

# **HOMEOPATHY** **BASICS**



**WHEN TO TREAT YOURSELF,  
WHEN TO CALL A PRO, *and*  
HOW TO GET THE BEST RESULTS**

**PRISCILLA MEDDERS**

## **HOMEOPATHY BASICS**

WHEN TO TREAT YOURSELF,  
WHEN TO CALL A PRO, AND HOW  
TO GET THE BEST RESULTS

by Priscilla Medders

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For my husband Cheyenne and our  
son Chet. Because of you, I discovered  
homeopathy in the first place. I love you.



# Contents

## Chapter 1

### **Know This BAE (Before All Else):**

<b>Acute vs. Chronic; Plus, Provings!</b> .....	1
What Is an Acute Illness?.....	2
What Is a Chronic Illness? .....	3
Why Does Acute Vs. Chronic Matter? .....	3
Warts and Thuja: A Cautionary Tale .....	4
Provings and Why They're a Big Deal.....	5
Mythbusting: Homeopathy Can't Be Powerful and Harmless at the Same Time .....	7
Know When to Seek Medical Attention, Obviously.....	8
One Assumption I'm Going to Make .....	8

## Chapter 2

<b>Introduction: The Why of This Book</b> .....	10
A Mission I Chose to Accept .....	10
What Makes Me Enough of an Expert to Write a Book About Homeopathy? .....	12
What's Clinginess Got to Do with It, Or How I Discovered Homeopathy .....	12

So Much More Than Placebo .....	14
Whole-Being Healing.....	15

### Chapter 3

#### What is Homeopathy and How Does

<b>it Work?</b> .....	16
What Homeopathic Remedies Look Like .....	16
It's Not Home Remedies.....	16
Individualized Care .....	17
Looking at the Big Picture .....	18
We Don't Play "Whac-A-Mole"	
with Symptoms .....	19
How Homeopathy Works vs. Whether	
Homeopathy Works .....	20
It's Still a Mystery, But There are Some Solid	
Possible Explanations .....	21
The Law of Similars In a Nutshell.....	23
The Law of the Minimum Dose	
in a Nutshell.....	24
Dilution of Remedies in a Nutshell.....	24
Potentization in a Nutshell.....	25
Does Homeopathy Have	
a Spiritual Component? .....	26
Where Does the Power of a Remedy	
Come From?.....	26

I Googled my Remedy, and It's Poisonous!  
How Is This Supposed to Help?..... 27  
Read More About It..... 28

## Chapter 4

**How We Choose an Acute Remedy, or Why  
Can't You Just Tell Me Which Remedy  
Will Help My Headache? .....** 29  
So Many Questions to Create a Proper  
CLAMS..... 30  
Modalities and Sensations and Etiology,  
Oh My! ..... 31  
One Person, One Totality of Symptoms, One  
Single Remedy ..... 33  
All These Things and More for a Chronic  
Condition..... 34  
Why Classical Homeopaths Are  
Anti-protocols..... 34  
Why It Might Even Be Irresponsible to Tell  
You Which Remedies Worked..... 36

## Chapter 5

**Home Prescribing: How to Get the  
Best Results.....** 38



A Note First About Illness and Why Homeopathy Shouldn't Always Be Your First Move.....	38
When Not to Treat an Acute Illness at Home .....	40
Step One: Before You Get Sick, Get a Homeopathy Kit.....	41
Step Two: Also Get Miranda Castro's Book.....	42
Step Three: CLAMS Time.....	42
Step Four: Flip to the Repertory Section .....	44
Step Five: Write Down the Possible Remedies .	45
Step Six: Narrow Down the Possible Remedies and Start Reading About Them .....	46
Modalities as Tie-Breaker .....	48
Step Seven: Dosage for Acutes.....	48
Step Eight: Repeat as Needed, and if the Picture Changes, Go Back to Step Three ....	50
When Multiple Remedies Make Sense: External Events .....	51
Dosage for Babies and Pets .....	51
Best Practices for Remedy Storage.....	52
What's This Info on the Remedy Label All About?.....	53
Recognize When It's Homeopath Time .....	53

## Chapter 6

<b>Getting the Best Results When Working with a Homeopath: Tips and Frequently Asked Questions</b> .....	55
Keep it Classical .....	55
Have a Homeopathy Kit on Hand .....	56
What Does a Homeopathic Consultation Look Like? .....	56
Why You Should Follow Your Homeopath's Instructions Exactly.....	57
Understand That Homeopathy Also Requires Work from the Client.....	58
Don't Wear Out Your Welcome .....	59
Why Follow Ups Are So Important—Even if it Seems Like the Remedy Didn't Help ...	60
Try to Resist Googling (or Identifying with) Your Remedy.....	62
Susceptibility as Part of Illness .....	62
I've Had This Condition for 20 Years. Why Can't My Homeopath Fix It Overnight? ....	63
What Is an Aggravation and What Should I Do About It? Or, What to Know After You've Just Taken a Remedy.....	64
The Direction of Cure .....	64

After a Constitutional Remedy: When an Acute is Not Just an Acute .....	65
Don't Start Anything New While You're Starting a New Remedy .....	66
What About Dental Work? .....	67
Why Did My Remedy Heal These Other Things, But Not the One Thing I Really Wanted Help With? .....	68
How Long Will It Take Before I Feel Better? .....	69
Can't Homeopathy Fix Everything So I Can Keep My Bad Habits? .....	69
Can Homeopathy Help ___ Condition or Illness? .....	70
My Chiropractor, Naturopath, or Functional Doctor Prescribes Homeopathic Remedies. That's OK, Right? .....	70
When Should I Find a New Homeopath? .....	71

## Chapter 7

### Complementary Therapies

<b>with Homeopathy</b> .....	73
Cell Salts .....	74
Cell Salt Uses .....	75
Cell Salt Combos .....	76

Cell Salt Dosages.....	76
Flower Essences .....	77
Find Your Own Flower Essence Blend .....	79

## Chapter 8

### Non-Complementary Therapies with Homeopathy, Plus the Concept

<b>of Suppression</b> .....	80
What Is Suppression?.....	81
Essential Oils to Avoid.....	81
Colloidal Silver.....	82
CBD Oil.....	83
Starting Other New-to-You Healing Modalities or Supplements at the Same Time as Starting Homeopathy.....	84

## Chapter 9

<b>Conclusion and Resources</b> .....	85
Find a Homeopath.....	86
Low-Cost Online Homeopathic Clinic .....	87
Homeopathy Kits .....	88
Homeopathic Pharmacies .....	89
Books.....	89
Films .....	91
Cell Salts .....	92

## HOMEOPATHY BASICS

Flower Essences .....	92
Online Resources for Home Prescribers.....	92
Find or Start a Study Group .....	93
<b>About the Author</b> .....	94
<b>Index</b> .....	95

CHAPTER 1

# Know This BAE (Before All Else): Acute vs. Chronic; Plus, Provings!

If you get nothing else from this book, I want to make sure you understand the difference between an acute illness and a chronic one and what to do about both.

Not understanding this difference and why it matters is where many home prescribers go astray. I've seen countless posts on social media by well-meaning people who are excited about

the possibilities of homeopathy. They often make recommendations about remedies and protocols for chronic conditions, not realizing that their recommendations are irresponsible or even risky!

I used to try to school those people, one comment at a time. There is a lot of misinformation out there, and I soon got burned out. Then I had a better idea, and you're reading it right now.

What earns me the right to write a book about the fascinating subject of homeopathy? The answer might surprise you—but I'll get to that in Chapter 2.

Knowing the difference between acute and chronic illnesses means you will know when you can confidently and safely prescribe a remedy on your own (Chapter 5) and when it's time to call a homeopath (Chapter 6). It will also help you get the best possible results using homeopathy to support your family's health.

### **What Is an Acute Illness?**

An acute illness is short in duration, usually a week or less, and has a rapid onset. It resolves quickly, either with the sick person getting better or, worst case scenario, dying. An acute illness or

injury is not a condition that repeats. An example of an acute illness is a seasonal cold which you might have caught from your co-worker. However, a cold that hits you the same way every year and always progresses into bronchitis, or a headache that happens every month along with your menstrual cycle is not an acute illness. It's part of your chronic or "constitutional" state.

### **What Is a Chronic Illness?**

A chronic illness doesn't begin and end quickly; it's something that has been going on for a while, often unnoticed. It may happen consistently or only periodically. It may seem to be an acute illness at first, then it just lingers for weeks. It's definitely not a "one-time-only," brief sort of illness. It's related to your "constitutional" state—what makes you inherently, intrinsically *you*—and sometimes, it's holding you back from being your best you.

### **Why Does Acute Vs. Chronic Matter?**

Treating an acute illness with homeopathy is simpler and more straightforward than treating a chronic illness. A home prescriber can often treat acute illnesses with great results (though



occasionally you'll need a homeopath for that too; more on that in Chapter 5). I sometimes feel bad for parents who don't know about homeopathy. Once I heard about it and started using it, we sailed through teething and croup with no trouble at all.

My son's constipation, however, was a different story. Nothing I tried made the least bit of difference, and it soon became clear that home prescribing was not adequate. I later learned that constipation is a chronic or constitutional problem.

A chronic illness—even something small-ish that *seems* simple and straightforward, like warts or eczema—is best handled with the help of a homeopath. I'll go into a lot more detail about this in Chapter 6. It's possible to make things worse or cause unpleasant new symptoms if you try to treat chronic illness without guidance. Plus, there are *thousands* of remedies to choose from, and knowing how to wade through all the possibilities takes a pro.

### **Warts and Thuja: A Cautionary Tale**

One of the most frequent suggestions I see on social media in the “crunchy” parent groups is to give a remedy called Thuja for warts. It's a well-known remedy that does help remove some types

of warts. The only problem is that it doesn't always work because it's not always a match. I have had a warts case in my own student practice which did not respond to Thuja at all. A different remedy was needed, which *did* make the warts disappear as if by magic (I'll tell you why I'm not going to reveal which remedy it was in Chapter 4—and I'm not trying to be stingy, there's actually a really good reason). If the mom had continued to give her child Thuja, not only would the warts have stuck around, but the Thuja could have started causing some unpleasant new problems. Let's just say there's a lot going on in the Thuja picture, and you don't want to bring that upon yourself or your child.

What is a remedy picture, and how do we see it? The picture of a remedy becomes clear through homeopathic provings. Provings are central to homeopathy so that's why I'm going to jump right in and talk about them now.

### **Provings and Why They're a Big Deal**

Homeopathy is never tested on animals. Samuel Hahnemann, the doctor who developed homeopathy into a true healing art and science, tested the very first homeopathic remedy on

himself. He eventually called this process of testing a remedy a “proving.” Homeopaths have tested remedies with the proving process ever since.

The first remedy Hahnemann tested (or proved) on himself was Cinchona bark, the substance from which quinine is derived. Quinine is used to treat malaria in conventional medicine. Hahnemann read about Cinchona bark and began to wonder about how it actually worked to cure malaria. He was already aware that Hippocrates had advised the physician to “let like cure like.” This is called the Law of Similars—you may have heard of it. Hahnemann hypothesized that quinine worked to heal malaria symptoms because it caused malaria-like symptoms when taken by a healthy person.

