is one teaspoon each of hops and peppermint, and two teaspoons each of chamomile, rosemary, and wood betony.

Strategy #9: A bright idea. Cool-white fluorescent lights-- which are commonly used in many businesses--give some people headaches. Ask your employer to help enhance worker productivity by replacing these bulbs with full-spectrum lighting.

Strategy #10: Color yourself pain-free. Close your eyes and imagine a cool color pervading your head and neck. Choose whatever color is soothing to you. This cooling color should be moving and sweeping around; don't let it stagnate. Research has shown that color does affect brain chemistry and behavior. Color therapy is not simply something for those who are interested in fashion; it also has potentially profound healing effect.

Strategy #11: No noise is good noise. Excessive noise can irritate anyone. Avoid loud music or being in situations where there is a lot of noise.

Strategy #12: See if your head is on straight: "_____ (your name), sit up straight!" Improper posture can stress neck or back muscles. If your office chair, your car's seat, or any chair in your house doesn't give you good support, do something about it.

Strategy #13: Learn to listen to your body. One of the most common and effective uses of biofeedback is teaching people how to treat headaches by learning how to consciously relax head, neck, and jaw muscles. After you master some basics of the ability to affect your own body, you can learn to do so without being hooked up to a machine.

Strategy #14: Watch "Candid Camera" reruns. Laughter releases tension. You may laugh your headache off.

Strategy #15: Play a different game. Tension headaches can result from an over-competitive personality. Create win-win situations. Appreciate the art of losing. Honor quality of performance, not the prize.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Infectious Disease: Effective Alternatives to Antibiotics

(Excepted from Discovering Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21st Century, North Atlantic Books)



Towards the end of Louis Pasteur's life, he confessed that germs may not be the cause of disease after all, but may simply be another symptom of disease. He had come to realize that germs seem to lead to illness primarily when the person's immune and defense system (what biologists call "host resistance") is not strong enough to combat them. The "cause" of disease is not simply a bacteria but also the factors that compromise host resistance, including the person's hereditary endowment, his nutritional state, the stresses in his life, and his psychological state. In describing one of his experiments with silkworms, Pasteur asserted that the microorganisms present in such large numbers in the intestinal tract of the sick worms were "more an effect than a cause of disease."

With these far-reaching insights Pasteur conceived an ecological understanding of infectious disease. Infectious disease does not simply have a single cause but is the result of a complex web of interactions within and outside the individual.

The Homeopathic and Ecological View of Infectious Disease

An analogy to help develop an understanding of the ecological perspective of infectious disease can be developed from the situation of mosquitoes and swamps. It is commonly known that mosquitoes infest swamps because swamps provide the still waters necessary for the mosquitoes to lay their eggs and for them to hatch without disruption. In essence, swamps are a perfect environment for the mosquitoes to reproduce.

A farmer might try to rid his land of mosquitoes by spraying insecticide over the swamps. If lucky, he will kill all the mosquitoes. However, because the swamp is still a swamp, it is still a perfect environment for new mosquitoes to fly in and to lay their eggs. The farmer then sprays his insecticide again, only to find that more mosquitoes infest the swamp. Over time, some mosquitoes do not get sprayed with fatal doses of the insecticide. Instead, they adapt to the insecticide that they have ingested, and with each generation they are able to pass an increased immunity to the insecticide on to their offspring.

Soon, the farmer must use stronger and stronger varieties of insecticide, but as the result of their adaptation, some mosquitoes are able to survive, despite exposure to the insecticide. Similarly, finding streptococcus in a child's throat does not necessarily mean that the strep "caused" a sore throat, any more than one could say that the swamp "caused" the mosquitoes. Streptococcus often inhabits the throat of healthy people without leading to a sore throat. Symptoms of strep throat only begin if there are favorable conditions for the strep to reproduce rapidly and aggressively invade the throat tissue.

Strep, like mosquitoes, will only settle and grow in conditions which are conducive for them.

The child with the strep throat generally gets treated with antibiotics. Although the antibiotics may be effective in getting rid of the bacteria temporarily, they do not change the factors that led to the infection in the first place. When the farmer sprays with insecticide or the physician prescribes antibiotics but doesn't change the conditions which created the problem, the mosquitoes and the bacteria are able to return to those environments that are favorable for their growth.

To make matters worse, the antibiotics kill the beneficial bacteria along with the harmful bacteria. Since the beneficial bacteria play an important role in digestion, the individual's ability to assimilate necessary nutrients to his body is temporarily limited, ultimately making him more prone to reinfection or other illness in the meantime.

Marc Lappe', PhD, University of Illinois professor and author of *When Antibiotics Fail*, notes that, "When these more benevolent counterparts die off, they leave behind a literal wasteland of vacant tissue and organs. These sites, previously occupied with normal bacteria, are now free to be colonized with new ones. Some of these new ones have caused serious and previously unrecognized diseases."

Major Classes of Antibiotics

- Aminoglycosides
- β -lactams
 - Penicillins
 - Cephalosporins
 - Carbapenems
 - Monobactams
- Fluoroquinolones
- Glycopeptides
- Ketolides
- Lincosamides
- Macrolides
- Oxazolidinones
- Streptogramins
- Sulphonamides
- Tetracyclines

Some clinicians have found that inappropriate antibiotic usage can transform common vaginal "yeast" infections (*Candida Albicans*), which are characterized by simple itching, into a system-wide *Candida* infection which can cause a variety of acute and chronic problems. Although the diagnosis of "systemic candidiasis" is controversial, there is general consensus that frequent antibiotic use can also transform bacteria that normally live in our bodies without creating any problems into irritating and occasionally serious infections in the elderly, the infirm, and the immunodepressed.

And of course, the bacteria learn to adapt to and survive antibiotics. Scientists then must slightly change the antibiotics (there are over 300 varieties of penicillin alone), or make stronger and stronger antibiotics (which generally also have more and more serious side effects). Despite the best efforts of scientists, Dr. Lappe' asserts that we are creating many more germs than we are medicines, since each new antibiotic brings to life literally millions of Benedict Arnolds.

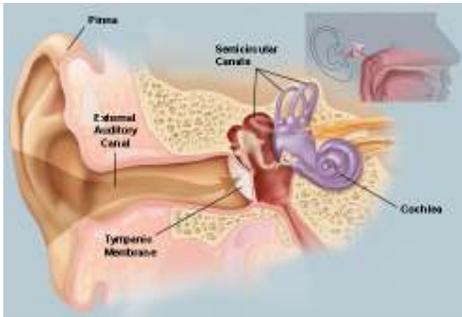
Just 15-20 years ago penicillin was virtually always successful in treating gonorrhea. Now there are gonorrhea bacteria which have learned to resist penicillin, and these bacteria have now been found in all fifty states as well as throughout the world. From 1983 to 1984 alone the number of cases in the U.S. with resistant strains of gonorrhea doubled.

Alexander Fleming, the scientist who discovered penicillin, cautioned against the overuse of antibiotics. Unless the scientific community and the general public heed his warning, Harvard professor Walter Gilbert, a Nobel prizewinner in chemistry, asserted, "There may be a time down the road when 80% to 90% of infections will be resistant to all known antibiotics."

The scientific community and the general public have ignored the insights of the late Pasteur and have ignored the importance of host resistance in preventing illness. Most scientists broadly accepted the germ theory, while only rare individuals have since acknowledged the importance of the ecological balance of microorganisms in the body. But the wisdom of Pasteur remains relevant, and more and more scientists are beginning to acknowledge the importance of alternatives to antibiotics. Even an editorial in the prestigious *New England Journal of Medicine* affirmed the need for the treatment of infections with "less ecologically disturbing techniques." Homeopathic medicines will inevitably play a major role as one of these alternatives.

Are Antibiotics Helpful in Ear and Throat Infections?

Claude Bernard, the esteemed "father of experimental physiology," affirmed Pasteur's contention that bacteria are not the cause of disease. In his most famous book, *An Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine*, Bernard said, "If the exciting cause were the principle factor, for instance, in pneumonia, everyone exposed to cold would come down with this disease, whereas only an occasional case of chill turns into pneumonia. Unless the subject is predisposed, the most powerful causes will have no effect on him. Predisposition is the 'pivot of all experimental physiology' and the real cause of most disease."



At a health conference in 1976 Jonas Salk noted that there are basically two ways to heal sick people. First, one can try to control the individual symptoms the sick person is experiencing, and second, one can try to stimulate the person's own immune and defense system to enable the body to heal itself. Whereas conventional medicine's allegiance is to the first approach, homeopathy and a wide variety of natural healing systems attempt the latter.

A good example of the questionable value of antibiotic use is their application in children's earache. Ear infection has become one of the most common childhood illness. The infection of the middle ear and eardrum is called "otitis media," a condition for which most physicians prescribe antibiotics. Several researchers, however, have found that antibiotics do not improve health of children compared to those not given antibiotics. Others have found that antibiotics provide a brief relief of symptoms, but subsequently there was no difference compared to those children given placebo. Still others have found that 70% of children with otitis media still had fluid in the ear after four weeks of treatment and that 50% of children experience another ear infection within three months.

Although some physicians assert that antibiotics are responsible for the presently low incidence of complications from ear infections such as mastoiditis, research has shown that there no evidence that antibiotics reduce the incidence of mastoiditis. Homeopaths claim a similarly low complication rate without the use of antibiotics.

One of the more significant studies showed that patients with ear infection who were treated with antibiotics had appreciably more recurrences (as much as 2.9 times) than those people who didn't use any treatment.

In chronic ear infection it has become standard procedure for physicians to use ear tubes in conjunction with antibiotics or in place of it. These tubes help drain the pus from the ear, but this treatment only deals with the results of the problem; it does nothing to treat the reason the infection was able to spread in the first place. This physiological fact may be the reason ear tubes have been found to be of questionable value.

Antibiotics and ear tubes treat symptoms of a problem. They do not strengthen the organism so that it can fight the infection itself, nor do they make the organism less resistant to future infection. Another myth which continues to be perpetuated is that of the value of antibiotics in treating sore throats. The primary rationale for using antibiotics to treat a sore throat has been to prevent the person from getting rheumatic fever, a potentially fatal condition. Researchers point out that there is presently an extremely low incidence of rheumatic fever. This low incidence is not the result of antibiotic use because there was a decrease in rheumatic fever incidence even prior to antibiotic use.

In 1986 there have been some reports of new outbreaks of rheumatic fever in some parts of the United States. However, Ellen Wald, M.D., medical director of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh, noted that too-early treatment with antibiotics may impair the body's normal immunologic response and open up the possibility of reinfection, and that this problem must be weighed against the benefit of possibly preventing rheumatic fever. One study showed that those children who were treated with antibiotics immediately upon diagnosis had eight times the recurrent rate of strep throat compared to those children who delayed treatment. In the context of other studies cited in this chapter, it may be worthwhile to compare those who received delayed treatment with those who received no antibiotics. It may also be worthwhile to compare these groups with a group of people prescribed a homeopathic medicine.

Recent research has even determined that today's strains of streptococcus very rarely cause rheumatic fever and that antibiotics do not even eradicate the strep in 25-40% of the cases, despite demonstrated sensitivity of the organism to the antibiotic.

Also, it is widely recognized that most strep infections are left untreated, and yet, a vast majority of these people do not get rheumatic fever. Further, from 33% to 50% of the cases of rheumatic fever occur without sore throat symptoms. A recent outbreak of rheumatic fever was reported in the New England Journal of Medicine. Two-thirds of the children with this disease had no clear-cut history of a sore throat within a three month period preceding the onset of their condition. Of particular significance, of the 11 children who had throat symptoms and who thus had a throat culture performed, 8 tested positive for strep. These children were prescribed antibiotics, and yet, each still developed rheumatic fever.



New evidence shows that antibiotics do help reduce the symptoms of sore throat faster than placebo. However, it is questionable if antibiotics should be used simply to relieve self-limited conditions. It is certainly understandable that antibiotic use be considered when there is a life-threatening condition. However, it is uncertain how effective they are in preventing one rare disease. It is also uncertain if it is worth prescribing these powerful drugs to mass numbers of children in the hope that a very small number might benefit.

Antibiotics should definitely not be given routinely to children with suspected strep throat. Recent research has now shown that 60% of children's sore throats are virally caused for which antibiotics are useless.

This evidence strongly suggests that alternatives to antibiotic usage should be sought for ear and throat infection. Homeopathy offers a viable alternative.

Homeopathic Treatment of Infectious Disease

When people think about the successes of modern medicine, they often assert that we are now living considerably longer than our parents or their parents. They also usually point to modern medicine's successes in treating the infectious diseases that raged during previous centuries such as the plague, cholera, scarlet fever, yellow fever, and typhoid.

Scientists and historians alike agree that these assumptions are myths, pure myths. Scientists point out that we are now living longer than ever before, but this has not primarily been the result of new medical technologies. Rather, our lengthening life is mostly because of a significant decrease in infant mortality, which is the result of better hygiene during birth (hurray for soap!), better nutrition (the creation of cities has enabled more people to have access to a greater variety of foods, thereby decreasing malnutrition), and improvements in various public health

measures such as sanitation, better sewage, cleaner water, and pest control.

Even with all these considerations, the increase in life expectancy for adults has not been very significant. Statistics show that the average white male who reached 40 years of age in 1960 lives to be 71.9; whereas an average white male who reached 40 years of age in 1920 lives to be 69.9. The average white male who reached 50 years of age in 1982 lives to be 75.6 years, while the average white male who reached 50 years of age in 1912, survived until 72.2 years.



Nobel Prize-winning microbiologist Rene Dubos noted, "the life expectancy of adults is not very different now from what it was a few generations ago, nor is it greater in areas where medical services are highly developed than in less prosperous countries."

Historians remind us that conventional medicine was not at all responsible for the disappearance or decrease in the fatal infectious diseases of the 15th to 19th century. Antibiotics were not even available until the 1940s and 1950s, and no other conventional drugs were successfully used to treat most of the infectious epidemics of the past. Even mortality (incidence of death) from tuberculosis, pneumonia, bronchitis, influenza, and whooping cough were on the sharp decline prior to the introduction of any conventional medical treatment for them. An important exception was the decrease in the death rate from polio after the introduction of the polio vaccine.

A little known fact of history is that homeopathic medicine developed its popularity in the United States as well as in Europe because of its successes in treating the infectious epidemics that raged during the 19th century. Dr. Thomas L. Bradford's *The Logic of Figures*, published in 1900, compares in detail the death rate in homeopathic versus allopathic (conventional) medical hospitals and shows that death rates per 100 patients in homeopathic hospitals were often one-half or even one-eighth that of conventional medical hospitals.

In 1849 the homeopaths of Cincinnati claimed that in over a thousand cases of cholera only 3% of the patients died. To substantiate their results they even printed the names and addresses of patients who died or who survived in a newspaper. The death rate of patients with cholera who used conventional medicines generally ranged from 40 to 70%.

The success of treating yellow fever with homeopathy was so impressive that a report from the United States Government's Board of Experts included several homeopathic medicines, despite the fact that the Board of Experts was primarily composed of conventional physicians who despised homeopathy.

The success of homeopathy in treating modern-day infections is comparable to its successes in treating the infectious diseases of the last century. It is common knowledge that homeopathic practitioners rarely resort to using antibiotics or other drugs commonly given for infectious conditions. Homeopaths, like any good medical professional, will use antibiotics when clearly necessary, but it is worthwhile having alternatives that work.

Homeopath Randall Neustaedter of Palo Alto, California, notes that acute ear infection is "a simple problem to manage with acute (homeopathic) remedies." Common acute ear infection medicines are Belladonna (deadly nightshade), Chamomilla (chamomile), Pulsatilla (windflower), Ferrum phos (phosphate of iron), and Hepar sulph (Hahnemann's calcium sulphide).

If the child gets treated with antibiotics and then has recurrent ear infections, homeopathic treatment generally takes more time but is often curative. Such recurrent problems, Neustaedter asserts, require the homeopathic "constitutional approach," the approach where a homeopathic medicine is prescribed based on the totality of present symptoms as well as on an evaluation of the patient's past history. While it is common for parents to prescribe successfully for acute ear infections, it is recommended that children receive professional care for recurrent ear infections or for any chronic condition.

Homeopaths have also found great success in treating a wide variety of other bacterial infections. Throat infections are commonly treated with Belladonna (deadly nightshade), Arsenicum (arsenic), Rhus tox (poison ivy), Mercurius (mercury), Hepar sulph, Lachesis (venom of the bushmaster), Apis (bee venom), or Phytolacca (pokeroot). Boils which result from bacterial infection are often successfully treated with Belladonna, Hepar sulph, Silica (silica), Arsenicum, or Lachesis. And styes, which usually result from a Staphylococcus infection, are effectively treated with Pulsatilla (windflower), Hepar sulph (Hahnemann's calcium sulphide), Apis (bee venom), Graphites (graphite), and Staphysagria (stavesacre).

Homeopathic Treatment of Viral Conditions

Conventional drugs at least relieve the symptoms of bacterial infection; however, there is little in conventional medicine has to treat most viral conditions. Since homeopathic medicines stimulate the body's own defenses rather than directly attack specific pathogens, homeopathy again has much to offer in the treatment of viral diseases.

In recent research on viruses that attack chicken embryos, 8 of the 10 homeopathic medicines tested inhibited the growth of the viruses 50 to 100%. This research is of particular significance because conventional science knows only a very select number of drugs that have antiviral action, and none of these drugs are as safe as the homeopathic medicines.

Homeopaths commonly treat people suffering from acute and chronic viral conditions. People with viral respiratory and digestive conditions, viral infection of the nervous system, herpes, and even a few with AIDS have reported significant improvement using homeopathic medicines. Sometimes this improvement is dramatic and immediate, though most of the time there is a slow, progressive improvement in the person's overall health.

British physician Richard Savage notes, "While the search goes on to find specific antiviral preparations which are free from side effects, homeopathy can be used effectively to treat patients in four ways:

1. Prophylaxis to generate resistance to the infection;
2. Treatment in the acute illness to reduce the length and severity of the illness;
3. Restoration to revitalize the patient during convalescence; and
4. Correction of the chronic sequelae to restore the patient to his former state of health."

1) Prophylaxis

Homeopaths have found that their medicines can prevent and treat various infections. There is not much research demonstrating the efficacy of the homeopathic medicines in preventing viral conditions, though there is some evidence that the medicines can be used to prevent other infectious diseases. Homeopathic micro doses can be used as immunizations; for instance, a single dose of Meningococcin 10c (a homeopathic preparation of Neisseria meningitidis), 18,000 people in Brazil were immunized in 1974. The immunized group had significantly less meningitis infections than a control group.

In the 1800s homeopaths commonly used medicines to prevent or cure what later came to be understood as bacterial or viral infections. Aconite and Ferrum phos were frequently given at the early onset of fever and aches as a way to prevent influenza. Belladonna was the most common medicine for preventing or treating scarlet fever, and Camphora (camphor) was the major medicine used to prevent or treat cholera. The dramatic success of the medicines in the prevention and treatment of these dread diseases gained homeopathy a large following.

