

Historic Evidence for the Efficacy of Homeopathy:

Homeopaths treated cholera successfully. During the 19th century, there were seven severe epidemics in America, the most serious in 1832. The death rates of people treated without homeopathy were five times those of the homeopaths.

In 1854, the British Parliament authorized the London Board of Health to appoint a commission to see which treatments were best for cholera victims. They found "regular" hospitals had a death rate of 54 percent; the homeopathic hospital's death rate was 16 percent.

In the London Cholera epidemic of 1854, of the 61 cases of cholera treated [at the London Homeopathic Hospital], 10 died, a percentage of 16.4; of the 331 cases of choleraic and simple diarrhoea treated, one died. The neighbouring Middlesex Hospital received 231 cases of cholera and 47 cases of choleraic diarrhea. Of the cholera patients treated 123 died, a fatality rate of 53.2 per cent., amount the victims being one of the nurses.

Dr. Macloughlin, one of the medical inspectors appointed by the General Board of Health, visited the wards, examined the cases under treatment, and watched their progress. His statement, addressed to Mr. Hugh Cameron [1810-1897], a member of the medical staff, was as follows:

- "You are aware that I went to your hospital prepossessed against the homeopathic system, that you had in me in your camp an enemy rather than a friend... and I need not tell you that I have taken some pains to make myself acquainted with the rise, progress and medical treatment of cholera, and that I claim for myself some right to be able to recognise the disease, and to know something of what the medical treatment ought to be, and that there may, therefore, be no misapprehension about the cases saw in your hospital, I will add that, all I saw were true cases of cholera, in the various stages of the disease, and that I saw several cases which did well under your treatment which I have no hesitation in saying would have sunk under other. In conclusion I must repeat to you what I have already told you, and what I have told everyone whom I have conversed, that although an allopath by principle, education and practice yet were it the will of

Providence to afflict me with cholera, and deprive me of the power of prescribing for myself, I would rather be in the hands of a homeopathic than an allopathic adviser."

Dr. Macloughlin, as shown by his researches and publications, was undoubtedly well informed as to the nature of cholera. [Quoted in A History of the London Homeopathic Hospital, 1914.]

- "...in Germany homeopaths were highly successful in treating the typhoid fever that Napoleon's tattered remnant of an army brought back with them [in 1812] from Moscow." [Griggs, 1981, p.179]

"...a committee was set up...to report on the various methods of treatment adopted [against cholera]...It was a dismal record of failure...but...it was completely silent on the two therapies which had been strikingly successful, those of the medical botanists, and homeopathic treatment with minute doses of camphor." [Griggs, 1981, p.208]

"Homeopathic treatment of cholera proved remarkably successful. Of the 1655 cholera patients treated in Raab [Hungary], for example, only six of the 154 patients treated homeopathically died, whilst of the remainder, 821 [almost 50%] treated conventionally, died." [Cook, 1981, p.157]

Modern Evidence for the Efficacy of Homeopathy

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K. Linde, N. Clausius, G. Ramirez, et al., "Are the Clinical Effects of Homeopathy Placebo Effects? A Meta-analysis of Placebo-Controlled Trials." *Lancet*, September 20, 1997, 350:834-843.

This state of the art meta-analysis reviewed 186 studies, 89 of which fit pre-defined criteria. Rather than count and compare the number of trials which show efficacy of treatment, the researchers pooled the data from the various studies to assess data. The results showed that patients taking homeopathic medicines were 2.45 times more likely to experience a positive therapeutic effect than placebo.

J. Kleijnen, P. Knipschild, G. ter Riet, "Clinical Trials of Homeopathy." *British Medical Journal*, February 9, 1991, 302:316-323.

This is the most widely cited meta-analysis of clinical research prior to 1991. This meta-analysis reviewed 107 studies of homeopathic medicines, 81 of which (or 77%) showed positive effect. Of the best 22 studies, 15 showed efficacy. The researchers concluded: "The evidence presented in this review would probably be sufficient for establishing homeopathy as a regular treatment for certain indications." Further, "The amount of positive evidence even among the best studies came as a surprise to us."

