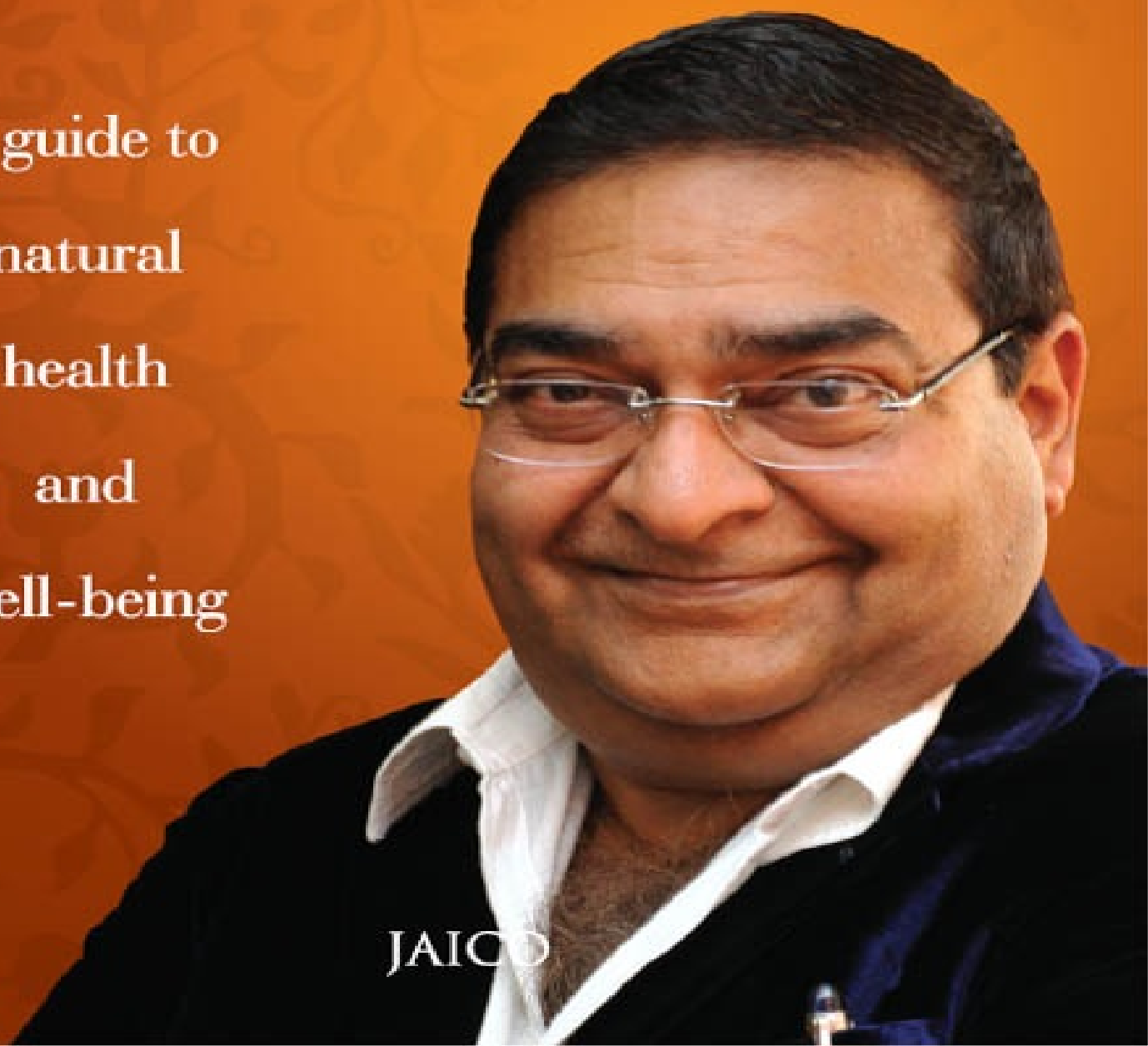


Dr. Mukesh Batra

LCEH, FSRH [MED] P [LOND], MDH [USA], FBIH [UK]

Healing with Homeopathy

a guide to
natural
health
and
well-being



JAICO

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JAICO PUBLISHING HOUSE

Ahmedabad Bangalore Bhopal Bhubaneswar Chennai
Delhi Hyderabad Kolkata Lucknow Mumbai

Published by Jaico Publishing House
A-2 Jash Chambers, 7-A Sir Phirozshah Mehta Road
Fort, Mumbai - 400 001
jaicopub@jaicobooks.com
www.jaicobooks.com

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HEALING WITH HOMEOPATHY
ISBN 978-81-7992-894-3

First Jaico Impression: 2011

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electronic or mechanical including photocopying, recording or by any
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publishers.

For my patients

Because of whom I am who I am and do what I do.

They Said It...

I have no pain, it's all gone. I couldn't move my hands. I had consulted all top homeopaths, all top allopaths, and then I discovered Dr. (Mukesh) Batra.

— Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister, India

The original is always the original and be it Mr. Bajaj, Dr. Batra or Mr. Bachchan in my case, there's no one who comes close to the original but we try, we try.

— Abhishek Bachchan, actor

We are here to talk about the good work that Dr. Batra has done. We feel very fulfilled and inspired and humbled, and blessed.

— Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, actor

I take this opportunity to thank Dr. Mukesh Batra for his endeavour. I believe in homeopathy and I also extend a big thank you to Dr. Batra's whole team...

— Shahrukh Khan, actor

Dr. Batra, what you're doing is outstanding. I'm deeply honoured to be standing on the same stage as you, because of the wonderful work that you do.

— Saif Ali Khan, actor

I want to thank Dr. Batra and Dr. Batra's team, which is the largest Homeopathic team in the world, for helping my 'People For Animals'. I'd like to thank him for all his help.

— Maneka Gandhi, politician, animal rights activist, environmentalist

You have always been on the forefront to help and heal people's illness and I am sure that every year of your life will be dedicated to human service.

— Sunil Dutt, actor and Member of Parliament

Mukesh, you are doing great work to keep our people healthy.

— M.F. Hussain, artist

He's always smiling. He's always positive and constantly with positive mental attitude.

— Vivek Oberoi, actor

Homeopathy medicine is very good because it's natural. It really helps and I am a believer in it. I have known Dr. Batra since I was a little girl. I used to go there with my mom.

— Karishma Kapoor, actor

Fortunately, I met Dr. Batra in 2003 and he helped me understand homeopathy — both at the gross level as well as its subtleties and intricacies. I have been applying the principles of homeopathy to my job at Bajaj. As far as I am concerned, homeopathy is very good for motorcycles as well.

— Rajiv Bajaj, industrialist

As one of those who has benefited immensely by your healing touch, I am quite sure the Speciality Clinic under your leadership will do immense good to the needy.

— M.V. Srinivasan, Ministry of Railways

I've often said to you, 'Doc I don't think I can live without you', and I mean that.

— Simi Garewal, actor

Mukesh, you do so much for all of us all the time that I am often speechless for words.

— Pritish Nandy, writer, editor, poet, and media baron

Words fail me to express our love and gratitude to you. Rare persons like you are already blessed! May God continue to bless you and your good work!

— Swami Nirmalanand, spiritual leader

Mukesh, Blessed

Beyond your body, mind and intellect lies your real Self — Discover it.

— Swami A. Parthasarathy, thinker, scholar, speaker

I read with much pride and happiness the huge strides that you have been making in positive health.

— Ameen Sayani, presenter, the man with the golden voice

Actor ko sirf teen cheezon ki zarurat hoti hai, Empathy ki, Sympathy ki, aur Homeopathy ki. I would like to congratulate Dr. Mukesh Batra for his immense service to mankind and humanity and all that he has done through homeopathy.

— Shekhar Suman, actor

“I have had interesting conversations with Dr (Mukesh) Batra about homeopathic medicine. His work is so inspiring.”

— Tusshar Kapoor, actor

“We inherit ‘Kalakaari’ from God. Each one of us is ‘Kalakaar’ in some, or the other field. Some people cook, some people can’t. Some people sing, others can dance. But those people who really worship their ‘Kalakaari’, cultivate it, and use it in life ahead for a noble cause — they are true ‘kalakaars’. (When I spoke to Dr Mukesh Batra) I got to know so much that he has done in life... (which) perhaps I and you cannot achieve in one life. It is a huge honour standing beside him, a (true) healer and Kalakaar.”

