## Homeopathy; 200 years of Healing

Homeopathy was initially developed by Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician over 200 years ago. This is a system of medical therapy quite unlike what is practiced today<sup>1</sup>. He believed that "like cures like". Giving as a "remedy" in very minute doses an herb or mineral that would cause symptoms similar to what the patient was afflicted with, could provide of those symptoms. This form of therapy is remarkably free of adverse side effects and is safe to use, most likely due to the very small amount of active ingredient being used. Interestingly, it can be quite effective. The *British Medical Journal* reviewed 22 well-designed studies demonstrating significantly positive results<sup>2</sup>. Homeopathy relies on the ability of our body to heal itself. The dilute concentration of the remedy seems to work along the same means as our immune and other inter-cellular signaling systems. To treat a cough, the remedy would consist of an agent that typically provokes coughing but at a very small amount prepared as a very diluted solution. Use of these natural substances is associated with no known contraindications, interactions or adverse effects at the dosages used. When prescribing remedies for various ailments, it's best to select the remedy based on the characteristics of the patient's presentation and major chief complaint.

Medications are prepared by a process of *potentiaztion* or serial *dilution* and *succession* (shaking) according to stringent guidelines. Dilutions of the various remedies are carried out on the order of 1:10 (X) or 1:100 (C). Dilution is done with sterile water or organic alcohol. These preparations are termed *remedies* and are typically used orally or topically. Oral remedies are prepared as tinctures, tablets or pellets that are typically placed under the tongue and dissolved to be absorbed by the body. The tinctures can also generally be added to a small glass of water and drunk.

Dosing is based on the level of severity of the symptoms. Very acute problems may require remedy dosing of every 5-10 minutes, less acute every 2-3 hours. Chronic problems can be dosed daily, weekly or monthly depending on the condition being treated. Acute problems should respond within the first 12 to 24 hours. The patient's response to therapy is used to guide further dosing. As improvement is noted, the dosing can become less frequent or as symptoms recur. The same dose can be given to all ages; these doses are so small we do not need to make allowances for small children or very elderly patients as we do with typical allopathic (prescription) medications. The 30C (diluted 100 times, shaken 30 times) potency is generally a pretty good place to start therapy. Homeopathic remedies are generally quite inexpensive; the cost of an entire course of treatment may be less than \$10.

A word of caution is in order however; some symptoms can signal serious conditions, it's still a good idea to seek the help of a qualified physician, especially if symptoms aren't resolving. Many people will be wrong in their initial assessment of what is wrong with them and can use self-help treatments that delay therapy or even worsen their condition.

Homeopathic products can be purchased in natural food as well as vitamin and supplement stores. They're also available over the internet. NutritionWise 75 E. Indiantown Rd. (561) 747-1818 is a good example of the former with staff that are skilled in recommending therapies. On-line <u>www.newtonlabs.net</u> and <u>info@newtonlabs.net</u> is another reputable purveyor of these products (which can also be purchased @ NutritionWise). Reference guides and compendiums are available where the products are sold to help discern what agents will be most useful for your problem.

## Trauma Relief

Injuries can be treated with homeopathic preparations as well. *Arnica* and *Aconitum napellus* ("Aconite" or "Monkshood") can be helpful. Shock can be treated with Aconite to deal with sudden intense shock, panic or fear with collapse, hyperventilation or palpitations, this is especially useful for mental and emotional shock. Strains, sprains & bruises are helped with *Arnica montana* or "Mountain daisy". This is also helpful for soft tissue injuries, relieving muscle aches from exercise and overuse as well as postoperative pain and bruising. It can be applied topically as an ointment or taken internally as a tincture or pellets under the tongue. People with Type-O blood tend to respond better to *Rhus Toxicodendrum* which is derived from poison ivy than to Arnica. Fractures can be helped with *Symphytum* (comfrey or "Boneset" to accelerate healing.

## **Medicinal Uses**

Various illnesses can also be treated with homeopathic products depending in part on how they present, (more information is available in the reference by Rakel):

Infant colic; Colocynthis (Bitter Cucumber).

Teething in children; Chamomilla (German chamomile) for the inconsolable pain.

Middle ear infections; *Belladonna* (Deadly Nightshade), *Pulsatilla* (Windflower) or *Ferum phosphoricum* (Iron Phosphate).

Conjunctivitis or inflammation of the covering of the eyeball; *Apis mellifica* (derived from honeybees), *Arsenicum album* (White arsenic), *Pulsatilla*, or *Euphrasia*.

Allergies; Arsenicum album, Pulsatilla or Allium cepa (Red onion).

Sinusitis; Kall bichromicum, Pulsatilla, Bryonia (Wild Hops).

Pharyngitis (sore throat); Phosphorus, Belladonna, Arsenicum, Apis.

Cough; Atimonium tartaricum (Tartar emetic), Spongia (Marine sponge), Ipecacuanha (Ipecac) Bryonia.

Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea, & Abdominal pain; Arsenicum, Magnesia phosphorica (Magnesium phosphate), Colocynthis, Belladonna.

Dyspepsia, Peptic ulcer; Argenitum nitricum (Silver nitrate), Nux vomica (Poison nut).

Colitis; Colocynthis, Cantharis (Spanish fly), Nux vomica.

Bladder infection; Cantharis.

Urinary retention/incontinence; Causticum (bisulphate of potash).

Arthritis; *Rhus toxicodendron* (especially for blood type O), alternating with *Bryonia*, *Arnica Montana* is useful for the other blood types.

Influenza prevention; *Gelsemium* 30C, taken as 3 doses over 24 hours then once weekly during Flu season which runs from January through April can be quite helpful.

Anxiety & panic; *Aconitum napellus* (Monkshood), *Argenitum nitricum* or *Gelsenium* (Yellow jasmine) Psychiatric disturbances are considered more important than physical ailments in homeopathy. According to Hering's law, which states that, the direction of cure is seen to occur from the top downward and from within outward.

Dermatologic problems are treated with oral medications in the homeopathic style of medicine; skin manifestations are believed to be a reflection of an internal problem. Local therapies will palliate but not cure. *Sulphur* (Brimstone) *Arsenicum* and *Thuja* (Arbor vitae) are deep acting remedies used for skin problems.

More inflammation is available in the library section of our website; www.tequestafamilypractice.com .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Rakel, D; Integrative Medicine, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition, Philadelphia PA, Saunders Press, 2003, p 781

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Kieijnen J, Knipschild P, ter Riet G: Clinical trials of homeopathy. BMJ 302:316, 323, 1991