

**History of Homeopathic Medicines.** The clinical use of homeopathic medicines was documented by Samuel Hahnemann MD, over 200 years ago. The definitive guide for the principles and practice of this type of natural medicine has been documented in the Organon. The practice of homeopathy is based on an observation called the *law of similars*. This means presenting symptoms (for example, stuffy nose, aching bones, watery eyes etc.) are matched with a substance in nature which mimics these symptoms. If a good match of the natural substance (plant, animal, mineral) is found, then the body receives a “message” which can stimulate physiologic processes to enable healing to begin. Often disease is a result of blockages or “stasis” as well as immune weakness.

For example, Hahnemann’s initial experiments were with cinchona tree bark, from which quinine is derived. He found cinchona given in daily doses to a healthy person could cause symptoms similar to malaria. However, the same cinchona given in homeopathic doses is curative to many patients with malaria. Homeopathic medicines are made in a special way –unlike other herbs and supplements. The way the medicines are produced seems to change the manner in which they act on the body.

**What Makes Homeopathic Medicines Different than Botanical tinctures or Supplements?** Homeopathic medicines are indicated by X, C, M etc. which follow a number on the label. This means the medicine has been “potentized” in a particular way. Each homeopathic medicine begins with a “mother tincture” of the natural substance in an alcohol base which extracts the most important components of the natural substance. Original sources of plant, mineral and animal mother tinctures are very closely monitored for time, purity and conditions.

For example, a 6X homeopathic (potentized) medicine of sodium salt (Nat Mur) means the sodium salt has been diluted by taking one drop of the “mother tincture” and 9 drops of the solute (typically alcohol) and “succesed” six times. Succession involves hitting the container sharply against a very hard surface many times. This process creates a homeopathic medicine instead of a salt botanical tincture or mineral supplement.

**Common Remedies.** There are approximately 3,000 single homeopathic remedies whose symptoms have been documented in standard reference manuals called “Materia Medica.” However, in modern times, many remedies may be needed which have not undergone the extensive provings in clinical practice or scientific evaluation. You should consult your homeopathic practitioner to determine which remedy may be most appropriate for you, at this time.

**Chronic vs. Acute.** If you have a cold, with a runny nose –or a digestive upset with diarrhea, often an acute homeopathic remedy can bring relief within 24 hours. However, if you feel you have a chronic condition such as IBS, Crohns, Diabetes, Hypertension,

Depression, etc., then a chronic homeopathic remedy may be more appropriate. An intake for a chronic homeopathic prescription typically takes 1 ½ -2 hours.

**How to Find a Homeopathic Practitioner.** Many homeopathic practitioners have studied homeopathy extensively, without obtaining other medical certifications such as MD, ND, PA, etc. You need to ask your potential practitioner about their training and interests. The National Center for Homeopathy NCH.com offers a list of homeopaths who have undergone special certification. However, many NDs (such as myself) have undergone specialized homeopathic training but do not have an NCH, or an HSOM certification. One of the best homeopathic internet sites is [homeopathy.com](http://www.homeopathy.com). You can check current research as well as interesting homeopathic subjects.

References.

Homeopathy, Beyond Flat Earth Medicine, Timothy R. Dooley, ND, MD, Timing Publications, San Diego, CA, 2002.

<http://www.homeopathyhome.com>

<http://www.homeopathic.org> (National Center for Homeopathy site)

<http://www.homeopathicsymposium.com>