Rather than testing his idea out on someone else, he tested it himself and discovered that his hypothesis was correct. He *did* begin to develop malaria-like symptoms when he took the Cinchona bark. The symptoms stopped when he stopped taking it, and returned when he took more of it. Homeopathy was born! Over time, the understanding of homeopathy has deepened and clarified, revealing the gentle and profound

healing art and science of today. (More about that in Chapter 3.)

Without provings, we wouldn't know which symptoms a remedy can heal—or which symptoms it can cause if a person takes it unnecessarily.

### **Mythbusting: Homeopathy Can't Be Powerful and Harmless at the Same Time**

There's a myth circulating in holistic circles that homeopathy can't hurt you if practiced incorrectly. I used to believe this. I quickly learned that this is simply not true (and why it can't be true) when I began studying under the guidance of actual homeopaths. It is more accurate to say that homeopathy can and will cause unwanted and unpleasant symptoms when an improperly-matched remedy is given repeatedly. (More about "matching" remedies in Chapter 4.)

Because of provings, we know which symptoms an individual remedy can heal (or which symptoms a remedy can cause in a healthy person). To say that remedies can't cause problems if you take them improperly is really the equivalent of saying that homeopathic remedies don't work. (We know that they do—more about that in Chapter 3.)

To sum up this chapter of the story: see a homeopath for help with chronic conditions, and don't continue to give a remedy for an acute condition if it isn't helping. You don't want to start proving the remedy, or causing the symptoms that remedy is known to help with.

### **Know When to Seek Medical Attention, Obviously**

We also must mention that you have to know when to seek medical care. If someone might be having a stroke or a heart attack, for example, grab the homeopathy kit and give Aconite and Arnica on the way to the emergency room. If you can't find the kit, go directly to the emergency room. If you have any doubt about whether the situation is urgent, seek medical care.

### **One Assumption I'm Going to Make**

If you're reading this book, I'm going to assume that I don't have to sell you on the idea that homeopathy works. It's likely that if you're reading this to learn more about using homeopathy, you've already had some experience with it or you've heard about it from someone who has and you're not a

skeptic. There are already a bunch of other books, well-researched and annotated, which can do a better job than I could. If you're the type who wants the published scientific studies, they are readily available. I'll share a bunch of excellent resources with you in Chapter 9.

Now that we've gotten all that out of the way, let me introduce myself.

CHAPTER 2

# Introduction: The Why of This Book

## **A Mission I Chose to Accept**

**T**he idea for this book found me one day when I was out for a walk. Elizabeth Gilbert says in her book *Big Magic* that if you don't work with a book idea when it's asking you to help it get written, that idea will go find someone else. Here are the four main reasons I'm willing to be the one to bring this book into existence:

1. I've been wishing for a simple, accessible book to refer people to when I hear they're interested in homeopathy. And maybe, hopefully, it will turn out to be a good

resource so there's less cringeworthy or irresponsible advice shared on social media about homeopathy.

2. When I was new to homeopathy, armed with Miranda Castro's beautiful *Complete Homeopathy Handbook* in one hand, my homeopathy kit in the other, and a burning desire to help my loved ones feel better, I had no idea how to put it all together. Perhaps you can relate to feeling like this. It's as if I needed a guide to her *Handbook*. I'll go over that in Chapter 5.
3. It will be really nice to have a book to be able to refer friends and family to, so they have an inkling of what a homeopath does. I've gotten used to the blank looks indicating that someone has no idea what "homeopath" means, but now I'll be able to tell them to read this!
4. I've been wanting a short, skimmable book for my clients to read; a quick and easy resource to enable you to get the best possible results with homeopathy, whether you work with me or with another homeopath.



## **What Makes Me Enough of an Expert to Write a Book About Homeopathy?**

At the time of this writing, I'm a student practitioner of homeopathy working toward getting my certification. This means I've completed all my classroom training and have been working on gaining clinical experience working with actual clients—lots and lots of them—before I take the written test for certification.

Compared to more experienced practitioners, I'm still close to the beginning of my journey with homeopathy, so I remember all the questions I had at the start and how many things I got wrong at first. These questions are all still very fresh in my mind, and I wanted to share them (and answer them) before I lose that awareness of how it feels to be a “newbie” with homeopathy.

## **What's Clinginess Got to Do with It, Or How I Discovered Homeopathy**

Homeopathy was right under my nose for years, but I didn't discover it for myself until my son was teething. I was scouring the “crunchy parent” groups on Facebook for natural alternatives to conventional pain relievers when I saw a discussion

about homeopathy for teething. One of the moms mentioned that if a baby was especially clingy, the remedy to try for teething was Pulsatilla.

What in the world would clinginess have to do with teething pain? I wondered. It seemed like such an odd suggestion. It caught my attention, however, because my son was very clingy. So clingy, in fact, that he could not fall asleep without nursing for a long time. During teething, this process was taking even longer than usual so I was more willing than usual to take a chance on something weird. A mom can only handle being a human pacifier for so long!

I had previously tried the “combo” teething remedy tablets, and those hadn’t made any difference. When I gave the first little tablet of Pulsatilla, and he fell right to sleep peacefully as soon as the remedy dissolved in his mouth, I was stunned.

What kind of magic is this? I wondered. The remedy didn’t only work that one time—it worked every time he had teething pain. It allowed him to just go to sleep with no struggle, no nursing for a long time to soothe his gums. It made a big difference in my own quality of life as well. I was suddenly hooked on homeopathy and began learning everything I could about it.

My little story about how I discovered homeopathy isn't groundbreaking or mindblowing. It's simply a great example of homeopathy at work because it shows that the improperly-matched remedy (the combo teething tablets) failed to act, but the individualized remedy which matched my son's full symptom picture including the clinginess did act, reliably.

### **So Much More Than Placebo**

Another reason I love my Pulsatilla story is that babies don't know what a placebo effect is. They don't expect a little tablet or a drop of water containing a diluted remedy to do anything for them.

Animals don't care about a placebo effect either. When my mom's dog suddenly couldn't walk and was dragging his back legs, he was diagnosed with IVDD, or intervertebral disc disease. She bought him a big crate because she was told he would never walk properly again. I tried a couple of remedies for him, but when I found a good match, it was because the remedy covered grief as well as the herniated disc. He had been left at a shelter as a senior dog. Even after he'd been adopted and had lived happily with my mom for a few years, he would still howl

piteously whenever she left him at home. After getting the remedy that matched his entire state, he recovered and has been walking normally ever since (and even frolicking on occasion). I'm not sure about the howling though. I'll have to check with her and get back to you on that.

### **Whole-Being Healing**

In these two simple stories, you get a glimpse of the way homeopathy heals the whole being—or reminds the whole being how to heal itself, to be more precise. Let's look a bit more at how homeopathy treats the whole person (or animal or plant).

CHAPTER 3

# What is Homeopathy and How Does it Work?

## **What Homeopathic Remedies Look Like**

**Y**ou've probably seen them at your local health food store. They're the little white pellets in the small plastic tubes with names like Aconite, Arnica, Calendula, Hypericum, or Ledum. Each tube usually has a "recommended use" printed on it and a potency, such as 30c.

## **It's Not Home Remedies**

People often see the word "home" in the name

and think it means “home” remedies or herbal tinctures. In fact, the word homeopathy itself means “similar” (*homeo*) “suffering” (*pathy*).

In order to help a person’s body heal itself—which is what a homeopathic remedy does—we have to first fully understand their individual suffering, then understand which remedy best matches that particular suffering, and finally understand how to evaluate their response to the remedy.

### **Individualized Care**

Because each person is unique, each person’s experience of disease is a little bit different. When a whole family comes down with the flu, Dad might get muscle aches, and Mom might get bone pain. Same illness, different symptom pictures. We zero in on what is particular about someone’s suffering and choose the remedy accordingly. Homeopathy must be individualized for it to work.

There are thousands of homeopathic remedies already in use, with more being proved and added regularly. In Chapter 4 I will take a closer look at how a remedy is chosen to match a specific illness. Right now let’s focus more generally on what homeopathy is and how it works.

## Looking at the Big Picture

Homeopaths don't look at symptoms in isolation from each other. It's all part of one cohesive picture, or "totality" of symptoms. If you come to us for help with bad menstrual cramps, we want to know everything else that's going on. The warts you had removed from the back of your hand, your difficulty falling asleep, your fear that someone is following you up the basement stairs at night—all of these are symptoms, even though they seem unrelated to the cramping. Understanding everything you experience is the only way to find a remedy to help.

A homeopath asks a lot of questions, sometimes very personal ones. You might be asked what was going on in your life when a chronic illness started (this is called the etiology). If you reveal that the illness began around the same time you were in a car accident, this information is very helpful to a homeopath—even if your symptoms appear to be unrelated to the accident.

Homeopathy is holistic care, meaning that it treats the whole person, body, mind, and spirit. My teacher and mentor Tanya Kell, president of the North American Society of Homeopaths, spoke at the Joint American Homeopathy Conference

in April of 2022, saying, “We are holistic healers. Holistic comes from the word ‘holy,’ so we have to come from that place of, we are given that mission by God to restore people to their rightful place.”

### **We Don’t Play “Whac-A-Mole” with Symptoms**

Remember that arcade game in which you try to smack a plastic mole with a mallet and another one just pops up in a different spot? We don’t try to simply get rid of or “suppress” a symptom. When someone comes to a homeopath for help with eczema, we don’t hand out a prescription for steroid cream knowing that as soon as the cream is gone, the eczema will probably return, or perhaps something worse will pop up next. We look for the deeper disturbance that is causing the eczema in the first place.

Homeopaths aim to see where a person’s vital force is “mistuned,” as Hahnemann described it. Then we look for the remedy which most closely matches this mistunement, give it to remind the vital force to tune itself back up, and carefully observe what happens. Sometimes the response to the remedy is every bit as telling as the original symptoms. It takes training and experience to be



able to understand what the vital force is telling us in response to a remedy.

## **How Homeopathy Works vs. Whether Homeopathy Works**

It may surprise you, but the actual mechanics of the workings of homeopathy aren't known. This is the source of much befuddlement for the scientific community. Don't worry! It's still perfectly possible to proceed scientifically and continue to use homeopathy.

Take the concept of mass, for example. Scientists still aren't sure how or why objects have mass, but they can observe that objects do have mass. At the time of this writing, the Higgs boson is just a theoretical subatomic particle that *might* explain how or why objects have mass—but it has not yet been proven as the source of mass. Accepting mass as a scientific property allows scientists to carry on their work with making calculations and hypotheses, even though they are still speculating about the nature of mass itself.

## **It's Still a Mystery, But There are Some Solid Possible Explanations**

“Homeopathy—how does it work? We don’t know,” says homeopath Miranda Castro with a twinkle in her eye, in the film *Just One Drop*. There are many possible explanations for homeopathy’s mechanism of action. Here are a few of my favorites:

- Recent advances with electron microscopy show that even though the homeopathic dilutions of a substance exceed Avogadro’s number (meaning that a solution is so diluted that no molecules of the original substance remain), some particles of the original substance do in fact remain in the solution.
- Quantum physics tells us that the powers of intention and attention work to change reality as we know it. Could it be that homeopathy works because the extreme dilutions and potentizations are made with the intention of drawing out the energetic properties of a substance?
- The memory of water as researched by Masaru Emoto suggests that the dilution of a substance in water translates it into a language

that the human body, being 60% water, can better understand.