— Amrita Rao, actor



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introduction



part one

chapter

01

living my
dreams



The passion for healing runs in my family. However, when I was a boy, I never ever contemplated being a doctor. Quite frankly, I was appalled at the idea of charging a fee to help people in pain.

In time, I took up medicine, but not simply because both my parents were doctors. I chose homeopathy only because I believed it would be easy. Too late, I discovered that it was just as rigorous a field as any other medical science. The homeopathy college I went to was responsible for this discovery, as well as for giving me the understanding that homeopathy is only effective when taught and practised as a science with a modicum of art and intuition blended in. Although there were, and still are, many homeopathy colleges, only a handful of them produce suitably qualified homeopathy graduates.

Whilst studying homeopathy, I completed my BA in psychology. This, I felt, would provide a compass and radar with which I could fathom the mental make-up of my patients. Although disease manifests itself physically, it is usually strongly rooted in the mind.

I graduated in medicine in 1973 and got married that same year. I had initially thought of postponing my wedding until I was more financially stable. But fate, in the form of an irate, prospective father-in-law intervened, “Either you marry my daughter now, or you stop seeing her.” We married.

Those early years proved to be a huge struggle.

Having chosen my career, or having been chosen by it, I pursued my medical practice with diligence and fidelity. I was offered a teaching post at my alma mater at a salary of INR 450 a month, which in those days was a fairly decent wage. I was also among the only alumni to be offered a teaching position so soon after completing my degree. When I turned it down, my parents were aghast. What I sought was clinical experience, so I chose to become an intern at

a charitable clinic at a modest INR 150 per month. With a wife to support, it wasn't easy.

For nine years, I lived with my family in a one-room apartment and that too courtesy of a well-meaning friend who rented me the place on easy payment terms. I had to change three buses between my residence and my Malabar Hill workplace. I never took a single holiday even if it meant wading through knee-high water, or reporting to work sick. Outings were often a cup of coffee and a *batata vada* split between me and my wife at an Irani restaurant. Fortunately, I received salary hikes and the patients began to trust me. When a friend offered me a flat, I gathered up the courage to start my own clinic, albeit small.

In those days, people liked to have their own doctor — like their own tailor, or hairdresser. As more and more people came to know me, my practice began to pick up.

The breakthrough came in 1982, when I started a well-appointed clinic in south Mumbai. My clinic was full of patients, some cheerful, but mostly tired and anxious. By lunch time, the crowd would thin-out leaving just a couple of patients usually with the most difficult diseases.

I have always considered it a huge responsibility to be entrusted with another's well-being. Realising how desperately people depend on me is what has always driven me to do my best. This is why I deal with patients, not with a doctor's professional guarded approach, but with humility, empathy and optimism.

I always wanted to make homeopathy popular among the masses. Keeping this in mind, I began to write columns for newspapers and magazines. I vividly remember my initial articles being flung into the wastepaper basket by editors with a good arm, but poor foresight. Today, I am besieged with requests for columns. At one time, no publisher wanted books on homeopathy. Now here you are, reading my fourth! Everything has changed. Only a few years ago, it was socially *déclassé* to be a homeopath. Today, I treat all kinds of patients ranging from the common man to celebrities, authors, artists, top actors, and heads of states including prime ministers, governors and chief ministers.

Not that the journey's been easy. I worked day and night to popularise homeopathy and take it everywhere, including into the villages. For me, there

has never been anything like an urban-rural divide. There are just people who are sick and need treatment, wherever they may be located.

Everybody everywhere needs to benefit from the advantages of homeopathy. A conventional medical doctor (allopath) simply looks at the patients and hears their symptoms before choosing from a wide range of patented drugs that will temporarily relieve their condition. A good homeopath, on the other hand, must understand the patient's physical, mental, and psychological history to be able to prescribe a medicine that will both control the symptoms and cure the disease. With this objective in mind, I began to computerise patient records, as early as 1982.

In the early days, this homeopathic attention to detail did lead to a few embarrassing situations. I remember the genteel outrage of society ladies when quizzed about the regularity of their periods!

The trouble was that I seemed and looked too young to be a serious doctor. So I was faced with a dual challenge. First, to establish homeopathy as a respectable, credible medical option. And second, to establish myself as a respectable and credible homeopath.

I found it difficult to overcome the stereotypical connect between age and wisdom. If women would balk at sharing personal information, men would look uneasy about the pills that I, as a young medic, was prescribing for them. Since I couldn't age myself, I did the next best thing — I aged my appearance with a pair of thick-framed, prescription-free glasses that added 15 years to my credibility!

The other stereotype I needed to crack was the image of homeopathy as a musty, traditional system based on plant and animal extracts. People needed to appreciate the modernity and logic of homeopathy. At that point, not too many people had too much faith in homeopathy, although the system was and remains popular in West Bengal. It was a daunting task, but hardly mission impossible.

What was needed was an image makeover. People perceived homeopaths as kindly fuddy-duddies dispensing sweet little sugar pills. I set out to cultivate a deliberately upmarket identity for homeopathy. As you might imagine, upmarket costs money. My plan was going to need considerable investment.

The first outlay was on a swanky clinic. I was determined that it should look like a million bucks and smack of a progressive, futuristic air. And so, borrowing at an exorbitant 36 per cent, I set up a clinic that even today would give most art galleries a run for their money. I also built a music collection that could cater to the patients' most unusual requests, "Could you please play me a minimalistic piece by Mozart?" It even sported a gumball machine for temperamental little folks.

The next was product packaging. No more little glass bottles where it was always tricky to pour out the right number of pills. Instead, we devised blister packs with the exact dose mechanically pre-packed and hygienically sealed, to be emptied directly into the mouth.

I have continued to invest and innovate towards providing the finest treatment. My patients are kings, even gods to me. I'm here to take care of their health and well-being in the best way.

For critics of homeopathy, I have documented clinical evidence in piles of albums displaying 'before' and 'after' case pictures, patient testimonials, and authenticated medical investigation reports recording the efficacy of homeopathy. No tall claims, but real-time results achieved through homeopathy.

My need to reach out to people is as great as their need for quality homeopathy. Where I could have personally consulted a limited number of patients a day, I developed a reliable model that was scalable and enabled the consultation of a huge number of patients every day. This is a strategy that has really worked because I believe in delegation, not in control or micromanagement.

My speciality clinics deal with several disorders. Patients want miracles, but we provide realistic assessments of recovery on the first visit itself and follow-up with good results even when it is a stubborn and difficult-to-treat illness. We do not, of course, treat hernias and heart attacks. A good homeopath has to know his limitations.

Although almost everyone in my close family are homeopaths, including my son Akshay and his wife Ushma, I still wouldn't call this a family tradition — not yet anyway!

Akshay enjoys Western music and the arts. This isn't a disqualification for a doctor; in fact, it's a plus point. Surrounded by illness, a doctor cannot afford to lose his sensitivity to suffering. You have to be able to empathise without becoming emotional. Feel without getting feelings mixed up. Music is a wonderful way to keep your mind clear and your sensitivities alive.

I have a great passion for arts — right from the time I was in school (Campion) when I acted in productions directed by Pearl and Alyque Padamsee. I used to know plays by William Shakespeare and George Bernard Shaw by heart, and can still recite passages from *Richard II*. I remain an avid theatre and film enthusiast and really enjoyed my stint on the Film Censor Board and on the jury panel of *Filmfare* awards.

I haven't yet reached the peak. I have to move laterally; I have to evolve from the soul. In working terms, it means listening to my mind's melodies, because the professional hazard of seeing so much pain should not desensitise us — medical doctors and healthcare providers.

Many of my patients were also closely involved in things that have gone into the making of my clinic and it is this involvement that has really touched my heart. Amongst the several artworks that my clinic boasts of, the most precious to me are those contributed by patients. On my table, sits a plump Ganesha created by B. Vithal after he was treated for a health problem. My first clinic has a ceiling painted by M. F. Hussain, who lying down as a patient realised that it was no fun looking up at a blank space and proceeded to improve the view! My brochures have been designed by a Lintas ad-man who felt he owed it to homeopathy. A good-looking couch that tilts back 180° is courtesy of a designer patient who declared that I needed a chair that tilts. So now I have the inclination, if not the time! But, I have squeezed-in time for personal passions. I enjoy photography and travelling and this has translated into an annual exhibition of pictures taken by me and Akshay. Although I began to learn singing only recently, the response to my first public performance attended by friends, family, and patients was so heartwarming that I may attempt a repeat.