C. N. Shealy, MD, R.P. Thomlinson, V. Borgmeyer, "Osteoarthritic Pain: A Comparison of Homeopathy and Acetaminophen." *American Journal of Pain Management*, 1998;8:89-91

A double-blinded study to document the relative efficacy of homeopathic remedies in comparison to acetaminophen for the treatment of pain associated with osteoarthritis (OA) among 65 patients. An IRB approved protocol. Results of the study documented better pain relief in the homeopathic group (55% achieved measured relief from homeopathy as compared to 38% from acetaminophen); however, the superiority of this treatment, in comparison with the acetaminophen group, did not reach statistical significance. The investigators conclude that homeopathic treatments for pain in OA patients appear to be safe and at least as effective as acetaminophen, and are without its potential adverse effects including compromise to both liver and kidney function.

Many of the patients asked to continue with the homeopathic treatment.

M. Weiser, W. Strosser, P. Klein, "Homeopathic vs. Conventional Treatment of Vertigo: A Randomized Double-Blind Controlled Clinical Study." *Archives of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery*, August, 1998, 124:879-885.

This was a study with 119 subjects with various types of vertigo, half of whom were given a homeopathic medicine (a combination of four homeopathic medicines) and half were given a leading conventional drug in Europe for vertigo, betahistine hydrochloride. The homeopathic medicines were found to be similarly effective and significantly safer than the conventional control.

D. Reilly, M. Taylor, N. Beattie, et al., "Is Evidence for Homoeopathy Reproducible?" *Lancet*, December 10, 1994, 344:1601-6.

This study successfully reproduced evidence from two previous double-blinded trials all of which used the same model of homeopathic immunotherapy in inhalant allergy. In this third study, 9 of 11 patients on homeopathic treatment improved compared to only 5 of 13 patients on placebo. The researchers concluded that either homeopathic medicines work or controlled studies don't. Their work has again be recently replicated and is submitted for publication.

J. Jacobs, L. Jimenez, S. Gloyd, "Treatment of Acute Childhood Diarrhea with Homeopathic Medicine: A Randomized Clinical Trial in Nicaragua." *Pediatrics*, May 1994, 93,5:719-25.

This study was the first on homeopathy to be published in an American medical journal.

The study compared individualized high potency homeopathic preparations against a placebo in 81 children, between ages 6 mo. and 5 yrs., suffering with acute diarrhea. The treatment group benefited from a statistically significant 15% decrease in duration. The authors noted that the clinical significance would extend to decreasing dehydration and postdiarrheal

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E. Ernst, T. Saradeth, and K.L. Resch,

"Complementary Treatment of Varicose Veins: A Randomized Placebo-controlled, Double-Blind Trial." *Phlebology*, 1990, 5:157-163.

This study of 61 patients showed a 44% improvement in venous filling time in the homeopathic treated group when compared with placebo.

P. Fisher, A. Greenwood, E.C. Huskisson, et al.,

"Effect of Homoeopathic Treatment on Fibrositis." *British Medical Journal*, August 5, 1989, 299:365-66.

This trial was double-blind with a crossover design, comparing Rhus toxicodendron to a placebo in 30 patients all suffering from an identical syndrome identified as the admission criteria. It showed a significant reduction in tender spots, by 25%, when patients were given the homeopathic medicine, as compared to when they were given the placebo.

D. Reilly, M. Taylor, C. McSherry,

"Is Homeopathy a Placebo Response? Controlled Trial of Homeopathic Potency with Pollen in Hayfever as Model." *Lancet*, October 18, 1986, 881-86.

The double-blind study compared a high dilution homeopathic preparation of grass pollens against a placebo in 144 patients with active hay fever. The study method considered pollen counts, aggravation in symptoms and use of antihistamines and concluded that patients using homeopathy showed greater improvement in symptoms than those on placebo, and that this difference was reflected in a significantly reduced need for antihistamines among the homeopathically treated group. The results confirmed those of the pilot study and demonstrate that homeopathic potencies show effects distinct from those of the placebo.

J. Lamont,

"Homeopathic Treatment of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder: A Controlled Study."

British Homoeopathic Journal

, October, 1997, 86:196-200.