I think it's entirely possible that homeopathy works in all of these ways and more that we don't yet understand. The many explanations for how homeopathy works could fill entire books. Amy Lansky goes into wonderful detail about this in Chapter 7 of *Impossible Cure: The Promise of Homeopathy*. I highly recommend this book if you want to learn more.

Regardless of how homeopathy works, we can observe scientifically that it does work and proceed accordingly. That's exactly what Hahnemann did: painstakingly, uncompromisingly, over many decades, observing and testing and perfecting until he developed a complete science and art of healing that is now used by hundreds of millions of people all over the world.

Hahnemann believed that the body can only experience one disease state at a time. When you overpower the original disease state with a new, similar disease state created by a homeopathic remedy, this stimulates the healing process. Enter the Law of Similars, the main principle of homeopathy.

## The Law of Similars In a Nutshell

The Law of Similars—“Let like cure like”—means that the symptoms of an ailment are matched with a substance which would cause similar suffering in a healthy person. *Similia similibus curentur* is the Latin phrase. Hahnemann expanded on the concept previously explored by 16th-century alchemist and Renaissance man Paracelsus. If you see this phrase on a bumper sticker, the driver of the car is likely a homeopath.

The Law of Similars is a simple concept. When you cut an onion it makes your eyes water, and the homeopathic remedy *Allium cepa*, made from onion, is known to help with colds that include watering eyes. Hyperactive children are often prescribed Ritalin—a stimulant. Even a defibrillator, which shocks the heart back into a proper rhythm, works homeopathically. If you were to use a defibrillator on a heart beating normally (this would be contraindicated, but just for explanation’s sake), it would shock that heart out of rhythm. There are many other well-established mainstream medicines which work via the Law of Similars.

## **The Law of the Minimum Dose in a Nutshell**

The Law of the Minimum Dose is another principle homeopaths follow, as advised by Hahnemann. We're aiming for the absolute minimum doses and potencies needed to instigate healing. It is our hope that each person we see will heal so thoroughly that they won't need us anymore. We don't want you to be on a handful of medicines every day, as happens so often with conventional medicine.

## **Dilution of Remedies in a Nutshell**

Perhaps the biggest stumbling block for skeptics of homeopathy is the dilution of the remedies. It doesn't seem to make any sense that the more a substance has been diluted, the higher its potency.

Hahnemann discovered that diluting substances made them less harmful but still powerful as medicines. Doctors discovered that mercury eliminates the symptoms of syphilis; the problem is that mercury is one of the most toxic substances on the planet and causes all sorts of symptoms. Hahnemann found that a combination of extreme dilution combined with potentization allowed him to use toxic substances like mercury, belladonna,

and many more as remedies while eliminating their usual harmful effects.

If you are only looking at the diluted nature of homeopathic remedies, it seems puzzling that they could have any effect at all. Especially confusing is that any potency higher than 12c is thought to be diluted past Avogadro's number, which means that no part of the original substance is thought to remain. The most commonly given and widely available potency is 30c, which is diluted far beyond the 12c potency. Homeopathic remedies are not only diluted but also potentized.

### **Potentization in a Nutshell**

Potentization is a piece that puzzles many critics of homeopathy. Hahnemann discovered that bashing a remedy or "succussing" it increases, or amplifies, the potency of the remedy. He observed the effects these diluted and potentized remedies had on his patients and discovered that higher dilutions (with higher potencies) brought about more noticeable results.

Homeopathy was developed in pre-electricity days, but it's helpful for me to think of homeopathic remedies less in terms of medicines or dosages and

more like signals. It's sort of like a switch or a light bulb going on or off, communicating to the vital force. It's the *quality* of the signal rather than the *quantity*.

## **Does Homeopathy Have a Spiritual Component?**

Many people wonder if there is something spiritual going on with homeopathy. Some churches lump homeopathy in with practices their members are advised to avoid.

While it can be spooky to see how quickly people recover from illness once they receive a well-matched remedy, there's nothing unscientific or "woo-woo" going on.

Homeopathy does recognize that human beings have a spiritual side, and that vibrant health usually includes a feeling of spiritual wellness, too. There are even remedies known to help with spiritual problems, such as a feeling that God has singled you out for divine punishment.

## **Where Does the Power of a Remedy Come From?**

The power of a homeopathic remedy doesn't come from some outside spiritual force. The

properties of a substance are merely unlocked from that substance by potentization, in perhaps a similar way to the power unlocked in a radioactive atom when it is split. The properties of a substance remain latent and waiting inside. Silica, for example, is an inert substance which doesn't interact with much of anything—just sand lying on a beach or glass in a windowpane. When potentized homeopathically, however, the properties of Silica are powerfully healing for someone who needs them.

The more the substance is diluted and potentized, the more the inherent properties of that substance are teased out and expanded for healing potential. There is energy in a homeopathic remedy just as there is energy in an atom.

## **I Googled my Remedy, and It's Poisonous! How Is This Supposed to Help?**

It's true. Some remedies—like Belladonna, Nux vomica, Lachesis, and many more—are made from poisonous substances. When you look up Belladonna, for example, you might be alarmed to learn that it causes a sudden high fever, glassy eyes, and a fast heartbeat. If you were to eat some belladonna berries, you would experience those



unpleasant symptoms of poisoning and more. In homeopathic potency, however, those are the very symptoms that Belladonna removes, safely and gently. When prepared homeopathically and used properly, even poisonous substances can bring about healing.

### **Read More About It**

Since this book is intended to be a practical, quick, simple-to-use reference, a more in-depth exploration of the scientific basis for homeopathy is beyond the scope of what I want to provide. But if you'd like to read more about this, I'll point you toward some excellent resources in Chapter 9.

CHAPTER 4

# How We Choose an Acute Remedy, or Why Can't You Just Tell Me Which Remedy Will Help My Headache?

**F**riends and family often ask: What can I take for my headache (or sore throat, or rash, etc.)? Once they hear that you're into homeopathy, they'll start asking you, too.

A quick glance at one of my computer repertories tells me there are at least 1300 headache remedies right now, and probably more being added even as we speak. It takes work to sift through all of those remedies to find one to help. People usually don't know what they're getting themselves into when they ask me for a remedy. A lot of questions follow a request like that.

### **So Many Questions to Create a Proper CLAMS**

To be able to match the proper remedy to your condition, I need a lot of details from you about your individual suffering. That's why I ask a ton of questions. And that's why homeopathy is more challenging to practice than "X condition equals Y medication."

That's why homeopaths need to hear first and foremost what your main complaint is. What is bothering you most about your illness?

Then we need information about the modalities (it's better when I drink something hot and worse with loud noise and light); the sensations (it feels like burning and squeezing), and the etiology (how the ailment began) to differentiate between possible remedies. We also need to hear about the ailment's

location (where in the body the ailment is located; and the concomitants (what the other symptoms are). A popular acronym to help remember all the moving parts of this process is CLAMS:

Concomitants

Location

Aetiology (or etiology)

Modalities

Sensations

## **Modalities and Sensations and Etiology, Oh My!**

When we're trying to find a matching remedy, the most useful thing we look at is the **modalities**, or what makes you feel better (what you are doing to cope with the pain or discomfort), and what makes you feel worse (what do you have to avoid so the pain or discomfort doesn't get worse).

For example, when you have a cough that is so painful you have to hold your chest, that points to a particular remedy. The modality here is "holding the chest ameliorates the cough." When you have a headache that feels worse in a hot car, the modality is "warmth aggravates the headache."

Modalities are near the top in the hierarchy of

how we choose a remedy. The specific **sensations** are very important too. It can be difficult to get people to think about the actual sensations going on in their body when they are unwell. Conventional medicine has made us lazy. To find a homeopathic remedy we need to pinpoint the actual physical sensations the person is experiencing, such as burning, stinging, stabbing, throbbing, tearing, scratchy, crawling, etc.

We also need to know which **location** of the body is affected, because different remedies have affinities for different parts of the body. And different remedies are known to help with our reactions to different types of life events and stressors—the **etiology** of the illness, how it all started or what seemed to set it off. And finally, we need to include the **concomitants** or the other symptoms happening along with the main complaint—even the ones that might not really be bothering you much at the moment. They're still part of the whole.

We combine these factors to come up with one cohesive picture of a disease and the remedy which matches it best.

## **One Person, One Totality of Symptoms, One Single Remedy**

We don't treat each symptom individually. We are looking for a remedy that covers the totality of symptoms to bring about healing. And for this reason, we don't recommend taking more than one remedy at a time—it's too difficult to tell which remedy is helping.

I once recommended a couple of possible remedies for a friend who had a urinary tract infection. She was having bladder and kidney pain and when she slept, she was having distressing dreams that people were trying to kill her. The two main remedies I was considering covered her symptoms plus the dreams of murderers. These are unusual UTI remedies but dreaming of murderers is an unusual symptom. I recommended the best match first (which fit because she'd had an especially exhausting week prior to the UTI), but I also thought a second one could be a possibility since she'd had some chronic health concerns prior to this. However, I overestimated the eagerness of someone who's really ill to follow my detailed instructions. Instead of taking the first remedy first and waiting to see if it helped, with the other as a

backup remedy, she just took both. She improved immediately, but I wasn't able to tell which remedy had helped her. Luckily, she had taken a higher potency of both remedies, so whichever one had helped continued to act without her having to redose.

## **All These Things and More for a Chronic Condition**

Prescribing for a chronic condition is more involved than acute prescribing. In addition to the “CLAMS” details, we need to know about someone's family health history, formative years, important life events, and so much more. I'll talk about this more in Chapter 6 on Working with a Homeopath.

## **Why Classical Homeopaths Are Anti-protocols**

There are people who will tell you that protocols or one-size-fits-all approaches to homeopathy are safe and effective. I want to encourage you to avoid that well-meaning but misguided advice. Homeopathy must be individualized, or we are not treating the particular suffering of the individual, and if that's the case, then it's not classical

homeopathy as Hahnemann intended. Those who recommend protocols should not claim to be practicing homeopathy.

Protocols include instructions such as: “Take X remedy for Y condition.” Or, “Take this combination of 10 different remedies for that particular complaint.” Neither of these approaches are individualized to the suffering of the unique person.

There are some scary protocols being shared out there, recommending high potencies of powerful remedies daily with no one to properly evaluate whether the remedies are hurting or helping. Many homeopaths lament these protocols and how difficult it is to properly understand a case when it has been confused by someone taking improperly matched remedies for an extended period of time. Hahnemann described this as “grafting” an artificial disease onto the vital force.

There are also some combination remedies with lots of different remedies included, usually the most likely candidates for a given condition. Combo remedies might help a little, because the chances of a partial match being in the mix are good—but you’ll get much better results with a single, well-matched remedy.



Remember the concept of provings from Chapter 1? You don't want to keep taking remedies that don't match your illness because you can bring about new symptoms with those remedies.

Hahnemann viewed "combo" remedies as being an unknown substance all their own since the combined remedies might have an unexpected synergistic effect, similar to the way medical drugs sometimes interact with each other. To truly show what a combo might do, the combo would need its own proper proving.