Homeopaths commonly find that successful treatment of acute or chronic disease with homeopathic medicines often leads to stronger and healthier people who do not get severely or recurrently ill. During the late 1800s many life insurance companies offered lower rates to people who went to homeopathic physicians because actuarial statistics showed that homeopathic patients were healthier and lived longer. There is also a record that these life insurance companies paid out larger sums of money to homeopathic patients since they lived longer than those under conventional medical care.

2) Treatment of Acute Illness

One of the additional advantages of using homeopathy in treating viral conditions is that homeopathic medicines can be prescribed even before a definitive diagnosis has been made. This is because homeopaths prescribe based on the totality of symptoms, and laboratory work is not always necessary to find the correct medicine. Since some viral conditions are difficult to diagnose even after laboratory tests, one is often able to cure people with homeopathy before a conventional medical diagnosis can be made.

Antibiotics are only helpful in certain bacterial infections, and since viral diseases are particularly common, conventional medicine offers little help. In comparison, homeopaths often successfully treat acute viral conditions such as the common cold, virus-induced coughs, influenza, gastroenteritis (sometimes called the "stomach flu"), and viral hepatitis.

Homeopaths use *Allium cepa* (onion), *Euphrasia* (eyebright), *Natrum mur* (salt), or other individually chosen medicines for the common cold. Aconite (monkshood), Belladonna, Bryonia (wild hops), Phosphorous (phosphorous), or others are helpful in treating common viral respiratory infections.

Influenza is a condition which results from viral infection, and it is also a condition that is easily treated with homeopathy. Although individualization of homeopathic medicines is generally a necessity in order for them to work, there are conditions in which certain medicines are particularly effective. *Oscillocochinum* (pronounced o-cill-o-cock-i-num) is a medicine that homeopaths have found particularly effective in treating the flu. Its manufacturer, Boiron Laboratories of Lyon, France, have found that it is 80-90% effective in treating the flu when taken within 48 hours of onset of symptoms. Its success is so widely known in France that it is the most widely used treatment for the flu in that country.

Interestingly enough, *Oscillocochinum* is a micro dose of the heart and liver of a duck. One might easily wonder how such a substance might ever be beneficial for the flu, but there actually is some sound logic to it. Perhaps you too heard about the research at the Mayo Clinic that showed that chicken soup has some antiviral action. Since chicken soup is basically a broth of the organs of chickens, perhaps *Oscillocochinum* is effective because it is "duck soup."

Ben Hole, M.D., a practicing homeopath in Spokane, Washington, reports, "*Oscillocochinum* is impressively successful, but in the rare situations where it doesn't work or isn't available, there are several other homeopathic medicines which can be used with excellent results when they are individually prescribed." Other commonly used homeopathic medicines for the flu include

Gelsemium (yellow jasmine), Bryonia, Rhus tox, and Eupatorium perfoliatum (boneset).

3) Restoration from Recurrent or Long-lasting Viral Infection

Although conventional medicine offers very little relief for recurrent or long-lasting viral infections, homeopaths have observed that micro doses relieve the symptoms of various chronic viral conditions such as herpes simplex, herpes genitales, chronic Epstein-Barr virus, and warts. One cannot claim that homeopathic medicines actually "cure" these viral conditions since the virus is assumed to remain in the body throughout one's life, though homeopaths find that their patients get significantly less severe bouts of infection or do not get any symptoms for long periods of time.

The homeopathic approach to treating all these disorders includes a thorough analysis of the person's totality of symptoms. There is thus no one medicine for a specific disease.

4) Correction of the Chronic Sequelae

After a viral (or even bacterial) infection people sometimes feel they are still not back to their same healthy self. Generally, an individually chosen homeopathic medicine is prescribed. If the individualized medicine is not working, homeopaths will occasionally give a potentized dose of the specific virus which previously infected the person as a way to strengthen their ability to regain health. Varicellinum (the chickenpox virus) is commonly given in a safe micro dose for symptoms that linger after the chickenpox, and Parotidinum (the mumps virus) is often given for symptoms that linger after the mumps.

For the post-herpetic neuralgias, the common medicines are Hypericum (St. John's Wort), Kalmia (mountain laurel), Magnesia phosphoria (phosphate of magnesia), Causticum (Hahnemann's potassium hydrate), Mezereum (spurge olive), or Arsenicum.

A state of weakness after a bout of influenza is often treated with China (cinchona bark), Gelsemium, Sulphur (sulphur), Phosphoricum acidum (phosphoric acid), Cadmium (cadmium), and Avena sativa (oat).

Respiratory infections occasionally linger creating chronic nasal discharge, sinusitis, and ear infections. Some of the common medicines given are Kali bichromium (bichromate of potash), Kali iodatum (potassium iodide), Kali carbonicum (potassium carbonate), Kali muriaticum (Chloride of potassium), Kali sulphuricum (potassium sulphate), Silica, Mercurius, Pulsatilla, Alumina (aluminum), Nux vomica (poison nut), and Conium (hemlock).

A Homeopathic Perspective on Insomnia

(Excepted from The One Minute or So Healer, Tarcher/Putnam)

This book does not primarily focus on how to use homeopathic medicines but instead provides information on various natural health strategies to treat common ailments.

WARNING: This book is a lighthearted practical health guide. Laughter may be a side effect.

*"I hate when my foot falls asleep during the day because I know it's going to be up all night."
Steven Wright*



Falling asleep can be so easy and yet at times be so hard. When insomniacs meet with narcoleptics (people who have an uncontrollable tendency to fall asleep throughout the day), each is inevitably jealous of the other's condition.

The zen solution for people having difficulty falling asleep is to avoid trying so hard. However, telling an insomniac to not try to fall asleep is like telling someone who is starving to try to fast when sitting at a dinner table.

It may be reassuring to know that 15-25% of all adults suffer regularly from insomnia. Somehow, though, this awareness usually doesn't make falling asleep any easier. In fact, there are probably readers who will now stay up nights trying to organize meetings of Insomniacs Anonymous.

While some insomniacs have difficulty falling asleep, others wake frequently and have problems staying asleep. Whichever problem you are experiencing, this is one situation whose solution can't be found by sleeping on it.

The good news is that not everyone necessarily needs eight hours of sleep a night. Some people define themselves as insomniacs, because they regularly sleep only five or six hours. Actually, they should think of themselves as high-energy people who don't need a lot of sleep. Some people's body rhythms are such that their highest and most creative energy period occurs late at night. The wakeful state that these people experience is not a sign of illness, it may simply be a signal-- sometimes an annoyingly loud signal--that the person should use this alert time to do some creative work.

Perhaps the best way to determine if you're getting enough sleep at night is if you feel rested and refreshed upon waking. If you don't feel rested and need some help, read the next set of strategies. Soon you may be getting sleepy, very sleepy, very very sleepy....

Strategy #1: Relaxation trick #1. Hypnotize yourself. Feel total relaxation in your feet, then slowly feel the relaxation move up your body. Tell yourself: I am falling asleep. Use diaphragmatic breathing which will help relax you further (see Strategy #8 in the Asthma section for instructions).

Strategy #2: Relaxation trick #2. Massage the soles of your feet, or preferably, have them massaged for you. This can be very relaxing.

Strategy #3: Relaxation trick #3: Don't sleep tight: Take a warm bath in which you add a couple of drops of one or more essential oils such as orange blossom, meadowsweet, or hops.

Strategy #4: Hops to it. Hops is the herb that is used to make beer, and it is also used by herbalists to help people go to sleep. Some people brew a tea of it; others purchase the hops leaves and insert them into a pillow. You could also buy a dream pillows; these are small pillows filled with various sweet-smelling herbs which help you to think sweet thoughts and dream sweet dreams.

Strategy #5: Herbal sedatives. Steep one teaspoon each of valerian root, scullcap, and catnip for 20 minutes. One cup of this tea will relax the body and calm the mind. Another good combination of herbs is chamomile, passion flower, and hops. These herbs are available in capsule form too, though drinking a warm tea of them has an additional relaxing effect.

Strategy #6: Don't count sheep, count on sheep's' wool. Wool blankets are better able to regulate skin and body temperature than synthetic blankets. This comfortable comforter may help you sleep better.

Strategy #7: Caffeine and other stimulants lurk in unsuspecting places. Avoid caffeinated products, including colas, aspirin, diet pills, black tea, and of course, coffee. Nicotine in cigarettes is also a stimulant which will keep you up at night.

Strategy #8: Warm milk rarely works. Despite folklore that has long suggested that warm milk helps people to sleep, research has shown that it is rarely helpful. In fact, non-fat and low-fat milk can actually stimulate the brain's activity.

Strategy #9: Avoid cat naps. Day naps should be avoided if you have problems with insomnia. Save your best forty winks for nighttime.

Strategy #10: Exercise earlier in the day and avoid it at night. A well-exercised body is less likely to experience insomnia, except when exercise is done within two hours of bedtime. Late-night aerobic activity can generate too much energy to fall asleep easily.

Strategy #11: Bedrooms are for sleeping. Avoid using your bedroom for stressful activities such as paying bills or doing work. Let your bedroom be a soothing, quiet, and relaxing place to be at all times.

Strategy #12: Create a sleep ritual. When it's time for sleep, close the shades, get into your special bed clothes, brush your teeth, turn off the lights, and fluff the pillow. Mentally scan your body and sense where you feel tension. Tighten this place and then relax it. Take a couple of slow, deep breaths. You may also want to make certain that you are getting adequate but not too much ventilation. Do whatever other activities make you feel comfortable, secure, and relaxed.

Strategy #13: Unmedicate yourself. Many prescription and over-the-counter drugs, including decongestants and aspirin, can disturb sleep. Talk with your doctor to see if you can reduce the dosage or change the prescription.

Strategy #14: Rest assured, sedatives disrupt sleep. Besides being addictive, sedatives disturb deep sleep, leading you to wake unrefreshed. Occasional use of sedatives may be worthwhile, but avoid regular use.

Strategy #15: Don't drink your sleep away. Alcohol may make you drowsy, but it disrupts sleep patterns and creates unrefreshing sleep.

Strategy #16: Try sex. While making love can be very energizing at times, it can also be extremely relaxing, thus helping to get the sandman's attention. (Don't try this if it causes anxiety instead.)

Strategy #17: Eight hours isn't necessary. Research has suggested that insomniacs actually need less sleep than others. Don't feel pressured to get a full eight hours every night; you may experience less anxiety about yourself and may be able to sleep better, even if you do sleep less.

Strategy #18: Coffee as a sedative? Homeopathic doses of coffee (Coffea) actually helps to relax the mind and body. Take Coffea 6 or 30 thirty minutes before bedtime and then again as you get into bed. This is particularly effective if you're physically as well as mentally restless.

Strategy #19: Sweet dreams with passion flower. Passiflora 3 (passion flower) is perhaps the closest to a generic homeopathic medicine for insomnia in children or the elderly as well as those with a hyperactive mind (too many ideas and anxieties crowding in on you).

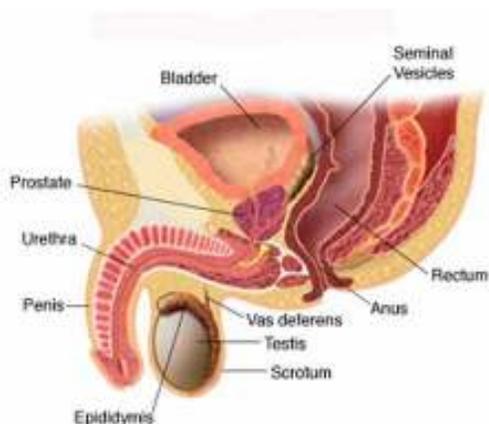
Strategy #20: Take two mantras and call me in the morning. A mantra is usually a one or two syllable word that you repeat over and over and over again. You use it as a way to calm the mind, though it can also clear the mind and encourage sleep. You don't have to use Sanskrit words as a mantra; you can use what you like: "one," "God," "love," or even "sleep."

Strategy #21: Talk out loud. By vocally releasing the things that are bothering you, you are letting go of them. Acknowledge your anxieties, insecurities, and fears out loud. Get these emotions out and they may let you sleep. Keeping a journal can also be very cathartic.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Men's Health Problems

(Excerpted from [Everybody's Guide to Homeopathic Medicine](#)

Stephen Cummings, MD, & Dana Ullman, MPH Tarcher/Putnam, 2004)



(NOTE: This book was initially published in 1984, though it was updated in 1991, 1997, and 2004. This book is the most popular homeopathic guidebook in the U.S. because it provides accurate and detailed information on how to use homeopathic medicines AND it informs the reader when medical care or medical supervision is indicated. ALL of the medicines listed in this article are available by calling Homeopathic Educational Services.)

The health of the male reproductive system is a reflection of overall well-being as well as sexual habits. We cover common men's health concerns, including sexually transmitted diseases, urethritis, prostate problems, irritation of the foreskin, and less common serious problems of the testicles.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Sexually transmitted diseases, or STDs, include about fifteen infectious illnesses that may be transmitted during lovemaking. Symptoms of these infections can include discharge from the penis, various kinds of eruptions or sores on the genitals or surrounding skin, and swelling of the lymph nodes in the groin. Any such symptoms require medical evaluation and treatment. Two of the most common STDs are genital herpes simplex and venereal warts; homeopathic treatment can be helpful during either of these infections.

Serious illnesses such as AIDS and some forms of hepatitis can also be transmitted during sex. They are beyond the scope of homeopathic self-care. Short of abstinence, the best way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases is by practicing "safer sex," which includes limiting the number of sexual partners, selecting them carefully, and using condoms correctly until you've been in a long-term, strictly monogamous relationship with no evidence of STDs in either partner. These measures do not guarantee you will escape infections, but they will improve your chances dramatically.

Urethritis and Bladder Infections

Urethritis is infection and inflammation of the lining of the urethra, the tube that runs the length of the penis, carrying urine and semen. Urethritis is most often associated with sexually transmitted infections, though sometimes no infection can be documented. A variety of germs can infect the urethra and trigger the body's inflammatory response, which can result in symptoms of burning and stinging as well as discharge of mucus or pus.

The Chlamydia bacteria is one of the germs most frequently associated with urethritis. Occasionally this infection leads to chronic symptoms of urethral irritation and discharge, and to infections of the prostate or testicles. Of more concern, Chlamydia is often passed on to women where it may cause infections of the female reproductive tract that result in pain and sterility.

The most worrisome infection of the urethra is gonorrhea, since the gonorrhea bacteria can spread to other parts of the body, causing general illness and infections in the large joints, usually elbows and knees. It, too, can cause serious infections in women. A gonorrhea infection of the urethra usually causes the penis to discharge a copious, thick, yellowish pus, along with burning pain at the opening of the urethra, felt during urination especially. In some cases.

however, the discharge may be watery, scanty, or completely nonexistent, and there may be no pain. Gonorrhoea can also infect other mucous membranes. Gonorrhoea infections of the throat and rectum after oral or anal sex are not uncommon. Rectal gonorrhoea may result in pain or discharge of pus, or there may be no symptoms at all.

There are many other kinds of germs associated with urethritis in men. Most of these are not now considered causes of other health problems, but they have not been well studied. Urethritis can sometimes be caused by physical irritation by soap, for example or it may occur after taking antibiotics. Health practitioners may give the diagnosis of "non-specific urethritis" if no infection with Chlamydia or gonorrhoea is found.

We want to point out that the symptoms of all urethral infections, even when caused by gonorrhoea, are largely evidence of the body's efforts to heal and remove the aggressive germs. Inflammation brings blood to the area so that more white blood cells, antibodies, and other components of the body's immune system are available to help destroy the bacteria. The extra blood also helps carry away dead cells and speeds the replacing of tissue damaged by the infection. The discharge flushes away debris and dead bacteria and blood cells, as well as infecting germs. Still, we strongly recommend antibiotic treatment, along with homeopathic treatment, for anyone with gonorrhoea or Chlamydia urethral infections.

Discharges are uncommon in children but may develop if a child has put something in the urethra. A child with a penile discharge needs medical care.

Bladder infections

Unlike women, males rarely get bladder infections (cystitis), because the male urethra is longer and not so near the anus. A bladder infection in a boy or man is often evidence that something is structurally wrong with the urinary organs, and he must be evaluated by a urologist.

General Home Care

Home treatment of urethritis should be begun whether or not you ultimately take antibiotics. Drink extra fluids and urinate frequently to wash the germs out of the urethra. You should pay attention to the general health practices of resting, eating a simple and nutritious diet, and avoiding stress, for these enable the body's own defenses to better fight the germs and heal the inflamed tissue.

Homeopathic Medicines

Case taking Questions for Urethritis

What is the color and consistency of the discharge from the penis?

If there is pain, what is its character cutting (sharp), burning, or otherwise?

Modalities:

At what time of day are the symptoms worst?

Is ejaculation painful?

Other symptoms:

Does the urine smell unusually strong?

Remedy Summary for Urethritis

Even if antibiotics are prescribed, homeopathic medicines should also be given, particularly if symptoms continue after completing antibiotic treatment. Give the medicine: Twice a day for up to five days. As soon as the symptoms have improved significantly, repeat the dose only when they worsen again. When to try another medicine: If there is no improvement after 2 days (wait until the third day to make this decision).

Natrum muriaticum

Essentials

Thin discharge that is clear, mucousy, or milky in color

Confirmatory symptoms

Discharge appears clear when it is wet but leaves yellow spots on the underwear

Cutting or burning pains at the urethral opening during or after urination or just as urination is finished

Painless discharge

Mercurius

Essentials

Thick mucus or pus accompanied by inflammation and burning pain of the urethra

Confirmatory symptoms

Discharge white, yellow, or green

Symptoms often worse at night

Sulphur

Essentials

Thin or mucousy discharges with burning pain during ejaculation; or

The general symptoms of the medicine are evident (see materia medica section)

Nitric Acid

Essentials

Burning pain during ejaculation

Thick, greenish or yellowish discharge

Confirmatory symptoms

Strong-smelling urine

Patient chilly in general

Pulsatilla

Essentials

Thick, yellow or green urethral discharge that is bland, causing little pain or irritation; and/or

The general symptoms of Pulsatilla are present

Natrum muriaticum is one of the primary medicines for men with urethritis. The discharge is usually thin and clear, mucous, or milky in color. Sometimes a greenish discharge occurs. The discharge may appear clear when it is wet but then leaves yellow spots on the underwear. There may be cutting or burning pains at the urethral opening during or after urination or just as urination is finished.

Pulsatilla should help men with thick, yellow or green urethral discharge that is bland and causes little pain. The medicine is general symptoms may indicate its use more than the specific symptoms of the discharge.

Mercurius is indicated when thick mucus or pus is accompanied by inflammation and burning pain of the urethra. The discharge may be white, yellow, or green. Often the symptoms are worse at night. Sulphur should be considered for thin or mucous discharges when there is burning pain during ejaculation or when the general symptoms of the medicine are evident (see the materia medica section).