Forty-three children were randomly assigned to either placebo or homeopathic treatment groups, and then those initially given a placebo were given an individualized homeopathic medicine. All subjects underwent a homeopathic interview to determine which individualized remedy was appropriate. Results show significant improvement once the patient began taking the homeopathic medicine.

K.H. Friese, S. Kruse, H. Moeller,

"Acute Otitis Media in Children: A Comparison of Conventional and Homeopathic Treatment." *Biomedical Therapy*, 60,4,1997:113-116, originally published in German in *Hals-Nasen-Ohren (Head, Nose, and Otolaryngology)* August, 1996:462-66.

This study of 131 children allowed parents to choose homeopathic or conventional medical care from their ear, nose, and throat doctor. 103 children underwent homeopathic treatment, while 28 underwent conventional care. They found that the total recurrences of the homeopathic treated group was .41 per patient, while the antibiotic treatment group was .70 per patient. Of the "homeopathic" children who did have another earache, 29.3% had a maximum of three recurrences, while 43.5% of the "antibiotic" children had a maximum of six recurrences.

Vittorio Elia and Marcella Niccoli,

"Thermodynamics of extremely diluted aqueous solutions." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, June 1999

An extensive thermodynamic study has been carried out on aqueous solutions obtained through successive dilutions and succussions of 1% in weight of some solutes up to

extremely diluted solutions, (less than 1×10^{-5} mol kg⁻¹) obtained via several 1/100 successive dilution processes. The interaction of acids or bases with the extremely diluted solutions has been studied calorimetrically at 25_C. Measurements have been performed of the heats of mixing of acid or basic solutions, having different concentrations, with bidistilled water or with the extremely diluted solutions. Despite the extreme dilution of the solutions, an exothermic heat of mixing in excess has been found, in about the 92% of the cases, with respect to the corresponding heat of mixing with the untreated solvent. Here [it is shown] that successive dilutions and succussions may alter permanently the physical-chemical properties of the solvent water. The nature of the phenomena here described still remains unexplained, but significant experimental results are obtained.

J. Dittmann and G. Harisch,

"Characterization of Differing Effects Caused by Homeopathically Prepared and Conventional Dilutions Using Cytochrome P450 2E1 and Other Enzymes as Detection Systems." *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine* 1996 2:2,279-290.

Target of investigation was to ascertain differences in the effects of homeopathic potencies (D) and equally concentrated conventional dilutions (V) on p-nitrocatechol formation catalyzed by CYP 2E1. Arsenicum album and potassium cyanatum (D) were compared to equivalent dilutions of As₂₀₃ and KCN (V). Significant differences in enzyme activity were found. The difference of influence exists and this may be attributable to the manufacturing process of homeopathic drugs, namely, the stepwise dilution with intermediate agitation.

K. Linde, W.B. Jonas, D. Melchart, D., et al.,

"Critical Review and Meta-Analysis of Serial Agitated Dilutions in Experimental Toxicology," *Human and Experimental Toxicology*, 1994, 13:481-92.

This meta-analysis of 105 studies in toxicology showed that homeopathic medicines may be useful in treating toxic exposures. This meta-analysis was conducted by a similar group of researchers who recently published a meta-analysis on clinical studies in *The Lancet*.

P.C. Endler, W. Pongratz, G. Kastberg, et al.,

"The Effect of Highly Diluted Agitated Thyroxine on the Climbing Activity of Frogs." *Veterinary and Human Toxicology*, 1994, 36:56.

P.C. Endler, W. Pongratz, R. van Wijk, et al.,

"Transmission of Hormone Information by Non-molecular Means." *FASEB Journal*, 1994, 8, Abs.2313.

These two studies show that a homeopathic medicine can influence the growth and development of tadpoles in water.

J. Benveniste, P.C. Endler and J. Schulte, (eds.),

"Further Biological Effects Induced by Ultra High Dilutions: Inhibition by a Magnetic Field." *Ultra High Dilution*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1994, 35.

J. Benveniste, B. Arnoux, L. Hadji,

"Highly Dilute Antigen Increases Coronary Flow of Isolated Heart from Immunized Guinea-pigs." *FASEB Journal*, 1992, 6: Abs. 1610.

These two studies show that certain magnetic fields can neutralize the effects of a homeopathic medicine.