### **Why It Might Even Be Irresponsible to Tell You Which Remedies Worked**

When I was researching other books about homeopathy, I came across a review about one of them which caught my eye. The reviewer did not like the way the author had not specified which remedies had helped in the cases mentioned.

I've often wished that homeopathy books intended for a more general audience would leave out the remedy name when discussing cured cases. It's so hard to get away from the "X condition equals Y remedy" mentality of conventional medicine. That's why I'm leaving out the names

of the remedies which helped in some of these cases.

Some conditions are simple and straightforward to find a remedy match for (such as my clingy teether needing Pulsatilla). For those conditions I'll give you advice about how to prescribe at home in Chapter 5.

But many conditions are not simple and straightforward, and I don't want to lead you on any wild goose chases by naming the remedies. Telling you how to treat the more challenging cases (like the UTI with dreams of murderers) is beyond the scope of this book. You want the help of a homeopath for that (or to become a homeopath yourself). Homeopaths spend many hours studying each remedy to be able to recognize it when we see it in practice.

Don't worry. You can still get some wonderful results prescribing at home for your family for common illnesses! Time to look at how to do that in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

# Home Prescribing: How to Get the Best Results

## **A Note First About Illness and Why Homeopathy Shouldn't Always Be Your First Move**

In Western society, we've gotten accustomed to reaching for an over-the-counter medicine every time we have an ache, pain, fever, or cold. When we begin learning about natural alternatives, sometimes the approach we take is looking for the "natural" equivalent of each over-the-counter medicine. The goal with this approach is still the

same: trying to prevent or avoid all illness and discomfort completely.

It's important when using homeopathy to keep in mind that illness is not our enemy. We don't want to pop a remedy to stop every ailment that comes our way. Childhood illnesses are a necessary part of growth, and in fact most parents notice leaps in development taking place once a child recovers from illness. The occasional cold or flu is often the body's method of cleaning house. Fevers are very healing and trying to reduce or stop them will often prolong an illness unnecessarily. Conventional medicine is beginning to catch on to the body's innate wisdom to heal itself, but decades of mistrusting our own "vital force," as Hahnemann called it, have left us confused about what health actually is.

We all need reminders that health isn't the complete absence of illness or discomfort. Health includes acute illnesses. When you or a loved one get sick, don't reach for the homeopathy kit first. Emphasize hydration, rest, and nourishing foods.

When progress seems to be "stuck" or healing needs extra support, then it's the perfect time to find a remedy to gently nudge the sick person back to health. When my son had a cold that suddenly

began to sound like croup in the middle of the night, a dose of the well-matched remedy allowed him to go right to sleep and recover easily.

### **When Not to Treat an Acute Illness at Home**

Knowing when *not* to treat an illness is every bit as important as knowing when and how to treat one. Don't reach for a remedy right away in these situations:

- If the issue has been going on longer than 7-10 days, chances are it's not truly an acute and you'll want to work with a homeopath.
- If the same issue has occurred multiple times before, it's likely a chronic issue and you'll want to work with a homeopath.
- If you've recently taken a constitutional remedy chosen for you by a homeopath, check with your homeopath before you take any remedies so you don't interfere with the action of your remedy. You don't want to mess up your case (a very common rookie mistake I myself have made) and spoil all the hard work it took to arrive at a good remedy.

In the next chapter I'll go into more detail about how to get the best possible results from working

with a homeopath. Let's explore what you need to know to be prepared for acute prescribing at home.

### **Step One: Before You Get Sick, Get a Homeopathy Kit**

If you want to be able to treat common complaints like colds and flus, it's useful to have remedies on hand so you'll be prepared. When you're sick or taking care of a sick family member, you won't want to run to the store for remedies. Many of the same remedies are also used for chronic care, so you'll be extra prepared to get great results when you already have a kit.

My favorite kit is the Helios 36-remedy kit designed by Mary Aspinwall. It includes most of the remedies a family will need for regular acute illnesses, bruises, and scrapes. You can find this one on Amazon or by ordering directly from Helios ([helios.co.uk](http://helios.co.uk))

There are several other great kits out there from Washington Homeopathic Pharmacy ([homeopathyworks.com](http://homeopathyworks.com)), Hahnemann Labs ([hahnemannlabs.com](http://hahnemannlabs.com)), and others. I'll list these in the Resources chapter, so they're easy to find.

Most homeopathy kits designed for home

prescribers are in the 30c potency which is perfect for minor acute illnesses. Higher potencies don't always match the intensity of minor illnesses, so 30c is more reliable for the home prescriber.

### **Step Two: Also Get Miranda Castro's Book**

You'll also need a copy of Miranda Castro's *Complete Homeopathy Handbook*. This book is the one many homeopaths started out with. I like to think of Miranda Castro as a sort of fairy godmother of homeopathy. There are many other great books out there, but her book is so wonderful and helpful that I'm going to walk you through home prescribing with that one.

I also really like one called *Homeopathic Medicine at Home: Natural Remedies for Everyday Ailments and Minor Injuries* by Maesimund B. Panos, M.D. and Jane Heimlich. It's not as thorough but it's more pocket-sized, which makes it easier to tuck into my bag to read while waiting for things.

If you get only one book, get Miranda Castro's.

### **Step Three: CLAMS Time**

Once you've determined that someone is sick enough to need some extra help from homeopathy,

and that it's truly an acute issue, it's time to get details about symptoms. Remember the CLAMS acronym from Chapter Four? Ask lots of questions to learn about their main complaint as well as the:

**C**oncomitants

**L**ocation

**[A]**etiology

**M**odalities

**S**ensations

Don't stop asking until you have as many of these questions answered as possible. When you're taking a baby's case, she won't be able to tell you that a cool cloth feels better on her face or that she prefers to be wrapped up warmly—you'll have to observe these things. Does your dog seem to prefer lying on the bathroom floor because the tile is nice and cool? These sorts of observations can be clues. Someone feels extra grumpy and doesn't want to cooperate by giving you their symptoms? That can be a clue too—or a sign to leave them alone. (If someone is uncooperative or their symptoms aren't clear, it's better to wait than to prescribe on an unclear case).

Write down all of these details so you don't forget them. You'll need to be able to refer back



to them. It's a great idea to start a family homeopathy journal to keep track of illnesses and remedies given.

### **Step Four: Flip to the Repertory Section**

The repertory section of the *Handbook* starts on page 165. I like to stick a little flag in this section so it's easier to find.

Flip through it until you find the main complaint. A few of the terms in this book are unfamiliar; catarrh, for example, is nasal discharge. Just look up anything you don't recognize and make lots of notes in the margins. Generally, this repertory is easy to use and thorough.

Each complaint in this repertory will include a list of the main remedies that are known to help with this complaint. Look up "croup," for example. When my son had it, I wrote down that the main remedies to help with croup are *Aco.*, *Calc-s.*, *Hep-s.*, *Kali-b.*, *Lach.*, *Phos.*, and *Spo.*

There are a few modalities listed under croup: "only on waking," "recurrent," "worse after sleep," and "worse on waking." None of these really applied to my son—he just seemed scared and had that barking-sounding cough—so I skipped

over those modalities. If they apply to your case, definitely use them.

You'll hear the term "rubric" tossed around by homeopaths. Basically, a rubric is just the symptom written out with all the remedies that are known to help listed alongside it. It's like a clue to the puzzle.

With some of the bigger rubrics, such as "common cold," "cough," or "sore throat," you'll see lots of modalities included to help narrow it down. You'll also sometimes see "causes" listed too, and those are also really helpful; those are the "[a]etiology" from the CLAMS acronym. Write those down too.

### **Step Five: Write Down the Possible Remedies**

Write down the remedies you find in these rubrics. I made note of the seven main croup remedies. I also looked at the "cough" section and saw that under "barking," six remedies are listed, but they are not all the same remedies as croup, so I wrote down those six as well. And finally, because my son seemed scared by the sound that was coming out of him, I chose the rubric "fearful" and wrote down the six remedies in there.

Those were the only symptoms I had to go on,

since he was too little to tell me how he was feeling, but it was enough. Here's what my notes looked like:

Croup:

*Aco., Calc-s., Hep-s., Kali-b.,*

*Lach., Phos., Spo.*

Barking Cough:

*Aco., Bell., Dros., Hep-s., Kali-m., Spo.*

Fearful:

*Aco., Arg-n., Arn., Ars., Bor., Calc-c.,*

*Calc-p., Ign., Lyc., Nat-c., Phos., Puls.*

## **Step Six: Narrow Down the Possible Remedies and Start Reading About Them**

When you look at my notes, it's pretty easy to see which remedy covers all three of the symptoms—in fact, only one of them covers all three. So, I started out reading about “Aco.,” which is short for *Aconitum napellus*. The names of the remedies are the Latin scientific names of the substances. You don't have to know the abbreviations though—just start flipping through the middle section of the book where all the remedies are listed and it will be easy to find the ones you're looking for.

When you hear homeopaths mention “*materia medica*,” this is what they're talking about—

remedies described in detail. Each author takes all the details about a remedy gathered from the provings and from experience using it in practice and creates a description of the remedy to make it sound like one complete picture.

Not every person who needs Aconite will have all the symptoms listed in the materia medica (take a look—it begins on page 38 of Castro's *Handbook*). But in my son's case, a lot of it fit his symptoms. His cough was worse at night, the barking croup sound did come on suddenly, and he did seem anxious and fearful. And, as Castro points out, Aconite is known to be the main remedy for croup.

If the description of Aconite had not matched his symptoms well, or if Aconite didn't seem to help, I would have read about some of the other remedies. But in his case, one dose of Aconite was all it took and the whole family was able to go back to sleep, rather than having to bundle him up and take him to the emergency room. Now, if I hadn't been able to help him with a remedy, I would definitely have taken him to the ER. Always be ready to ask for help when you need it.

Even if you're not using Miranda Castro's book, the concept is still the same—once you find out the

main remedies that match a certain acute illness, you read up about those remedies and decide which one covers the symptoms, modalities, sensations, and [a]etiology best.

### **Modalities as Tie-Breaker**

If you're trying to decide between different remedies, give special emphasis to the modalities, or what makes the person better or worse. Another way to look at the concept of modalities is to consider what the person is doing to cope with their discomfort, or what they have to do to get by. The modalities of the remedy can serve as your deciding factor.

For example, let's say Dad has the flu. Many of his symptoms look like *Rhus tox*, but he wants to lie absolutely still and can't stand the thought of moving from his spot on the couch where he's lying facing away from everyone. This modality of being "worse from the least motion" points to *Bryonia* instead. Similarly, you would never give *Bryonia* to someone who is restless (better for movement).

### **Step Seven: Dosage for Acutes**

Give one dry pellet of the best-indicated

remedy (the one which matches everything in your CLAMS), then wait a little while.

Don't touch the pellet with your hands if possible; it's best to tip one pellet into the cap of the remedy tube and then drop the pellet in your mouth.

Many homeopaths like to start with a dry dose first, then a second dose in water to give the remedy the best possible chance to act. A water dose is dropping one pellet into a small glass of water, stirring gently, then taking one sip. This one sip equals a dose. Since remedies are already extremely diluted, the extra water makes little difference and may in fact increase the potency of the remedy a little. The pellet doesn't have to dissolve; the remedy is on the outside coating of the pellet, and as soon as you give the water a stir, it's ready. A metal spoon is fine, as is a plastic cup or bottle if that's what you have on hand.