Nitric Acid is another alternative when the discharge is accompanied by burning pain during ejaculation. In this case, the discharge is more likely to be thick and greenish or yellowish. The urine may smell very strong and the patient is usually chilly in general (whereas the Sulphur patient is "warm-blooded").

Prostate Problems

The walnut-size prostate is located at the floor of the pelvis behind the base of the penis. During ejaculation the prostate contributes a milky alkaline fluid to the semen to enhance the fertility of the sperm. Several maladies involving the prostate are fairly common in men, including prostatitis (prostate infections), benign prostatic hypertrophy (prostate enlargement), and prostate cancer.

Benign prostatic hypertrophy

The prostate grows larger with age. Once a man reaches middle age, problems with urinating often result as swelling of the prostate gland constricts the urinary passage. This is called prostatic hypertrophy. There may be trouble getting the urinary stream started, or the stream may be weak or interrupted. Frequent urging to urinate, together with passing of only small amounts, is also common. These symptoms should be evaluated medically. Constitutional homeopathic treatment can be helpful during the early stage of prostatic hypertrophy. Conventional treatments include various recently-introduced medicines as well as surgical procedures.

Prostate Cancer

The treatment of cancer is beyond the scope of this book, but we do have a few words of advice: Since prostate cancer is one of the most common malignancies in men, regular contact with your doctor after the age of forty is wise, even if you have no symptoms. Screening tests for cancer include physical exam of the prostate and a blood test, the prostate specific antigen (PSA). Although the value of screening for prostate cancer is controversial (the benefits of treating cancer detected by screening tests aren't clear) your practitioner will have some recommendations and can keep you informed of medical progress in this area. Prostate cancer is often very slow-growing and your doctor may recommend no specific treatment. Constitutional homeopathic care would be appropriate under these circumstances.

Prostatitis

Because the urethra passes through the prostate on its way from the bladder, bacteria can travel through the urethra to settle in the prostate. The prostate gland is susceptible to both acute infection and to chronic infection or inflammation. An acute infection can cause severe pain and tenderness in the region of the prostate, sometimes extending up into the genitals, pelvis, or back. Other symptoms can include increased urge to urinate, burning during urination, difficulty starting urination, discharge from the penis, and general symptoms such as fever and weakness.

Chronic inflammation of the prostate can develop after an acute infection or on its own. Symptoms are similar to but milder than those of acute infection and tend to come and go over long periods. Vague aching in the region of the prostate, dribbling of urine, trouble starting or maintaining a forceful stream of urine, and discharge of prostatic fluid from the penis after a bowel movement, for instance, are common symptoms. Often it is impossible to identify the bacteria involved in chronic prostatitis; it may well be a self-perpetuating problem that persists even after infecting bacteria have been eliminated.

General Home Care

Home treatment for acute prostatitis includes drinking plenty of fluids, urinating frequently to help wash out the infecting bacteria, getting rest, eating a simple, nutritious diet, and avoiding stress. Chronic prostatitis is difficult to heal completely. Still, the measures used for acute prostatitis can be helpful. In addition, hot sit baths may bring some relief. You can also try Kegel exercises as a mild form of self-massage to express excess fluid from the prostate and thereby reduce symptoms: Firmly tighten the muscles you would use to interrupt the flow of urine, repeating 50 to 100 times per day. Some urologists advise their patients to ejaculate regularly to expel some of the prostatic fluid and reduce pressure in the gland.

Homeopathic Medicines

During either acute or chronic prostatitis, homeopathic care can complement conventional medical treatment. In acute cases, you can use homeopathic medicines while you take antibiotics to speed the healing process. If symptoms persist after antibiotic treatment, or in chronic cases that have developed with no acute onset, you may try homeopathy instead of antibiotics (after seeing a health practitioner to rule out dangerous infections such as gonorrhea or Chlamydia). We recommend you see a professional homeopath if one is available, but if not, go ahead and try homeopathy at home.

Unfortunately for the homeopath, the typical case of prostatic trouble gives rise to few distinguishing symptoms that help in remedy selection. If no remedy stands out as a good match for the affected person's symptoms, you can try the ones listed below one at a time.

Case taking Questions for Prostatitis

Character of the symptoms:

What is the character of the pain or discomfort is it an ache, a sensation of pressure, or sharp pain like a needle?

Modalities:

How is the pain affected by sitting, standing, walking, and urinating?

Other symptoms:

Describe the color and consistency of any discharge from the penis. Is there pain in the urethra or bladder?

Remedy Summary for Prostatitis

Give the medicine: During acute symptoms, one dose two times a day for up to five days, less frequently as the symptoms improve. For chronic cases, one dose of the 30th potency per day for five days, or a low potency twice daily for up to two weeks.

When to try another medicine: In acute cases, if there is no improvement after 36-48 hours. In chronic cases, if the symptoms haven't improved within 10-14 days.

Pulsatilla

Essentials

Pain in the prostate after urination; or

The general symptoms of Pulsatilla are present (see the materia medica section)

Confirmatory symptoms

Sharp pains or spasms in prostate area extending into the bladder and pelvis

Thick, bland discharge from the penis

Chimaphilla umbellato

Essentials

Soreness in the region of the gland is worse with pressure, especially during sitting Confirmatory symptoms

Sensation of sitting on a ball or of painful swelling.

Discharge of mucus from the penis or the presence of stringy mucus in the urine

Kali bichromium

Essentials

Prostate pain aggravated by walking; must stand still for relief

Confirmatory symptoms

Needlelike pain or drawing pains extending from the prostate into the penis

Burning in the urethra after urination

Discharge of very thick, sticky, or stringy material from the penis

Causticum

Essentials

Pressure and pulsations in the prostate with pain extending into the urethra and bladder after a few drops of urine have passed.

Sabal serrulata

Essentials

Indicated during chronic prostatic enlargement with difficult urination; there may be burning during urination as well.

Lycopodium

Essentials

Pressure in the prostate aggravated during and after urination

Confirmatory symptoms

Needle-like pains in the bladder and anus

Pulsatilla is a good medicine for the man who experiences aggravation of pain in the prostate after urination. There may be sharp pains or spasms in the region of the prostate that extend into the bladder and pelvis. A thick, bland discharge from the penis may be present. Men who show strong general symptoms of this medicine can be given Pulsatilla even when the specific symptoms don't clearly confirm it.

Chimaphilla umbellato is more difficult to find - even at some homeopathic pharmacies - than most of the medicines covered here, but it is well indicated for many men with prostatitis. Soreness in the region of the gland is worse with pressure, especially during sitting. There may be a sensation of sitting on a ball or simply of painful swelling. A discharge of mucus from the penis or the presence of stringy mucus in the urine may be noted.

The Kali bichromium patient's prostate pain is worsened by walking, and he must stand still for relief. The pain may be needle-like or there may be drawing pains extending from the prostate into the penis. There may be burning in the urethra after urination. A discharge of particularly thick, sticky, or stringy material may be found at the urethral opening.

With Causticum there are pressure and pulsations in the prostate with pain extending into the urethra and bladder after a few drops of urine have passed. In contrast, Lycopodium covers pressure in the gland that is worse during and after urination. Needle-like pains in the bladder and anus especially indicate this medicine.

Sabal serrulata has also been found effective during prostatic problems. However, its indications are fairly general: enlargement of the prostate with difficulty passing urine or burning while urinating.

Foreskin Irritation

If a skin irritation on or under the foreskin develops, you can treat it at home by gently pulling the foreskin back, applying dilute Calendula tincture (see Chapter 14), and allowing the area to dry before returning the foreskin to its normal position. If a sexually active adult has sores or a rash, or if pus has formed, see your practitioner.

Occasionally the foreskin may get stuck in a retracted position and become swollen or inflamed. Apply ice wrapped in a cloth to the area and try to gently work the foreskin back into its normal position. If you are not immediately successful, emergency care is required.

Testicular Problems

Pain or swelling in the testicles or vicinity requires medical attention. A variety of problems may cause such symptoms.

Epididymitis is an infection of the epididymis, a compact, coiled tube attached to each testicle and in which newly formed sperm mature. Although epididymitis does not occur too often, it is more common than orchitis, infection of the testicles. Both these infections cause pain and swelling in the testicular area.

Testicular pain may also be caused by twisting of the testicle and the structures within the scrotum that connect it to the body. Called testicular torsion, this is not only extremely painful but also dangerous, because if the blood supply is interrupted, the testicle may be lost in a few hours.

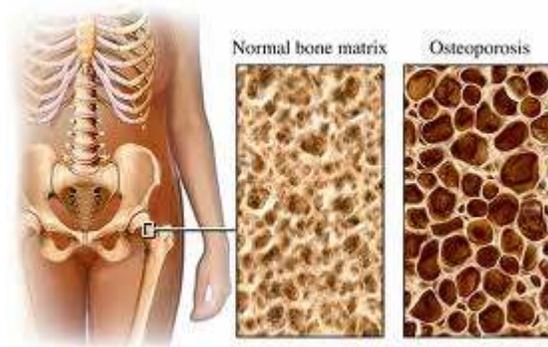
Testicular cancer is one of the most common cancers in men under thirty. You should get checked immediately if you notice change in the size of or any lumps or nodules in a testicle. A cancerous testicle is typically painless. Testicular cancer is usually easy to treat when it is discovered early. Men should make it a habit to regularly feel their testicles (in the shower is a good time) to be sure that no changes have occurred.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Osteoporosis

(Excepted from The One Minute or So Healer, Tarcher/Putnam)

This book does not primarily focus on how to use homeopathic medicines but instead provides information on various natural health strategies to treat common ailments.

WARNING: This book is a lighthearted practical health guide. Laughter may be a side effect.



Both bones and eggshells are made primarily of calcium. Although bones can be impressively strong, depending upon their density, they can break like an eggshell.

Osteoporosis, a common condition of the elderly, affects women more than men because they have less bone mass and because they produce less estrogen after menopause which reduces the body's ability to keep calcium in the bones. Osteoporosis leads to degeneration of the spine, humpback, and fragile bones-which are more easily fractured. This condition is

creating an elderly population which is fragile, weak, and, like an eggshell, breakable.

Osteoporosis is also creating a legion of shorter elderly people whose vertebrae are compressing against each other due to the loss of calcium from the bone. Perhaps this explains why the Incredible Shrinking Woman got so small.

This epidemic of osteoporosis has created a major market for calcium supplementation. If calcium supplements were listed on the stock exchange, their price would have skyrocketed in recent years. However, if people knew the research about calcium that follows here, the stock's value would have fallen as fast as it rose.

There are numerous countries that have a very low rate of osteoporosis despite the fact that the people consume as little as 200 mg of calcium a day, considerably less than the 1,000 to 1,500 mg. of calcium that most doctors recommend for pre- and post-menopausal women. The problem in this country is that most women consume too many things that leech the calcium out of their bones.

Despite the fact that Eskimo women get over 2,000 mg. of calcium a day (from their consumption of fish bones), and even though exercise is a regular part of their life, they are known to have one of the highest rates of osteoporosis in the world. This problem is not due to bad luck. It is because they eat so much protein (as much as 250 to 400 grams a day) and so much fat; this excess causes increased calcium loss. This example highlights the importance of looking at factors that help AND hinder calcium absorption.

Conventional physicians often recommend hormone replacement therapy as a preventive to osteoporosis. Research has shown that lifelong use of these hormones helps to maintain bone strength, though it does not restore bone loss that has already occurred. More troublesome about the use of these drugs are the numerous studies indicating that they create side effects including increased chances of endometrial cancer and heart disease. Also, once a woman stops taking these drugs, calcium excretion is significantly increased.

Here are some strategies which are less costly than drugs, both financially and otherwise, and with fewer side effects. Since having adequate calcium levels in the bone is dependent on building bone strength during youth, it is best to take measures to prevent osteoporosis as early in life as possible. Although the best time to start was when you were a child; the second best time is today.

Strategy #1: Move your body. Exercise, especially weight-bearing exercise such as walking, tennis, dancing, rope-jumping, basketball, and backpacking, helps build strong bones. Swimming is not considered a weight-bearing exercise because of the zero-gravity environment of water.

Strategy #2: Do kinder gentler exercises. Free the neck! Power to the pelvis, Liberate the vertebrae 31! Doing yoga and other gentle exercises help make you limber and stronger. However, headstands and shoulder stands should not be done if you already have osteoporosis.

Strategy #3: Avoid calcium vampires. Calcium vampires are substances that suck the calcium out of your bones. In other words, they stimulate the body to excrete more calcium than is being put into it. Substances which are calcium vampires are alcohol, caffeine, salt, animal protein, fats, tobacco, distilled water, oxalic acid-rich foods (chard, rhubarb, spinach, and chocolate), and aluminum (absorbed from baking soda, aluminum pots, and from certain deodorants). Phosphorus-rich foods and drinks also impair calcium absorption, the worse offenders being soda drinks, milk and milk products, and many processed foods.

Strategy #4: Avoid the calcium vampire drugs. Many drugs disrupt calcium absorption or metabolism, including antacids, antibiotics, anti-depressants, barbituates, cholesterol-reducing drugs, corticosteroids, diuretics, laxatives, and chemotherapeutic drugs.

Strategy #5: Support stomach acid. An inadequate amount of stomach acid can lead to poor absorption of calcium. To increase stomach acid, eat charcoal-barbequed foods or charcoal supplements, eat more slowly, and don't wash your food down too quickly with a drink.

Strategy #6: Go outside. Vitamin D is important for calcium absorption. You can absorb vitamin D by being exposed to the sun. Get a healthy dose of this sun vitamin (an hour or two), but don't overdo it.

Strategy #7: Fish for fish oil. Fish oil has a healthy dose of vitamin D which helps the body absorb calcium.

Strategy #8: Do the calcium-magnesium team. Calcium and magnesium are a team that work together in your body, so if you take calcium, you should also take magnesium. Pre-menopausal women should take approximately 1,000 mg. of calcium a day, and during menopause they should take about 1,500 mg. The best calcium supplements (in order of preference) are hydroxyapatite, citrate, lactate, gluconate, and carbonate. It is best to avoid taking large doses of calcium at one time; better to take smaller doses more frequently. Also, don't think that mega doses of calcium are better than the above recommendations; too much calcium can create problems because it displaces iron, manganese, and zinc, and it can lead to kidney stones. The dose of magnesium should be at least 50% of the dose of calcium. For additional help, take 1,000 mg. of vitamin C, which helps to create collagenous fibers to which the calcium of the bone is attached.

Strategy #9: Supplemental supplements. Boron, zinc, copper, and manganese are essential for bone integrity. They are all in green leafy vegetables. Boron is of special value; it has been found to stimulate higher estrogen levels and increase bone density. Supplementation of 5 mg. per day is recommended.

Strategy #10: Calcium-rich foods. Sardines, salmon, green leafy vegetables, broccoli, tofu with calcium sulfate, mineral water, and sesame seeds all will supply your body with calcium. If you choose to get your calcium from milk, yogurt, or cheese, it is recommended to consume low-fat or non-fat products because the body will be better able to assimilate their calcium.

Strategy #11: Horsetail tea. It won't grow you a tail, but this herb is rich in calcium and silica and can help build strong bones.

Strategy #12: Be born black. While this too is not a one-minute strategy, evidence does show that black people do not experience as much osteoporosis as white people, possibly because they have greater bone mass.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Pre- and Post-surgical Treatment

(Excepted from [Consumer's Guide to Homeopathy](#), Tarcher/Putnam)



Surgery represents conventional medicine at its best and its worst. On the one hand, surgery demonstrates incredibly sophisticated informational and technical advancement, yet on the other hand, it often indicates the inability of physicians and patients to prevent this invasive treatment of last resort.

Like other health professionals, homeopaths honor the special role that surgery and surgeons have in health care. Homeopaths are not against surgery, because certain conditions are simply not treatable without it. At the same time, however, surgery is often performed unnecessarily. It is performed when other, safer measures can be effectively used. It is performed too early when the body can sometimes heal itself. And it is performed inappropriately, primarily because surgeons only know surgery and don't know what else to do (the law of hammers pervades many professions: when you are a hammer, everything becomes a nail).

Even when surgery is successful, this does not necessarily mean that the person is "cured." Surgery may, for instance, remove an abscess, a tumor, kidney stones or gallstones, or other diseased parts, but because this removal doesn't change the underlying pathological processes that created them in the first place, it is understandable and even predictable that people tend to reexperience their ailments.

Even if the ailment seems to have disappeared, homeopaths do not believe that a curative process has always taken place. While the initial complaint may have been eradicated, sometimes more serious pathology develops shortly after the surgery. Although doctors tend to believe that this is a "new" disease, homeopaths theorize that the surgery probably suppressed the original ailment.

This critique of surgery is not meant to devalue its appropriate use in treating various congenital deformities, structural problems, severe injuries, or life-threatening pathological conditions. As previously stated, homeopaths are not against the judicious use of surgery.

When possible, homeopaths first attempt to see if treatment with an individualized homeopathic medicine can prevent the need for surgery. Patients and even homeopaths are sometimes surprised and impressed at the significant results that homeopathic medicines can provide--not that they can do the impossible, but they can often elicit a healing response when conventional therapeutics cannot.

The integration of homeopathic medicines with surgical care uses the best of both worlds to create comprehensive and ultimately more effective health care.

Homeopathic Medicines Before and After Surgery

Once it is determined that surgery is medically necessary, homeopathic medicines can reduce complications of surgery and augment healing so that people can recover more quickly afterward. Surgeons commonly ask patients not to take any food, drink, or drugs prior to surgery. While it makes sense to avoid food, drink, and conventional drugs, there have never been any reported problems from taking homeopathic remedies prior to surgery.

Some homeopaths recommend Ferrum phos 6, four times a day for two days, prior to surgery in order to prevent infection and hemorrhaging.

Homeopathic medicines can also help people deal with the various emotions they are experiencing prior to surgery. Gelsemium 6 or 30 is a common remedy for the person who experiences great anxiety, apprehension, weakness, and trembling prior to surgery. Aconitum 6 or 30 is indicated when the person is terrified about surgery and thinks that he will die from it.

Take either Gelsemium or Aconitum the night before the surgery and another dose upon waking in the morning. If fear and/or anxiety is felt after surgery, take one to three more doses.

One double-blind, randomized trial on 50 children who underwent surgery showed that 95% of those given the homeopathic medicine Aconitum experienced significantly less post-operative pain and agitation. Aconitum was chosen because it is a common remedy for ailments in which sudden and violent onset of shock or trauma is a primary indication, as well as symptoms of fear and anxiety, which are especially common emotions experienced by children prior to surgery.

Arnica is another common homeopathic medicine given to people before and after surgery because of its ability to reduce surgical shock and minimize bleeding. Surgical shock is a condition that trauma or surgery can cause in which all the capillaries and small blood vessels are filled with blood at the same time. A randomized, placebo-controlled, crossover study showed that Arnica significantly decreased bleeding time.