I am still weaving dreams for my company and myself. Taking homeopathy to a society brought up on a diet of TV and quick-fixes is both a challenge and a duty. I am busy planning new strategies so that people's interest in homeopathy never wanes.

I started out at a charity clinic and will continue to make charity a part of all that I do both personally and professionally. I have turned vegetarian to reduce animal suffering, and support the work of People For Animals. Dr Batras' Positive Health Foundation supports orphanages and old-age homes with free treatment and medicines. We sponsor the education of deserving homeopathy students and donate to the blind. My company has instituted India's first health awards — Dr Batra's Positive Health Awards (PHA) — which recognises those who have overcome disease and disability to lead positive, purposeful lives.

I caught a spark in an idea. I've ignited it for the world... reaching out to people who want quality holistic healthcare.

Life can never be still for me.

preface:
bad medicine*A Pill For Every Ill?*

Popping pills whether for a mild skin, rash or low-grade fever, is now seen. as normal. It isn't. Self-medication, be it prescription, or over-the-counter (OTC) products, has become the enemy of good health and exposes you to the risk of, sometimes dangerous, side-effects.

When asked what he wanted to be when he grew up, a child responded, “It is easier to tell you what I don’t want to be.”

I intend to answer the question of “Why homeopathy?” similarly, by showing you what system of medicine you should not be following.

What holds the key to your choice of medical options is the question, do you want to feel better, or do you want to get well? Can medicine achieve both? If so, what kind of medicine?

From the moment we are born, medicine dominates our life. Knowingly or unknowingly. Do you know, for example, what is in the intravenous (IV) drip given to you at the time of delivery, or to your newborn? Nor are you likely aware of the toxic additives in the injectibles babies are tickled with even before they start to cry when they enter an unfamiliar world. The doctor never tells you simply because you don’t ask him. Hardly his fault.

Yet, it is vital to understand what we are doing to ourselves, and, worse, what we are allowing to be done to us in the name of modern medicine.

Open Dangers

‘Medicalisation’ is the name of the game. From anti-analgesics, anti-pyretics, anti-spasmodics, anti-allergens, and antibiotics to vitamin supplements and vaccines, there’s a whole buffet out there. With plenty of takers.



Medicine Deaths?

The Journal of the American Medical Association reports that there are more than two million medication-related reactions annually in the USA alone, resulting in over one lakh deaths.

Let me illustrate the point. You have a bout of fever. You visit a doctor. You are prescribed a certain medicine. You take it. You get well. From then on, the chemist becomes your medicine man. Whenever a fever, infection, or similar illness strikes, off you go to him for the same medicine without understanding its sphere of action, or side-effects. So, you could be taking antibiotics even for viral fever or viral infections against which they are completely powerless.

Not only are the drugs you are unwittingly pumping into yourself not helpful, but they could actually be causing you great harm. For one, they can cause gastric problems — diarrhoea or constipation. To overcome each, you pop either an antacid or a laxative. Over time, their effects reduce, so you increase the dose. So, taking one medication is forcing you to take another, and the more you have of one, the more of it you need. The result of this bizarre situation is compromised health for you, and a burgeoning bottom line for the INR 1,12,500 crore antacid and INR 90,500 crore laxative industry.

And, we haven’t yet even started on all the other over-the-counter (OTC) medicines.

There’s a pill for every ill. OTC medication is easily available, widely used, and practically useless. We are guilty of consuming huge quantities of nasal drops, throat lozenges, pimple creams, and all manner of lotions and potions that may not kill, but certainly cannot cure. The OTC medicine market, currently pegged at INR 20,25,000 crore, is thanks to you, growing at an astonishing annual rate of 20 per cent.

Most surprisingly, your doctor is nowhere in the picture. He cannot and does not know that you are having medicines all on your own. Often inappropriately.

There are many illnesses that do not require medical intervention. Self-limiting illnesses ease and disappear on their own. For example, a simple cold simply needs you to rest for a day or two. Instead, we attack it with an array of strong drugs. These not only fail to cure the cold, but actually weaken the body's natural defences.

A stress-induced headache is only a passing symptom that resolves with rest and sleep. Nobody allows this to happen, instead they bombard it with painkillers. The result is a pattern that becomes repetitive — a habit or dependence on anti-inflammatory medications along with the risk of their numerous side-effects. Most medicines — right from antipyretics and anti-inflammatories to antacids — adversely impact our immunity.

Apart from ineffective and unnecessary medication, there is also the danger of overmedication. The tendency to simply prescribe medicines and often too many medicines, in order to satisfy or reassure patients, is on the rise. There is greater emphasis on alleviating symptoms rather than curing the disease.

It is ironic that it is this overuse of drugs that is making more and more people sick. Drug-induced illnesses are known as *iatrogenic illnesses*.

To cite just one example — high blood pressure medication (anti-hypertensive drugs) causes impotence. However, it is not uncommon for doctors to endlessly and ineffectively treat impotence without investigating the real cause, which may be a possible side-effect of anti-hypertensive medication.

What does this mean? Conventional or allopathic medicine is far too focused on treating illness rather than preventing it.



Root Canal Effect

Microbes can multiply in the tiny canals in the dentine and slowly infiltrate the lymphatic system. What's more, normally harmless microbes can also become virulent or toxic, because of anaerobic conditions that exist in 'diseased' teeth.

Root canal treatment can also sometimes lead to intestinal dysbiosis, apart from cancer, heart disease, arthritis, kidney disease and autoimmune disorders.

Medicine Excess

The widespread use of antibiotics entitles them to their own discussion. First, the background. Our natural intestinal florae are composed of lactobacteria. These are 'good' bacteria which not only help us to digest and absorb food, but also protect us against ingested harmful 'bad' bacteria. When you have a healthy intestinal flora, it takes millions of salmonella bacteria, for instance, to cause infection. When you have dysbiosis or microbial imbalance in the body, it takes just a handful to cause illness.

At the onset of any bacterial infection, the patient is routinely advised a course of antibiotics to destroy or inhibit the growth of bacteria. When antibiotics are prescribed appropriately, they are effective. When inappropriate or overused, they have a downside.

One major side-effect of antibiotics is candidiasis (fungal infection). Other side-effects include allergies, stomach upset, diarrhoea and vaginal yeast infections in women. Studies also evidence that children who frequently receive broad-spectrum antibiotics are about nine times more likely to suffer from asthma.

Apart from antibiotics, there are other powerful drugs used in long-term therapies that kill or suppress our natural intestinal bacteria. This provides the perfect breeding ground for parasites and harmful bacteria causing dysbiosis and recurring infections.

The Wrong and Wrong of It

Conventional or modern medicine defines health simply as the 'absence of disease'. A physical condition along with its packages of symptoms is labelled an illness. The remedy? To 'attack', 'fight' and 'demolish' the obvious symptoms of the disease, without addressing its cause.

Research is hardly ever focused on how to prevent the illness, for instance, cancer, but only how to assail it with powerful medication and invasive techniques. The fundamental objective in the process is to 'manage' pain and destroy apparent symptoms rather than treat the illness from the root. Some examples:

- *High blood pressure:* Conventional medicine uses drugs to lower blood pressure levels. Nowhere in the process does it address the cause that elevated the blood pressure in the first place.
- *High cholesterol:* Conventional medicine uses drugs to synthetically reduce cholesterol levels without figuring out the reason for those raised levels. In reality, raising its cholesterol levels is a self-protective response by the body. The real problem lies elsewhere.
- *Depression:* Conventional medicine “bombards” depressive individuals with toxic, anti-depressant drugs. This merely masks emotional and psychological issues, which could even be a result of simple nutritional or dietetic imbalance (for instance, a lack of Omega-3 essential fatty acids).



TB — The Great Leveller

Tuberculosis is no longer a disease of the poor. It has infiltrated affluent societies today, through domestic staff and the influx of construction workers, living in nearby slums.

Conventional medicine overlooks the role of the environment, water and air quality, social factors, nutritional and financial deficiencies, and psychological issues in the onset of illness.

A majority of our modern diseases are the result of lifestyle and psychosomatic factors. However, doctors continue to try and ‘fix’ them with medication rather than addressing the cause.



Cancer Upsurge

Over a hundred years ago, cancer was uncommon. There is clear evidence today that chemotherapy and candida (fungal infection) and other fungi, for instance, are the ‘source’ of leukaemia (blood cancer). Research also shows that there are fungal spores present in every sample of cancer tissue studied.