You can set this glass aside for repeat dosing if the remedy turns out to be a good match. Depending on how severe the illness is, you might repeat every couple of hours, every hour, or even every half hour if someone is really sick (although at that point, it might be better to get help from a homeopath or doctor).

You should be able to tell within 30-60 minutes (often it will be sooner) whether a remedy is helping. If the remedy is not obviously helping after a couple of doses, don't keep giving it—you don't want to cause a proving (see Chapter 1 for more info about provings). Dump the glass out and run it through the dishwasher so no one else gets an accidental dose. Move on to the next well-indicated remedy and start the dosage process over.

Some prefer to skip the dry dose and go straight to the water dose—that's mostly a matter of personal preference. If someone is really sick and is likely to need multiple doses, you might want to start with a water dose right away.

### **Step Eight: Repeat as Needed, and if the Picture Changes, Go Back to Step Three**

As long as the remedy is helping and you are seeing improvement, you can repeat the remedy if necessary. If the remedy stops helping and if the symptoms seem to change into a different picture, it's time to re-evaluate the case. It's not uncommon to have to give a few different remedies—in succession, not at the same time—when someone needs support during an acute illness.

## **When Multiple Remedies Make Sense:**

### **External Events**

In cases of accident, injury, or surgery, the symptoms are caused not by the inward state of the vital force expressing itself outwardly, but by an outside event having an effect. For that reason, many homeopaths feel it makes sense to combine remedies for maximum benefit. You sometimes see recommendations to combine Arnica for bruising, Aconite for shock, Hypericum for nerve pain, Calendula for cuts and abrasions, and the like. These combinations can be extremely helpful but are for short-term use only.

### **Dosage for Babies and Pets**

In general, babies and pets don't mind taking remedies at all and sometimes even enjoy them. Kids especially enjoy crunching the little sugar pellets if they are old enough for that.

You can put a remedy in water and give little ones a sip or a drop. You can put the remedy into a saucer of milk for pets or put a few drops on a treat. A nursing mother can even take the remedy herself so her baby gets it through her milk.

Just remember to keep your remedies stored



out of the reach of little hands. Children often try to get into the homeopathy kit and eat the pellets. The good news is that a whole vial of a remedy is the same dosage as a single pellet. If your child eats remedies like candy, they have had the equivalent of one single dose of a remedy (or remedies, if they ate more than one vial), which isn't likely to cause harm. The main downside is the cost; remedies are more expensive and harder to come by than candy!

### **Best Practices for Remedy Storage**

Speaking of how to store your remedies, you'll want to make sure they're cool and dry and away from essential oils (which can overpower them) and things like Wi-Fi routers and microwave ovens (which could possibly interfere with the potency). I once ruined one of my remedies by storing the tube in the same box as my essential oils and I had to buy more. I do, however, keep my remedies in my handbag along with my mobile phone, and I don't worry too much about the scanners at airports. My remedy kit still works just fine. Some people like to keep their remedy kit in a Faraday bag, which is a great idea.

## **What's This Info on the Remedy Label All About?**

If you look at many homeopathic remedy bottles or tubes, they often list a recommended condition they are indicated for. My tube of Pulsatilla, for example, says nothing about teething but instead gives “colds with thick, yellow nasal discharge” as its main indication or use. This is simply a matter of FDA compliance. Remedy manufacturers are required to list an indication for each remedy as well as an expiration date on the label. My Pulsatilla expired this January, but I won't be throwing it out. Homeopathic remedies don't expire like conventional drugs do. There are remedies from decades ago which still retain their potency. Sugar is an antibacterial substance, surprisingly, and it's often used as a preservative, so it's the perfect delivery method for homeopathic remedies.

## **Recognize When It's Homeopath Time**

When in doubt, check with a homeopath. It is a great idea to establish a relationship with a professional homeopath before you need backup!

It is difficult, if not impossible, to be objective about yourself and your own kids, even

when everyone is healthy. Hahnemann directs homeopaths to be “unprejudiced observers.” When you are sick with an acute illness, it can be a struggle to think clearly about which remedies might match your condition. It is tough to remain objective and concentrate when your child is sick and suffering. Most homeopaths call someone else when they or their loved ones are sick.

Establish a relationship with a homeopath while everyone is well, and you won't lose any time finding a homeopath when you're down for the count. (More about working with a homeopath in Chapter 6.)

As I have already mentioned, know when to call a doctor. If someone needs to go to the emergency room, you don't want to cause delay.

CHAPTER 6

# Getting the Best Results When Working with a Homeopath: Tips and Frequently Asked Questions

## Keep it Classical

**W**hen you're looking for a homeopath, find one who is "classical." This means they follow Hahnemann's guidelines

for practicing homeopathy: individualized, holistic, one remedy at a time in most cases, and the minimum dose needed to help you get well.

### **Have a Homeopathy Kit on Hand**

Many remedies in a home prescriber's kit just so happen to be commonly prescribed as chronic or constitutional remedies, so invest in a small kit. It's a lot more convenient and economical than having to run out and buy different remedies for all your family members. Don't forget to keep the kit out of the reach of little ones, because remedies are tasty!

### **What Does a Homeopathic Consultation Look Like?**

A homeopathic consultation is an informal chat. You'll describe your main complaint, your other symptoms, your health history, your family's health history, your emotional state, and more. It's sometimes like a therapy session. The more you can tell your homeopath about what is important to you—even the things that might be difficult to talk about—the better your remedy is likely to match your current state. Many homeopaths meet clients in person, and most use online video conferencing and phone calls.

## **Why You Should Follow Your Homeopath's Instructions Exactly**

Since daily medications are often the norm, it might seem strange to only take one dose—one single pellet—of a remedy and then wait several weeks until the next follow up. Or to take just three doses of a remedy and then stop. Or to bash the remedy bottle the homeopath gave you against your hand a certain number of times before taking a dose. There are many different methods of dosage. To make it even more confusing, different homeopaths might prefer different methods of dosage over others.

Homeopaths try to keep your care as simple as possible, but we do need you to follow our instructions exactly in order to be able to evaluate your remedy's action properly. Don't repeat, stop, or change your remedy without checking with your homeopath first. If there's anything you're not sure about, ask. You need to understand and embrace your own part in your care.

Also, ignore any dosage instructions or indications you see on the remedy bottle. Those are only there for FDA labeling compliance.

## Understand That Homeopathy Also Requires Work from the Client

In a world where medical doctors prescribe X drug for Y disease without any individualization at all, it might seem like a hassle to put the extra work in with homeopathy. We ask questions that are obviously relevant to your illness, and also questions that do not seem relevant to anything. Smile and nod and keep answering the questions. Everything we ask is for the purpose of finding your remedy—even your past relationship history, what you were like as a baby, any major losses or disappointments you’ve had—all of this is relevant to your homeopath. Your answers help us understand why you were never well since that one thing that happened, and more importantly, how to help you. If it was an important event or illness in your life, it will be important for your homeopath to know about it. It is important for your homeopath to know about every significant event or illness. Also:

- Tell your homeopath if you’re especially sensitive to medications, fragrance, or chemicals.
- Tell your homeopath all of your symptoms as well as conditions you used to have. We especially need to know if you’ve ever had

major skin issues because those will help us to proceed with extra caution. You are a whole being and we need to be able to understand you as such.

- Tell your homeopath if something extremely stressful happened since the last time you spoke.
- Tell your homeopath about all the supplements and medications you're taking.

### **Don't Wear Out Your Welcome**

Your homeopath does not need to become your new best friend. Keep in mind that there is—and should be—a professional boundary there. Don't text your homeopath in the middle of the night. Don't update them on every little change that you notice; too much information makes it hard to keep up with your case over time. Instead, keep a list or journal, write those changes down as you notice them, and save the list for your next follow up.

If something big does come up, let your homeopath know about that. Use your best judgement and respect your homeopath's personal life as you would that of any health professional. Just because we're especially good at listening doesn't mean we have the energy to listen all the



time. In fact, working with people who are unwell can be draining and many homeopaths do struggle with burnout at times. Respect your homeopath's private life. This will ensure that you get the best possible attention and care from them when it's your turn.

### **Why Follow Ups Are So Important—Even if it Seems Like the Remedy Didn't Help**

Now, it may very well be true that you haven't had any progress since taking your last remedy. If that's the case, your homeopath needs to know that. Don't miss out on your healing by giving up too soon.

Everyone who practices homeopathy has had the experience of finding a great remedy match for someone, only to have the client report at their next follow up that they feel exactly the same. When the client is asked about the specific symptoms the homeopath was originally called upon to treat, however, those symptoms will often turn out to be much improved or even completely gone.

This happened to me just yesterday. A mom reported that her son was not any better after taking his remedy. When I asked about the specifics, it

turned out that his sleep was actually much better, even if the other main issue (tooth decay) was not completely resolved in 4 weeks.

Often the healing happens so gently and gradually that you don't even notice it. One of the strangest things about practicing homeopathy is that we often see it remove not only the chronic issue, but also the *memory* of the issue. Clients will report that their remedy has had no effect, when in fact a major shift has taken place over time, and even the state of mind has been healed.

It's so important to follow up with your homeopath. Even if it seems like nothing has changed and you're frustrated about that, tell the homeopath. You need an unbiased observer. I can provide observations about my own son's case to our homeopath, but I can't objectively evaluate whether or not the remedy is doing what it should or whether the picture has changed because I'm part of that picture day to day. I need someone who is not involved in our day-to-day life to determine whether we're making progress or not.

Contrast this “heal it so you can forget about it” approach with modern medicine, which seeks to give you a diagnosis so you can become a long-term

consumer of whichever drug has been developed for that diagnosis. It's a completely different way of thinking.

### **Try to Resist Googling (or Identifying with) Your Remedy**

If at all possible, try not to look up your homeopathic remedy. Once you read about the symptom picture, it might make it harder for you to be objective about what you're noticing. Your remedy state is not like your astrological sign; it's not meant to be a picture of who you are. It's more like a picture of where you're stuck, out of tune and unable to be your best you. So do your best to not identify with your remedy picture, because if all goes well, it's going to change soon.

### **Susceptibility as Part of Illness**

Why does one person struggle with a certain health condition, and others don't have to worry about that condition at all? Genetics and environment play their parts, to be sure. But from a homeopath's perspective, it boils down to susceptibility—where are the individual weak points in your constitution? What susceptibilities

and tendencies have you received from your parents and their parents? Which organ systems tend to need extra support in your family?

For a homeopath, it's not just a matter of accepting genetic inheritance and making the best of it. We want to strengthen your constitution to restore your rightful inheritance of good health and the freedom to move around in the world without restriction.

### **I've Had This Condition for 20 Years. Why Can't My Homeopath Fix It Overnight?**

Clients sometimes think this way. Yes, homeopathy does bring about miracle cures every now and then. But for the most part, homeopaths have to treat layers of disease and sometimes work in reverse chronological order to turn back the clock on your disease. Many people have tried everything under the sun before they find homeopathy, using many suppressive medications like steroids and antibiotics. These substances do a number on the vital force, and healing takes time.

Stay committed to improving your health, follow your homeopath's instructions, try to be patient, and stay positive. You're not in this alone.