The late British homeopathic physician Donald Foubister recommended Arnica 30 the night before surgery, another dose the morning of the surgery, another dose just prior to the surgery, and different medicines afterward, depending upon the type of surgery and the symptoms the patient feels.

Homeopathic medicines can also be beneficial for patients who undergo long-term intravenous (IV) therapy. Frequent insertion of an IV commonly causes phlebitis (inflammation of the vein) and hematoma (the pooling of blood under the skin); a double-blind study using Arnica 5c found that it can effectively reduce and prevent such problems. The study showed significant benefits from Arnica, including reduced pain. Besides subjective improvement, there were also objectively measured increases in blood flow and in blood coagulation factors.

While Arnica is the primary remedy to be taken just prior to the majority of surgeries, there are a certain number of operations for which Dr. Foubister commonly recommended other remedies. For surgery involving cartilage and periosteum, as is often occurs in the knee or elbow, it is recommended to take Ruta 30 the evening before, the morning of the operation, and immediately afterward. For hemorrhoidal surgery, it is recommended to take either Staphysagria 30 or Aesculus 30 in a similar pattern as described for Ruta. And for circumcision, Staphysagria 30 and Arnica 30 should be given similarly as above.

The following are common recommendations for after surgery. Please note that the length of time of treatment can and should be different with each patient, depending upon the intensity of symptoms. Doses should generally be taken as long as pain persists, though they should not be taken for more than a couple of days, unless the person is still in pain and the remedy is providing obvious relief. Arnica 6, 12, or 30 should be given for at least two doses after surgery, approximately one hour apart. In addition to this remedy, the following remedies should be given one hour after the last dose of Arnica:

Gynecological surgery:

--Dilation and curettage: Belladonna 30, every 6 hours
--Hysterectomy: Causticum 30, three times a day (some homeopaths recommend Staphysagria 6 or 30, three times a day)
--Caesarean section or episiotomy: Staphysagria 30 or Bellis perennis 30, three times a day
--Abortion or miscarriage: Ignatia 30, every four hours
--Plastic surgery on the breast: Bellis perennis 6 or 30, three times a day
--Amputation of the breast or a lump: Hamamelis 30, every 4 hours
Circumcision: Staphysagria 30 and Arnica 30, every four hours for a day.
Prostate surgery: Staphysagria 30, three times a day
Abdominal surgery: Staphysagria 30 or Bellis perennis 30, three times a day
Appendectomy: Rhus tox 30, three times a day
Gastrectomy: Raphanus 30, three times a day
Gall bladder surgery: Lycopodium 30, three times a day
Eye surgery: Ledum 30, every four hours
Tonsillectomy and adenoidectomy: Rhus tox 30, every four hours

Orthopedic surgery

--involving cartilage or periosteum: Ruta 30, every four hours
--involving the spine: Hypericum 30, every four hours
--Surgery for bullet wounds and/or stab wounds: Staphysagria 30, four times a day
Plastic surgery: Arnica 30 (internally) and Calendula, (externally) four times a day
Amputation: Hypericum 30, every four hours
Hemorrhoids: Staphysagria 30 or Aesculus 30, every four hours for two or three days*
Varicose veins: Ledum 30, three times a day
Dental surgery: Hypericum 30 and Ruta 30, alternating every two to four hours

Homeopathy for Specific Ailments After Surgery

Some common conditions after surgery for which homeopathic medicines are often effective include the following:

Fear of Death

Aconitum 30 is indicated (every hour for up to four doses).

Bleeding

Arnica 30 helps to slow or stop bleeding after surgery. Phosphorus 30 is the primary remedy for helping to stop bleeding when Arnica does not work adequately. Ipecacuanha 30 is indicated when there is much bleeding of bright red blood, often accompanied by nausea. Secale 30 is effective in treating uterine bleeding that is aggravated by heat and relieved by cold. Cinchona 30 is helpful for people whose bleeding and general loss of fluids lead them to feel weak and faint and have ringing in the ears. This remedy is sometimes indicated several weeks, months, or years after much fluid has been lost, after either an illness or an operation. Arsenicum 30 is useful when profuse bleeding leads to great weakness, burning pains, restlessness, anxiety, and fear, along with a characteristically large thirst for only sips at a time.

Dose: Take the remedy every hour until bleeding stops, not more than four doses. If bleeding has not significantly slowed, consider another remedy. The next day, take one more dose of whichever works to reduce the possible complications of blood loss.

Trauma to Tissue

Arnica topically and Arnica 6 or 30 are useful when the muscle feels bruised or swollen and when there is any pooling of blood under the skin. Hamamelis topically and Hamamelis 6 or 30 are effective when the person has weak veins, passive hemorrhage, bleeding hemorrhoids, or varicose veins. Capillaries are enlarged and congestion is marked. Calendula in external application (gel, ointment, tincture, spray) is indicated to heal wounds or incisions. Bellis perennis 6 or 30 is a remedy for use after abdominal surgery and when deep internal tissue has been traumatized.

Dose: Apply external remedies at least once a day, and apply again if bathing washes them off. Generally, only two to eight doses of the internal remedy over a two day period will be necessary to complete the healing process.

Wound Infection

External applications of Calendula and Hypericum, either alone or preferably together, help to both prevent and treat infection of surgical wounds. If pus has developed and caused hypersensitivity of the wound, Hepar sulphur 30 is recommended. Because Hepar sulphur is an effective remedy for helping to push out splinters, pieces of glass, and various foreign objects that get stuck under the skin, it also has a tendency to push out surgical stitches. Thus it is not recommended to use this remedy when there are stitches, except towards the end of the healing process, when their removal is part of the healing. If the wound becomes purplish, Lachesis 30 or Gunpowder 30 is indicated. If there is much burning in the wound or wound area, Sulphur 30 is helpful.

Dose: Apply external remedies at least once a day, and apply again if bathing washes them off. Take internal remedies every two to four hours during the first 24 hours and four times a day for two to five more days.

Scarring and Adhesions:

Apply Thiosinaminum tincture externally or use an external combination formula that also contains Calendula (some injury gels include these ingredients). Take Graphites 12 internally.

Dose: Apply external remedies at least once a day, and apply them again if bathing washes them off. You may need to do this for several weeks or months. Internal remedies should be taken three times a day for two days, and if necessary, repeated one month later.

Constipation

Raphanus 6 or 30 is indicated when there is constipation with no urgings for a stool and/or when there is painful gas; see also the chapter on Digestive Disorders for other potential medicines for constipation.

Dose: Take this remedy three times a day for up to four days.

Nausea and Vomiting

Nux vomica 6 or 30 is good for violent retching, especially when there is generally ineffectual retching that does not lead to vomiting. Phosphorus 6 or 30 helps to prevent or treat nausea after surgery; it is indicated when the patient has a strong thirst for ice drinks; he or she may also have a concurrent headache. Ipecac 6 or 30 is effective for persistent nausea with vomiting, when vomiting does not provide relief. Arsenicum 6 or 30 treats violent and incessant vomiting which is made worse by drinking water, especially cold water, or eating. There may also be burning pain in the stomach. See also chapter on Digestive Disorders.

Dose: Take a remedy every two hours during intense symptoms and every four hours during less intense discomfort. If improvement is not obvious after 24 hours, consider another remedy.

Gas

Carbo veg 6 or 30 helps people who suffer from great distension and offensive gas, who get some relief from release of gas, and who desire carbonated drinks because they seem to help them release gas. Cinchona 6 or 30 is useful when there is more pain than distension, frequent rumbling in the abdomen, and no relief from releasing gas. Raphanus 6 or 30 is a common remedy for people who have a distended abdomen but are unable to expel gas. Because this condition is extremely common after surgery, especially abdominal surgery, this remedy is often indicated. Colocynthis 6 or 30 is effective when there is more pain than distension, and also cramps that are relieved by bending over.

Dose: Take a remedy every two hours during intense pain and every four hours during mild discomfort. If improvement is not obvious after 24 hours, consider another remedy.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Pregnancy and Labor: Getting Off to a Good Start

(Excepted from [Discovering Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21st Century](#), Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1991)

Why is it that so many physicians seem to think that birth is a surgical solution to a nine-month



disease? Although good medical care is so important for the health of the mother and infant in high risk situations, physicians intervene too often in the birthing process, turning normal deliveries into medical emergencies.

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) commonly asserts that its members deserve credit for the decline in infant and maternal death rates during the past century. ACOG however doesn't readily acknowledge that most of the countries with the lowest infant mortality rates have the largest numbers of

midwives who provide home births and rarely utilize technological interventions. Despite spending more money per person on health care than any other country, the U.S. ranks 18th in infant mortality according to 1984 statistics. It is startling to learn that not only are all Scandinavian countries ahead of the U.S. in having lower infant mortality rates, but so are Ireland, Spain, and East Germany.

Despite the various shortcomings of modern obstetrical care, the present regime is an improvement over the way physicians delivered babies in the 1800s. In the 1870s women were commonly given regular doses of quinine before birth to prevent fever, plus a powerful cathartic to "cleanse their body," then ergot to induce labor, and morphine to lessen any after pains. The use of these powerful drugs increased, rather than lowered, instances of infant and maternal mortality during childbirth.

With the fear of germs so prominent at the turn of the century, hospitals did all they could to eradicate infectious organisms. Nurses washed women's head with kerosene, ether, and ammonia. They sometimes shaved pubic hair because they thought that it harbored germs. And they performed enemas on women in labor every 12 hours and gave continual douches of saline solutions to which whisky and bichloride of mercury were added. The increased effort to protect the mother and infant led to interventions and manipulations of the birthing process that made giving birth both traumatic and dangerous. Describing the 19th century obstetrician, historians Richard and Dorothy Wertz have also unfortunately characterized the 20th century obstetrician:

"Doctors were on the lookout for trouble in birth. That seemed to them to be their primary purpose. They found a lot of trouble--so much, in fact, that they came to think that every birth was a potential disaster and that it was best to prepare each woman for the worst eventualities. In line with that perception, doctors increased their control over the patients during labor and delivery, rendering them more powerless to experience or participate in birth. Women acceded to the doctors' increasing control because they also believed that their methods would make birth safer."

The underlying assumption of obstetricians has tended to be that women need technological interventions in order to have a healthy and safe pregnancy and birth. Although some medical interventions are certainly of great value, there is general consensus that birth has become over medicalized. Some of this over medicalization is the result of doctors doing all they can to prevent malpractice suits,* and some of it is the result of doctors assuming that more medical interventions improve the chances of having a healthy mother and infant.

[* It is rare for physicians to be sued for over-utilizing medical interventions, but it is common for suits to arise after a doctor waits before intervention. Dr. David Rubsamen, a physician, attorney and insurance company consultant, notes, "It's very uncommon for an obstetrician to be sued because he did an unnecessary Caesarean section. But cases where the charge is that you waited 45 minutes too long, are very common."]

There is now increasing concern about the use of any drugs during pregnancy since the fetus inevitably receives doses of these drugs which can disturb its development. Research has shown that drugs during labor and delivery can have short- as well as long-term effects on infants. Even the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Drugs has recommended that doctors "use the smallest possible amount of medications when it is needed, and to discuss the benefits and side effects with the mother preferably in advance of the birth."

Obstetricians have contended that the various interventions are necessary for a safe birth. No one can doubt that certain medical interventions can reduce complications and be lifesaving at times. Problems however result when conventional drugs and modern technology are utilized in normal or relatively normal childbirth. Obstetricians have ignored the fact that those countries which have utilized the least medical interventions during birth have tended to have the best childbirth statistics. Whereas 85% of women having hospital delivery in the U.S. have had an episiotomy, only 8% of Dutch women and only 3% of Swedish women receive them. Whereas 25-33% of women in the U.S. are aided in birth by a forceps delivery, only about 5% of European women receive this treatment. And whereas over 20% of American women who have hospital births have a caesarean section, the World Health Organization has conservatively estimated that "there is no justification for any region to have a rate higher than 10-15%."

Of particular concern, it has been determined that one intervention leads to another, each one increasing health risks to the mother and infant. Drug use during pregnancy causes potential health problems for the fetus and increases the chances of fetal distress syndrome which may require cesarean section. Amniotomy (the deliberate breaking of the bag of waters surrounding the baby) helps induce labor, and as the result of it the fetus loses the cushion of even pressure that protects it during contractions and lessens compression against the head.

The lithotomy position, in which a woman lies on her back with her feet spread in stirrups is generally convenient for the doctor but is an uncomfortable and inefficient position for women during delivery.* The lithotomy position leads to slower progress of labor, increases chances of the doctor recommending methods to induce and augment labor, often leads to the use of forceps and episiotomy for delivery, and raises blood pressure which may decrease the amount of oxygen to the fetus, leading to the greater need for caesarian section.

[* One survey noted that 95% of women prefer an upright position during labor and delivery.] The administration of analgesia and anesthesia to diminish pain during labor decreases the strength and frequency of contractions, usually requiring the use of drugs to augment labor and forceps to aid delivery. These drugs may also lower the mother's blood pressure which could threaten the life of the fetus. The drugs also prevent the woman from actually feeling how hard she is pushing the baby against her perineum, which may lead to stretching or tearing it. Physicians then must reduce this latter risk with further intervention by doing an episiotomy.

Doing an episiotomy requires local anesthesia which has the above mentioned risks associated with it. An episiotomy enables the physician to use forceps to speed up delivery, though there are additional risks from its application, including hemorrhage within the head and damage to the nerves of the face and arms. There is also an increased threat of severe lacerations of the mother's perineum when forceps and episiotomies are used.

All the above mentioned interventions increase the chances of needing a caesarean section. The Canadian Medical Association Journal estimated that there are 26 times more maternal deaths from caesarean section than from normal delivery. Even when women who had been diagnosed with serious pre-existing disease weren't counted, the death rate for women undergoing a caesarean was still 10 times greater.

Since a caesarean section is major surgery which may require a general anesthesia, the mother is unable to breastfeed her infant immediately after birth. And because the mother usually needs to take further medications after this operation, she ultimately is also feeding these drugs to her infant through her breast milk.

Women who are prescribed medications during or after labor, or at any time when they are breastfeeding, are also providing trace amounts of these drugs in their milk. Even though only relatively small amounts of these drugs appear in the milk, the young infant's liver, kidneys, immune system, and general defenses haven't matured enough to metabolize and detoxify these drugs effectively. The results may be minor, or in some cases, they can be significant.

Drug use during pregnancy can have even more traumatic effects on the new life that is developing in the woman's body. Thalidomide, an infamous drug which was prescribed to pregnant women in the 1960s and which caused serious birth defects, forced the Federal Drug Administration to require more adequate testing of drugs prior to the availability on the open market. Still, many commonly used drugs can have damaging effects on the fetus, especially when incompatible drugs are utilized together. One expert has estimated that the average pregnant woman in 1980 received four different prescriptions. It is thus no wonder that even conservative statistics now reveal that 12% of babies born in the U.S. have a serious, often incurable mental or physical health disorder. *

[* Drug use during pregnancy is one significant reason for many birth defects, though genetic disposition and exposure to various toxic substances and radiation will also influence the amount of birth defects.]

There is finally general consensus that drug use during pregnancy, labor, and lactation should be kept to a minimum. However, most physicians in the United States are not aware of specific alternatives to their conventional drugs and thus often have to rely upon them as the primary course of treatment for sick, pregnant, or lactating women. It is a sad fact that American physicians do not know much about homeopathy, and therefore, they do not know that these medicines can be instrumental in diminishing various symptoms of pregnancy, reducing risks of problems in labor, and healing pains, discomforts, or diseases of women who are breastfeeding. Since homeopathic medicines are generally safe, they can provide much benefit and little harm. A growing number of American physicians are finally learning about and using homeopathic medicines. Our children will thank us for this.

Homeopathic Medicines in Pregnancy

The relative safety of the homeopathic medicines make them invaluable in pregnancy, labor, and postpartum. "There's nothing safer." says Ananda Zaren, a nurse, midwife, and homeopath in Santa Barbara, California, who has used homeopathic medicines in hundreds of births. Besides being safe, the medicines are quite effective in treating various common problems of pregnancy. Zaren adds, "The medicines help strengthen the woman physically and psychologically." Homeopaths have been known to joke that pregnancy is an excellent time to receive homeopathic care since two people (the mother and the fetus) get a remedy for the price of one. The medicines not only improve the health of the mother, they also benefit the fetus. Although no formal statistical analysis has yet been carried out, homeopaths have commonly observed that the

children born from women who have received homeopathic care during pregnancy seem healthier than others. Homeopaths make this conjecture by comparing the children of women from previous pregnancies without homeopathic medicines with the offspring of later pregnancies in which the mothers have received the medicines.

It is generally known that the health of the woman greatly affects the health of the fetus. Since pregnancy can be particularly stressful to a woman's body, women often experience exacerbations of previous health problems or various new symptoms. Some of these common symptoms and conditions are nausea, abdominal gas, vaginal infections, bladder infections, herpes, insomnia, anemia, backaches, breast swelling and swelling in general, constipation, hemorrhoids, leg cramps, skin eruptions, and varicose veins.

Some of these symptoms and conditions are minor and do not require any treatment with conventional or homeopathic medicines. They can be alleviated with appropriate dietary and lifestyle changes. However, other conditions can be irritating enough to require some kind of treatment. Since pregnant women should be very careful in taking any conventional drugs, it is reasonable and prudent to consider first trying homeopathic medicines for many non-emergency medical conditions.

It is generally recommended that pregnant women receive professional homeopathic care rather than treat themselves. Since their health directly affects the well-being of two people, the pregnant woman deserves the best treatment possible, and an experienced practitioner is more able to provide this care. If homeopathic care isn't available in your area, individuals can learn to self-prescribe; unfortunately, there are not many good books on homeopathic medicines for obstetrical problems and none of the books in English are up-to-date texts. There are some modern texts on homeopathic obstetrics in German and French.

Some women, of course, will be more difficult to treat than others. This book isn't intended to get into the technical details of what homeopaths do in such cases. However, it is worthwhile to know that homeopaths differentiate between acute symptoms and chronic symptoms. Acute symptoms represent self-protective efforts of the organism dealing with some type of recent stress or infection. Chronic symptoms, in comparison, refer to recurrent, unsuccessful efforts of the organism to re-establish health. Such symptoms may persist because the person is constitutionally weakened from genetic, lifestyle, or environmental factors and/or because the person is continually stressed or frequently reinfected (this is discussed in more detail in Chapter 9 on "Chronic Diseases"). Sometimes what seems to be an acute symptom is actually the result of an underlying chronic condition. Instead of prescribing a medicine primarily for the most prominent symptom, the homeopath may prescribe a "constitutional" medicine which is individualized to the totality of a woman's symptoms in the light of her present state as well as her family's health history (see the "Homeopathic Typologies" section in The Introduction to Homeopathy for more information on what is meant by "constitutional medicine" and "constitutional treatment").