Take for example, water. Polluted rivers and lakes as well as over-chlorinated tanks and reservoirs are health hazards. Man-made water resources with their hard water content are triggers of heart disease, kidney stones, and premature greying of hair. Similarly, noise can be injurious to health. Loud music has been

blamed for deafness, while there is evidence that expectant mothers living close to airports, a high decibel zone, give birth to premature babies.



Toxic 'Burden

Not all of us realise that it is the chemical nature of materials used to build and, furnish our homes and offices, for example, chemical paints, that are feeding directly into the toxic burden our bodies must bear somehow — can we treat them with medicines?

Workers in closed concrete office spaces with no access to fresh air or proper ventilation, exposed to long hours of electromagnetic radiation from machines, fall ill frequently. They are actually 'sick' — from working, or living, in isolation from natural surroundings. A doctor cannot cure Sick Building Syndrome (SBS), it needs an architect.

Similarly, the increased toxicity levels from modern gadgets in our modern homes cannot be combated with medicines alone.

Then there is stress, depression and aggressive behaviour that can sometimes result from excessive TV viewing, especially among children and youth.

Environmental, sociological, psychological, and psychosomatic issues cannot be addressed by drugs alone.



Did You Know?

*Today's Wonder Drugs
Tomorrow's Killer Drugs*

Ten years down the line, the miracle drugs of today will often be debunked as medical garbage due to increased side-effects or after-effects.

They are replaced by other wonder/killer drugs.

The cycle continues...

When modern vaccine therapy was first introduced during the last century, it spectacularly improved our ability to prevent illnesses — from polio to flu. All seemed well and good until studies began to reveal major side-effects along with

collateral damage. Many conventional physicians themselves are of the view that vaccines suppress our immunity, leaving us vulnerable to a number of illnesses. The latest debate relates to the new swine flu (H1N1) vaccine, Tamoxifen, which thanks to its alarming side-effects, is said to be a case of the cure being worse than the disease!

Medical drug disasters are again an off-shoot of modern healthcare.

For example, the contraceptive pill was hailed as the greatest invention after the evolution of the bicycle. If the latter ‘engineered’ the Industrial Revolution, the former brought about a social revolution, transforming sexual attitudes and reducing unwanted pregnancies and abortions. Decades later, the same pill is suspected to be a carcinogen.

Similarly, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) were regarded as a miracle, a panacea for pain, until it was found they caused gastric bleeding and haemorrhage.

Why, even the good, old streptomycin, long touted as a boon for tuberculosis, was found to cause deafness. In fact, many of the medicines that are still in use and freely available in India like Novalgin — and others — have long been banned as health hazards in the West.

The same is the case with medical theories.

Obesity Multiplies into Diabetes

Thirty years ago, the rates of obesity and type-2 diabetes were stable. However, when health authorities in the US, for example, started debunking foods containing fats and cholesterol and recommended eating more carbohydrates, obesity increased from 15 per cent to 25 per cent within a span of 10 years. Today, it continues to rise at a whopping 40-45 per cent, worldwide. Consequently, type-2 diabetes became an epidemic as a result of the increased number of obese children who developed it.

Technological Miracles: Where Safe isn’t Safe

Computerised tomography (CT scans), a huge technological advance, widely used to detect deviations, including tumours, expose patients to large amounts of radiation that have been shown to increase the risk of cancer. Studies published in *The Archives of Internal Medicine* link CT scans to increased risk of cancer. One has predicted that a single heart scan at age 40 could result in cancer in one in 270 women and one in 600 men. The younger the patient, the higher the risk.

It is also a fact that even a single well-administered brain scan, routinely used on patients to spot a stroke, or aneurysm, especially in accident victims, delivers the equivalent radiation of hundreds of chest X-rays.

The Specialisation Spectre

Specialisation and super-specialisation are the new medical mantras. By definition, specialists examine specific body parts separately. Not only does this lead to the absence of a holistic overview of the patient's physical condition, but it also over-looks the psychosomatic or mind-body connection, which often holds the key to the illness. Too focused, as they are, on physical symptoms, specialists ignore emotional health and well-being.



Did You Know?

Men screened for prostate cancer have a 2.04 per cent risk of dying from the disease. A man who doesn't get screened has a 300 per cent risk. 70 per cent of diagnosed prostate cancers could be left untreated with little harm.

Yet, millions of men are subjected to painful radiation, nauseating hormone treatments, and prostate removal — with the end-result being impotence, incontinence and, worse still, death.

With too many cooks, there is not only more chance of spoiling the broth, but there is also less interaction and involvement with individual patients. This has led to lowered levels of patient satisfaction. Unlike the erstwhile family doctor, you now have the general practitioner who is only too keen to refer you to a specialist or two. Call it 'networking' of sorts — at the expense of your health and wallet.

Multiple Chemical Sensitivities

Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS) is today a new medical diagnosis. Unlike other ailments and just like SBS (Sick Building Syndrome), it cannot be traced to a specific bacteria or virus.

What makes MCS and SBS so difficult to ‘trap and tag’ is that there are thousands of chemicals interacting in as many ways, affecting different people in different ways.



Addictive Medicine

Bad medicine is good medicine for pharma groups. For example, you have a self-limiting cough or disturbed sleep for a few days. You gulp a cough syrup that contains codeine, an addictive substance. Over a period of time, you get used to the substance, so much so you will have to increase its intake to feel better. Likewise, a sleeping pill. It leads to a state of medicinal dependence and subsequent side-effects — some of them, serious.

What causes you to have an allergy might send your colleague home with a headache — even when the same chemical combination is the trigger for either health issue.

The paradox is that modern medicine has not been able to impact a host of simple afflictions like acne, allergies, and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) or many degenerative chronic illnesses like arthritis and backache as well as serious, ‘headline-grabbing’ diseases like diabetes, cancer and AIDS.

Since it is apparent that medical technological advances have not provided a cure-all or panacea for every ill, let us return to an old adage. The less the medicine, the better it is.

The ‘Sickening’ Pharma Industry

Pharmaceutical drugs or medicines don’t actually treat the illness or disease — they only manage the apparent symptoms. What they also do is cause harmful side-effects and with long-term use, lower your natural immunity. This means that you are more ‘open’ or susceptible to more illness — a state that would require more drugs. It is a vicious cycle.

It must be emphasised that drugs, in any form, are more or less toxic. The more powerful the drug (chemical), the more toxic it is. Yet, putting more and more people on medication is a common practice today.

More and more studies are finding that an increasing number of people are turning hypertensive in our stressful world. The ideal blood pressure measurement is 120/80 mmHg. Now, conventional experts argue that even a marginal increase can be a precursor — so, it's better to circumvent the possibility with early, appropriate medical treatment.

Guess what this means? Getting even more people 'hooked' on to anti-hypertensive medication.

Why so? When pharma companies bring in more and more people into the ill-health bracket — they sell more pills and boast of healthier profits.

Pharma companies heap lavish gifts on doctors including everything-paid-for holidays and professional 'jaunts' in foreign countries in return for the doctor prescribing their company's medicines to large numbers of patients.

It is also not uncommon for companies to fund fake journals, or fudge studies of drugs they intend to promote as wonder drugs — with a 'proven' tag — to unsuspecting patients.

Institutionalisation of Medicine

Conventional medicine has robbed us of our natural ability to take part in our healing process. This applies most particularly to women who are prescribed contraceptive pills, hysterectomies, mastectomies, hormone replacement therapy (HRT), needless caesarean births and so on. The system is planned to take control away from the person and place it in the hands of exorbitantly expensive professionals.

Just like hotels, private hospitals want full occupancy. And unlike hotels, they retain the prerogative to decide the length of your stay. So, you will find hospitals not ready to discharge patients during weekends, even though the doctors have their weekly-off on those days. Extending your stay is a great way

to boost profits.



Medical Red-Tape

You have to pay a hefty deposit before any private hospital will admit you — no matter the nature of the emergency or criticality of the case.

Should a patient die in hospital, his body is held ‘hostage’ until the bill is cleared.

Nor do these hospitals lean in favour of good, competent doctors as these do not rope-in large numbers of patients for extended hospitalisation. Instead, hospitals prefer doctors with the talent to fill beds. This is what it takes to run plush establishments and rake-in profits.

Private hospitals also want operation theatres to be booked for a certain number of days. So, surgeries are often performed more for the hospital’s health than yours. There is the additional advantage that the patient will need hospitalisation to recoup.

