

MINISTRY OF AYUSH
HOMOEOPATHY SECTION

1. ABOUT HOMOEOPATHY

Homoeopathy is a system of medicine where medicines are prescribed on the basis of symptom similarities. Homoeopathy was discovered in 1796 by a German physician named Dr. Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann. The word Homoeopathy is derived from ‘*Homoeos*’ means ‘*like*’ and ‘*Pathos*’ which means ‘*suffering*’. Homoeopathy is a science and art of holistic, logical and philosophical system of individualistic drug therapeutics, based on well proved scientific principles ‘*Similia Similibus Curentur*’ i.e. *Let Likes be treated by Likes*, where the most similar medicine is selected by assessing the individualistic picture of the patient based on detailed information regarding present complaints, causation, past and family histories, etc. The Homoeopathic medicines are tested by its power of producing symptoms on healthy human body, which are recorded and compiled to form the *Materia Medica*. Those symptoms of medicine recorded in *Materia Medica*, facilitates in easy selection of similar medicine when patient narrates his own sufferings. Such detail case taking not only helps in selection of medicine but also in management of the case and benefits the patient to let out all the mental as well as physical discomfort the patient was going through.

The Homoeopathic medicines are prepared from either active materials of nature such as inspissated juice of the leaves aloe socotrina, crushed bees or inert materials such as table salt, sand etc., found in nature. The preparatory process is unique in Homoeopathy, thereby minimizing the toxic effects of crude drug substance of the former and arousing the latent curative properties of the later.

Homoeopathy achieved its present status after a long struggle that started in Germany and travelled all over the world, brought to India in the early 19th century by an Austrian physician, Dr. Martin Honigberger, who treated Maharaja Ranjit Singh of Lahore, who was suffering from paralysis of the Vocal cords with swelling of the feet. At present Homoeopathy is a well-recognised and accepted medical system with a rapidly growing market.

Homoeopathy is being practiced for the past century in India and has blended quite well with the Indian tradition and way of life. There are over 3 lakhs (approx) registered homoeopathic doctors in India currently, with approximately 12,000 more being added every year. More than 300 clinical studies have been conducted for

various diseases across the world that proves the efficacy of Homoeopathy. It follows a holistic approach towards achieving the inner balance of an individual on mental, physical, emotional and spiritual levels. Homoeopathy is a time-tested, scientific medical treatment that continues to spread its effectiveness around the world especially because of its minimum cost, minimum dose and no side-effect.

2. PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS OF HOMOEOPATHY

The cardinal principles of Homoeopathy, make the system unique. This uniqueness of Homoeopathic application of drugs makes it difficult many a times to implement the provisions of the existing regulations for modern system “as it is” to Homoeopathy, which requires innovative approaches and designs not usually considered or required in bio-medicine involving single chemical entities.

2.1. Therapeutic Principle

Dr. Hahnemann brought in the process of systematic observation and collection of facts, deducing the basic homoeopathic principle of ‘*similia similibus curentur*’ (let likes be treated by likes) i.e., a set of symptoms produced by any substance on a healthy individual can cure similar symptoms in the sick. A simplest example is the effect of peeling an onion and the consequent watering and burning of eyes and nose. Patients suffering from common cold (a viral disease) having similar watering and burning sensation in the eyes and nose, can be treated by the medicine *Allium cepa*, prepared from red onions. Based on this principle, the pathogenesis or prescribing indications of any drug is based on its record of drug toxicity and symptomatology produced thereof, and by systematically testing drug substances on healthy human volunteers. The pathogenetic profile of homoeopathic drugs, thus identified is included in the texts called the Homoeopathic Materia Medica.

2.2. Drug Development

The drug development process as applied to Homoeopathy in the past was based on efforts by individual practitioners and has had limited contribution from the pharmaceutical industry as such. The process now needs to be streamlined and established so as to enhance introduction of new drugs in Homoeopathy by the pharmaceutical industry and to ensure that the drugs developed have undergone rigorous testing procedures for application on human beings.

The systematic testing of drug substances on healthy human volunteers is called Drug Proving where in small quantity of the drug substance is given to healthy human volunteers and the minutest changes in physical and mental state are recorded.

Subsequent to drug proving a detailed list of symptoms of the effect of the drug on all body systems, i.e., mind, head, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, gastro-intestinal system, respiratory system, cardiovascular system, neurology, etc. is formed. The medicines thus applied on patients presenting with a combination of these symptoms is likely to cure the patient, irrespective of the name of the disease.

During this treatment process, there would be some symptoms of the patient which were not “matching” with those of recorded drug proving symptoms but were also relieved. These symptoms form the clinical symptoms and are included within the already recorded symptoms of the drug, thereby evolving the pathogenesis of the drug. As such, a new indication for an existing drug is an enhancement to the drug pathogenesis and is not a new drug per se. Accordingly, based on the presenting symptom totality, the traditional homoeopathic medicines can be used in treatment of new and emerging diseases as well, requiring validation of action of medicines in these new conditions, rather than become a new drug per se.