This reference to differentiating prescriptions for acute or chronic conditions is important because there will be discussion forthwith of individuating homeopathic medicines for common problems of pregnancy, labor, and postpartum. Although several frequently prescribed medicines will be listed for various conditions, homeopaths may prescribe a fundamental or constitutional medicine rather than an acute medicine. It isn't appropriate to list all possible constitutional medicines here, both because there are so many of them and also because constitutional care should be provided by trained homeopaths.

Homeopaths find that the women who receive constitutional homeopathic treatment prior to becoming pregnant rarely seem to get morning sickness during pregnancy. For those that do get it, there are various homeopathic medicines that are often effective in diminishing the nausea, vomiting and indigestion common to morning sickness. Sepia (cuttlefish), Nux vomica (poison nut), Colchicum (meadow saffron), Silicea (silica), Ipecacuanha (Ipecac), Pulsatilla (windflower) and Symphoricarpos racemosa (snowberry) are but some of the more commonly indicated medicines for morning sickness. All these medicines are known to cause nausea and vomiting when given in overdose and will aid in its cure when given in the micro doses homeopaths use.

To get a sense of the individualization process used in homeopathic medicine, it is worthwhile to differentiate those symptoms indicate which medicine should be prescribed. Women who need Sepia, Colchicum, Ipecac, and Symphoricarpos are so nauseous that they cannot even stand the smell of food, though women who need Sepia may sometimes feel better after eating. Women who have constant nausea, not just in the morning, may need Ipecac, Nux, Silicea, and Symphoricarpos. Nausea that is ameliorated by lying down indicates Nux, Silica, or Symphoricarpos, while nausea that is aggravated by motion suggests Ipecac, Sepia, and Symphoricarpos. Nux is indicated for a type of woman who is highly irritable and who will have symptoms of nausea, vomiting, and constipation worsened in the morning. She will also have a constant pain and pressure in the pit of the stomach and may desire alcohol. Pulsatilla is for emotional women who are weepy, moody, and indecisive and who have frequent burping of sour, rancid, hot food. She will have nightly diarrhea which tends to change frequently in its color and shape. Sepia is given for women who have deep feelings of dissatisfaction or indifference. She will have a sense of emptiness at the pit of her stomach, constipation, a bitter or saltish taste in her mouth, and if she is hungry at all, she will desire sour foods. There is general agreement amongst homeopaths that Sepia is the most common medicine prescribes for morning sickness. (More detail about each of these medicines are found in homeopathic texts called "materia medicas.")

John Renner, M.D., a homeopath who practiced for over 50 years and who participated in thousands of births, found the best success in giving Aconite 3x (monkshood) and Bryonia 3x (wild hops) together every 30 minutes. If the woman's symptoms are not noticeably improved within six hours, another remedy should be considered.

It should be candidly noted that some homeopaths find that they successfully cure morning sickness, others find that it is difficult to cure. Homeopath and midwife Ananda Zaren advises, "Sometimes you have to give the woman her constitutional medicine and at other times the indicated acute medicine is necessary. Although morning sickness is sometimes difficult to treat, homeopathy and sound nutritional advice can provide a safe and sometimes effective treatment for this irritating problem." Morning sickness is not considered a dangerous condition, but since it discourages proper and adequate nutrition, it does present certain risks for the fetus.

Since a homeopathic medicine is prescribed based on the basis of the totality of the symptoms the person is experiencing, it is common for women to experience not only relief of their morning sickness from the homeopathic medicines, but also noticeable lessening of various symptoms. It is, in fact, quite uncommon to see lasting improvement in nausea without concurrent general improvement in health. Although no homeopathic research has yet proven the medicines beneficial to the mother with morning sickness or to the fetus, clinical experience shows that the medicines have promise for the mother, and the consequential benefits to the fetus are inevitable. Homeopathic medicines are a literal godsend for many pregnant women who wish to avoid conventional drugs during this special time in their life. The homeopathic medicines are invaluable in treating various irritating symptoms of pregnancy, including vaginal infections, bladder infections, herpes, insomnia, constipation, hemorrhoids, leg cramps, muscle aches, and

skin eruptions. Jacques Imberechts, M.D., a respected Belgium homeopath, notes, "The homeopathic medicines are very effective in healing so many symptoms and syndromes of pregnancy that I have found that my patients rarely request or need anything other than homeopathic treatment." Dr. Imberechts admitted that he has had difficulty in treating women who develop varicose veins during pregnancy, though he personally felt that constitutional care before and during pregnancy can possibly prevent this condition. Richard Moskowitz, M.D., a Boston homeopath, has found the best results with Pulsatilla and Hamamelis (witch hazel) in treating varicose veins. Marcel Simons, M.D., a Belgium obstetrician and homeopath, has also observed good results with these medicines as well as with Vipera (the German viper).

Homeopathic Medicines During Labor

Besides using the homeopathic medicines to diminish pain and discomfort of pregnancy, the medicines can also be used to prepare the women for the process of labor. Homeopaths have often cited numerous instances where the properly indicated medicine has helped to turn a breech baby. Pulsatilla is a common medicine for this, though the best medicine is generally the one medicine indicated based on the uniqueness of each woman's symptoms. Ananda Zaren notes that the medicines can turn a breech baby late in pregnancy, though they seem to work faster in turning breech babies that occur early in pregnancy. Zaren asserts that a footling breech, a rare position during labor in which one foot or both come down first, represents a structural problem for the woman and cannot be treated effectively with homeopathic medicines.

By turning breech presentations, homeopathic medicines can change a higher risk pregnancy into a normal one. Because the medicines offer so much potential for benefit during pregnancy and little potential for side effects, homeopathic medicines will inevitably play an increasingly important role in childbirth in the near future and in the 21st century.

John George, M.D., a Seattle obstetrician and gynecologist, utilizes homeopathic medicines in his practice and has found, "In many ways the medicines facilitate the childbirth process for the woman and the physician. The medicines make it all go a lot more smoothly." Specifically, Dr. George notes, "The correctly prescribed homeopathic remedy given in preparation and anticipation of labor is observed to prepare the cervix for labor by facilitating and softening, thinning out, and dilating the cervix prior to the onset of real labor. The second observation is that the labor pattern of contractions tends to be more orderly and efficient in progressing the birth. Thirdly, the amount of pain experienced during labor is markedly reduced, greatly lessening the need for analgesics and anesthesia."

Ananda Zaren notes that constitutional medicines are rarely indicated during labor, since the process of childbirth creates stresses which require the use of medicine for acute symptoms. Zaren has found that the micro doses prevent problems during delivery, decrease delivery time, and increase the woman's pain threshold so that she can deal with the pain of childbirth more easily.

Homeopaths, like good conventional physicians, will prefer not to prescribe any medicines if it seems that the labor is normal and healthy. The homeopath however has at his or her disposal several medicines which can help the process if there are any complications. Caulophyllum (blue cohosh), for example, is a medicine par excellence in strengthening uterine muscles which can help the process of labor. It is not the only medicine prescribed for this condition, though it is the most commonly given remedy. Generally, the 3, 6, 12, 30 or 200 potency is given if the woman's labor is progressing slowly and if the woman has an undilated cervix which may be spasmodically rigid and with feeble contractions. Caulophyllum is also indicated if the contractions are irregular or if there's atony (weakness) of the uterus during labor. Dr. Jacques Imberechts half-jokingly says, "When it seems like labor is beginning, you should call the taxi and then take

Caulophyllum. If you take the medicine before you call the taxi, you're likely to have that baby in the taxi."

No scientific study has yet shown the value of Caulophyllum in childbirth in human beings. However, in a study of over 200 births in England, it was shown to reduce significantly the numbers of stillbirths in a herd of pigs with a high stillbirth rate.

Respected British homeopath Douglas Borland recommended taking Caulophyllum 12 or 30 daily during the last two or three weeks of pregnancy as a way to strengthen and prepare the woman for childbirth. Some other homeopaths feel that one should never routinely give Caulophyllum, but that each woman must be individually treated.

Belladonna (deadly nightshade) and Cimicifuga (black snakeroot) are two other commonly indicated medicines for helping in the process of labor. Belladonna is indicated when the woman experiences some of the characteristic symptoms of this medicine, which include an extreme nervousness and agitation, deliriousness, general flushing of the face and mucous membranes, and hot skin. Women who need Cimicifuga tend to be somewhat hysterical, frequently sighing, experiences spasmodic pains that seem to fly in various directions, and are intolerant of the pain. A characteristic symptom of those who need Cimicifuga is when the labor woman becomes very pessimistic about the labor, either proclaiming that "I can't do it" or "this is driving me crazy; I can't take it anymore."

There are several other homeopathic medicines which should be considered, depending on the individual symptoms of the woman. Prescribing the homeopathic medicines during labor provides yet another opportunity to use the medicines as a safe and needed alternative to conventional medications.

Homeopathic Treatment of Mother and Infant

The process of labor can be exhausting. If the woman is worn out or if she has muscle aches from the physical exertion, Arnica (mountain daisy) is indicated. Arnica is discussed in greater detail in "Sports Medicine" for it is known as a superb medicine for aches and pains of overexertion and for shock and trauma of injury. Though childbirth is not exactly an "injury," it does put a woman's body through a certain degree of shock and trauma. Arnica is also valuable after delivery for the mother and the infant since it is so effective in helping a person recoup from the childbirth process. (The homeopathic medicines are safe for infants, though it is recommended to give only small sized homeopathic pellets--or crush the larger sized pellets into small pieces--so that the infant doesn't choke on them. One can also place the pellets in water and then feed the infant with a clean teaspoon or dropper.

Homeopathic medicines can also be used to help the mother recuperate from the drama and trauma of labor which requires medical intervention. If an episiotomy or a caesarean is performed, homeopaths commonly give the woman Staphysagria (stavesacre), a major medicine that homeopaths give after surgery. Homeopaths have observed that women who take Staphysagria do not seem to request pain killers after labor as often as other women.

Dr. John George has found good results with Sulphur after a long or difficult labor. He also noted that "The stretching and tearing of the tissues around the bladder, perianal area, and vulva shower bacteria into the surrounding tissues and into the bloodstream which can cause a bladder infection or other complications, all of which Sulphur seems to prevent effectively."

If the mother has torn her perineum during delivery, British homeopath Robert Davidson recommends Bellis perennis 200c (daisy). He has found it work well in these internal

injuries. Calendula tincture is also of value in speeding the healing process. This salve is generally applied with a wet sponge.

If the infant is asphyxiated, conventional medical measures are necessary, though homeopathic medicine can still increase the chances of survival. Antimonium tart (tartar emetic) is one of the most common medicines that homeopaths give to asphyxiated babies. A baby may seem dead, though more often he will have a rattling in his throat and breathing difficulties due to some phlegm blocking their respiration. Antimonium tart seems to help them remove it immediately. Generally, if Antimonium tart doesn't work, Carbo veg (vegetable charcoal) or Camphor (camphor) may be needed. Those babies who require Carbo veg tend to be cold and blue. Those babies who need Camphor will usually have a high fever, a deep redness over the entire abdomen and thighs, and tetanic spasms. Opium (opium)* is another homeopathic medicine which can be indicated if the baby is unconscious and rigid throughout the whole body. It also tends to be needed if the mother experienced a profound fear either during her pregnancy or during labor. Laurocerasus (cherry laurel) is valuable if the baby has a facial twitch when grasping for air. Arnica (mountain daisy) is indicated after a baby has experienced a traumatic delivery evidenced by a hematoma (blood and swelling) on the skull. Arnica is also indicated when the baby has a bodily stiffness like that of Opium, though these former babies will have a hot face, cold body, jerking respiration, and tremor of the limbs.

[* For quite illogical reasons, the FDA no longer allows the availability of this medicine, even in extreme micro doses.]

Homeopaths have found that the correctly prescribed medicine tends to work immediately, which, considering the circumstances, is necessary for the baby's survival. The prescription of any of these medicines should not delay other heroic medical measures necessary to aid the baby's chances of survival.

Homeopaths also report success in treating neonatal jaundice. They find that the correct medicine can resolve this condition in one to three days. Conventional treatment usually requires hospitalization in which the baby is put in an incubator and exposed to special fluorescent lights which break down bilirubin and encourages healthy liver function. It usually takes three days to two weeks to resolve this condition. Of particular significance, the incubation of the baby separates him or her from the mother, making breastfeeding difficult or impossible. This separation also significantly reduces the amount of skin-to-skin contact which is so valuable physiologically and psychologically to the infant...and to the mother.

Alphonse Teste, M.D., a famous 19th century French homeopath, has asserted that Aconite (monkshood) "will often suffice to cure the disease." If improvement isn't observed within 24 hours, Nux vomica (poison nut), Chelidonium (celandine), Lycopodium (club moss), Chionanthus (fringe-tree), Bovista (puffball), or Natrum sulph (sulphate of sodium) should all be considered. Besides aiding women in pregnancy and labor, homeopathic medicines can be helpful to a mother who develops problems which make breastfeeding difficult. Before discussing some specifics of what homeopaths do in such conditions, it should first be emphasized that breastfeeding plays a very important role in providing the newborn baby with important antibodies, enzymes, and other essential nutrients that help the baby adapt to and thrive in his or her new surroundings. Women with mastitis, inflammation of the breast, need to be treated as soon as possible so that they can continue breastfeeding. Dr. Robert Mendelsohn, a well known pediatrician and author, feels that breastfeeding is so important that physicians and others should do all they can to encourage it. Dr. Mendelsohn counters those people who say it is disgusting to breastfeed in public by claiming it is more disgusting to bottle feed in public.

One of the most common breast problems after childbirth is mastitis. Conventional treatment for this condition is simply antibiotics. Although these drugs work reasonably well, it certainly would be worthwhile to try an alternative treatment that is safe and effective, since the baby will end up receiving trace amounts of antibiotics through breast milk. Belladonna, Bryonia, Phytolacca (pokeroot), and Lac caninum (dog's milk) are the most commonly effective medicines for mastitis. Belladonna and Bryonia are most often given at the first stages of mastitis. Belladonna is indicated when the woman has red, hot and swollen breasts, which like Lac caninum, are very sensitive to motion or jarring. Women who need Belladonna will have a high fever, congestion in the head, throbbing headache, and flushed face. Bryonia should be prescribed when the breasts have a stony hardness in them. The breasts will be hot and painful, but not very red. There may be a stitching pain which is worse from motion, especially by raising the arms. The woman will have dry lips, thirst and constipation.

Women who need Phytolacca have stony-hard and very painful breasts which are discharging pus. There may be an excessive flow of milk, though the nipples are so sensitive that nursing produces intense suffering that radiates all over the body. Women who need Lac caninum have sore and tender breasts that are particularly sensitive to motion or even the slightest jar. They experience pain while walking or sometimes by simple inspiration, though this pain diminishes if the woman supports her breasts when moving in any way.

There are numerous problems of pregnancy, labor, and postpartum which have not been discussed in this chapter. Since homeopathic medicines strengthen the overall health functioning of the individual, they can be applied in general to treat a wide variety of acute and chronic obstetrical conditions. The history and present world wide use of these medicines provides some evidence of their value. Homeopathic medicines will probably not only be invaluable to our children in the 21st century, but to theirs too.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Psychological Problems: Treating Mind and Body

(Excepted from [Discovering Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21st Century](#), North Atlantic Books)



Charles Frederick Menninger, M.D., the founder of the famous mental health facility called the Menninger Clinic, was actually a homeopathic physician. He joined the American Institute of Homeopathy in 1894 and shortly thereafter became the head of his local medical society. Dr. Menninger was such an advocate of homeopathy he once said, "Homeopathy is wholly capable of satisfying the therapeutic demands of this age better than any other system or school of medicine."

Hahnemann's name is not referred to in texts on the history of psychology nor is his name recognized in psychology today. And yet, even before Hahnemann developed the homeopathic science, he made important contributions to mental health care. In the late 1700s insanity was considered the possession of demons. The insane were regarded as wild animals, and treatment was primarily punishment. Hahnemann was one of the few physicians who perceived mental illness as a disease that required humane treatment. He opposed the practice of chaining mental patients, granted respect to them, and recommended simple rest and relaxation. Although this type of care may seem obviously important, it was revolutionary at its time.

Historians and psychiatrists today recognize that in the past the treatment of the insane was often barbaric. These experts are not just recalling the past of the 1700s or 1800s; mental health care of just several decades ago was filled with abuses. The mentally ill were injected with malaria in hopes that the fever would burn out their insanity. Insulin was given to schizophrenics, even though it seemed to diminish symptoms only when given in very high, sometimes lethal, doses. In the 1950s between 40-50,000 pre-frontal lobotomies were performed (in this operation the frontal lobe of the brain is incised, usually leaving the patient in a zombie-like state). Neuroleptic drugs, such as Thorazine (chlorprozine), Haldol (haloperidol), and Prolexine (flufenazine) were and are frequently given to psychotic patients. These drugs may cause severe acute muscular spasms, bizarre posturing, and eventually to Parkinsonian syndrome.

These various treatments are either outdated or have been moderated, and yet, it remains questionable if modern psychiatric care is optimum.

Modern Psychiatric Care

Although treatment for the mentally ill has progressed in the past few decades, it is still hard not to think that perhaps some of the psychiatric care offered today will be considered barbaric in the distant or even near future.

Mental illness is certainly one of the major health problems today. The National Institute of Mental Health estimated in 1984 that one in every five Americans has a mental disorder. This same study revealed that during a six-month period 8.3% of Americans suffered from an anxiety disorder (including phobias), 6.4% had a substance abuse problem (abusing alcohol or drugs), and 6% had an affective disorder (disorders of mood).

For a long time psychiatrists and psychologists had great difficulty in defining what constituted mental illness and what differentiated one type of illness from another. In 1980 the American Psychiatric Association published the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders--Third Edition (DSM-III). This text has become the official guide to defining mental disease

categories. Although DSM-III presents the most exacting information presently available on mental illness, Dr. Jerrold Maxmen, a Columbia University psychiatrist, has noted that "DSM-III shows how little psychiatrists actually know about mental disorders.... Because solid data doesn't exist for so many of these topics (diseases), DSM-III spotlights the enormous gaps in factual information about mental disorders."

Despite the advances in the ability of psychiatrists and psychologists to diagnose mental illness, it is not always clear that such diagnoses give us greater understanding of psychological disorders nor does it necessarily teach us how to cure them. The German philosopher Immanuel Kant reminded us of the limitations of diagnosis when he said, "Physicians think they are doing something for you by labeling what you have as a disease."

During the past century mental health professionals have debated the nature of mental illness. They have asked: to what degree is mental illness biological or organic and to what degree is it psychosocial? Until recently, most psychiatrists took one side or another on this issue. There is consensus among psychiatrists today that, generally speaking, biological factors primarily determine the type of symptoms of disorder that a person experiences (e.g. delusions, insomnia), while psychosocial factors are primarily responsible for the content and meaning of these symptoms.

