

HOMOEOPATHY

DEFINITION

Homoeopathy is an effective system of healing which assists the body's natural tendency to heal itself. It is the medical practice of healing "like with like" and by using a wide range of natural substances remedies are selected to stimulate the body's own healing power. Remedies are tested on healthy people and the symptoms that are produced are carefully recorded. The homoeopath matches the symptoms produced by the different substances as closely as possible to the symptoms experienced by the patient and this encourages the natural healing system of the body.

BASIC PHILOSOPHY

Hippocrates first described the homoeopathic principle 2,500 years ago and the word is derived from the Greek "Homoios" meaning "similar suffering". The basic philosophy is that if a substance can produce symptoms in a healthy person, it can also be used to cure those same symptoms in someone who is sick. For example, when you peel an onion you experience watery eyes, and if you have hay fever which made your eyes water, the remedy made from onions would probably help the condition.

IS IT SAFE?

Yes. The secret is in the dilution of the substance. Substances are diluted so that there is not even a molecule of the original substance in the remedy. Because of this homoeopathy is safe to use, even in cases where the use of conventional drugs might be unwise. It means that babies can be safely treated as well as pregnant women.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Scientists are near to understanding how homoeopathic medicines can be so effective in such dilute amounts. It is likely that it has something to do with the method of production, namely by shaking and diluting the substance. The study of quantum physics and electromagnetism has shown that this method of production possibly leaves an imprint of the substance's energy in the dilutant. We believe that it is this energy imprint that somehow stimulates the body's natural healing mechanism.

HOW DOES HOMOEOPATHY DIFFER FROM CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE?

Homoeopathy is an holistic medicine. It takes into account the whole person and the whole mental and emotional response to the disease. No single factor is taken in isolation. As individuals we are all born with particular strengths and weaknesses and it is when the body is ill that particular weaknesses are shown up as disease symptoms. Our weaknesses may be as a result of genetic inheritance or as a result of some physical or emotional trauma in our lives. Therefore the homoeopath needs to know a great deal about a patient before a really effective remedy can be prescribed. This is why a different remedy is often given for the same illness in a family; for example, the different family members may all respond in a slightly different way to the "same" cold that is being passed around.

YOU CAN USE HOMOEOPATHY TO TREAT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY

With the help of simple booklets available from the homoeopath most common acute illnesses and a variety of injuries can be treated successfully at home. You may need a little guidance as to how to use the remedies, as the frequency of use and methods of making the remedies stronger are very different from the conventional understanding of how to use medicine. Your homoeopath will be able to guide you. You may also need help in distinguishing between when you can successfully try home prescriptions and when you will need to consult a qualified homoeopath. As a general rule an acute disease has three stages. Firstly you might feel a bit under the weather. Then you would develop recognisable symptoms, and this would be followed by the convalescent stage. Examples of acute disease are coughs, colds, conjunctivitis, flu, food poisoning, measles, mumps, chickenpox, travel sickness, etc.

REMEDY KITS

Our homoeopath encourages patients to buy their own remedy kits. These can be added to very inexpensively, and, so long as they are stored correctly, their effectiveness will last for years.

CONSULTING A QUALIFIED HOMOEOPATH

If you have a recurrent acute condition or a serious condition it is always better to see a qualified homoeopath. As homoeopathy can be used to treat anything you do not have to have a clear diagnosis and it is even used in the treatment of emotional and depressive states where there are no physical symptoms.

CONSULTATIONS

Beforehand it is possible to make an appointment for a short free chat so that you can ask the homoeopath any questions that you might have. In general a first consultation will take two hours for an adult and an hour for a child. This might seem to be a long time but it is helpful if you can give as much information about yourself and what is troubling you so that an accurate remedy can be prescribed. The aim is to get an overall picture of yourself as well as your particular complaint. Follow up consultations last between half an hour and an hour depending upon the condition. The number of consultations will also vary in each circumstance and would depend largely on the patient's response to a remedy. The aim is to help the patient improve their energy and immune responses so that the time between consultations gets wider and wider apart.

OTHER MEDICATIONS

Your homoeopath will need to know about the other medications that may have been prescribed but you will not be advised to suddenly stop taking these. As your homoeopathic treatment progresses you may well find that you can gradually and carefully reduce your medicine but it is generally advisable to discuss this with your medical doctor.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY HOMOEOPATHIC REMEDY IS WORKING?

Reactions to a remedy vary considerably and your homoeopath will generally try to telephone you a fortnight after your first prescription so that your progress can be assessed. Sometimes responses can be very subtle and at other times symptoms can change. Your homoeopath will try to explain what is happening as your treatment progresses. Any of your symptoms may be important so you should take note of them all. For example, if you have been frightened of the water for most of your life and you suddenly decided to take swimming lessons the homoeopath might see this as a sign of increased confidence and a sign that your general level of overall health is improving. In general all symptoms, be they emotional or physical, are seen as a positive responses. For many patients it is a relief to view their symptoms in this way, rather than seeing them as a sign of weakness.