What is homeopathy?

Homeopathy is based on the theory that “like cures like,” that is a substance that could cause illness or a symptom can also treat the same illness when given in a homeopathic dose. For example, the remedy Rhus tox is made from the poison ivy plant. Poison ivy causes many people to have intensely itchy red blisters on their skin when they come in brief contact with the plant. Rhus tox is given homeopathically in a very minute form to someone who has the symptoms of poison ivy. With the homeopathic dose of the Rhus tox, the body works to rid itself of the condition and heal itself.

How long has homeopathy been in clinical use?

Homeopathy is a system of medical treatment developed by German physician Samuel Hahnemann beginning in 1794. He published The Organon, his first compilation of homeopathy’s principles in 1810.

The first American homeopathic medical college was established in Allentown, PA, in 1835. At the turn of the 20th century, 20% of all medical practitioners in the United States were homeopaths (approximately 15,000) and there were 22 homeopathic medical colleges. Homeopathy fell out of popular usage for a time in the 1900s though some companies like WHP continued along. A homeopathic renaissance began in the 1980s. In 1990, 2.5 million Americans sought out some form of homeopathic care. By 1999, that number rose to more than 6 million and has been increasing rapidly ever since. Worldwide, approximately 500 million people use homeopathy for their healthcare. Internationally, it is practiced by tens of thousands of MDs and NDs. Retail sales also continue to increase at a growth rate unrivaled in the United States in a century—now estimated to be approximately $1 billion a year.

How is homeopathic medicine made?

Homeopathic remedies are made from substances found in nature (animal, mineral, botanical) through a process of serial dilutions and succussions (vigorous agitation). Each remedy is manufactured according to the Homœopathic Pharmacopœia of the United States following strict formulation requirements. In the case of plant source material, the plants used in the manufacture must be made free of herbicides or pesticides. In the case of a plant source, a tincture of 1 part plant and 9 parts alcohol and water is made (1x) and then combined with alcohol and succussed to make a 2x potency. This process continues using the lower potency to make the next higher x potency. Cs are made from a 2x (1c) by repeatedly diluting 1 part of the lower potency to 99 parts of alcohol—succussing at each potency. The actual substance of plant material becomes more and more dilute, yet more homeopathically potent. Therefore, the strength of a 30x/c is said to be greater than a 6x/c.

How Can Less Be More?

Simply put, when a remedy is made, it is repeatedly diluted and succussed. Thus, there is less material substance; however, as a result of the succussion, the energy of the original material has been made stronger.
What is the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States (HPUS)? The HPUS tells homeopathic medicine manufacturers exactly how the individual remedies must be made. It provides the groundwork for safety: how to make a remedy, what to make a remedy from, the class under which it is made and so on. In this way, homeopathic medicine is different from an herb or supplement because its manufacture is highly regulated. Homeopathic medicine manufactured in the United States must be made in accordance with the HPUS.

Are homeopathic medicines regulated? The manufacturing of homeopathic medicines is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and prepared by licensed companies like Washington Homeopathic Products using strict guidelines of the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States (HPUS), and the current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP) of the FDA. Nearly all homeopathic medicines are available over the counter without a prescription.

Is it safe and are there any side effects? Homeopathic medicine, when used as directed, is generally recognized as safe for babies, children, pregnant women, and adults. However, if you are pregnant or nursing, we do recommend that you consult a licensed practitioner before using any medicine, including homeopathy.

How can I understand the homeopathic potencies or strengths? Homeopathic remedies have been found to be more effective, gentle, and safe because they have been diluted and agitated vigorously (succussed) in the manufacturing process. Homeopathic drug potency is indicated on the label and shown by a number followed by x or c. X indicates a substance base is diluted at a ratio of 1:9 (1 part active to 9 parts inactive—USP dilution alcohol). The ratio for a c potency is 1:99 (1 part active to 99 parts inactive—USP dilution alcohol). The number preceding the x or c signifies the number of times the base substance was diluted and succussed. The number 6, for example, means it has been diluted and succussed 6 times: a 30, 30 times. In homeopathy, the higher the number, the stronger the medicine. Although the actual material substance becomes less and less with each dilution, the energy of the medicine becomes more homeopathically potent. It is generally recommended to start low and work your way up if you are noticing improvement but not complete alleviation of the condition. High strengths (200, 1M and higher) are rarely taken as the higher strength isn’t always better as the high strengths could overshoot the problem. Generally, people start with a low potency and go higher as necessary; this applies to babies, animals, and even rugby players. However, high potencies can be recommended for certain types of emergency situations. Whenever possible, you should follow the guidelines set forth by your practitioner as the best potency to use depending upon the symptom set. This is where the art of homeopathy comes in and many people rely on reference books, classes, or the advice of a homeopathic practitioner.

How do I know whether to take a high or low strength/potency? The strength of a remedy is denoted by a number: the higher the number, the higher the strength. A higher strength isn’t always better than the high strengths could overshoot the problem. Generally, people start with a low potency and go higher as necessary; this applies to babies, animals, and even rugby players. However, high potencies can be recommended for certain types of emergency situations. Whenever possible, you should follow the guidelines set forth by your practitioner as the best potency to use depending upon the symptom set. This is where the art of homeopathy comes in and many people rely on reference books, classes, or the advice of a homeopathic practitioner.

How do I take this medicine? Homeopathic medicine is available in pellets or liquid dilution form. A dose is considered as the number of times a remedy is taken, not the number of pellets or amount of liquid ingested. Each product’s label will provide general dosage instructions. For pellets, pour the pellets into the cap; from the cap, place the remedy under the tongue. Avoid placing the pellets in your
hands. Allow the pellets to dissolve in your mouth. Although the labels on the medicine provide general dosage instructions, one should always defer to his/her practitioner’s instructions when possible. How the medicine is taken is totally dependent upon the severity of the illness or symptom set that is being treated so a homeopathic practitioner or serious self-study is recommended.