## **What Is an Aggravation and What Should I Do About It? Or, What to Know After You've Just Taken a Remedy**

It sometimes happens in constitutional care that you'll initially feel worse after receiving a remedy. This is known as an "aggravation." It isn't something you should expect (we don't want any self-fulfilling prophecies), but it is usually a promising sign that your remedy is a good match for you. Your homeopath will tailor the potency and dosage of your remedy to be as gentle as possible to minimize any aggravations, but they happen occasionally. If the symptoms are especially bothersome, let your homeopath know and they will tell you what to do.

The return of old, previously-suppressed symptoms is a great sign too. If those warts you used to have removed have suddenly come back with a vengeance, try to see this as cause for celebration. They won't be there forever—we can and will help you get rid of those, too—but for now, your body has bigger healing to tackle.

### **The Direction of Cure**

There is a hierarchy of symptoms and organ

systems in the body, and when you begin to truly heal, you'll start healing the more important systems first. The skin on the extremities, though it's noticeable to you, is quite far away from your vital parts and is thus a very "safe" place to be sick. This principle is known as Hering's Law of Direction of Cure, and it's another one of the tenets of homeopathic practice. It gives us a reliable way to evaluate whether you're getting better or not.

### **After a Constitutional Remedy: When an Acute is Not Just an Acute**

In Chapter 5 we talked a bit about knowing when to treat an acute and when to let it ride. When you are under the care of a homeopath, sometimes acute illness can arise as part of your body's reaction to a constitutional or chronic remedy. It's usually a great sign.

When the vital force gets stirred up enough to produce a nice acute illness—especially when a fever is involved—homeopaths rejoice. We don't enjoy seeing you suffer; this is tough love. We know that an acute illness coming up after a constitutional or chronic remedy means that once you recover from the acute, you will continue to feel

better and better. Two hundred years of collective clinical experience tells us this.

Unpopular though it may be, our recommendation in this situation is often to power through it as best you can. All the traditional natural approaches (except for biocides) apply here: extra rest, extra hydration, chicken soup, fresh-squeezed fruit juice, and the like.

If you are completely miserable, however, that's another story. Let your homeopath know if that is the case.

### **Don't Start Anything New While You're Starting a New Remedy**

Many people who are seeking alternative healing modalities are trying as many different ways to get better as they possibly can. Unfortunately for your homeopath, if you start a new supplement or start an extreme new diet and exercise program the very same week you start your constitutional remedy, how will we know the full effects your remedy is having?

If you're spending the money and time to work with a homeopath, give it your best shot and don't confuse the picture by starting anything else that's

new to you, just for now. Take this as permission to relax about your health for a little while and let someone else help you. Do the usual healthy things in moderation, like taking walks, getting sunshine, sleeping plenty, and eating well. And if you have trouble doing that, tell your homeopath about that, too.

### **What About Dental Work?**

Sometimes, dental work causes enough of an upset that a re-dose might be needed. If you've recently started a remedy and then had major dental work right after that, make sure to tell your homeopath. Let them evaluate whether you need to make any adjustments.

On another note, I've had multiple clients ask me what they can give their kids preventatively to help them feel relaxed while having dental work, the way nitrous oxide does. There isn't really a homeopathic alternative to nitrous oxide. Homeopathy doesn't work by creating a drugged state; it works by gently nudging your own vital force out of a present mistunement.

We can give remedies after the experience to help ease any stress and pain, but I generally



advise my own clients to go with the dentist's recommendations for their kids. Even holistic dentists use nitrous oxide for children, because let's face it, fillings can be a scary experience, especially when you're little. I opted to use it for my son because he seemed anxious about getting his teeth worked on. To me the risk of potentially causing him long-term anxiety about going to the dentist outweighed any health risks associated with nitrous oxide. But every child is different, so definitely individualize your own decision about this.

### **Why Did My Remedy Heal These Other Things, But Not the One Thing I Really Wanted Help With?**

Healing is unpredictable. We don't get to tell your body how to heal itself; your vital force will prioritize its healing in ways that may seem surprising. According to Hering's Law of Cure, the vital force heals the more important and interior things first, and the less important and exterior things last.

For this reason, skin conditions like eczema may not heal immediately (though I've definitely seen cases of eczema healing quickly). It's just not

possible to say for sure what your body needs to heal first. Sometimes people feel much better mentally before they ever notice any change in their physical symptoms. Just stay with it and be patient; even if it takes a few different remedies, you are likely to see improvement soon.

### **How Long Will It Take Before I Feel Better?**

It's hard to predict how long healing will take. A homeopath will generally expect to see progress within 6 weeks, and if not, we'll adjust accordingly. If your illness is one you've had for a long time, it may take a while before you see it shift.

### **Can't Homeopathy Fix Everything So I Can Keep My Bad Habits?**

Hahnemann often wrote about “obstacles to cure,” or unhealthy living circumstances which prevented the full healing of his patients. The right remedy can help you recover from mold toxicity, but it can't remove the mold in your home. The right remedy can help you to stop smoking, but it can't make smoking harmless so you can keep an unhealthy habit. A stressful home, a diet lacking in nutrition, a lack of sunshine and fresh air—all

of these things can cause ongoing challenges to returning to full health.

### **Can Homeopathy Help \_\_\_ Condition or Illness?**

The answer is usually yes, no matter how you fill in the blank above. We don't treat the illness, though. We treat the individual by strengthening their constitution. In reestablishing balance in the vital force, the person is able to heal. We are incredible self-healing beings, after all, if we can remove the mistunement that keeps us from healing.

Some advanced states of illness are best treated by an experienced practitioner, and it's a good idea to ask around for a referral. Most homeopaths are happy to help you find a better fit if you aren't flourishing in their care.

### **My Chiropractor, Naturopath, or Functional Doctor Prescribes Homeopathic Remedies. That's OK, Right?**

Many of these more holistically-minded doctors learn about homeopathy and include homeopathic remedies in their practices. However, not all of them

have been trained in classical homeopathy, which takes years of dedicated study. When a practitioner who hasn't been trained in classical homeopathy starts prescribing remedies, there is always the potential to cause more harm than good. For more information about this, read the section in Chapter 1 about provings.

There are plenty of naturopaths and medical doctors out there who practice classical homeopathy. Ask them to tell you more about how they practice. If they “muscle test” to decide which remedy to give you, I'd advise you to seek help elsewhere.

### **When Should I Find a New Homeopath?**

Any homeopath will tell you that good homeopathic care is about having a relationship. Every person will bring out something different in whomever they meet, and not every homeopath is right for every person. If you don't feel like you are getting the care you want from your homeopath, or if you don't feel like you can open up to your homeopath, see someone new.

If your homeopath doesn't feel like they are able to help you, they may refer you to see someone else

who can see your case with fresh eyes. Don't take that personally; it's simply a matter of making sure you have the best possible care.

CHAPTER 7

# Complementary Therapies with Homeopathy

**T**here are two additional healing tools I've found to be very supportive alongside homeopathy. If you are working with a practitioner, he or she needs to be able to evaluate your response to a remedy, and you want to make that as simple as possible.

Some practitioners love the extra support that these therapies provide and will encourage you to use them. Some practitioners find these therapies make it more difficult to tell which remedies are

helping you. Just make sure to talk about it with your practitioner beforehand.

## Cell Salts

Dr. Wilhelm Heinrich Schuessler was a German doctor and homeopath who analyzed the mineral content of human cells in the late 1800s. He discovered twelve essential inorganic mineral compounds or “salts” which are essential for the body to function properly. Certain symptoms correspond with certain mineral deficiencies, and Schuessler developed a potentized form of these cell salts to quickly replenish the nutrients the body needs.

The twelve cell salts are:

1. Calc. Fluor. (Calcium fluoride)
2. Calc. Phos. (Calcium phosphate)
3. Calc. Sulf. (Calcium sulfate)
4. Ferr. Phos. (Ferrum phosphate)
5. Kali Mur. (Potassium chloride)
6. Kali Phos. (Kali phosphate)
7. Kali Sulf. (Potassium sulfate)
8. Mag. Phos. (Magnesium phosphate)
9. Nat. Mur. (Sodium chloride)
10. Nat. Phos. (Sodium phosphate)

11. Nat. Sulf. (Sodium sulfate)

12. Silica

Although many of these have the same names as homeopathic remedies made from the same minerals, they don't function in the same way. They're more like a raw material for the body in a very potent form, rather than an energetic signal like a remedy. When you see the "6x" potency, that means it is a cell salt.

Like remedies, cell salts are made with lactose or some kind of sugar tablet, so they are very easy to give.

### **Cell Salt Uses**

A cell salts kit usually includes a book or a sheet listing different indications for each salt. A few examples:

- Ferrum Phos often gives you a boost when you feel like you might be coming down with something.
- Calc Phos, Silica and Calc Fluor can help ease growing pains.
- Mag Phos can help ease muscle spasms—this one works especially well when dropped into a warm beverage.



- Kali Phos can help to soothe stressed-out nerves.

## **Cell Salt Combos**

The most popular cell salt product is a combo called “Bioplasma” made by Hyland’s. Bioplasma includes all twelve of the cell salts and can be added for extra nutritional support for anyone, especially pregnant women. Homeopaths Without Borders loves to bring plenty of Bioplasma along when they go to Haiti since malnutrition is so common there.

Another excellent cell salt combo is made by Miranda Castro for bones, hair, nails and teeth, available from her website ([mirandacastro.com](http://mirandacastro.com)). I have my son taking this combo as often as I remember to give it to him, and I often recommend it to my clients. It has the three main cell salts to help kids grow and build healthy bones and teeth, and it also gives adults a boost.

## **Cell Salt Dosages**

The recommended dosage for cell salts is 2-4 tablets or pellets (depending on age) twice a day or more often as needed. While you wouldn’t want to depend exclusively on cell salts—it is better to

see a homeopath for constitutional care for chronic issues—they can be very helpful at times.

If you're taking a few different cell salts, take them at different times for maximum assimilation. Most homeopaths recommend taking cell salts for 5 days, then taking two days off—I usually take them just on weekdays. This practice is thought to allow your body extra time to fully assimilate cell salts.

### **Flower Essences**

A British homeopath and doctor in the 1930s named Edward Bach discovered that the distilled essences of certain flowers and other plants helped to promote emotional balance. He identified 38 original flower essences and organized them into seven different categories:

- Fear
- Uncertainty
- Insufficient interest in present circumstances
- Loneliness
- Oversensitivity to influences and ideas
- Despondency and despair
- Overcare for the welfare of others

Each of these categories contains several different flower essences discovered by Bach to gently nudge

the emotions in a more positive direction. Aspen, for example, is thought to help you “maintain a state of inner peace & security, regain assurance of mind,” and Impatiens helps you to “think & act mindfully, without haste or irritation.”

The most common way to use flower essences is to create a custom blend with up to seven of the essences. The practitioner may ask the client to choose the seven essences they would like to include, or they may choose for the client. This blend can be taken by mouth—usually four drops at a time four times a day—or those four drops can instead be added to a glass of water and sipped on periodically.

Rescue Remedy is a popular blend of Bach flower essences which can usually be found at health food stores and Whole Foods, available in dropper bottles or candy form. You can use Rescue Remedy to gently and quickly ease stress, especially the fight-or-flight responses in acute situations such as accidents. For chronic stress, however, Rescue Remedy may not be the appropriate selection. Chronic stress is not an “acute” situation but rather a chronic problem, and other flower essences—combined with constitutional care—are a better match.