2.3. Individualization and Holistic Application of Drugs

The drug dynamics in Homoeopathy is a record of symptomatology pertaining to all systems of the body and not necessarily associated with signs or markers identifiable in the laboratory. These are a combination of symptoms experienced subjectively, signs identifiable on examination and parameters identifiable in the laboratory. In a sick individual, all the symptoms of the patient are recorded, pertaining to any system of the body, combined with the feelings, thinking process and personality identifiable, which is then matched with the recorded symptoms and personality in the *Materia Medica*. The prescription thus made forms a classical homoeopathic prescription. It is expected that for all new drugs introduced in Homoeopathy, the basic tenet of evolution of pathogenesis and clinical symptom by drugs proving and subsequent clinical verification is maintained and holistic approach of Homoeopathy is retained. The deductive methodology of one drug, one indication / one disease (except in case of epidemic diseases) cannot be applied as it is for market authorization in Homoeopathy. The market authorization needs to be based on examination of drug proving and clinical efficacy data provided by the researchers, and inclusion of drug monograph in the Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI) / Homoeopathic Codex compiling physical and chemical characteristics of raw drug substances.

3. DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT IN HOMOEOPATHY

Health is considered as mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing. Homeopaths believe that physical disease often has mental and emotional components, and diagnosis includes physical symptoms, current emotional and psychological state, and the person's constitution.

In homoeopathy, disease is considered as the dynamic disturbance of harmonious relation between the material body and vital force that stimulates the body in health. Whenever the Vital force is deranged then the harmonious state of balance between mental, physical and emotional well being is disturbed and this appears as signs and symptoms. Signs and symptoms are the impression of the disease and diagnosis is the art of identifying the disease from its signs and symptoms. Cure is only achieved by the complete elimination of symptoms and even effects of other treatments. The cases where continued treatment is necessary, it is called “palliation” not “cure”.

In homoeopathy prime importance is not given to the diagnosis of the disease, but a proper diagnosis helps a homoeopathic physician in determining the direction of treatment. Proper diagnosis always compliments the various procedures taken by the homoeopathic physician. It helps in elimination of cases requiring surgical or mechanical management and assessment of the real significance of any new symptom in the course of treatment after prescription. It aids in identification whether the new symptom belongs to the remedy or due to the further progress of the disease.

Generally, the patients seek the help of a physician when the primary manifestations are already being obscured, and the patient is only left with the secondary manifestations. In these cases, the signs and symptoms of the patients are very vague. Diagnosis in these cases gives a clue towards primary manifestation and helps in deciding the seat and nature of the disease. It also gives the idea about the pathological and constitutional tendencies that help us to decide whether a constitutional, miasmatic, or palliative medicine is required. The knowledge of diagnosis of the disease also helps in identifying the communicable disease and isolating the patient from the other family members to prevent the further spread of the infection. It also helps in ascertaining the cause and prognosis of the disease.

Diagnosis helps to narrow down the selection criteria of medicines for a physician. It may give a selected group of medicines which can be further sorted out after referring to our Materia Medica, the most similar medicine can be found out for the patient.

The posology (selection of potency, dose, route of administration) depends on the pathological disease condition of the patient.

3.1. Homoeopathic drugs are used in the form of:

1. Tinctures – Alcoholic extracts of drug substance from vegetable origin.
2. Triturations – Drug material mixed in a fixed ratio (usually 1:10 or 1:100) of milk sugar prepared according to procedures laid down in the HPI, available in the form of tablets or powders.
3. Succussed dilutions or potencies – Drug material diluted in increasing amount of alcohol in a fixed ration (usually 1:10 viz decimal scale, 1:100 viz. centesimal scale and 1:50000 viz. 50 millesimal scale) and treated as per homoeopathic pharmaceutical process of shaking for a fixed number of times. In India, the potencies usually available and sold in decimal scale are 1X, 3X, 6X,12X and 30X ; 3C, 6C, 12C, 30C, 200C, 1M C, 10M C, 50M and CM in centesimal scale and 0/1, 0/2, 0/3,0/4, 0/5, 0/6, 0/7, 0/8 and beyond in 50 millesimal scale, each denoted differently.

3.2. Strength of Homoeopathy

Homoeopathy has its own areas of strength in therapeutics, and it is particularly useful in treatment for allergies, autoimmune disorders and viral infections etc. Many surgical, gynaecological & obstetrical and paediatric conditions and ailments affecting the eyes, nose, ear, teeth, skin, sexual organs etc. are amenable to Homoeopathic treatment. Behavioural disorder, Neurological problems and Metabolic diseases can also be successfully treated by Homoeopathy. Apart from the curative aspects, Homoeopathic medicines are also used in preventive and promotive healthcare. In recent times, there is an emergence of interest in the use of Homoeopathic medicines in veterinary care, agriculture, dentistry etc.