Nor do hospitals or their doctors take responsibility for your treatment. You are asked to sign a consent form without which they will not proceed. You have no choice. So, God forbid, if something goes wrong, the hospital cannot be held accountable.

Writes Dr Robert Mendelsohn, Professor of Medicine at the University of Illinois, USA, “I do not believe in Modern Medicine. I am a heretic. I believe that Modern Medicine’s treatment is more dangerous than the diseases they are designed to treat. I believe that more than 90 per cent of Modern Medicine could disappear from the face of the Earth — doctors, hospitals, drugs, and equipment — and, the effect upon our health would be immediate and beneficial... For the hospital is the temple of the Church of Modern Medicine and, thus, the most dangerous place on Earth... There is plenty to be afraid of.”

Let us instead build a new faith. There is no need to fall sick. After all, being healthy is the body’s natural state. And, recovering one’s health can be done naturally.

There is a holistic system of medicine that shows you how. At once safe, sane,

humane, gentle, and free from side-effects, it is simple and also natural medicine.

Homeopathy.

Effective, affordable, non-invasive, easily administered and pleasurable to partake, homeopathy is the medicine for today and tomorrow. Choose it for optimal health and holistic well-being.

the
story
of
homeopathy



hahnemann

01 his life & times



A Polyglot's Polyglot

Hahnemann excelled in 14 languages and the sciences, from an early age. He even assisted his tutor in teaching Greek to fellow students.

No wonder then, the young lad was inexorably drawn towards a career in medical science, thanks to his creatively ingenious bent of mind.

Samuel Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy, was born on April 10, 1755, in Meissen — a small German town famous for porcelain and Meissen china. Meissen porcelain's signature logo, the crossed swords, is one of the oldest trademarks in existence.

Hahnemann's father, a poor porcelain painter, was a thoroughly practical man. He instilled in his son the yen to follow "what was good and worthy." He encouraged him to read and write, learn new things, be inquisitive, and never ever dither from expressing his viewpoint or from differing. He also impressed upon him, "Never be a passive listener, or learner." The lad's mentor in many ways, he also imparted to his talented son a clear sense of moral direction — to live and act without pretence. Samuel never forgot his father's ageless maxim. This shaped his destiny, as a true medical visionary. It also helped him to fulfil his futuristic, landmark discovery called homeopathy.

Nature to Nurture

From his childhood, Hahnemann was fond of nature, the hills, the landscape and

the environment. He built a herbarium of plants and tended to them with the love of a gardener. Call it coincidence, or providence, plants were destined to play a key role in his famous medical experiments later.

Hahnemann first enrolled at the University of Leipzig to study medicine. He was 20. His economic shortcomings never hampered his quest, or dream, to be a doctor of the top draw. To augment his paltry allowance, Hahnemann began to take up translation work for a fee. He soon went to Vienna, the famed seat of learning, as a coming-of-age medical student. There was a strong reason for this shift — to gain quality clinical exposure and experience. He was, however, again under the weather financially — predictably, he gave up his studentship in less than a year's time. Destiny was manifest, because the young medic made a good impression on one of Vienna's leading doctors, Professor von Quarin. Quarin got him the authorisation to practice medicine as a family doctor.



Penury & Tragedy

Hahnemann recounts how the family scrubbed laundry with raw potatoes, because they could not afford soap. Worse still, he lost one of his newborn sons in a carriage accident when he was hounded from, one town to another by his detractors.

Hahnemann was, of course, far from being happy — so, he moved from one medical position to another. Yet, in the midst of his professional turmoil, he continued to convey his disenchantment with the medical practices of his time through his writings. He believed that orthodox medicine was injurious to one's health.

It was the era of barbaric practices — for instance, conventional doctors routinely used bleeding and excessive purging to treat diseases — even in self-limiting illnesses. They also used extremely strong and powerful medicines that were more likely to poison than heal. Hahnemann was disgusted. He dreamed and pondered over a new idea — how to make medicine safe, effective, sane, humane and gentle.

Poverty & Scarcity

Hahnemann was, indeed, just one among a few of his time to step into the portals of a university and graduate with an MD. This was a big step — a giant leap for his brilliant mind.



Not by Bread Alone

The amount or quantity of bread Hahnemann earned was, for too long, too small for his large family. He lived with them in a single room separated by a curtain.... What was not lacking was love. In his words, "Four daughters and one son together with my wife constitute the spice of my life."

By the time he married Joanna, Hahnemann was thoroughly disenchanted with the gaping flaws of medical practice. He gave up his medical career out of sheer repulsion. His beliefs now began to undergo a revolution. He mustered support for what was up-and-coming in his mind as a completely new medical concept — an *avant-garde* method — on the verge of drastically changing the face of medicine and his own life.

In the meanwhile, orthodox or conventional medicine's 'assaults' on Hahnemann and his new ideas for a new, sane, humane and gentle system of healing became increasingly well-orchestrated. This led to a vicious campaign of persecution. It soon reached its crescendo. It made Hahnemann's life in Leipzig almost impossible. He was even abused and, also not surprisingly, hounded out of town.

Hahnemann's Eureka Moment

The greatest of discoveries, or inventions, are often strokes of good fortune, or pure chance. Homeopathy was no exception.

When Hahnemann was engaged in the translation of William Cullen's classical work, *Lectures on the Materia Medica*, in 1790, he could not resist, or contain his excitement. Cullen's statement that cinchona (quinine) bark possessed specific febrifugal (fever-relieving) action, because it was both the most aromatic and the most bitter substance known, triggered and aroused his scientific mind. Also, his curiosity. Not one to accept a word for a word, right from his childhood, Hahnemann felt that this was a far too simplistic

overstatement — there were any number of substances, not just barks, having extremely bitter and fragrant properties. None of them, perhaps, had the medicinal strength to cure fevers, no less malaria-like symptoms.

Cinchona to Hahnemann was what the falling apple was to Isaac Newton.



Monumental Honour

Hahnemann's monument in Paris, made of polished granite, stands 14 feet tall. It is adorned with the inscription, Hahnemann, Founder de Homœopath, followed by his date of birth, death, and other basic information. The inscription also includes the motto of homeopathy, Similia Similibus Curentur, with a secondary inscription, Non iniutilis vixi — meaning, "I did not live in vain."

He wanted to find out the why and how of cinchona's 'feverish' effect, right from the word go. He made a decoction of cinchona bark. He drank it. Much to his amusement, he developed symptoms akin to malaria. He now expounded his new principle — cinchona can cause malaria-like fever, so can cure the same illness. The cinchona analysis was the precursor — the benchmark for the progress of his cutting-edge ideas that now turned medicine on its head. His fame began to now spread, far and wide, as the founder of homeopathy, a system that was on the verge of demystifying traditional medicine.

French Renaissance

Four years after Joanna passed away, having lived all her married life in poverty, a new lady entered Hahnemann's life. Her name — Melanie D'Hervilly Gohier, a young, attractive, and well-connected French artiste.

Nearly forty years younger, Melanie was magnetically drawn to Hahnemann, thanks to his new medical invention. She became his patient, his student, and also his fan. She proposed and Hahnemann agreed to marry her. Quite soon, the newly married couple moved to Paris.

Hahnemann began to establish a flourishing medical practice in the French capital. He became a celebrity and the most-favoured doctor of the rich and the famous, who also offered free treatment to the poor. It's a story for another day that Melanie used her extraordinary relationship with Hahnemann to reap

extraordinary riches after his death — on July 2, 1843, at age 88 — through the publication of some of his as-yet-unpublished works and other writings.

It's also sad that after Hahnemann was buried in a solemn ceremony, his resting place was trampled by two more graves. His crypt was later reinterred in a grandiose tomb, everything paid for by his American admirers, in the exalted Cimetière du Père Lachaise, where many legends are buried — most notably, the great classical composer and pianist Frédéric François Chopin, and singer Edith Piaf.

Hahnemann may now be smiling from his final resting place, looking at the dramatic ways in which his seminal ideas — once scoffed-at and also ridiculed — are being accepted by millions worldwide today.

mastermind & visionary



Hahnemann's 20-20 Vision

Hahnemann could amazingly diagnose with his 'mind's eye' illnesses that sometimes go unnoticed, even with modern technology or diagnostic methods.