## **Find Your Own Flower Essence Blend**

In addition to the original 38 Bach flower essences, other companies have continued to explore new essences to add to the repertory. I particularly like the blends made by a company called Freedom Flowers ([freedom-flowers.com](http://freedom-flowers.com)). As I write this, in fact, I am sipping on water with some of their “Motivation & Manifestation” blend dropped in as a little extra push to help me finish this book.

The full Bach remedies kit containing all 38 remedies is rather expensive, so the blends made by Freedom Flowers are the perfect option to try out flower essences for yourself without having to invest a lot of money. They make a gentle but noticeable difference.

CHAPTER 8

# Non-Complementary Therapies with Homeopathy, Plus the Concept of Suppression

In the world of holistic health, there is a perception that all natural substances are helpful.

I would like to point out that the antibiotic penicillin grows naturally as mold on bread. Mold is a natural substance. We don't avoid antibiotics because they are unnatural. We avoid antibiotics

(as much as possible, anyway) because they indiscriminately kill the good bacteria in the human microbiome along with the “bad” bacteria.

There are many natural substances which behave like antibiotics. Many homeopaths call these substances “biocides” because they kill life (the way an insecticide kills insects).

When we seek to support the body’s healing holistically with homeopathy, we don’t go to war with the “bad” bacteria. We build up the vital force so it can do its own healing as it was meant to do.

### **What Is Suppression?**

Homeopaths want you to avoid anything that will weaken or “suppress” your vital force. Biocides suppress or push down the vital force.

Many popular natural substances have a suppressive effect just like steroids and antibiotics. They may temporarily stop an illness or ailment, but they work by weakening or stopping the body’s healing response, the way steroids and antibiotics do.

### **Essential Oils to Avoid**

- Tea Tree
- Oregano

- Eucalyptus
- Anything else with antimicrobial properties

These essential oils interfere with the action of homeopathic remedies. If you have been using them and are not getting the results you hope for with homeopathy, this may be the reason.

It's not a matter of the "grade" or source of the oils. No matter how they were produced, these essential oils will do you more harm than good in the long run, just like steroids and antibiotics. Once you stop using them, your symptoms will likely return.

### **Colloidal Silver**

A lot of crunchy folks adore colloidal silver. It's (seemingly) so useful for all the things! I was even told by one blogger who developed her own line of supplements that there are scientific studies to show that colloidal silver only kills the harmful bacteria and not the beneficial strains.

However, even the "bad" bacteria have a reason for being in our bodies, otherwise they wouldn't be there. Tinkering with the balance of the human microbiome is risky territory. Wouldn't it be better to let the healthy body decide for itself what the balance should be?

Learning to trust the self-healing bodies we've been given means respecting that every part of them serves some purpose, even if we don't know what that purpose is yet. After all, we're still discovering new functions and even new organs in the body in the 21st century. The mesentery, for example, is a newly-discovered organ in the human body, but we're still not sure what it does! It was recently discovered that blood is also made by the lungs, not just by the bone marrow. There is still so much we don't know about health—let's do our best not to interfere with it!

### **CBD Oil**

CBD is another substance to avoid. It definitely has the potential to help alleviate a myriad of conditions—until you stop using it. This means it is palliating or temporarily suppressing symptoms and not contributing to health. Homeopathy does a much better job of healing chronic conditions, rather than merely masking them.



## **Starting Other New-to-You Healing Modalities or Supplements at the Same Time as Starting Homeopathy**

I mentioned this in Chapter 6, but it is important enough to repeat it here: you shouldn't add other healing modalities or supplements at the same time you're starting constitutional care. While it's understandable to want to try every possible therapy to help you get better, homeopathy could be all you need—if you just give it the best possible chance. Don't change anything else in your lifestyle so that your homeopath can evaluate the action of your remedy.

Healing therapies like acupuncture, chiropractic care, Rolfing, and Splanchna can do wonderful things, as can many healthy supplements. Unfortunately, adding them during homeopathic care can make treatment more difficult by confusing the picture. If, however, you've been seeing an alternative practitioner for a while and then add homeopathy it is less likely to interfere with homeopathic evaluation.

CHAPTER 9

# Conclusion and Resources

First and foremost, thank you for reading this book. This first edition by a first-time author and student practitioner will no doubt have mistakes and omissions, but I hope you can catch some of my enthusiasm about homeopathy. It really has been incredible (and occasionally even jaw-dropping) to see the changes homeopathy can bring about when used properly, and I ♥ it.

I made so many mistakes when I first began learning about homeopathy and practicing it at home—and when I first began to see a homeopath for care. If this book helps you avoid some of those

mistakes—and hopefully, helps you get the best possible results for yourself and your loved ones—it will make me SO HAPPY.

I chose an image of remedy pellets in the shape of a heart for the cover because I hope this book communicates how much love goes into the practice of homeopathy. From taking the time to understand the minute details of how a person is suffering, to making the sustained effort to guide that person back to vibrant health, homeopaths undertake this work with love and a desire to help others. Most of the people I've met who practice homeopathy discovered it because they wanted to help someone they love, like you probably do.

### **Find a Homeopath**

Most homeopaths work via video chat, so you don't even need to find someone local to you, though in-person contact is always nice! You can find a certified practitioner of classical homeopathy by asking around or by contacting one of these organizations:

- North American Society of Homeopaths (homeopathy.org)—when you see a homeopath with the RSHom credentials, it means they've

gone through the certification process with NASH to show their competency in practicing homeopathy by submitting their cases for review and are now registered with the Society of Homeopaths. Their website has a provider directory.

- Council for Homeopathic Certification ([homeopathicdirectory.com](http://homeopathicdirectory.com))—when you see a homeopath with CCH credentials, it means they have finished a program of homeopathy studies with an accredited school, have taken the CCH certification exam, and are a Certified Classical Homeopath. Their website has a provider directory as well.
- National Center for Homeopathy ([homeopathycenter.org](http://homeopathycenter.org)) also has a provider directory.

### **Low-Cost Online Homeopathic Clinic**

When you're feeling unwell and need help from a homeopath but don't have a relationship with one, get in touch with Homeopathy Help Now. HHN is an online clinic run by the Academy of Homeopathy Education (AHE) offering donation-based or even free

homeopathic care. Practitioners include seasoned homeopaths as well as student homeopaths under supervision as part of their studies at AHE ([homeopathyhelpnow.com](http://homeopathyhelpnow.com)).

Homeopathy Help Now also offers chronic or constitutional care at varying affordable price points. You can see a certified practitioner, a not-yet-certified graduate of AHE, or a student practitioner under supervision. They also offer free care in their online teaching clinic if you don't mind waiting a little longer to be seen.

### **Homeopathy Kits**

The kit I use most frequently is the blue Helios 36-remedy kit. The size is perfect for my purse; the vials inside are glass and clearly labeled; the pellets are an easy size to use and share; the selection of remedies is excellent; and it even includes a small repertory/materia medica book inside ([helios.co.uk](http://helios.co.uk)).

I also love both the tiny "Homeocard" kits from Miranda Castro and her "Complete" kit which contains every remedy in her *Complete Homeopathy Handbook* ([mirandacastro.com](http://mirandacastro.com)).

Other wonderful kits are also available from:

- Washington Homeopathic Pharmacy (homeopathyworks.com)
- Hahnemann Labs (hahnemannlabs.com)
- Ollois (ollois.com)

Many of the companies that sell homeopathy kits have been experiencing supply issues due to the growing interest in homeopathy and the increase in demand for remedies. Be prepared to shop around as kits may be out of stock.

### **Homeopathic Pharmacies**

- Washington Homeopathic Pharmacy (homeopathyworks.com)
- Hahnemann Labs (hahnemannlabs.com)
- I&E Organics (iandeorganics.com)
- Boiron (boironusa.com)
- Ollois—their pellets are organic and lactose free (ollois.com)
- Helios—also lactose-free pellets (helios.co.uk)
- And of course, Amazon or Whole Foods if you just need something fast—but I do prefer to support the homeopathic pharmacies whenever possible.

## Books

- Miranda Castro's *Complete Homeopathy Handbook*—if you haven't already noticed, I am a big fan of this one
- *Homeopathic Medicine at Home: Natural Remedies for Everyday Ailments and Minor Injuries* by Maesimund B. Panos, M.D. and Jane Heimlich—another option for home prescribers
- Amy Lansky's *Impossible Cure: The Promise of Homeopathy*—this book was my first in-depth introduction to homeopathy; before I read it I had only heard homeopathy mentioned on social media. This book, along with my own early experiences using homeopathy, made me decide to become a homeopath. I don't know if you'll find it a “page turner,” but I did. If you want to read more about the science of homeopathy including many scientific studies, this is the book for you.
- *The Organon of the Medical Art* by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, edited and annotated by Wenda Brewster O'Reilly Ph.D., is a must read if you are thinking about studying homeopathy further. Don't skip over the footnotes—Hahnemann's rants about the errors of

conventional (allopathic) doctors are most entertaining and still relevant today!

- *Homeopathic Care for Cats & Dogs* by Don Hamilton, DVM, has been my go-to resource for helping me find remedies for my own pets.
- *Discovering Homeopathy: Medicine for the 21st Century* by Dana Ullman—this book was required reading in homeopathy school and is excellent, thorough, and well-researched.
- *The Science of Homeopathy* by George Vithoulkas—another excellent book required in homeopathy school, for those interested in more in-depth reading.
- *Yasgur's Dictionary and Holistic Health Reference* is a great resource to have on hand if you find yourself digging deeper into homeopathy. It was a lifesaver during my early days of homeopathy school since much of the language used in homeopathic literature comes from the pre-1900s. More than just a dictionary, it's a concise reference for all things homeopathy-related. I continue to use it frequently.



## Films

- *Just One Drop*—directed by Laurel Chiten ([justonedropfilm.com](http://justonedropfilm.com))
- *Magic Pills*—directed by Ananda More ([magicpillsmovie.com](http://magicpillsmovie.com))

## Cell Salts

I started with a small kit of the 12 original cell salts from [mirandacastro.com](http://mirandacastro.com). As those run out, I buy the larger bottles from Hyland's to refill them ([hylands.com](http://hylands.com)).

## Flower Essences

- Bach Flower Essences—the original 38 flower essences ([bachremedies.com](http://bachremedies.com)).
- Freedom Flower Essences—many new flower essences added to the original 38—some lovely blends available here—I used the “Motivation & Manifestation” blend to help me write this book ([freedom-flowers.com](http://freedom-flowers.com)).

## Online Resources for Home Prescribers

- Homeopath Mary Aspinwall has created many resources for home prescribers. Look for her Facebook group (Mary's Homeopathy

Study Group) as well as her online app to help you find remedies, especially when you're on the go ([remedyseeker.com](http://remedyseeker.com)).

- Mary has also created a beginner's course on her website ([homeopathyworld.com](http://homeopathyworld.com)) which allows you to study at your own pace.
- Homeopath Kim Elia's online app called Homeopathic Housecall is a subscription-based tool to guide you to well-indicated remedies for acute complaints and injuries ([homeoaide.com](http://homeoaide.com)). One of my classmates raves about this app and gifted a subscription to her son.