Psychiatrists tend to utilize medications to deal with the biological aspects of psychological problems and psychological therapies to treat the psychosocial condition. Their determination of what drug to use is based on their understanding of brain function. Nerve cells transmit messages by sending electrical impulses and chemicals called neurotransmitters to one other. This action triggers other nerve cells to fire messages or to inhibit this firing, depending on the frequency and intensity of the message transmitted and the sensitivity of the nerve cell's receptors.

Psychiatric medications are chosen to influence these mechanisms. People with schizophrenia are found to have nerve cell receptors that are hypersensitive to certain neurotransmitters and thus these cells fire too easily. Chlorpromazine (Thorazine), trifluoperazine (Stelazine), and haloperidol (Haldol) are some of the antipsychotic medications which are given to schizophrenics to help reduce this hypersensitivity and to calm them. Psychiatrists believe that severe depression results from a decrease in receptivity to certain neurotransmitters; thus medications are prescribed to increase this receptivity. Tricyclic antidepressant medications, most commonly amitriptyline (Elavil) and imipramine (Tofranil) are thought to have this stimulating action. Monoamine oxidase (MAO) inhibitors are also given for depression, in part because they prevent the breakdown of some neurotransmitters, and in part because they seem to relieve symptoms of depressive patients. Amphetamines are still given to depressive patients, especially the elderly; however, it has since been discovered that cells tend to develop a tolerance and an addiction to such drugs, requiring even stronger doses of it to have an effect.

Despite the simplicity of these explanations for why psychiatric medications are prescribed, nature is not always as unidimensional as our explanations of it. Neurotransmitters not only affect nerve function but also directly influence hormones. By intervening in the delicate balance of brain chemistry, drugs cause significant physiological disruption. For example, one might assume that the body would be physiologically under active during severe depression. In actual fact, the adrenal glands become hyperactive, producing excessive amounts of cortisol, the body's principal "stress" hormone. Various neurological, cardiovascular, digestive, hematologic (blood), and allergic symptoms are side effects of most antidepressive drugs.

The MAO inhibitors cause such disruption of the body that many common food and drinks (aged cheese, yoghurt, beer, chocolate, raisins, coffee, yeast products and others) have to be avoided since their ingestion can cause high blood pressure and, in a small number of cases, death.

There are 10 trillion nerve cells in the brain that govern sensing, thinking, and feeling. Despite the varying functions of different groups of nerve cells, their interdependent and synergistic nature creates a highly complex working whole which is literally impossible to comprehend fully. Predictably, psychiatrists have had limited success trying to alter certain improperly functioning parts without directly disturbing brain chemistry and physiological processes.

Author Lyall Watson noted, "If the brain were so simple that we could understand it, we would be so simple that we couldn't understand it." And acknowledging the complexity of the brain and of human behavior, Albert Einstein once said, "How difficult it is! How much more difficult psychology is than physics."

Despite the fact that psychiatric drugs often have serious side effects, especially when given over long periods of time, and the additional fact that they do not actually cure mental illness, these drugs still serve an important function. Since approximately 15% of people with severe depression commit suicide, methods to alleviate depression and thereby reduce the chances of suicide are certainly needed. If, however, there are alternatives to them, it is certainly prudent to consider them. Dr. Charles Frederick Menninger reminds us, "It is imperative that we exhaust the homeopathic healing art before resorting to any other mode of treatment, if we wish to accomplish the greatest success possible." (For more information about Dr. Menninger and his experiences with homeopathy, see Dana Ullman's book, [The Homeopathic Revolution: Why Famous People and Cultural Heroes Choose Homeopathy.](#))

Homeopathic Understanding of Mental Illness

The homeopathic understanding of health is intimately connected to its understanding of the mind in general. Homeopaths don't separate the mind and body in the usual way; they generally assume that body and mind are dynamically interconnected and that both directly influence each other. This acknowledgement of the interconnectedness of body and mind is not simply a vague, impractical concept. Homeopaths base virtually every homeopathic prescription on the physical and psychological symptoms of the sick person. Psychological symptoms often play a primary role in the selection of the correct medicine.

Trying to determine whether a person's mental state caused his physical disease or vice versa is rarely helpful in discovering the correct homeopathic medicine. Most of the time, this determination is moot. Instead, the homeopath seeks to find a medicine that matches the totality of the person's physical and psychological symptoms, irrespective of "which came first."

Even the "which came first" issue is much more complex and deceptive than one might initially presume. Most of us may have said at one time or another that we got a headache or some other symptom after getting angry, being depressed, or becoming fearful and that this emotion "caused" the headache. The emotional stress, however, may be only the veritable "straw on the camel's back" that results in the collapse of the camel (or in the development of the headache). This collapse wasn't necessarily "caused" by a straw, but may have resulted because the camel was already carrying a load of 500 pounds, i.e., because we were concomitantly experiencing various physical, environmental, and other stresses in our life.

Too often we assume that something that happens close to the time we develop symptoms is "the cause" of our problem. It is however always easier to look for the effects of causes than for the causes of effects. In actuality, what we assume to be the "cause" is probably but another

effect or another stress. The "cause" of a phenomenon is not so simple and may not ever be known. The Greek philosopher Democritus understood this paradox when he said that he would rather understand one cause than be King of Persia.

Contemporary psychologist Lawrence LeShan also questioned the value of finding the "original cause" of a mental disorder. He noted, "One does not put out a forest fire by extinguishing the match that started it."

The homeopathic alternative to treating psychological and physical diseases is to assume that mind and body are undeniably connected and that a micro dose must be individually prescribed based on the totality of the sick person's symptoms.

From a homeopathic point of view, the prevalence of mental illness in our society is not simply the result of living in a fast-paced, stressful society, but also because our medical care system has effectively suppressed various physical illnesses. Homeopaths assert that by treating symptoms as "causes" rather than as "effects," conventional medicine masks the symptoms without curing the underlying disease process. Homeopaths theorize that, worse still, the treatment and suppression of symptoms forces the disease process deeper into the organism so that it then manifests in more severe physical pathology and more serious psychological disorders.

Homeopaths and biologists alike acknowledge that living organisms respond to stresses in ways that primarily allow for survival. Organisms will protect their most vital processes first. Homeopaths therefore assume that the person's mental state is vital for survival insofar as it governs the state of awareness that makes decisions on how to respond to stressful or life-threatening situations. The organism will protect the most deep psychological level most strongly and will first externalize various superficial emotions. Likewise on a physical level, certain vital organs, especially the brain and the heart, will be protected before other organs.

Homeopaths operate on the assumption that the organism creates the best possible response, based on its present abilities, to whatever stresses it is experiencing. Because homeopaths view symptoms as adaptive efforts of the organism to respond to stress or infection, they assume that efforts to control or suppress these defensive reactions can lead only to more serious symptoms. The evidence supporting this assumption is in any pharmacology text which lists the side effects of drugs. It becomes immediately apparent that the side effects of drugs are often more serious than the condition they are treating. And predictably, these side effects include various acute and chronic mental symptoms. A classic example of this phenomena is witnessed in the use of corticosteroids (cortisone and prednisone), used to suppress skin eruptions and asthmatic attacks. In addition to the various side effects of these drugs, corticosteroids are also known to induce depression and even psychosis, which diminish when the drug dosage is reduced or stopped.

Psychological symptoms, too, are thought of as ways in which a person is trying to adapt to biological and psychosocial stresses. Such symptoms should not be suppressed, unless medically essential. Instead, a homeopathic medicine should be individually prescribed based on the totality of the person's symptoms. The correct homeopathic medicine will catalyze an healing process that will raise the person's overall level of health. To complement the prescription, good homeopaths will provide some psychotherapeutic support based on homeopathic principles (See "Psychotherapy--Homeopathic Style"). And of course, homeopaths will, when appropriate, refer clients to various other health practitioners.

The Homeopathic Treatment of Psychological Problems

Several schools of psychologists categorize people in certain psychological or characterological types. Others in medicine, genetics, and sports categorize various "body types." Homeopaths, in contrast, acknowledge certain "body mind" types. They determine their medicines based on the constellation of physical and psychological symptoms.

Choosing the correct homeopathic medicine is at once a highly systematic and an artful process. Edward C. Whitmont, M.D., one of the founders of the New York Jungian Training Center and a homeopath since the 1940s, has written eloquently about the homeopathic body mind types. In his book [Psyche and Substance: Essays on Homeopathy in the Light of Jungian Psychology](#), Dr. Whitmont describes a dozen key medicines that homeopaths use, the role that each of these substances play in nature, the chemistry of each substance and how it acts the way it does, the symptoms that it is known to cause in human beings when given in toxic dose, and the body mind type it is known to treat and cure.

In a similar fashion, Philip Bailey, a homeopath in Australia, has written [Homeopathic Psychology](#) in which he describes the body mind types in light of specific personality types.

In order to give a sense of some specifics of these homeopathic typologies, I will describe two medicines, Arsenicum album (arsenic) and Nux vomica (poison nut). The following descriptions are brief summaries. For more detailed information about them, consult the books by Whitmont, Bailey, articles by Vithoulkas, and various materia medicas.

The person who needs Arsenicum is an overanxious, restless, fearful, perfectionist type of person. He or she has a driven nature; an anxious state over anything specific or just things in general; and suffers from a fussy meticulousness, all of which create a high strung and nervous individual. In general, people needing Arsenicum tend to assume that there are hostile forces at work in the world and that they must work vigilantly against them. They have a deep-seated insecurity, from which develops a dependency on others, a possessiveness of objects and people, a tendency towards fastidiousness, and deeply-felt anxieties and fears. They may have various anxieties and fears, especially about their health, their future, and their financial status, all of which are heightened when they are alone, and then diminished when they are with others. To reduce the chances of things going wrong, they become over conscientious. They over prepare for everything and are inordinately fastidious.

Physically, the person who needs Arsenicum is usually thin, fine-haired, delicate skinned, with pale or alabaster complexion. They perspire easily and profusely and are extremely sensitive to factors in the external environment. They are particularly sensitive to any exposure to cold and feel better from most forms of heat. They tend to experience burning pains which are relieved by warm applications, and if they have those pains in the stomach, they are relieved by warm drinks. Milk, fruit, ice cream, and alcohol may aggravate digestive or other symptoms. Most commonly, their physical and psychological symptoms will be particularly apparent at midnight and shortly after.

The symptoms which typify the Arsenicum type are often seen in insomniacs. Because the symptoms of Arsenicum are worse late at night and because these people tend to be perfectionistic, they usually require things to be "just right" in order to fall asleep. Part of their hypersensitivity to the environment lies in a sensitivity to noise--any noise.

Part of their over conscientious nature is an anxiety about health. People who need Arsenicum are often hypochondriacs. They have many, many symptoms, and even though they may have had them for a long time, they still want the practitioner to get rid of them immediately. As the

result of this anxiety, they tend to go to a variety of doctors and usually try many types of alternative therapies. These people also tend to become addicted to various pain relievers or other medications that temporarily diminish their pain. Also, because of their anxious and restless nature, they may use drugs or alcohol to slow them down and help them relax.

Arsenicum is also a common medicine given to people with anorexic tendencies. People who need Arsenicum tend to have anxieties about the food they eat, sometimes thinking that all food is toxic and that they shouldn't eat at all. Another part of their personality that fosters anorexia is their perfectionist nature which tends to encourage a thinner and thinner waistline.

Nux vomica has several similarities to Arsenicum but more distinct differences. People who need Nux are hurried and impulsive, like those who need Arsenicum, though Nux people are more prone to irritability, anger, and maliciousness. Even those Nux people who have learned to control their rage tend to feel a hyperirritability and anger inside themselves struggling to be expressed. They are dissatisfied, rarely content, hypercritical of others, impatient, and jealous. They are very competitive. They will compulsively compete, even in certain games or job situations where competition isn't appropriate.

Like people who need Arsenicum, Nux people will be fastidious. Whereas Arsenicum people will usually become anxious and nervous as they try to hold in their disgust for messes, Nux people will often get irritated and visibly angered by lack of order and cleanliness.*

[* It must be noted that homeopaths recognize that a person can be neat, orderly, and fastidious in a healthy way. However, whenever homeopaths refer to fastidiousness as a symptom, they are referring to a state where the individual is overly concerned about cleanliness and order.]

People who need Nux tend to be extremely self-reliant, a distinct difference from those who need Arsenicum and their dependence upon others. Nux people will overemphasize achievement, to such a degree that their life will become dominated by their work. They will take on greater responsibility than they are capable of, becoming increasingly irritable and demanding.

Classically, people who need Nux represent what is called in psychology the "authoritarian personality." They want to force things their own way. To achieve security they adopt a powerful authority and demand that those in inferior positions submit to it. Whitmont describes them as perfect bureaucrats. They are rigidly moralistic and will condemn others who violate Nux's moral code. And finally, they repress socially disapproved tendencies and project them onto others.

Nux people also have a soft side. They are sentimental and may cry from listening to certain music or seeing beautiful things. And despite a rough exterior, they cannot stand the least pain. They may cry even after a bout of anger. Since they can't stand the least opposition, they may cry from frustration. Despite this occasional tendency to weep, it has been consistently observed that, though they may be sad at times, it is often impossible for some people who need Nux to cry.

Physically, people who require Nux may be husky, solid, and muscular, or they may be lean, bent forward, and withered. They are physically and emotionally irritated by exposure to cold, drafts, noise, and light. Their worst time of day is upon waking, and it usually takes an hour or so to wake up. They sometimes feel an urge to take a nap. If they are accidentally awakened from this nap, they become highly irritated. They may suffer from insomnia because of their very active mind which constantly ruminates about the many irons they have in the fire.

They tend to overeat, with cravings for fats, spicy foods, and milk. They may experience various digestive and nervous symptoms which are aggravated by foods that they tend to crave, especially milk, meat, fats, and coffee. Commonly, they will be constipated and have much gas.

Typically, people who need Nux to sustain their hyperactive nature by drinking coffee, imbibing alcohol, and taking various stimulants. They are therefore prone to alcoholism, drug abuse, and malnutrition. They may be friendly when they are sober; however, when they are drunk or high, they tend to be abusive, cruel and violent. They will ridicule and scorn others. They thus have tendencies to wife and child abuse. They also have strong sexual desires, and they tend to demand much from their sexual partner. Their strong sexual desires may also lead them to raping others. However, if they have drunk too much or taken too many drugs, they may become impotent, even after the effects of these substances has worn off.

People who need Nux also have classic "Type A" behavior. They are prone to being workaholics and will often demand a similar level of commitment to work from others. As the result of this hyperactivity, they tend to become hypertensive and are therefore prone to heart disease.

Arsenicum and Nux are two of the many homeopathic medicines used to treat people suffering from psychological and physical problems. Homeopaths commonly treat people with acute and chronic psychological disorders, including depression, anxieties and phobias, and emotional and mental states of confusion. Homeopaths also commonly treat people with substance abuse problems.

The late Dr. Jack Cooper was the Chief Psychiatrist for 17 years at New York's Westchester County Prison and Jail. Although he didn't initially use homeopathic medicines at his work in the prison, he was very impressed with the results he received when he finally began to do so. He found that the prisoners he was treating with homeopathic medicines were becoming more able to cope with the withdrawal of drugs and alcohol. Of particular importance, Dr. Cooper also noted that for several years there were no suicides in the prison, whereas both before he began using the medicines and after he left, there were several suicides every year. Dr. Cooper found that the homeopathic medicines were having dramatic effects on the prisoners' physical and mental health. And of personal significance to Dr. Cooper, he found that his work was no longer frustrating, but rewarding and worthwhile.

Dr. Cooper's practice outside the prison included the treatment of many alcoholics. He conducted an informal study of alcoholics treated with homeopathic medicines. As a way to measure the effects of these medicines and to diminish the possible effects that his own presence may have created, he didn't actually see the patients himself in most cases. Instead, he talked to a loved one or relative who intimately knew the alcoholic's physical and psychological symptoms. Of the approximately 30 patients in the study, Dr. Cooper found a 50% cure rate, which he defined as a significantly decreased desire for alcohol and the ability to drink socially without excessive physical or psychological symptoms. Homeopathy actually has a history of successful treatment of various psychological disorders. In 1874 the first public institution for the homeopathic treatment of the insane was opened in New York--the Middletown Asylum for the Insane (later called the State Homeopathic Hospital, at Middletown). Comparing the rate of discharge from conventional vs. homeopathic mental hospitals in New York between 1883 and 1890, we find that an average of 30% of patients were discharged from conventional hospitals every year, while 50% of patients in homeopathic hospitals were discharged. Although one can quibble about these statistics for one reason or another, it is less possible to question the fact that the death rate in conventional mental hospitals was 33% higher than that at homeopathic mental hospitals.

By 1899 seven states in the United States had public mental hospitals under homeopathic supervision, and two of these states had more than one. More recently, two British homeopaths evaluated 120 cases of various neurotic disorders in 1953. Their overall improvement rate was 79% after six months, an impressive statistic when one considers that most of their patients had been ill for at least a year, and many for several years.

Psychotherapy: Homeopathic Style

Too often people assume that psychological problems require psychological solutions. Since some psychological symptoms arise from physiological processes (and vice versa), it is of value to treat the psychologically sick person holistically. A holistic approach is inherent in homeopathic care.

A homeopath prescribes the individually chosen medicine for the sick person, but he or she may do more than this. When appropriate, a homeopath will provide basic information on nutrition, exercise, stress management, and social and environmental determinants to health and disease. A homeopath may also counsel the person to help him or her deal with the emotional and mental state he/she is experiencing.

Today, many modern psychoanalysts utilize homeopathic-like perspectives and practices. In contrast to some philosophical theories that assume that human nature is essentially destructive and perverted, integral to homeopathy and many psychoanalytic practices is the assumption that human nature is basically creative and that the organism has implicit self-healing capabilities. Symptoms, including psychological ones, are presumed to be ways that the body mind is trying to adapt to and to deal creatively with various internal and external stresses.

Some very simple psychotherapeutic processes that might be considered "homeopathic" in their approach are "paradoxical intention" and therapeutic double-bind, which try to dislodge the symptom and thus to set a curative process in motion. In these systems the therapist actually encourages the patient to pretend to experience the problematic emotional state. For instance, if a person has a phobia of snakes, he or she is asked to pretend to see a snake and to pretend to feel afraid. This method is effective insofar as the person is sometimes not able to produce the fear at will and then not as susceptible to have the phobia at other times.

In another form of paradoxical intention, the therapist encourages the patient to exaggerate the emotional or behavioral problem. Milton Erickson gave a classic example of this strategy when he described the case of a boy who sucked his thumb. Rather than discourage the child from this behavior, Erickson expressed unmistakable concern that the child was not giving equal attention to his other fingers. Erickson asked the child to begin sucking them. Shortly after this suggestion, the child stopped sucking his thumb altogether.