Hahnemann was a doctor far ahead of his time. He was also a medical activist who looked at and visualised medicine out-of-the-box. He preceded the 'scope' era — in other words, the microscope, the stethoscope, the otolaryngoscope and so on.

He Thought of Germs without Gadgets

Do you know that at a time when there were no microscopic, clinical or laboratory tests, Hahnemann visualised, in his fertile mind, the principles of infectious or contagious diseases? Better still, he successfully treated, with homeopathic medicines, the deadly epidemics — typhus, cholera and flu, among others — which devastated Europe in the first half of the nineteenth century.

He 'X-rayed' Epidemics

Hahnemann was the first to suggest that epidemics generated from a single source, or a similar disease, long before epidemiology was established. He also described how individuals are impacted by infectious agents — the more virulent the disease, the greater the strain and the more individuals it affects. In other words, Hahnemann's perceptive ideas preceded modern immunology.



Hahnemann & Mesmer

Hahnemann made approving references to Anton Mesmer, including Mesmerism, now called hypnosis. He also made a connection between his idea of vital force — or, prana in Sanskrit, which, he believed brought about healing — and Mesmer's animal magnetism — the 'power' that enables hypnosis.

New discoveries in medical sciences — for example, virus infections — confirm Hahnemann's intuitive leaps that many diseases are caused by infection.

Sculptor of the Conscious



Why Hahnemann Disapproved Of 'Bad Medicine'

Hahnemann was an irrepressible critic of the established practice of conventional medicine of his time — a form of medical intervention, based more on a code of belief rather than fact. This included certain maddening procedures, such as the application of leeches to suck 'diseased' blood, purge, and blister, not to speak of the insensitive treatment of the mentally ill — and, the use of large, dangerous doses of sulphur and mercury.

Hahnemann strongly believed that the basic causes of illnesses started in the mind. He thought of the mind-body connect, when psychology was just a small part of philosophy. His observations preceded, in effect, the work of Sigmund Freud. Hahnemann gave precedence to the role of dreams when Freud — who founded psychoanalysis and interpreted dreams — was not even born. Hahnemann looked at and studied dreams, as radiating snapshots of the mind. He interpreted their peculiarities to diagnose illnesses and prescribe suitable homeopathic remedies to resolve them. He also looked at mental symptoms, temperament, sensibilities and sensitivities — not to speak of idiosyncrasies — several decades before they became standard psychological expressions.

He Treated the Mentally Ill in a Humane Manner

From mediaeval times, conventional doctors, and other therapists, or crude healers, considered mental illnesses, or insanity, as the handiwork of demons, or 'bad' spirits. They also regarded the insane as 'wild animals'. The 'cures' they

meted out to them, in the form of therapy, was primarily punishment, including chaining. Hahnemann abhorred these inhuman and tragic methods, because he was one of those rare, enlightened doctors who perceived mental sickness as illnesses that required humane treatment, not diabolical, uncivilised measures that were in vogue — under the garb of medical treatment. He, thus, brought to humanity's doorstep a new form of medical science, a gentle form of rational healing.

Homeopathic healing, which Hahnemann revolutionised, takes place through the precise, subtle action of tender, natural remedies on the mind-body-spirit core of the individual, or patient. In other words, homeopathy corrects the imbalance that exists in the mind-body-spirit hub — or, the real cause of illness — that we experience. Put simply, when the balance of body and mind, as Hahnemann suggested, is restored, it frees us of illness from the inside out, or from the root.

The First Doctor to Think of Vaccination

Modern vaccination therapy has eradicated polio and many such destructive diseases worldwide. But, did you know that years before vaccination was invented, Hahnemann had conceived and charted a course for it? This was a landmark in the annals of medical science.

Hahnemann was the first doctor prepare *Hydrophobinum*, a homeopathic medicine, made from the saliva of a rabid dog to treat hydrophobia — a condition, caused by the bite of a mad dog, which presents itself with a pathological fear of water.



Before Pasteur Who?

Hahnemann was the first medical pioneer to think of vaccination, when Louis Pasteur, the founder of vaccination, was just eight years old.

We owe it to Hahnemann for having first lit the vaccination lamp, which inspired Pasteur, and offering us protection from life-threatening contagious, or infectious, diseases through mass vaccination.

Pioneer of Modern Hygiene

Hahnemann initiated and gave a new sense of direction to modern public health and hygiene. He was also one of the few early doctors to recognise poor hygiene as a contributory cause for the spread of illness. His success with cholera and typhoid epidemics was, in part, due to his emphasis on cleanliness. He also stressed on the importance of good nursing, diet, bed-rest, and isolation of patients during epidemics — much before this became a part of medical treatment.

A One-Man Medicine Taskforce for Change

No system owes so much to one man as homeopathy does to Hahnemann. The chronicle of Hahnemann told and retold is the tale of homeopathy and humane medicine itself. Millions of us today are indebted to Hahnemann, for our optimal health and well-being, through the use of his gentle, safe and effective medicines.

Hahnemann was, quite truly, the Originator *par-excellence* of medical resurgence, thanks to his amazing contribution to medicine and humanity — a visionary doctor who changed the course of medicine.

His life's mission was guided by a simple idiom, not just a place in History's Hall of Fame — “Treat and restore the sick back to health, gently, and safely.”

homeopathy

03 facts & figures



Holistic Growth

The global homeopathy market is slated to reach INR 52,000 crore by 2017.

The Indian homeopathy market is expected, to touch INR 5,873 crore mark, in 2017. It is also expected to grow at a rate of 25-30 per cent vis-à-vis 13-15 per cent for the traditional pharmaceuticals industry, since users of homeopathy are increasingly growing.

Homeopathy is the most recent and the most radical of medical sciences. It is also, by far, the most humane, safe, gentle, and also the fastest growing global healthcare system of healing.

- Homeopathy is the second largest medical system in the world, according to World Health Organisation (WHO)
- France contributes the largest share to the world homeopathy market — an estimated 300 million Euros, followed by Germany with 200 million Euros
- In the UK, homeopathic hospitals are part of the National Health Service (NHS). Homeopathy is recognised as a postgraduate speciality by an Act of Parliament
- Around 20 per cent of people in India have used homeopathy sometime in their lives. Over 150 million people in India take homeopathic medicines
- In all-India surveys, over 55 per cent of people said they had faith in homeopathy; and, the treatment was safe and physiologically more

satisfactory with no side-effects

- There are over 3,00,000 qualified homeopathic practitioners, 7,500 government clinics, 307 hospitals, and 180 teaching institutes affiliated to universities in India
- 80 per cent people feel that homeopathy is increasingly becoming a popular alternative because of serious side-effects caused by allopathic medicine
- Most people feel homeopathy is more personalised treatment, with greater one-on-one interaction between the patient and the doctor
- In France and the Netherlands, 40 per cent of all MDs prescribe homeopathy
- In Scotland, 20 per cent of doctors are licensed in homeopathy
- Six French medical schools offer courses in homeopathy. It is also taught at all pharmacy schools, and four veterinary schools
- Almost every pharmacy in Germany and France stocks homeopathic remedies
- Homeopathy is reimbursable by national healthcare insurance in the UK, France, Germany, Greece, Austria, Israel and the UAE
- Being easily available and effective in treating chronic ailments, homeopathy is accessed online by over 10 million patients across India
- Online homeopathy connectivity worldwide is spread over 95 countries.

A Favourite with Intellectuals, Artists and Celebs

Many literary giants, presidents, prime ministers, artistes, musicians, and celebrities, have advocated for, and written about homeopathy.

Literature: Lord Alfred Tennyson, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Henry Wadsworth, Mark Twain, Ralph Waldo Emerson, George Bernard Shaw,

Washington Irving, Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, J. D. Salinger and Gabriel Garcia Marquez.

Artists and Fashionists: Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Jackson Pollock, Antoni Gaudi, Karl Lagerfeld, Vidal Sassoon, Diane von Furstenberg, Jerry Hall and Cindy Crawford.

Leaders and Presidents: Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi and Bill Clinton.

Prime Ministers: Benjamin Disraeli, Tony Blair and Dr Manmohan Singh.

Business Tycoons: John Rockefeller Jr., Bill Gates, Jr., and Rajiv Bajaj.

Women's Rights Leaders: Florence Nightingale, Mary Coffin Ware Dennett, Susan B. Anthony, Clara Barton Lydia and Coretta Scott King.



More & More People Turning to Homeopathy

While modern drugs have saved millions of lives, they have not really solved the resurgence of germs that are turning up in new, drug-resistant forms.

