



# Homeopathy

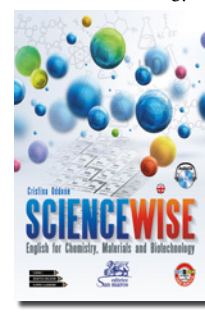
Homeopathy is a system of natural health care that has been used worldwide for over 200 years. The name derives from the Greek words 'similar suffering' and was coined by a German doctor and chemist, Samuel Hahnemann, who is credited with founding homeopathy. It is recognised by the World Health Organisation as the second largest therapeutic system in use in the world. It is very popular in India and South America, whereas over thirty million people in Europe, and millions of others around the world, also benefit from its use. Although homeopathic treatments are derived from natural substances, homeopathy should not be confused with herbal medicine, Chinese medicine, or other types of natural medicines. It is a unique therapeutic system, which works with your body to relieve symptoms, restore itself and improve your overall health. Homeopathic treatments stimulate a person's own healing ability, by selecting the most appropriate medicine based on the individual's specific symptoms and level of health. This principle is based on the idea that the body knows what it is doing and that symptoms show the action the body takes to overcome illness. This response is automatic in living organisms and it is called vital response. The 'similar' medicine stimulates the natural vital

response and provides the body with all the necessary information to complete its healing work. The initial action is to increase the strength of the symptoms, and this is the first sign that the disease is being cured from within.

Homeopathy is used to treat acute illnesses, like colds, ear infections, migraines, and sore throats, as well as chronic conditions, like asthma, depression, autism, and arthritis.

Homeopathic medicines – known as 'remedies' – are made from natural sources and are environmentally friendly. The substances used include plants (such as Wolf's Bane, Deadly Nightshade, dandelion, or plantain), minerals (e.g. iron phosphate, arsenic oxide or sodium chloride), or animal products (e.g. the venom of a number of poisonous snakes or the ink of the cuttlefish). The technique for making a homeopathic medicine involves repeated dilution of a specific substance until little of the original substance remains. When manufacturing a homeopathic medicine from a plant, for example, the first step involves cleaning and preparing the plant with alcohol and water to make a tincture. This tincture is then diluted and strongly shaken. This step is repeated over and over to create increasing potencies of the medicine. For example, one

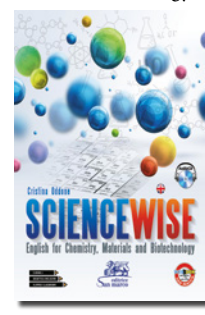
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## GLOSSARY

1 a guide that may be used for example





drop of a plant tincture may be mixed with 9 drops of alcohol, and the mixture will then be strongly shaken: this process is known as succussion. The resulting homeopathic medicine is labelled with a potency according to the number of times this has been done. Most remedies are available in health food shops, homeopathic pharmacies and online. They are also extremely affordable. Homeopathic remedies when used as directed, are completely safe for everyone – including pregnant and nursing women, infants, children, adults and also pets. Only a minimum dose is administered to initiate the healing process,

which then carries on, driven by its own internal healing mission. This is the reason why homeopathic remedies do not produce the side effects that are so often the drawback of conventional treatment. Moreover, they are non-addictive, and are not tested on animals. Before deciding on the effectiveness of the medicines, their curative powers are discovered by testing them out on healthy human subjects while carefully noting emotional, mental and physical changes. This information is very important because it constitutes the basis for homeopathic treatments.

## ACTIVITIES

1 Decide if the following sentences are true or false and then correct the false ones.

- 1 Homeopathy is a very recent system of natural health care.
- 2 The word 'homeopathy' derives from the Latin words meaning 'similar suffering'.
- 3 Homeopathy is not recognized by the World Health Organization.
- 4 Homeopathy is popular only in some countries such as India and South America.
- 5 The word 'homeopathy' encompasses all types of natural medicine.
- 6 Homeopathy is interested in each individual and their state of being.
- 7 The symptoms of an illness are the way the body takes action against it.
- 8 Homeopathic remedies stimulate a person's natural vital response.
- 9 Homeopathy provides the minimum dose and then the body reacts.
- 10 Homeopathic remedies are exclusively made from plants.
- 11 Tinctures are made by adding alcohol and water to a plant.
- 12 Homeopathic remedies are not expensive and easy to find.
- 13 Unlike traditional treatments homeopathic remedies have no side effects.
- 14 These treatments are tested on animals.

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2 Translate the following words into Italian.

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|---------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Healing .....     | 6 Dose .....          |
| 2 To overcome ..... | 7 Drawback .....      |
| 3 Response .....    | 8 Non-addictive ..... |
| 4 Within .....      | 9 Effectiveness ..... |
| 5 Remedies .....    | 10 Therapeutic .....  |

3 What are the main differences between conventional treatments and homeopathy? Discuss the topic.

4 Describe the process of making homeopathic remedies using your own words