**How often do I take the medicine?** The label will provide general information on the frequency of dosage; this is a safe and efficacious way to begin taking a remedy. Ideally one should follow the directions from his/her homeopathic practitioner or homeopathic reference book. As you start to see a measurable improvement, reduce the frequency of dosing or stop taking the medicine altogether. Repeat as needed. Rarely do you take homeopathic remedies every day for a long period of time. In an acute situation, you may see an improvement anywhere from immediately to 24 hours after taking the medicine. If, after taking the medicine, you experience an aggravation (an overstimulation of the healing process), stop the remedy. When the aggravation subsides, consider re-taking the remedy, especially if the condition has improved but no other improvement is forthcoming. The most important aspect of homeopathic treatment is the selection of the correct medicine. No matter what strength the remedy is, if it is the right one, it will have an effect on the body. Just remember, it is seldom necessary to take the medicine for a long period.

**How soon should I notice a result and how often should I take a remedy?** In an emergency, results are typically immediate. Acute problems (for example, a cold) could take a few hours or a day for results to be realized. Consult a practitioner for treating chronic problems. Repeat as directed by your practitioner or in accordance with the label. Typically people reduce or stop repetition as improvement occurs, repeating as necessary. Rarely are remedies taken for extended periods of time.

**Does coffee antidote homeopathic medicine?** It is often said that strong odors such as camphor, coffee (including decaf), and mint can antidote (render ineffective) homeopathic medicines. Be aware of the possibility of antidoting and avoid where possible. If you think you have antidoted the remedy’s action, wait a few days and retake the remedy. WHP has generally observed that in individuals who are accustomed to drinking coffee on a daily basis, remedies are not usually antidoted by their coffee consumption.

**What do you recommend for…?** Unless you are a licensed practitioner, in most states it is not legal to recommend, suggest, or tell anyone what they should take, how they should take it, or at what potency. To do so is considered practicing medicine without a license. However, recommendations can be made for a combination or single remedy if the indication or name on the label matches the person’s condition. Directing people to web sites or reference books so that they may identify the remedy they need is permissible. Ask a WHP sales representative to recommend a book that will work well for your particular needs. We also offer a remedy research section on our website to help you find what you need. Be sure to check out our “How can I find out more?” FAQ on page 4 to learn about organizations that will help you learn more!
Is homeopathy a form of herbal medicine? No. The two systems are very different. Herbal medicines use a much larger dose of plant materials than one gets in a homeopathic remedy. And unlike herbal supplements, which are regulated as dietary supplements, the FDA accepts homeopathic products as medicine.

Can homeopathy be used for animals? Homeopathic medicine can be used for animals. A number of our customers started out using homeopathic medicine for their pets or farm animals. Our variety of dosage forms makes this a bit easier; for example, people may find it easier to use remedies in dilution form or small granules when giving animals homeopathic remedies. Animals respond very well to homeopathic treatment. Again, it is more important to select the right remedy than to worry about how many pellets to give or what strength. Whether an elephant or a bird, the dose is the same. The weight (size) of the animal is not important. The medicine may be given in their drinking water or dissolved in water and dispensed with an eyedropper—which ever is easier.

Why should my family try homeopathy? Homeopathy is used by more than 500 million people worldwide for a wide range of ailments. The system is popular because it’s natural, it works, it’s non-habit forming, and it’s comprehensive with no side effects. What’s more—it’s safe for the very youngest and oldest among us with a safety record unparalleled in the history of medicine. It’s a great option for family use because it’s easily adaptable for self-care.

Can remedies expire or be ruined? The FDA does not require homeopathic medicine to have an expiration date. Therefore, you may safely use homeopathic medicine even if you have had them in your medicine cabinet for years. However, in order to keep remedies effective for years you should store them at room temperature in a dry, dark place and not in the refrigerator. Avoid touching/contaminating them. Also, do not put spilled remedies back in the container and avoid heat higher than 120 degrees, moisture, and extended periods of sunlight.

What does research about homeopathy show? There are a large number of basic science, pre-clinical, and clinical studies as well as a very large quantity of epidemiological evidence showing that homeopathy works. To learn more about these studies, please visit: [https://www.homeopathyworks.com/homeopathic-research/](https://www.homeopathyworks.com/homeopathic-research/)

Can you give an example of the epidemiological evidence for homeopathy? During the great flu pandemic of 1918-19, ordinary medical hospitals had 26,000 admissions with a fatality rate of almost 30%. Homeopathic hospitals had 24,000 admissions with a fatality rate of 1.5%. There are literally thousands of other contemporary and historical examples.

Are there noteworthy people who used or now use homeopathy? Indeed there are! British Royal Family members have been faithful homeopathic patients since the 1830s. Queen Elizabeth and Prince Charles reportedly carry homeopathic remedies with them when they travel. Other noted supporters include Bill Clinton, Abraham Lincoln (and 9 other U.S. Presidents), Mahatma Gandhi, Paul McCartney, Tina Turner, John D. Rockefeller (who used homeopathy throughout his long—98 year—life), and Cindy Crawford (who showed her WHP kit on Oprah). Jazz musician Dizzy Gillespie said, “there have been two revelations in my life—the first was be-bop and the second was homeopathy.” Mother Teresa added homeopathic care to the services of her missions. Mikhail Gorbachev awarded a Soviet physician a gold medal for his work in homeopathy.

Remember… As with all medications, keep homeopathic medicine out of the reach of children. If nursing/pregnant or if relief is not established after 7 days, consult your licensed practitioner.

*The uses for our products are based on traditional homeopathic practice. They have not been reviewed by the Food & Drug Administration.