There has also been a real shift in the way people think about their health today. Rising healthcare costs is also a factor for the surge of interest in homeopathy.

Many people are attracted to homeopathy because of its emphasis on treating the whole person — body, mind and spirit. Besides, most homeopathic physicians use counselling to help patients find out whether their daily lives, such as job stress, marital problems, diet, or sleeping habits, or pills, could be the reason for their symptoms.

In this age of managed care and impersonal group practices, most patients find this individualised approach of homeopathy particularly appealing.

Royalty: British and European Royal Families.

Spiritual Leaders & Advocates: Popes, Eastern spiritual leaders, Muslim clerics, and Mother Teresa.

Sportspersons: David Beckham, Martina Navratilova and Boris Becker.

Musicians: Ludwig van Beethoven, Robert Schumann, Frédéric François Chopin, Sir Yehudi Menuhin, Cher, Tina Turner, Paul McCartney, George

Harrison, Pete Townsend, Annie Lennox, Bob Weir, Paul Rodgers, Axel Rose, Moby, Jon Faddis and Dizzy Gillespie.

Hollywood/TV Artistes/ Celebrities: Sarah Bernhardt, Douglas Fairbanks Jr., Marlene Dietrich, John Wayne, Catherine Zeta-Jones, Lesley Ann Warren, Pamela Anderson, Priscilla and Lisa Marie Presley, Jane Seymour and Jennifer Aniston.

Bollywood: Shahrukh Khan, Karishma Kapoor, Kareena Kapoor, Chiranjeevi and Hrithik Roshan.

allergic rhinitis



Cascading Effect

Physical illnesses badly affect our emotional and, mental states and vice versa.

Any illness that gets entrenched, or progresses, leads to faulty functioning at all three levels: body, mind, and, spirit.

Homeopathy is holistic medicine. It focuses on the individual who presents with the illness — not merely the illness in isolation.

In other words, it looks at the individual, or patient, through two lenses in both health and illness, focusing at different levels of reactions, or responses, in the individual. This is in sharp contrast to conventional or allopathic medicine, which merely looks at the individual or the patient in compartments or segments — not as one, unified whole.

Circle of Life

Let me illustrate. You'd think of yourself as a system of interconnected parts of a circle — of having three areas of equal diameter. This also corresponds to what is called the three 'chakras' (wheels) in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Think of one part as being representative of the mind, emotional, and intellectual spheres; the second corresponding to the vital organs (body); and the third circle related to the spirit. What lies in our deepest dimension is our emotional and mental self. It works quickly and profoundly in normal day-to-day life, or in crises. For example, when you are in a harmonious state of mind, you perform at your best. When you are disturbed, you cannot perform at your best — or, in any capacity, at work, at home, or on the playing field, whether you are a computer professional, or an amateur cricket player.

Mind & Body Connect

Homeopathy takes into account not merely the individual's symptoms, but also the mind/body connect.

A child with jaundice, for example, who's cheerful and is attended to by a caring, supportive family has a much better, or earlier, chance of recovery than a depressed child with wart-like eruptions.



Human Resilience

Our body is a, well-connected, resilient organism. Just think about what happens when you sustain a wound. The blood flow is automatically redirected to first supply the vital organs.

It is a fact of life that people living in a natural environment stay healthy. They wake up in the morning, have a simple, balanced, nutritious breakfast and go through a long workday without complaints. They don't gobble pills; on the contrary, they spend every moment 'training' the immune system without actually focusing on it.

When your immune system is strong, and in top gear, allergic reactions — to highlight one common example — are foreign to you and also your system. It is for this reason that the endocrine system becomes strong.

Homeopathy enables us to achieve this state. Naturally.

The Law of Similars

Homeopathy treats illness or disease by the administration of minute doses of a remedy that would in healthy persons produce symptoms similar to those of the disease (like cures like).

This is the basic principle of homeopathy, or what is called the Law of Similars. It states that since exposure to a substance can cause specific symptoms in a healthy person, that substance — when correctly prescribed as a homeopathic remedy — can stimulate the body's internal curative powers to overcome similar

symptoms in illness states. Hahnemann called this, *Similia Similibus Curentur*.

Homeopathic remedies are given according to the Law of Similars. This also gives homeopathy its name — *homeo* means similar, *pathos* means suffering.

Hahnemann's homeopathy is a revolution. Hahnemann looked at the similarity between the symptoms (signature) caused by the healing properties in plants, and other medicinal substances, and the symptoms produced by the disease.

For example, when one suffers from sleeplessness, as a result of joy, not stress, it can be treated homeopathically with *Coffea Cruda*, a remedy made from coffee, which can cause sleeplessness from overexcitement, or delightful news such as a pay-hike.

To take another example, when you chop an onion, you get watery eyes, a runny nose, sneezing, coughing and throat irritation from exposure to the tuber's active substances. The homeopathic remedy, *Allium Cepa*, made from red onion, can help you overcome a cold or allergy attack in which you may have similar symptoms — watery eyes, runny nose, sneezing, coughing, or throat irritation. The actual symptoms of the illness, as you'd figure out, were not caused by exposure to onion, yet the homeopathic remedy made from onions can help the body overcome them, because the symptoms (signature) are similar.

Even conventional medicine uses the homeopathic principle, albeit differently. Radiation therapy is used to treat cancer patients (radiation causes cancer) and digitalis is used for heart ailments (digitalis causes such conditions). Why even modern allergy treatment uses the homeopathic principle — the use of small doses of allergens in order to create antibodies.

More recently, the use of stimulants in conventional medicine, in the treatment of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), in children, is also based on the Law of Similars, albeit loosely. Stimulants are given to restless children to calm down their hyperactive states. For treating hyperactivity, homeopathic doctors, however, look at restlessness as a general symptom; besides, they will also look elsewhere, including the child's unique nature, temperament, likes and dislikes, because homeopathy has more than a dozen remedies for hyperactive children. Only a closely-related remedy that suits a particular ADHD child would be able to bring about a change for the better in that child.

This is where homeopathy differs from conventional medicine in which one medicine is made to fit all — notwithstanding each person's unique individuality and temperament.

Vital Force & Dynamic Balance

Our body functions on the foundation of a dynamic balance. It is this balance that helps direct all bodily functions in life. This is called homeostasis. In other words, keeping things static, or constant.

Our body is somewhat like a spinning wheel. So long as it is spinning, or working dynamically, all our body systems stay in good shape or balance. Our body has the resilience and the innate ability to return to its upright position, naturally, in spite of the assault from outside forces. For instance, when our immune system identifies a protein foreign to the system, it produces antibodies to drive the protein out of transmission — much before it can cause harm. Such self-regulating activities happen without our knowledge; they are, of course, not tangible. What guides this organising principle, or our immune system, that runs us all — from our defence mechanism to our bioclocks — is difficult to observe directly.

Physiologists suggest that there is a fundamental principle that guides our body to live, think, eat, digest, reproduce and move. It is this defence mechanism that lets our body repel invading organisms. It keeps all our internal biological functions running smoothly.


Hahnemann called this the 'vital force' or principle — in modern parlance, immunity.

Homeopathic Provings

Hahnemann not only founded, but also invented a process for finding homeopathic remedies with the view to applying them in illness states. He called this method *prüfung*, in German, meaning a 'test'. This is called 'proving' in English.

When the first, original provings were performed using alcohol-based tinctures of various substances, Hahnemann would take the substance and experience a set of symptoms. This he recorded meticulously — with no room for error. He also gave them to his family, healthy volunteers, or provers. They would receive repeated doses of the substance and would notify all the symptoms they experienced.

All of us have altering levels of sensitivity to particular substances — this only means that we would also develop different sets of symptoms, depending on our individual temperament, or sensitivity. Some provers, who are extremely sensitive to a particular substance, may develop innumerable symptoms. Likewise, provers who are not sensitive may not present or develop any symptoms.

 <i>Potency Equation</i>	
<i>Designation</i>	<i>Dilution</i>
<i>X</i>	<i>1/10</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>1/100</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>1/1000</i>
<i>LM</i>	<i>50,000</i>

Hahnemann's provings led to the development of the homeopathic *Materia Medica* — a compendium of symptoms experienced by groups of provers. This also included symptoms that developed during accidental poisoning. In the course of time, symptoms cured by homeopathic remedies, not part of the original provings, were also incorporated in the *Materia Medica*.