4. INDIAN SCENARIO

Homoeopathy was introduced in India when some German missionaries and physicians started distributing homoeopathic medicines amongst local inhabitants. However, Homoeopathy took roots in India in 1839 when Dr. John Martin Honigberger successfully treated Maharaja Ranjit Singh for the paralysis of Vocal Cords. Dr. Honigberger settled in Kolkata (then Calcutta) and became popular as Cholera-doctor. Later Dr. Rajendralal Datta, Dr. M.L. Sirkar reputed Physicians also started practicing Homoeopathy. Dr. M.L. Sirkar edited the first Homoeopathic Journal 'Calcutta Journal of Medicine' in the year 1868. In 1881, many renowned physicians including Dr. P.C.

Mujumdar and Dr. D. N. Roy established first Homoeopathic College – 'The Calcutta Homoeopathic Medical College'. Dr. B.L. Bhaduri, Dr. Salar, Dr. P.C. Majumdar, Dr. B.K. Bose, Dr. B.N. Banerjee, Dr. D.N. Roy, Dr. Younan, Dr. Akhoy kumar Dutta, Dr. J.N. Majumdar, Dr. N.M. Chaudhuri, Dr. Baridaran Mukherjee, Dr. S.K. Nag, Dr. Lahiri, Dr. B. K. Sarkar and many others made personal efforts in establishing Homoeopathy as a profession. They are well known for their contribution to the growth of Homoeopathy not only in West Bengal but also in the whole country.

Over the years, the number of amateur homoeopathic practitioners grew steadily and most of them approached the Government to accord recognition to Homoeopathy. The turning point came in 1937 when the Central Legislative Assembly resolved, "That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General of the Council that he may be pleased to introduce Homoeopathic treatment in government hospitals and give homoeopathic colleges in India". Later, in the year 1948, the same Assembly adopted yet another resolution about Homoeopathy, which was followed by constitution of the Homoeopathic Enquiry Committee. In 1949, this Enquiry Committee submitted its report recommending that Central Homoeopathic Council be constituted. In 1952, a Homoeopathic ad-hoc Committee (later re-christened as 'Homoeopathic Advisory Committee' in 1954) was constituted, which was to advise the Government on all matters related to Homoeopathy, namely homoeopathic education, homoeopathic research, regulation of practice, pharmacopoeia, rural medical aid, drug manufacture, family planning, financial aid to homoeopathic colleges, dispensaries, hospitals and cooperation with International Homoeopathic Medical League. The Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Committee (HPC) was constituted in 1962 by the Government of India to lay down the standards for quality control and manufacturing of homoeopathic drugs. The Homoeopathic Research Committee constituted in 1963 initiated the process of organized homoeopathic research and identified priority research areas. A combined Council to conduct research in Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy was formed initially (1969), which paved the way for individual research councils and consequently, the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) was formed (1978). The Homoeopathy Central Council Act, 1973 (HCC Act) enacted by the Indian Parliament established the legislative mechanism to regulate education and practice in Homoeopathy in the country.

The National Institute of Homoeopathy (NIH) was established in 1975 in Calcutta (now Kolkata) as a model institute for under-graduate & post-graduate education and research. The Homoeopathic Pharmacopoeia Laboratory (HPL) was also founded in

1975 to lay down principles and standards for preparation of homoeopathic drugs. On 28th March, 2008, the Union Cabinet accorded approval for establishment North Eastern Institute of Ayurveda and Homoeopathy (NEIAH) to provide health care facilities to the people of NE Region and Sikkim under Ayurveda and Homoeopathy systems of medicine. Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homoeopathy (PCIM&H) 2014, is a subordinate office under Ministry of AYUSH, Government of India. Development of Pharmacopoeias and Formularies as well as acting as Central Drug Testing cum Appellate Laboratory for Indian systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy are the key fields of activity of PCIM&H. The National Commission for Homoeopathy (NCH) has been constituted by an act of Parliament known as The National Commission for Homoeopathy Act, 2020 which came into force in the year 2021. The Board of Governors in supersession of Central Council of Homoeopathy constituted under section 3 of The Homoeopathy Central Council Act, 1973 stands dissolved thereafter. National Institute of Homoeopathy, Delhi a satellite Institute of NIH, Kolkata, an autonomous Institute under Ministry of Ayush is also in line with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's vision of expansion of infrastructure, human resources and promotion of research in the traditional systems like Ayush and their active engagement in the healthcare system and providing affordable healthcare to every citizen and every region of the Country.