### **Find or Start a Study Group**

Like Mary Aspinwall's Facebook group, a wonderful way to learn more about homeopathy is to find or start your own local study group in real life to talk more about homeopathy. Invite homeopaths to visit with you and share more about what they know. Talk about your own successes and failures with home prescribing and why you chose different remedies for different cases. Spread the love!

# About the Author

Priscilla Medders is a student practitioner of homeopathy who is completing her clinical hours for certification. She lives in beautiful Northwest Georgia with her husband Cheyenne Medders and their son Chet. She spends her free time daydreaming about the house they're going to build.

# Index

## A

abrasions 51  
 Academy of Homeopathy  
     Education (AHE) 87, 88  
 accidental dose 50  
 accident(s) 51, 78  
 Aconite (*Aco.*) 8, 16,  
     44, 46, 47, 51  
 acupuncture 84  
 acute illness 2, 34, 39,  
     40, 41, 48, 54, 65, 93  
 acute vs. chronic 3  
 advanced states of illness 70  
 aetiology. *See* etiology  
 affinities 32  
 aggravation 64  
 alchemist 23  
*Allium cepa* 23  
 animals 5, 14  
 antibiotic(s) 63, 80, 81, 82  
*Arnica* (*Arn.*) 8, 16, 46, 51

artificial disease 35  
 Aspen 78  
 Aspinwall, Mary 41, 92, 93  
 assimilation 77  
 astrological sign 62  
 attention 21  
 Avogadro's number 21, 25

## B

babies 43, 51, 58  
 Bach, Edward 77, 78, 79, 92  
 bad habits 69  
 barking cough 44, 45  
 bashing a remedy 25  
 beginner's course 93  
*Belladonna* (*Bell.*) 24,  
     27, 28, 46  
 Big Magic 10  
 biocides 66, 81  
 Bioplasma 76  
 blood 83  
 body's innate wisdom 39

- Boiron 89
- bone marrow 83
- bones 76
- bruises 41, 51
- Bryonia 48
- C**
- Calendula 16, 51
- candy 52
- car accident 18
- Castro, Miranda 11, 21,  
42, 47, 76, 88, 90
- catarrh 44
- cats 91
- causes 45
- CBD Oil 83
- cell salts 74, 75, 92
- Certified Classical  
Homeopath (CCH) 87
- certified practitioner 86
- chicken soup 66
- childhood illnesses 39
- chiropractic care 84
- chiropractor 70
- Chiten, Laurel 92
- chronic illness 3, 8,  
18, 34, 40, 56, 65
- Cinchona bark 6
- CLAMS 30, 31, 34,  
42, 43, 45, 49
- classical homeopath 34
- classical homeopathy  
34, 55, 71, 86
- cleaning house 39
- clinginess 12, 13, 14, 37
- clinical experience 66
- cold(s) 23, 39, 41, 45, 53
- colloidal silver 82
- combination remedies  
35, 36, 51
- combo teething tablets 13, 14
- Complete Homeopathy  
Handbook 11, 42,  
44, 47, 88, 90
- complete picture 47
- concomitants 31, 32
- constipation 4
- constitution 62, 63
- cough 45
- Council for Homeopathic  
Certification 87
- croup 4, 40, 44, 45, 47
- cuts 51

**D**

daily medications 57  
 deciding factor 48  
 defibrillator 23  
 dental work 67  
 dentist 68  
 diagnosis 61, 62  
 diet 66, 69  
 dilution of Remedies 21, 24  
 Direction of Cure (Hering's

Law) 64, 65, 68. *See*

*also* Hering, Constantine

disease state 22

divine punishment 26

dog(s) 14, 43, 91

dosage 48, 57

dreams 33, 37

drugged state 67

dry dose 48, 49, 50

**E**

eczema 4, 19, 68

electron microscopy 21

Elia, Kim 93

emergency room 54

Emoto, Masaru 21

energetic properties 21

environment 62

essential oils 52, 82

etiology 18, 30, 32, 45, 48

eucalyptus 82

exercise 66

expiration date 53

external events 51

**F**

fairy godmother of

homeopathy 42

family health history 34

family homeopathy journal 44

Faraday bag 52

fast heartbeat 27

FDA compliance 53, 57

fearful 45

fever(s) 27, 38, 39, 65

flower essences 77, 92

flu 17, 39, 41, 48

follow up 61

follow ups 60

formative years 34

fragrance 58

freedom 63

Freedom Flower

Essences 79, 92

- frolicking 15
- functional doctor 70
- G**
- genetics 62, 63
- Gilbert, Elizabeth 10
- glass 27
- glassy eyes 27
- God 19
- Googling 62
- grafting 35
- grief 14
- growing pains 75
- grumpy 43
- H**
- Hahnemann Labs 41, 89
- Hahnemann, Samuel 5, 6, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 35, 36, 39, 54, 55, 69, 90
- hair 76
- Haiti 76
- Hamilton, Don 91
- headache 29
- healing modalities 84
- health 39
- heart 23
- heart attack 8
- Helios 41, 88, 89
- herbal tinctures 17
- Hering, Constantine 65, 68
- herniated disc 14
- Higgs boson 20
- higher potencies 42
- Hippocrates 6
- holistic 18, 19, 56
- holistic dentists 68
- Homeocard kit 88
- homeopathic consultation 56
- homeopathic evaluation 84
- Homeopathic Housecall 93
- Homeopathic Medicine
  - at Home 42, 90
- homeopathic pharmacies 89
- Homeopaths Without Borders 76
- Homeopathy Help
  - Now 87, 88
- homeopathy kit(s) 8, 11, 39, 41, 52, 56, 88
- homeopathy's mechanism
  - of action 21
- home prescribing 38
- home remedies 17

howling 15

human microbiome 82

human pacifier 13

hydration 39, 66

Hyland's 76, 92

hyperactive children 23

Hypericum 16, 51

## I

I&E Organics 89

illness is not our enemy 39

Impatiens 78

Impossible Cure 22, 90

individualized 17, 34, 35, 56

injuries 51, 93

instructions 57

intention 21

Intervertebral Disc

Disease (IVDD) 14

## J

Joint American Homeopathy

Conference 18

journal 59

juice 66

Just One Drop 21, 92

## K

Kell, Tanya 18

## L

Lachesis (Lach.) 27, 44, 46

lactose-free pellets 89

Lansky, Amy 22, 90

Latin scientific names 46

Law of Minimum

Dose 24, 56

Law of Similars 22, 23

layers of disease 63

leaps in development 39

Ledum 16

let like cure like 6

life events 34

light bulb 26

location 31, 32

lungs 83

## M

magic 13

Magic Pills 92

main complaint 30, 32, 44

malaria 6

mass 20

materia medica 46, 88

medical care 8

memory 61

memory of water 21



- menstrual cramps 18  
mercury 24  
mesentery 83  
metal spoon 49  
microbiome 81  
microwave ovens 52  
milk 51  
mineral deficiencies 74  
minimum dose. *See* Law  
of Minimum Dose  
mistunement 19, 67, 70  
mobile phone 52  
modalities 30, 31, 44, 45, 48  
mold 69, 80  
More, Ananda 92  
multiple remedies 51  
muscle spasms 75  
muscle test 71  
mythbusting 7
- N**
- nails 76  
National Center for  
Homeopathy 87  
naturopath 70  
nerve pain 51  
nerves 76  
newbie 12  
new symptoms 4, 36  
nitrous oxide 67, 68  
North American Society  
of Homeopaths  
(NASH) 18, 86, 87  
nourishing foods 39  
nursing mother 51  
Nux vomica 27
- O**
- objective 53, 61, 62  
obstacles to cure 69  
Ollois 89  
one-size-fits-all 34  
onion 23  
online app 93  
online homeopathic clinic 87  
online video conferencing 56  
oregano 81  
organic 89  
Organon 90  
over-the-counter medicine 38
- P**
- pain relievers 12  
palliating 83  
Panos, Maesimund 42, 90

- Paracelsus 23  
 pellet(s) 49  
 penicillin 80  
 pets 51  
 physical sensations 32  
 placebo effect 14  
 plastic cup 49  
 poisonous substances 27,28  
 potency 25,42,75  
 potentization 21,24,25  
 pre-electricity days 25  
 pregnant women 76  
 preservative 53  
 professional boundary 59  
 properties of a substance 27  
 protocols 34,35  
 provider directory 87  
 proving(s) 5,6,7,36  
 published scientific studies 9  
 Pulsatilla (Puls.) 13,  
 14,37,46,53
- Q**
- quantum physics 21  
 quinine 6
- R**
- radioactive atom 27  
 rapid onset 2  
 rash 29  
 remedy bottle 57  
 remedy kit 52  
 remedy label 53  
 remedy picture 5,62  
 remedy storage 52  
 Renaissance 23  
 repeat dosing 49  
 repertory 44,88  
 Rescue Remedy 78  
 rest 39,66  
 restless 48  
 return of old symptoms 64  
 Rhus tox 48  
 Ritalin 23  
 Rolfing 84  
 rookie mistake 40  
 RSHom 86  
 rubric 45
- S**
- sand 27  
 scanners at airports 52  
 Schuessler, Wilhelm 74  
 scientific property 20  
 scientific studies 90

## HOMEOPATHY BASICS

- scrapes 41
  - self-fulfilling prophecies 64
  - sensations 30, 31, 32, 48
  - shock 51
  - shocks 23
  - signals 26
  - Silica 27, 75
  - Similia similibus curentur 23
  - skin conditions 68
  - skin issues 59
  - sleep 61, 67
  - smoking 69
  - sore throat 29, 45
  - spiritual 26
  - spiritual component 26
  - spiritual problems 26
  - Splankna 84
  - state of mind 61
  - steroid cream 19
  - steroids 63, 81, 82
  - stimulant 23
  - stress 78
  - stroke 8
  - stuck 39
  - study group 93
  - succussing 25
  - suffering 17
  - sugar 53, 75
  - sunshine 67, 69
  - supplement 66
  - supplements 59, 82, 84
  - suppress 83
  - suppression of symptoms  
19, 80, 81
  - suppressive medications 63
  - surgery 51
  - susceptibility 62
  - symptom picture 14
  - symptoms 19, 48
  - synergistic effect 36
  - syphilis 24
- T**
- tea tree 81
  - teeth 76
  - teething 4, 13, 37
  - Thuja 4, 5
  - tie-breaker 48
  - totality of symptoms 18, 33
  - tough love 65
  - toxic substances 24
- U**
- Ullman, Dana 91

unbiased observer 61  
unclear case 43  
uncooperative 43  
unprejudiced observer 54  
urinary tract infection  
    (UTI) 33, 37

**V**

video chat 86  
vital force 19, 20, 26, 35, 39,  
    51, 63, 65, 67, 68, 70, 81  
Vithoulkas, George 91

**W**

warts 4, 5, 18, 64  
Washington Homeopathic  
    Pharmacy 41, 89  
water dose 49, 50  
watering eyes 23  
Western society 38  
Whac-A-Mole 19  
when not to treat an illness 40  
Wi-Fi 52  
wild goose chases 37

**Y**

Yasgur's Dictionary 91  
yellow nasal discharge 53

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