Psychotherapies that recognize the importance of accepting rather than denying one's emotions are an obvious first step toward a "homeopathic" cure. Engaging with and expressing those emotions is the second step. The energy block by habituated responses and long-term traumas is thus freed cathartically. The symptoms are transformed in an overall revitalization of the individual's healing capacities. This approach is certainly more in line with homeopathic thinking than shortcut methods that define an ideal way of being and that encourage patients to act in a specific, prescribed way. Simple rational analysis of emotional processes is likewise an inadequate way of dealing with structures and energies that are unconscious and go to the root of the organism. Behavior modification strategies that primarily change the way one acts but don't affect the underlying tendencies that led to that behavior in the first place are another clearly "unhomeopathic therapy." And therapeutic measures which palliate extreme symptoms may only temporarily compensate for problems, not cure them.*

[* Just because a psychotherapeutic intervention is "unhomeopathic" does not mean it doesn't have an equal value or efficacy in specific cases.]

Some principles of gestalt therapy are also quite homeopathic. Gestalt therapy, as the name itself implies (gestalt means a unified whole), is a way of looking at a specific problem in the context of the whole person. Rather than treating the problem as extraneous to the person and simply trying to change it, the gestalt therapist (and therapists from various similar schools of thought as well) encourages the person to become more aware of him/herself in total and to transform one's whole being. If a person had a sexual problem, the gestalt therapist, like the homeopath, would not understand the problem as only a "sexual problem" but as "a problem of the whole person."

Modern psychoanalysts, like homeopaths, have understood that symptoms are not "the problem" but only manifestations of the problem. Sigmund Freud laid the groundwork for this perspective by uncovering the sublimated and unconscious nature of psychological disorders and the manner in which they are expressed. Carl Jung extended this perspective by showing how those sublimated psychological patterns contain also symbolic representations of transpersonal unconscious materials. Wilhelm Reich showed how they were locked into actual physical states. In general, the psychoanalytic process involves the patient in re-experiencing those unconscious dynamic elements that lie at the basis of the pathology. This re-creating or mimicking of an original submerged experience is clearly homeopathic-like in the largest sense.

The awareness of the dynamic complexity of symptoms is shared by homeopathy and psychoanalysis. Although most classic homeopathic texts contain an outdated psychological terminology, the very basis of homeopathic medicine comprises a sophisticated psychoanalytic framework. More recent homeopathic texts* correct this problem, and the best homeopaths are often excellent psychotherapists.

[* See Edward C. Whitmont, *Psyche and Substance: Essays on Homeopathy in the Light of Jungian Psychology*.]

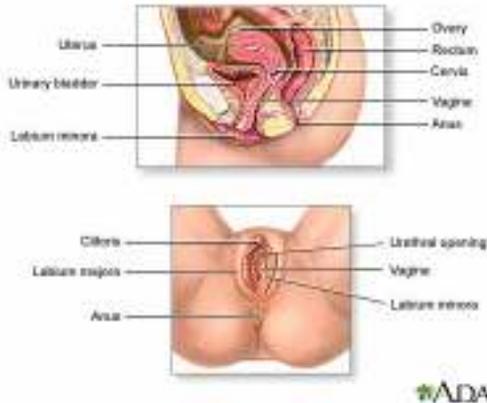
Still, homeopaths have much to learn from the field of psychology. Too often homeopaths try to obtain information about a person's psyche by asking such direct questions as "What fears do you have? What makes you angry? What types of things make you cry?" Homeopaths obviously have to learn more sophisticated means not only getting but of interpreting this information and distinguishing real character from affect and ego-oriented character.

And of course, the field of psychology has much to learn from homeopathy. Herring's Law of Cure is an invaluable assessment tool for the progress of treatment. The emphasis in homeopathy on the minimum dose will encourage therapists to find the deepest-acting, individualized treatment which doesn't require obsessive re-application, but is powerful enough to have a significant effect. It is interesting to surmise how this might be done in a sophisticated psychotherapy, both with and without actual homeopathic remedies. And ultimately, when homeopathy's law of similars is more fully understood and utilized, psychologists and psychiatrists will automatically recognize symptoms as the organism's adaptive responses and seek to aid patients in efforts to go with, rather than against, this self-defensive, self-healing process.

A Homeopathic Perspective on Women's Conditions

(Excepted from [Consumer's Guide to Homeopathy](#), Tarcher/Putnam)

Eliza Flagg Young, MD, a nineteenth century physician, once said, "Every woman is born a doctor. Men have to study to become one." Although this may be a controversial statement, what isn't controversial is that women tend to be the primary health care providers in most families. In the vast majority of homes women are responsible for watching over the health needs of the children, and by their shopping and cooking, they are responsible for fulfilling the nutritional needs of the family.



Because homeopathic medicines are considerably more amenable to home care than are conventional drugs, it is predictable that American women have had a history of interest in homeopathy.

It was not simply a coincidence that a large number of leading suffragettes in America during the 19th century were advocates of homeopathic medicine. Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Julia Ward Howe, Louisa May Alcott, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Lucretia Mott, and Clemence Sophia Lozier were but some of the nineteenth century feminists who considered both women's rights and homeopathic medicine to be important ways to create a healthier society.

The famous Ladies Physiological Societies of the nineteenth century were early versions of contemporary women's support groups in which women taught each other about their bodies and how to heal themselves. Because of the significant role that homeopathy played at that time, information about homeopathic medicines was integral in many of these meetings of women.

Even many wives of conventional physicians in the nineteenth century sought the care of homeopaths. At an 1883 meeting of the American Medical Association, one doctor complained, "Too many wives of conventional physicians are going to homeopathic physicians. And to make matters worse, they are taking their children to homeopaths too!"

Likewise today, the vast majority, approximately two thirds, of homeopathic patients and purchasers of homeopathic products are women. And today, there are approximately 300 homeopathic study groups, the significant majority of which are led by women and participated in by women.

There is one simple reason why so many women, past and present, have sought out homeopathic medicine: it is a safer and more effective method of healing themselves and their families. Because women tend to seek professional medical care more than men do, they also tend to experience more of its dangers as well as its benefits. When women reach the limits of modern medical expertise and experience some of the harsh side effects of modern medical practices, it is certainly understandable that they seek out alternative health methods such as homeopathic medicine.

Premenstrual Syndrome (PMS)

Homeopathic medicines can effectively treat the cramps, bloating, and various psychological symptoms that women commonly experience around their menstrual flow. While serious PMS should receive professional homeopathic attention, occasional or mild PMS symptoms can benefit from self-treatment, with either an individually prescribed remedy or one of the combination formula products.

When cramps are the predominating symptom of PMS, consider Pulsatilla (for cramps experienced by women who are gentle, yielding, and easily weepy, and who experience a changeable menstrual flow from month to month, are without thirst, are occasionally nauseous, prefer open air, and tend to feel worse when exposed to heat, which usually aggravates their water retention), Belladonna (for intense bearing down pains or cramps that come on and go away suddenly, and aggravation from motion or any type of jarring or draft, sometimes with a headache), Magnesia phos (cramps that are relieved by bending over, by firm abdominal massage while bending forward, or by warmth and warm application, and that are aggravated by cold, cold air, or uncovering), and Colocynthis (cramps like those of Magnesia phos but the woman is considerably more irritable and restless).

When bloating is the primary symptom, consider Pulsatilla (see above), Sepia (constipation, lethargy, general weakness felt in internal organs, irritable personality, snappishness, sadness), Lycopodium (aggravation of symptoms between 4-8pm, in warm weather, and with flatulence, and backache), and Lachesis (aggravation of symptoms during sleep and upon waking, symptoms worse on left side, pains relieved by the flow).

When moodiness, irritability, and heightened emotions are the main symptoms, consider Pulsatilla (see above), Sepia (see above), Ignatia (emotional vulnerability, especially grief, contradictory feelings, and hysteria), Cimicifuga (sharp labor-like pains that dart from one side of the body to the other, possible back pain or sciatica, intolerance of pain, loquaciousness, hysteria, feelings of being overwhelmed, and "I can't take it anymore"), Lachesis (loquacious, sharp-tongued, sarcastic, irritable, suspicious, and jealous, with flushes of heat, symptoms worse upon waking and exposure to heat; headaches), and Nux vomica (irritable, faultfinding, quarrelsome, competitive; Type-A personality; nausea).

Dose: Take the 6, 12, or 30th potency every two hours during intense symptoms and every four hours for less intense symptoms. Stop taking the remedy if symptoms are gone or quite mild. If there isn't some type of obvious improvement in 12 hours, try another remedy.

Cystitis (Bladder Infection)

Another extremely common condition for which homeopathic medicines seem to work wonders is cystitis (bladder infection). While professional homeopathic care and/or medical attention should be sought to treat recurring bladder symptoms and for severe symptoms, an individually chosen homeopathic medicine can alleviate the pain and discomfort of most acute conditions before the woman reaches the doctor's office.

The two most common remedies for acute cystitis are Cantharis (burning, cutting pain before, during, and after urination, each drop passing as though it were scalding water, frequent urges to urinate) and Sarsaparilla (severe pain at end of urination, burning pain and constant urging; a characteristic but not common symptom is that urine can be passed only while standing). Other remedies to consider are Berberis (pain in the thighs and loins during urination, pain extending from the bladder and/or over the abdomen to the urethra), Pulsatilla (pain during and after urination as well as when lying down, dry mouth but no thirst), Apis (stinging pains with an aggravation of symptoms by warmth of any sort), Belladonna (acute pain aggravated by any motion or simple jarring, a sensation of something moving inside the bladder, restlessness at night with wild dreams), Nux vomica (constant urge to urinate, short relief when passing small quantities and from warm applications or warm bathing), and Causticum (cystitis after surgery, involuntary urination when coughing or sneezing).

Dose: Take the 6, 12, or 30th potency every two hours during intense symptoms and every four hours for less intense symptoms. Stop taking the remedy if symptoms are gone or

become mild. If there isn't some type of obvious improvement in 24 hours, try another remedy. The correct remedy may need to be taken for up to three days for an acute urinary tract infection.

Vaginitis

Vaginitis refers to an inflammatory condition in the vagina that is primarily the result of infection (i.e., from *Candida Albicans*, *Trichomonas vaginalis*, *Gardnerella vaginalis*, or *Chlamydia trachomatis*) or exposure to an irritant (chemical or allergic). The symptoms of vaginitis generally include an abnormal vaginal discharge and itching or burning pains. To understand how and why homeopathic medicines are effective, it is useful to learn something about the nature of vaginitis.

One of the most common types of vaginitis is a yeast infection, usually caused by the yeast *Candida Albicans*. The vagina normally is populated by a variety of microorganisms that help to prevent infection. The "good" microorganisms create a chemical environment that inhibits the "bad" microorganisms. They also compete for food with the "bad" infective organisms. If a woman takes antibiotics to treat an infection, whether it is for vaginitis or not, the antibiotics kill both the bad and the good microorganisms, ultimately creating various imbalances in the body, including yeast infections.

The vagina can normally live comfortably with small amounts of yeast, but the killing of good microorganisms by antibiotics allows yeast to grow in significant numbers, creating a yeast infection.

Conventional treatment for yeast conditions is usually antifungal medications or suppositories. While these medicines may temporarily decrease the number of yeast cells, they do not increase the body's good microorganisms, nor do they protect the body from future yeast infections.

Other factors that can disrupt the ecological balance in the vagina are a high sugar diet, birth control pills, and certain hormonal changes, including those caused by pregnancy. Simply getting rid of the yeast, bacteria, or other pathogens growing as a result of the ecological imbalance and leading to vaginitis does not resolve the fundamental stress to the woman's health.

Homeopathic medicines are not antifungal or antibacterial in the conventional sense. Rather, they strengthen a woman's own defenses, which then help her body fight off the fungal infection itself. By this process they do not create the same type of internal ecological disruption that antibiotics cause. Some of the common remedies for vaginitis are *Pulsatilla* (white, yellow, or greenish bland vaginal discharge with vaginal soreness, a weepy, moody, emotionally-laden state, thirstlessness, aggravated by heat and relieved in the open air; a common remedy for vaginitis in pregnant women), *Kreosotum* (itching with burning pains, a yellow, putrid vaginal discharge which is acrid and irritates the vaginal lips and surrounding skin; the discharge may stain bed sheets, and is worse in the morning and upon standing), *Borax* (a burning vaginal discharge which is the color of egg whites; *Borax* tends to be useful for vaginitis that occurs midway between menstrual periods), *Hydrastis* (profuse stringy yellow vaginal discharge with great itching, worse after menstruation), *Sepia* (white, milky, offensive, itchy, and burning discharge which tends to be more profuse in the morning and while walking, sensations of uncomfortable pressure and heaviness in the vaginal area, general fatigue, constipation, irritability, depression), *Graphites* (premenstrual yeast infection, often in overweight women with thin, white, acrid discharge and who may experience a concurrent backache, increased discharge in the morning and while walking), and *Calcarea carb* (thick yellow or milky discharge which tends to cause intense itching, usually in overweight, fair-skinned women, worse before menses and on becoming warm, though they tend to be very chilly; a headache and spasmodic cramps may be concurrent).

These remedies are effective not only for yeast infections, but also for other types of vaginal infection. In addition, there are numerous homeopathic formula products in pill or suppository form that can be used to treat the acute vaginal infection effectively.

Chronic or recurrent vaginitis should receive professional homeopathic care for an appropriate constitutional medicine.

Dose: Take the 6, 12, or 30th potency every two hours during intense symptoms and every four hours for less intense symptoms. Stop taking the remedy if symptoms are gone or have become mild. If there isn't some type of obvious improvement in 48 hours, try another remedy.

Cysts and Fibroids

A cyst is a usually harmless fluid-filled sac of tissue that may be found in the breast, ovaries, or vagina, or simply under the skin. Small cysts are often imperceptible, and even large ones can sometimes be symptomless unless they are large enough to press on certain organs or nerves. Fibroids are noncancerous growths in or on the walls of the uterus which can lead to abnormal uterine bleeding, painful intercourse, and bladder and bowel pressure.

Cysts and fibroids are relatively common symptoms experienced by women. Conventional medical care ranges from the conservative ("Let's leave it alone and let it go away") to the radical ("We need to remove it before it gets worse or causes any other problem"). Homeopathic treatment for these conditions generally requires professional constitutional care. Some homeopaths have observed that cysts often respond rapidly to the correct homeopathic medicine, while fibroids tend to take longer. Homeopathic remedies for fibroids will not always completely get rid of them, but they do often at least reduce bleeding or other complications. Homeopathic treatment of fibroids tends to be more effective when they are not too extensive.

In reference to the treatment of cysts, a gynecologist from Barcelona, recently reported on a study she performed evaluating 40 cases of ovarian cysts. After nine months of treatment using individually chosen homeopathic medicines, 36 of the 40 women had no evidence of a cyst, three had only a right-sided cyst, and one had a cyst on both sides.

Endometriosis

Endometriosis is a condition in which the lining of the uterus gets displaced and appears in various sites in the body, including the ovaries, the bladder, or the bowel. Although the cause of this condition is unknown, it is sustained by ovarian hormones.

Endometriosis can lead to varying symptoms, including heavy, painful periods, breast swelling, backache before periods, infertility, painful intercourse, dizziness, and depression. Conventional treatments for it are diverse and problematic. The conventional pharmacological treatment is with drugs that inhibit ovarian or pituitary hormones. These drugs produce various masculinizing effects, including increased body hair and irreversible changes in the voice. Some physicians recommend surgical treatment in which the displaced cells are burned out with a laser, or removal of the uterus, Fallopian tubes, and/or ovaries.

Because some women experience great pain with this condition, they are desperate for any relief. These conventional medical treatments sometimes provide relief, but at the cost of new problematic symptoms and sometimes at the cost of the recurrence of the original condition.

Michael Carlston, MD, a homeopath and assistant clinical professor at the University of California at San Francisco School of Medicine, asserts that homeopathic medicines can be very helpful at the early and middle stages of endometriosis, though because of severe scarring during

advanced stages of the disease, they are not very effective later on. Endometriosis is not an ailment amenable to self-care; professional homeopathic care is required.

Fertility and Contraception

Because homeopathic medicines can be effective in reestablishing health in women's reproductive organs, it follows that they can be helpful in reestablishing fertility. Homeopathic constitutional care, rather than self-care, is necessary for treating problems of fertility.

Some women ask if homeopathic medicines can be used for contraception. The answer to this question is a definitive "No." Homeopathic medicines create healthy people, and in the process of doing so tend to make people more rather than less fertile.

Any pharmacological agent that is strong enough to block conception is also strong enough to cause other physiological disruptions. Birth control pills have been linked to heart disease and to breast cancer, though while some studies have found this latter link, others have not. Various less drastic but still problematic symptoms have also been associated with the use of birth control pills, including increased vaginal bleeding, migraine headaches, bladder infections, depression, and various nutritional deficiencies. Dr. Ronald W. Davey, physician to Queen Elizabeth II, notes that he sometimes uses homeopathic doses of the Pill to treat women who have suffered from side effects of this drug. To get the best results, however, a woman has to have stopped taking the Pill. Many women have experienced symptoms from the IUD as well. Chellis Glendenning, in her book *When Technology Wounds*, describes her traumatic experiences with the ill-famed Dalkon shield IUD.³ Ultimately, professional care from a homeopathic physician helped restore her health when no other treatment was effective.

Side effects from conventional drugs and from medical devices generally require the attention of a professional homeopath, unless the symptoms are extremely minor.

Menopause

Menopause is a natural life phase which some doctors seem to have made into a disease. The fact that women secrete less estrogen in their fifth or sixth decade of life does not signify an ailment but is part of normal body evolution. While it is true that many women experience various symptoms during this change of life, there are many natural ways to deal with them which are safer than the lifelong estrogen replacement therapy that physicians commonly recommend (see Resources section for details).

Homeopathic medicines are effective for relieving the common symptoms experienced during menopause (hot flashes, vaginal dryness, cramping, bloating, constipation, and emotional swings). Self-care with homeopathic medicines can be provided for these symptoms, though because the symptoms can be so diverse in their effects on women's bodies and minds, it is not possible to summarize the key remedies in this book (see Resources).

Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis is one of the serious conditions that some women experience late in life. Because there are several homeopathic medicines, notably *Calcarea phos* (calcium phosphate), which are known to help build stronger bones, it makes sense that homeopathic remedies be considered as part of a woman's health program. However, because osteoporosis can be an insidious condition which develops without obvious symptoms prior to a fracture, women are encouraged to become familiar with the various nutritional and lifestyle factors that decrease the chances of developing osteoporosis. When such efforts are combined with homeopathic medicines, women will inevitably be significantly stronger and healthier.

Dose: Although classical homeopaths prefer to prescribe constitutionally to women just prior to, during, or after menopause, women who have increased risk factors for osteoporosis and are not under professional homeopathic care might consider taking the 6th potency of Calcarea phos once a day for three to five days, every month. If, however, the woman is undergoing professional homeopathic constitutional care, this remedy will generally not be necessary.

Allergies are Nothing to Sneeze at... With Homeopathic Medicines

It is getting close to allergy season again, and to most allergy sufferers freedom from this dread condition is literally nothing to sneeze at. This freedom, however, is a distant dream for many allergy sufferers.



