



Homeopathy: Q&A

Homeopathic Medicine Research

What is Homeopathy?

Homeopathy is a branch of western medicine using microdoses of remedies to provoke defense and self-regulatory responses, rather than only blocking body reactions, which is the conventional approach.

“Like-cures-like”, the basic principle of Homeopathy is that when a substance in large doses causes certain symptoms, in minute doses it can help heal a person suffering from an illness characterized by those same symptoms. For example a person suffering from hay-fever might be given a remedy prepared from an onion, because a healthy person chopping an onion usually experiences watery eyes, a runny nose and irritation.

Some non-homeopathic treatments rely also on this like-cures-like principle: **For instance, vaccines introduce small doses of an illness-causing agent to cure or prevent disease.**

How does it work?

Homeopathic remedies **act as catalysts** that aid the

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What is a Homeopathic Physician?

The American Institute of Homeopathy defines a Homeopathic Physician as **“one who adds to his knowledge of Medicine a special knowledge of Homeopathic Therapeutics”**

What illnesses & conditions respond well?

Homeopathy is effective often within hours **in acute diseases:** influenza, bronchitis, pneumonia, gastroenteritis, injuries, shock and even fright.

Most appropriate for referral are **the full range of chronic diseases:** allergies, asthma, eczema and other dermatites, migraines or stress headaches, hypertension, angina, cardiac arrhythmias, peptic ulcer, Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis or spastic colitis, hepatitis, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyositis, lupus, hyper- or hypo-thyroidism or thyroiditis, all types of arthritis, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and all types of psychiatric disorders from schizophrenia to psychosomatic conditions, to neuroses.

Homeopathy is effective at all ages as well. Good candidates for homeopathy are cases in which no clear conventional diagnoses can be made. Basically, homeopathy relies on the individual symptomatology picture to select the curative remedy, thus bypassing the need for extreme conventional diagnostic accuracy, in certain conditions.

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body's inherent healing mechanisms, rather than suppress symptoms. Moreover, homeopaths believe that there is a mental and emotional component to any physical disease. They refer to a complex system grouping of symptoms.

The right remedy for a particular condition treats the physical, emotional, and mental symptoms of the symptom complex.

What happens during a visit to the homeopath?

An initial visit to the homeopath can take from 1 to 1.5 hours. Since homeopaths treat the patient, not the illness, the **practitioner interviews the person at length**, asking many questions and **observing personality traits** as well as unusual or peculiar **behavioral or physical characteristics**, before prescribing a homeopathic remedy.

Homeopathic remedies consist of infinitesimal doses of an **herb, mineral, or animal** product. They usually come in the form of tiny sugar pills, liquid drops, syrups, or ointments that are diluted to various strengths or potencies. Potencies are labeled by roman numerals. The most common, available in pharmacies, are 6, 12, or 30, X or C potencies. C potencies contain 1 part of the medicine diluted to 99 parts of water or alcohol; X indicates 1 part of the medicine diluted to 9 parts of the water or alcohol. But other dilutions are available to trained homeopaths.

Remedies are usually taken for no more than a few days, though some patients require only one or two doses before starting to feel better. If a remedy doesn't work, it may be because it was the wrong substance for the set of symptoms, or some external factor had antidoted it. Homeopathy is quite safe because remedies usually have no adverse side effects, even if taken in large doses. Key to classical homeopathic theory is the concept of individualization. Unlike conventional medicine, **remedies are tailored to the individual**, not just to the condition being treated. Thus, two children with, for example asthma, might receive two very different treatments.

How can I find a qualified practitioner?

There are approximately 25 homeopathic training programs in the United States & Canada, most of which being **2 to 4 year programs**. Many medical doctors (MD) and osteopathic doctors (DO) study homeopathy as a **post-graduate specialty**, much the same as, for example, neurology or orthopedics. A second group of doctors includes naturopathic physicians (ND) who study rudiments of homeopathy as part of their naturopathic school training.

Distance Consultation?

Since 90% of the patients seeing a Homeopath have the diagnoses already established and the relevant investigations and tests completed by that time, Homeopathic Medicine is inherently most suitable for the novel and agreeable concept of Distance Consultation i.e. Telephone/Videophone/Internet Consultations.

How much does the treatment cost?

Homeopathy, **like other health services** (i.e.: dental care, eye care, acupuncture, plastic surgery, fertility treatments, etc.) is not covered under the public provincial Health Insurance Plan (OHIP). However, most private Extended Healthcare Plans reimburse Homeopathic Medicine services.

(see Form EHIR for a list of Extended Healthcare plans covering Homeopathy)

The Initial Homeopathic Assessment lasts **60 to 90 minutes** and costs in the range of **\$150 to \$350**, in Toronto. Follow-up Visits last 20 to 30 minutes and costs in the range of **\$50 to \$150**. Medically Qualified Homeopaths tend to charge towards the higher end of the scale.

(see enclosed Brochure for Fee Schedule)