The system had spread around the world, within a relatively short period as it had similarities in its approach with the prevailing traditional and ethnic medical systems and merged with them. Thus, homoeopathic hospitals, colleges and pharmacies were opened in many parts of the world during the 19th century. Homoeopathy flourished throughout the 20th century, particularly in the latter part of the century. Today, India has a strategic advantage over other countries, in terms of infrastructure and intellectual and clinical resources in Homoeopathy. The Government of India facilitated the spread and development of Homoeopathy by recognizing and integrating it into healthcare delivery.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HOMOEOPATHY

1) What is the role of symptoms in homoeopathic treatment?

A symptom can be defined as an external expression of the internal disease. According to Dr. Hahnemann "the change in the health of the body and of the mind (morbid phenomena, accidents, symptoms) which can be perceived externally by means of the senses, that is to say, physician notices only the deviations from the

former healthy state of the now diseased individual, which are felt by the patient himself, remarked by the those around him and observed by the physician.” The symptoms are the sole guide for the selection of the homoeopathic remedy in each individual case of disease.

2) What is the constitutional treatment in homoeopathy?

Concept of Constitution in Homoeopathy is understood as a person’s physical and mental make-up which is revealed through his or her physical built, characteristic desires, aversions and reactions as well as emotional and intellectual attributes. To understand the constitution of a person, a physician must know the person’s individualistic change. Also, mental disposition, emotional and intellectual component and performances are to be considered. Various concomitants expressed in relation to the stressful situations like dentition in a child, menstruation, pregnancy and menopause in a female are important expressions which helps in understanding the constitution of a patient.

A constitutional prescription takes into consideration all above aspect and is aimed to remove the constitutional defects, diathesis and proneness to certain disease conditions by homoeopathically selected remedy.

3) What is classical homoeopathy?

Classical Homoeopathy is a holistic therapy which considers an individual as a whole inclusive of symptoms of mind, body and spirit. Homoeopathy takes into consideration of a person's natural environment and lifestyle. Then a homoeopath provides treatment that closely matches individual symptoms and recommends homoeopathic medicines for the same.

4) What are the sources of homoeopathic medicine?

Homoeopathic Medicines are prepared from 7 different sources

1. Vegetable kingdom (fungi, herbs, flowers, whole plant)
2. Animal Kingdom (whole or parts and even their secretions)
3. Mineral kingdom (organic or inorganic)
4. Sarcodes (products of healthy glandular secretions)
5. Nosodes (diseased products or secretions)

6. Imponderabilia (energy from natural / artificial sources)
7. Synthetic sources

5) How long does it take for homoeopathic medicine to be effective?

Various Factors (such as age, constitution, habitat, occupation, moral or intellectual character, social and domestic relation) helps in determining the projected length of time period of homeopathic treatment to cure diseases or health disorders. However, in case of a perfectly selected Homoeopathic medicine the result and effectiveness are almost instantaneous.

6) While on homoeopathic treatment is there any necessity to have the pathological tests done?

Yes, Pathological tests and other investigations are important for treating disease, for monitoring the disease progression, for preventing disease, for the management of progression of the disease or condition.

7) If a person is using homoeopathic medicines is it possible for them to use conventional drugs at the same time?

All medical treatments, whether conventional medicine or alternative medicine, have the potential to interact with each other, but when there is a long-term usage of conventional medicines, especially there is a chance of drug dependency, it is difficult to abruptly discontinue the medicine. In such cases, physician opts for integrated method of treatment, keeping in mind the safety of the patient. Rather, Conventional medicines should not be stopped without the knowledge and approval of the attending physician. The homoeopathic physician should be informed about the conventional medicines that is administered or presently taking.

8) What reaction should expect after taking homoeopathic medicine?

There can be positive (Amelioration) or negative (Aggravation or no effect) aspect after taking the homoeopathic medicine, which depends whether the rightly chosen similar remedy is administered or not. Positive reaction would be improvement in general health of the patient both physically and mentally, fast relief of the suffering (acute or chronic).

The negative reaction may be intensification of the suffering, which is often tolerable as homoeopathic dosage is given in minimum quantity.

9) What are the preventive medicines in homoeopathy?

Homoeopathy not only treats the disease but is very efficacious in preventing the diseases. Homoeopathic prophylactic medicines have the potential to prevent or minimize in individual patients or in case of epidemic and endemics.

10) How are homoeopathic medicines prepared?

Homoeopaths use a procedure called dynamization or potentization to treat diseases, in which a drug is mixed with alcohol or distilled water and then it undergoes well defined process called succussion. For insoluble drug substances, trituration is used for insoluble drug substances such as oyster shell, sand in which sugar of milk is added with the drug substance with lactose which helps in reducing the material substances.