Allergies can be imprisoning. They can make it impossible to go for a walk in the country, and even make it difficult to go outside. Some allergy sufferers can't visit their friends who have pets, and many others can't eat their favorite foods.

Even the pleasures and benefits of exercise are difficult because some allergy sufferers' noses run more than they do. A runny or stuffy nose leads to mouth breathing, then a dry mouth, then less efficient breathing, and then less efficient overall functioning. A domino effect is set up, and the allergy sufferer is knocked down.

Conventional medical treatment for allergies usually consists of antihistamines, steroids, and desensitization shots. In obstinate cases, laser surgery may be utilized to vaporize mucus-forming nasal tissue. People with allergies know that these treatments don't work; at best, they provide temporary relief of symptoms, and at worst, they create side effects which can be worse than the allergies themselves.

Perhaps the greatest misunderstanding about allergies is the assumption that the allergen (the cat dander, the pollen, the house dust mite, or whatever) is the problem. Actually, the allergen is simply the trigger, while the allergic person's body is the loaded gun. Rather than just treating symptoms or avoiding the allergen, the best course is to take action to strengthen the body's own immune and defense system. Natural therapies which do this help empty the loaded gun or simply make it shoot blanks.

Homeopathy and Allergies

In the near future when homeopathic medicines are widely accepted by the majority of orthodox physicians, doctors will pretend that they have always been supporters of homeopathy and homeopathic principles. They will point to conventional allergy treatment as an example of this.

While it is partially true that conventional medical treatment of allergy uses small doses of a substance to which the person is actually allergic and even though this principle is the basis of homeopathy, homeopaths use considerably smaller doses than conventional allergy shots. Also, homeopaths find that using the same substance to which the person is allergic may relieve a person's symptoms, but it will not truly or deeply cure the person's allergy.

Homeopaths instead prescribe a "constitutional medicine," a remedy that is individually chosen to the totality of symptoms that the person is experiencing, not just the allergy symptoms. Finding a person's constitutional medicine requires the care of professional homeopath.

People can, however, use homeopathic medicines to treat the acute phase of their allergy. Although these natural medicines will not "cure" one's allergy, they will often provide effective relief and will do so without side effects.

Solid research has proven the effectiveness of homeopathic medicines in hay fever. Dr. David Taylor-Reilly, a professor and homeopath at the University of Glasgow in Scotland, published an important study in the Lancet (October 18, 1986) which showed that homeopathically prepared doses of 12 common flowers were very effective in reducing hay fever symptoms when compared with patients given a placebo.

This same researcher published in the Lancet (12-10-94) another high caliber study on the homeopathic treatment of asthma. This double-blind, placebo-controlled randomized trial performed conventional allergy testing to determine what substance asthma sufferers were most allergic. Then, half of the subjects were given a homeopathic preparation of this substance, while the other half were given a placebo. Those people given the homeopathic medicine experienced a very significant improvement in their symptoms of asthma.

Specific Remedies

One of the common homeopathic medicines for respiratory allergies is *Allium cepa* (the common onion). Because onions are known to cause tearing of the eyes and running of the nose, it is wonderfully effective in treating such symptoms when given in homeopathic micro doses. Specifically, people who will benefit from *Allium cepa* experience a profuse, fluent, burning nasal discharge which is worse in a warm room and better in the open air. They have a profuse, bland (non-burning) tearing from the eyes with reddened eyes, and will desire to rub their eyes frequently. They experience a raw feeling in the nose with a tingling sensation and violent sneezing. A frontal congestive headache may be concurrent with their allergy symptoms. These symptoms tend to exacerbate after damp winds.

People who need *Euphrasia* (eyebright, an herb) have the opposite symptoms as those who need *Allium cepa*: they have profuse burning tears from the eyes and a bland nasal discharge. Their eyes water so much the person looks awash in tears. The whites of the eye and the cheeks become reddened from the burning tears. The eye symptoms are worse in the open air. The profuse bland nasal discharge is worse at night, while lying down, and in windy weather.

Burning tears and nasal discharge which are often worse on the right side characterize the symptoms related to *Arsenicum album* (arsenic, the mineral). These people's symptoms are worse at and after midnight. They toss and turn in bed and become very anxious, frightened, and restless during breathing difficulties. They are very chilly and feel better in general in a warm room. They usually have a great thirst but only take sips at a time. These people are sensitive to light, have violent sneezing, and may develop asthmatic breathing.

When an allergy sufferer is particularly irritable and chilly and has a fluent nasal discharge during the day and congestion at night, *Nux vomica* (poison nut, a seed from a tree) should be their remedy. Their symptoms tend to be worse indoors and better in the open air. They are sensitive to the cold and to being uncovered. Frequent sneezing may be experienced. Their symptoms sometimes begin after being irritated, vexed, or fatigued.

A common remedy of both women and children is *Pulsatilla* (windflower, an herb). These people have a nasal discharge during the day and congestion at night (just like people who need *Nux vomica*). People who need *Pulsatilla* are quite different from people who need *Nux vomica*: they are usually gentle, mild, yielding, impressionable, and emotional people who seek attention and sympathy, rather than the argument and conflict in which *Nux vomica* people indulge. People who need *Pulsatilla* have congestion is worse in a warm room, hot weather, or while lying down, and is relieved in cool rooms, open air, or with cool applications. They tend to have itching at the roof of their mouth at night. They tend to be without thirst.

There are numerous other remedies to consider, including Histaminium, Kali bic, Natrum mur, Sabadilla, Solidago, and Wyethia. To learn when and how to use these remedies as well as more detailed information about the previously described medicines, consult a homeopathic guidebook, such as either of my books *Everybody's Guide to Homeopathic Medicines* or *Homeopathic Medicine for Children and Infants* or Dr. M. Panos and Jane Heimlich's *Homeopathic Medicine at Home*.

If these individual remedies are not available or if you cannot find the best one to fit your symptoms, there are now numerous "homeopathic formula products" readily available in health food stores. These natural remedies are extremely easy to use and work wonderfully well.

So, what would you rather do: invest in box after box of Kleenex, or try some simple and safe homeopathic medicine to treat your allergies. You may never want to go through another allergy season without homeopathic medicines.

First Aid with Homeopathic Medicines

It is initially startling but ultimately logical to learn that homeopaths use stinging nettle (*Urtica urens*) to treat people with first or second degree burns. Of course, a homeopath would not recommend actually touching a stinging nettle plant to the burned area. Instead, a homeopath would give a specially prepared, non-toxic dose of stinging nettle. Since stinging nettle causes a burn when exposed to it in toxic dose, it also helps heal burns when taken in small non-toxic dose.



The basic principle of homeopathic medicine is that a small dose of a substance will help cure that which it causes in overdose. Although this principle may be a bit confusing at first, it actually makes a lot of sense. Modern day physiology and biology are confirming a basic premise of homeopathy which recognizes that symptoms are

efforts of the organism to adapt to stress or infection. Symptoms are therefore understood as the way the "body mind" is trying, although not always successfully, to re-establish homeostasis or balance. Since symptoms are the best efforts of the organism to attempt to heal itself, it is best to avoid treating or suppressing specific symptoms, and it is preferred to aid and stimulate the body's defense and immune processes.

The homeopathic medicines are able to stimulate the defense system, since they, like conventional immunizations and allergy treatments, give small doses of what causes a condition in order to stimulate the immune system. Homeopathic medicines, however, are distinctively different from immunizations and allergy treatment, since the homeopathic medicines are more individually prescribed to people, given in much smaller and less toxic doses, and used for both prevention and treatment of a person.

Homeopathic medicine developed much of its popularity in the United States and Europe because of its success in treating people with cholera, scarlet fever, yellow fever and other infectious diseases that were ravaging populations. More recently homeopathic medicine has developed a reputation of successfully treating people with various chronic complaints. What many people do not know about homeopathy is that it also provides many valuable medicines in treating people who suffer from accidents and injuries. When these medicines are used in conjunction with conventional first aid procedures, the risk of long-term damage from an injury can be significantly decreased and the healing process can be noticeably enhanced.

One must study homeopathic medicine for many years in order to learn how to prescribe the correct medicine for people with chronic conditions. One can, however, learn to use the medicines for first aid very easily. Whereas treatment of a person's acute or chronic disease requires strict individualization of the person's total physical and psychological state, treatment for accidents and injuries does not require such individualized prescription. The reason for this difference is that people with acute or chronic diseases have distinct or subtly different symptoms and causes of their condition, and thus need a different medicine to begin their curative process. People with injuries tend to experience very similar symptoms and usually need a similar metabolic stimulus to heal their complaint. Basically, when different people cut themselves, get burned, break a leg or injure themselves in some other way, they all tend to need a similar stimulus to heal their injury.

Homeopathic medicines for first aid and sports injuries are very easy to prescribe and are usually very effective in reducing pain of the injury and speeding the healing process. It is thus no

wonder that many superstar athletes have heard about homeopathy and have begun to benefit from its use. Football superstar O.J. Simpson, tennis player Boris Becker, New York Knicks coach Pat Riley, ex-Yankee pitcher Jim Bouton, and pro golfer Sally Little are but some of the athletes who spell relief with H-O-M-E-O-P-A-T-H-Y.

The following medicines are used to treat people in first aid situations. There are other homeopathic medicines that can also be used, but these are the most commonly used medicines for the conditions described.

NOTE: Homeopaths use the Latin names for their medicines since a similar nomenclature is needed to converse with homeopaths throughout the world.

ARNICA (mountain daisy)

ARNICA is mentioned first because it is a medicine par excellence for the shock or trauma of any injury. It is necessary to treat an injured person for shock first unless the injury is very mild or unless the person is bleeding so profusely that stopping the bleeding should be attended to immediately. Since ARNICA is the first medicine prescribed in numerous types of injuries, it is the most common medicine used in first aid. It helps reduce shock, relieve pain, diminish swelling, and begin healing. ARNICA is a great medicine for injuries to muscles, especially when there is pain from overexertion. ARNICA is also an excellent medicine before or after surgery since the body experiences a state of shock from these medical procedures. It is used as well before and after dental surgery, and before, during, and after labor to help the mother and infant deal with the shock and stress of birth. Common conditions for use: Shock or trauma of injury; surgical shock; muscle injuries.



HYPERICUM (St. John's Wort)

HYPERICUM is an excellent medicine for injuries to nerves or to injured parts of the body which are richly supplied with nerves (fingers, toes, the spine). Generally, such injuries have sharp or shooting pains, and the injured part is very sensitive to touch. HYPERICUM is also good for old injuries to nerves which still seem to both the person. King George VI of England was so impressed by the effectiveness of HYPERICUM that he named his prize racehorse after it. Common conditions for use: Injuries to nerves.



URTICA URENS (Stinging Nettle)

As you might have predicted from learning about the law of similars, URTICA URENS is the medicine of choice for burns (stinging nettle, as you may know, causes a burn upon contact with the spine of the plant). URTICA URENS in external application is also helpful in diminishing the pain of the burn and in promoting healing. Such application should be diluted approximately one part of URTICA URENS with ten parts water. Common conditions for use: burns.



LEDUM (Marsh Tea)

LEDUM is the best medicine for puncture wounds, whether it be from a needle, a nail, or other sharp object. Deep punctures or punctures from rusty nail should receive medical attention, but this should not delay you from taking LEDUM which has no side-effects and which can be helpful in healing wounds and preventing tetanus. LEDUM is also commonly prescribed for insect stings and animal bites. It's applicable as well to people with severe bruising (black eyes or blows from firm objects), especially if the affected part feels cold and yet feels relieved by cold applications.

Common conditions for use: puncture wounds; insect bites.



RHUS TOX (Poison Ivy)

Although some people cringe when they even hear someone mention poison ivy, it is an often prescribed homeopathic medicine (in non-toxic homeopathically prepared dose!). It is a great medicine for certain types of skin conditions (since it causes them!) as well as for numerous other conditions which homeopaths have found it causes in overdose. One of the conditions it causes in overdose is the rupturing of ligaments and tendons. Because of this, it is the most common medicine prescribed for sprains and strains, especially the type of sprain and strain that is worse upon initial motion but that is better upon continued motion.

It is also a medicine given for dislocated joints. ARNICA is another medicine to condition for dislocations.

Common condition for use: Sprains or strains.



RUTA (Rue)



RUTA is the medicine given for severe sprains where the person has a torn or wrenched tendon, split ligament, or bruised periosteum (bone covering). It is also the most common medicine prescribed for recent or old injuries to the knee or elbow. As such, it is one of the medicine prescribed for "tennis elbow."

Common conditions for use: Severe sprain; injury to the bone.

SYMPHYTUM (Comfrey)



Homeopaths, like herbalists, use SYMPHYTUM for fractures. Homeopaths, however, give their medicine in potentized dose rather than in teas and poultices as done by herbalists. Although one must go to a physician to have the fracture re-set and placed in a cast, SYMPHYTUM will relieve pain and promote rapid healing of the fracture. Besides its application in fractures, SYMPHYTUM is a great medicine for injuries to the eyeball, bones around the eyes, and the cheekbones.

Common conditions for use: Fractures; facial injuries.

External Applications

Some homeopathic medicines are used externally,* including:

CALENDULA (Marigold)



CALENDULA TINCTURE (in an alcohol base), GEL, SPRAY, and OINTMENT are invaluable external applications in treating cuts and abrasions. CALENDULA is known to have antiseptic properties due to its organic iodine content. CALENDULA helps stop bleeding, inhibits infection, and promotes granulation of tissues to help heal wounds and burns. CALENDULA TINCTURE should not be applied directly on a cut since its alcohol content causes stinging pain. It is best to dilute this tincture with a little water. If you'd like to avoid this effort, you can instead directly apply CALENDULA GEL, SPRAY, or OINTMENT.

Note: CALENDULA works so rapidly in healing the skin that it is not recommended for use in deep cuts. In deep cuts CALENDULA sometimes can close and heal the outside skin before the tissue underneath is completely healed.

Common conditions for use: Cuts, abrasions, burns.

HYPERICUM (St. John's Wort)



HYPERICUM TINCTURE is recommended as an external application in treating deep cuts since it helps heal internal structures as well as the skin. It also has the ability to close open wounds and thus sometimes prevents the need for stitches. HYPERICUM is also used for septic (infected) wounds (CALENDULA, in comparison, is primarily good for clean uninfected cuts). HYPERICUM TINCTURE, like other external applications which have an alcohol base, should be diluted prior to application.

Common conditions for use: Deep cuts, infected cuts.

General Rules for Determining Dosage

People who are beginners in homeopathy should primarily use the 6th potency (written on the bottom as "6x" or "6c") or the 30th potency ("30x" or "30c"). The 6x is a dose of the medicine that has been diluted 1:10 six times with vigorous shaking between each dilution, while the 6c has been diluted 1:100 six times. Only homeopathic practitioners who have a great deal more knowledge of homeopathy should use the higher potencies (200x, 1000x, or higher). It is important to remember that homeopathic medicines are more powerful the more they experience "potentization"--the pharmaceutical process of dilution and shaking. Higher potencies thus should be used with great care.

Homeopaths have found that injured people tend to need more frequent repetition of doses shortly after injury. One may need to prescribe a medicine every 30 to 60 minutes immediately after severe injury. After a couple of hours, the frequency of doses can diminish to every other hour or every fourth hour, depending upon the severity of pain. Doses every four hours or four times a day are common when a person has a non-severe injury. A person will generally not need to take a medicine for more than two to four days, except in fractures or severe sprains where one to three doses daily for five to seven days are common.

The basic principle of how to determine dosage is: The more severe the condition, the more often will its repetition be necessary.

It is important to remember that a medicine should only be taken as long as the person experiences pain. Do not continue taking the medicine unless there are still symptoms. The basic idea is to take as little of the medicine as possible and yet enough to lessen pain and stimulate one's healing powers.

Administration of the Medicine

The medicine should be taken into a "clean mouth." Food, drink, tobacco, toothpaste, and other substances should not be put into the mouth for at least 15 minutes before or after the dose. It is generally best to place the medicine underneath the tongue.

Homeopaths have found that some substances can neutralize the effects of the homeopathic medicines. Although there is some controversy around which substances are implicated more than others, it is best to avoid the following substances for at least 48 hours after taking the final dose: coffee, camphorated products (including lip balm, counter-irritant muscle relaxing cremes, Tiger's balm), strong herbal teas, mentholated products, cough drops, and mouthwash.

Care and Storage of Homeopathic Medicines

Special handling and storage of the homeopathic medicines are needed in order to avoid possible contamination. When the medicines are correctly handled and stored, homeopaths have found that they can last for several generations. Since it is very difficult to determine if the medicines have been contaminated, one should take the following precautions to prevent potential problems.

--The medicines should be kept away from strong light, from temperatures higher than 100 degrees, and from exposure to strong odors like camphor, menthol, mothballs, or perfumes.

--The medicines should always be kept in the container in which they were supplied and never transferred to any other bottle which has contained other substances.

--The medicine should be opened for administration of the medicine for the minimum time possible. One should be careful not to contaminate the cap or cork before replacement.

--If, by accident, more pills than the number specified in the prescribed dose are shaken out of the bottle, do not return them to the container; throw the excess away to avoid possible contamination.

CERTIFIED HOMEOPATHY ONLINE COURSE - SESSION 8 – QUESTION & ANSWERS

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP, PC: _____

PHONE: _____

FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please be sure to fill out the information above, complete the test and e-mail or fax it back to us at iridology@netzero.net or 530-878-1119. We will grade your question & answer session and will let you know if we have any questions or concerns. **Please put your answers on a separate piece of paper.**

NOTE: We set the next several sessions up in a way that you can print these pages for your friends, family, and clients. You can put them in a binder and make copies of them if you would like to hand them out to people whom you know are suffering from the issues we have included in the articles.

1. What potency should beginners in homeopathy typically use?
2. What is the basic principal of how to determine dosage?
3. How long should a homeopathic medicine be taken?
4. Should homeopathic medicine be taken after symptoms have disappeared as you do with herbs?
5. What is the basic principal on how to take homeopathic medicine?
6. What is the proper administration of homeopathic medicine?
7. What products should be avoided for 48 hours after taking a final dose?
8. What are the 4 instructions for care and storage of homeopathic medicines?
9. What is Stinging Nettle used for in homeopathy and how is it used?
10. What is Allium cepa used for in homeopathy?
11. What is endometriosis?
12. What is Chamomilla used for?
13. What is the Latin name for eyebright?
14. What is Prophylaxis?
15. What is Osteoporosis?
16. Who are narcoleptics?
17. Arnica is another common homeopathic medicine given to people before and after surgery because of its ability to _____.
18. What is cystitis?
19. What is a system-wide Candida infection?
20. When should Staphysagria be given?
21. What are the 13 strategies for relieving migraines?
22. Women who have constant nausea during pregnancy, not just in the morning, may need what four homeopathic remedies?
23. What is neonatal jaundice?
24. What homeopathic remedy is given to people with anorexic tendencies?
25. What percentage of people with severe depression commit suicide?
26. What is an allergen?