



Information sheet: Homeopathy

What is Homeopathy?

Homeopathy is a non-invasive, natural therapy based on a guided process of self-healing that can be used to treat any disease or complaint. It is best described as a therapy of using like to cure like, or the hair of the dog principle.

The patient's health is restored by administering a remedy specifically targeted to provoke their symptoms. The remedy is determined by interpreting the symptoms not as the disease itself, but rather as an indication of the underlying problem of which they represent the natural response.

The homeopathic remedy promotes rather than suppresses this natural healing process by driving the symptoms along the direction of cure. In this way homeopathy uses like to cure like and differs from therapies that interpret the symptoms alone as the problem or disease and aim solely to abolish or suppress them.

Homeopathic remedies are presented in ultra dilute doses that act as gentle signals to provoke this natural response. They are more akin to prompts to promote the natural response and are have no side effects.

You may have heard that such infinitesimal doses are too minute to do anything but this is a misunderstanding of the therapy. The critical factor is the match of the remedy to the patient not the concentration of the remedy.

What does the therapy do?

A homeopathic consultation is an interview in which the patient expresses their symptoms very thoroughly in the manner in which they affect them at a unique and individual level. This allows the homeopath to select a remedy that most closely matches the symptom picture described. The remedy is then prescribed in an oral dose that is taken until the symptoms change.

Homeopathy is therefore a general healing art and can be used for almost any condition either alone or in a complementary manner.

What are the training standards?

Homeopathy is practiced both by medical and non-medically qualified practitioners (NMQP).

Those subject to statutory regulation (eg doctors, pharmacists, vets, dentists, nurses and midwives) may be trained by the Faculty of Homeopathy, which was established by an Act of Parliament in 1950. The Faculty confers licentiate (LFHom), diploma (DFHom) and membership (MFHom) qualifications.

NMQPs are educated in one of a number of homeopathic colleges to either diploma of undergraduate degree level. They may then register with one of several professional bodies: the Society of Homeopaths (SoH), the Association of Registered Homeopaths (ARH) or the Homeopathic Medical Association (HMA).

Is Homeopathy under any regulatory process?

Medically qualified homeopaths are governed by the regulations of their professional bodies ie GMC, GPhC, RCVS as well as those of the Faculty of Homeopathy. NMQPs are regulated by their registering body (SoH, ARH, UKHMA) and SoH sits within the Professional Standards Authority (PSA). Each professional body has a set of standards and regulations of which their members agree to abide.



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How do I find a Homeopath?

Homeopaths are located around the UK and can be contacted by searching on the websites of their professional bodies (Faculty of Homeopathy, Society of Homeopaths, Association of Registered Homeopaths or Homeopathic Medical Association). Alternatively you can find practitioners listed in the local telephone directory, or by recommendation and their name will be followed by the initials of their registering body above.

Are there any safety concerns for Homeopathy?

Homeopathy employs the use of remedies prepared in infinitely diluted medicines for which there are no side effects and as such there are no safety concerns or contraindications for being treated by a homeopath, either as a primary therapist or as a complementary therapy to conventional medical treatment. Homeopathy primarily requires presenting your symptoms in great detail to the practitioner and it is therefore essential to have both trust and a good communication with them.

Is there an evidence base for Homeopathy?

Homeopathy was discovered in 1790 and has been practiced along the same principles by millions of practitioners around the globe since then. A large corpus of scientific evidence has been accumulated which stands the most robust tests of modern science. Research material is freely accessible online at both the Faculty of Homeopathy and the Homeopathic Research Council. The Faculty of Homeopathy publishes a prestigious quarterly journal that is the only Medline recognized publication of homeopathy in the world.