E. Davenas, B. Poitevin, and J. Benveniste,

"Effect on Mouse Peritoneal Macrophages of Orally Administered Very High Dilutions of Silica." *European Journal of Pharmacology*, April, 1987, 135:313-319.

This study showed Silica 6C and Silica 10C induced a statistically significant increase in immune function, as measured in macrophages in the blood of mice.

Paolo Bellavite and Andrea Signorini,

Homeopathy: A Frontier in Medical Science. Berkeley: North Atlantic, 1995.

This is the most notable book on homeopathic research to date. There are some excellent chapters that present compelling theories on how homeopathic medicines may work, in

the light of new physics, biophysics, fractals, chaos, and complexity theory.

P.C. Endler and J. Schulte (editors),

Ultra High Dilution: Physiology and Physics. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, 1994.

A compilation of articles on basic science research. A second volume, entitled Fundamental Research Ultra High Dilutions and Homeopathy, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic, was published in 1998.

Roeland van Wijk and Fred A.C. Wiegant,

Cultured Mammalian Cells in Homeopathy Research: The Similia Principle in Self-Recovery. Utrecht: University of Utrecht, 1994.

This is a technical book which discusses research by cell biologists. This research verifies the homeopathic principle of similars.

M. Doutremepuich (ed.),

Ultra-Low Doses. Washington, DC/London: Taylor and Francis, 1991.

This is a compilation of articles on basic science research.

Economic Benefits of Homeopathic Treatment

Cost Effectiveness of Homeopathic Treatment,

Caisse Nationale de l'Assurance Maladie des Travailleurs Salaris, 1996.

A study of 130,000 prescriptions confirmed the results of the 1991 French Government Report (see below) and suggest further benefit and savings to the homeopathic approach to care. This survey also noted that the number of paid sick leave days by patients under the care of homeopathic physicians were 3.5 times less (598 days/year) than patients under the care of general practitioners (2,017 days/year). Although homeopathic medicines in France represent 5% of all medicines prescribed by physicians, they represent only 1.2% of all drug reimbursements due to their lower cost per prescription. (Homeopathic medicines are reimbursable under the French health care system).

Jacobs, J, Smith, N.

"Charges, utilization, and practice patterns from a pilot insurance program covering alternative medical services." American Public Health Association Conference, New York City, November 18-21, 1996.

Study conducted in Seattle, WA which compared the utilization and cost of homeopathic, naturopathic, and acupuncture services. Researchers concluded that homeopathic care was the least costly and that patient visits to homeopaths were less often than to other alternative care professionals. (This study, however, did not compare utilization or costs against conventional medical care). See also, W.B. Jonas and J. Jacobs, *Healing with Homeopathy*. New York: Warner, 1996.

"Cost-effectiveness of homeopathic treatment in a dental practice," British Homoeopathic Journal. January, 1993;82,1:22-28

This study evaluated a single homeopathic dentist's practice and suggested that it was more cost-effective than conventional dental care.

Swayne, J., W. Feldhaus.

"The cost and effectiveness of homeopathy." British Homoeopathic Journal July 1992;81,3:148-150.5H.

This study suggested that doctors practicing homeopathic medicine issued fewer prescriptions and at a lower cost than their conventional medical colleagues.

Gerhard, I, G. Reimers, C. Keller, and M. Schmuck,

"Weibliche fertilitasstorungen. Vergleich homoopathischer einzelmittel—mit konventioneller hormontherapie." Therapeutikon. 1991;7:309-315.

A small study of the homeopathic treatment for infertility. This study showed that homeopathic care for infertility was 30 times less expensive per successful delivery than the match comparison group given conventional care.

French Government Report: Social Security Statistics.

CNAM (National Inter-Regulations System) 61, January 1991.

Conducted by the French government in 1991, this study showed a significantly reduced cost from homeopathic care versus conventional medical care. The totality of costs associated with homeopathic care per physician was approximately one-half of the totality of care provided by conventional primary care physicians. However, because homeopathic physicians, on average, saw significantly fewer patients, the overall cost per patient under homeopathic care was still a significant 15% less. It is also appeared that these savings increase the longer a physician has been using homeopathy.