Provings were the precursors for the first phase in modern pharmacological studies of allopathic drugs as well.

No Animal Experiments

Hahnemann was steadfast in his views on animal experiments. He was also against drugging animals, vivisection, or killing them for experimentation.

Hahnemann observed that homeopathic provings could not be done on animals,

because:

1. Animals do not provide subjective or emotional or mental symptoms — the bedrock of homeopathic prescribing
2. Effects of the same drug on animals and on human beings are different
3. You cannot record modalities (worse or better) and finer symptoms (sensitivities, sensibilities) in animal provings.

Drug Dynamisation

Homeopathic medicines, or remedies, represent a special system of energy medicine — a process that minimises the deadly effects of crude medicinal and also toxic substances.

A homeopathic remedy is prepared by diluting the original medicinal substance in a series of steps.

These remedies are sold in liquid, pellet and tablet forms. These are called potencies; they come in 6x, 12x, 30c, 200c, 1M, 10M, LM, and so on.

Hahnemann experimented with small doses of medicinal substances and found them effective — his method of using extremely minute doses also eliminated their toxic effects.

Hahnemann discovered what is called serial dilution. He diluted smaller and smaller amounts of the medicinal substance with water and alcohol. He added what he called succussions (shaking) at each dilution, striking the bottle firmly one hundred times, to begin with, before the next dilution.

The homeopathic potency effect is brought about by this mechanical action upon the smallest particles of medicinal substances. How is this achieved? Through rubbing or shaking, as described earlier, and by the addition of a non-medicinal substance, powder or liquid, and separating them from each other. This process is called dynamisation, or potentisation. The products, thus, produced are called potencies in different scales. The bottom line — the higher the potency, or

dilution, the more powerful or stronger the remedy.

How Homeopathic Medicines Are Made (Potentised)

To produce a 1c potency of a homeopathic remedy, for instance, one drop of the mother tincture (medicinal extract) is added to 99 drops of alcohol or water mixture and succussed. To produce a 2c potency, one drop of the 1c mixture is added to 99 drops of alcohol or water mixture and succussed.

This process is repeated until 3c, 6c, 30c, 200c, or still higher (c = centesimal) potencies, which you see as labels on homeopathic medicine bottles, are obtained.

In addition to this, homeopathic medicines are also prepared by rubbing (trituration) rather strongly. One part of the drug substance is mixed with 9 parts of sugar of milk using a porcelain mortar-pestle and a spatula, or machines in modern homeopathic pharmacies.

The scale of potencies now obtained, in the decimal scale, are marked as 1x, 2x, 6x, and so on.

How Homeopathic Medicines Work

Homeopathy is the youngest of the medical sciences. It is modern in its outlook, so also in its philosophy. Its adherence to small, or micro-dosaged, medicines corresponds to nano-medicine.

Homeopathy packs the power of the atom in its tiny pills. It extends the strength of fission and fusion — with a nuclear underpinning. In other words, the system may be called energy or vibrational medicine, because homeopathic medicines release energy that helps the body to heal itself, from the inside out.

Resonance Effect

Johannes Kepler, the great astronomer, said, “Nature uses as little as possible of

everything.”

Matter, as we all know, stores and also radiates energy. Water, or alcohol, the substance used to make homeopathic medicines is also matter — it stores wavelengths. Researchers say that not only does water store wavelengths, it also stores some forms of memory. This idea was proved in the 1980s. *The Memory of Water*, by Michel Schiff, is a notable book on the subject.



Hormesis in Nature

In one study, researchers from the Michigan State University, US, showed how hormesis works in nature. They used micro-doses of a fertiliser to stimulate crop yield. In a dose equivalent to the homeopathic 9X dilution, the fertiliser increased tomato yield by 30 per cent, carrot by 21 per cent, and corn by 25 per cent.

Water can remember the biologically active molecules that it had once been in contact with. All things produce their own wavelengths, and like a flower, each substance is unique. Double-distilled water, or alcohol, used in the preparation of homeopathic medicines, maintains the memory, or reminiscence, of the substance diluted in it.

This can occur even when repeated dilutions of 1:10 or 1:100, as described earlier, exceed the point at which no molecules beyond Avogadro’s number, apart from their energy ‘signature’, remain in it.

In an article published in the conventional medical journal, *Gastroenterology*, it was suggested that small doses may be more effective than large doses because of a ‘therapeutic window’. The article also stated that this is more likely to happen when an individual, or any living being, is in a state of ‘readied excitation’, or is ‘raring and geared-up’ when a specific stimulus triggers a cascading, enveloping effect.

Hormesis

The effects of micro-doses have been known for a long time. There are a number of examples that support the idea — that extremely diluted concentrations of a substance will have a measurable and, sometimes, profound effect.

Hormesis is one such phenomenon. Hormesis is the term used for a favourable biological response to low exposures of toxins and other stressors.

A pollutant, or toxin, showing hormesis, has the opposite effect in small doses as opposed to large doses.

Molecular Bonding

Hahnemann was a pioneer. He thought — though he did not tangibly know in his time — that homeopathic potencies correspond to the natural physiological concentrations found within the body. It has now been demonstrated that homeopathic dilutions actually assist the body and its physiology to reactivate our enzymes and endocrine systems through natural regulatory, or what is recognised to be part of biofeedback or bio-response mechanism.

High-Dilution and UV-Spectroscopy

A team of researchers at the Swiss Institute of Complementary Medicine (KIKOM), in collaboration with two other laboratories in the USA, investigated homeopathic preparations with UV-spectroscopy. They reported that highly diluted homeopathic preparations, i.e., diluted beyond Avogadro's number, exhibit characteristic, physicochemical properties.

Likewise, the use of Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC), a new technological breakthrough, has made it possible to actually figure out the amount of medicinal substance present in homeopathic remedies, aside from differentiating them into various dilutions. In other words, TLC shows the presence of homeopathic medicines even in high dilutions.

individuality & constitution



Individual Diagnosis

Homeopathy diagnoses the type of illness a person, is experiencing; it looks at each person as a completely unique individual.

The homeopathic 'constitutional' approach aims at diagnosing the individuality of the person suffering from the complaint. This is not just based on the symptoms experienced during the illness, but also on understanding one's personality and temperament.

Homeopathy works on the principle that the mind and body are so powerfully linked that bodily, or physical, conditions cannot be successfully treated without an understanding of the person's 'constitution'.

Homeopathic treatment lays great emphasis on a person's 'constitution'. This relates to one's state of health, including one's temperament, sensibilities, sensitivities, idiosyncrasies, and inherited or acquired characteristics.

Most homeopathic doctors place great emphasis on the individual or patient's 'constitutional type', when they prescribe medicines. What does this signify? Choosing remedies whose symptom-picture exactly matches the individual's psychological and physical make-up.

Homeopathic remedies must be meticulously chosen, if they are to work at their optimum efficiency. Needless to say, chronic conditions are best treated by professional homeopathic doctors rather than by way of self-diagnosis, or self-treatment.

Let us cull a few examples of the homeopathic constitution (individuality) types, or archetypes.

Arsenicum Album

This personality shows a typical overpowering sense of defencelessness, or insecurity, or fear for one's health and financial security.

The *Arsenicum* type hoards everything for the rainy day, fearing that poverty, or financial distress, can strike one's life, or career, anytime. The most distinctive features of the *Arsenicum* personality are emotional symptoms, such as irritability, disapproval and displeasure.

Although the *Arsenicum* individual is politically correct and devout, he is enveloped by anxiety and terrifying panic attacks with tremulous restlessness and immense longing for companionship and protective reassurance. There is a sense or fear of death too, extending to his entire being. This is one major reason why the remedy is often prescribed to treat deep phobic disorders — for the most part, agoraphobia, or anxiety with fear of open spaces.

Arsenicum individuals also show a great dependence on their doctors — most often their doctors are swamped with anxious, frantic calls at any time of the day, or night.

Arsenicum individuals are obsessive, compulsive, ritualistic and finicky to a fault. They may themselves clean up the entire house in anticipation of a guest's arrival. This reflects the comfort they derive from managing their environment.

Arsenicum individuals also tend to be control freaks — with a fondness for micro-management. This makes them feel more than a bit secure. They also plan everything, or whatever is possible, in advance.

Excess depression or anxiety in *Arsenicum* individuals can sometimes lead to suicidal tendencies.

The *Arsenicum* child tends to show an uncanny ability to follow his parents' diktat to the best extent possible. In so doing, they may display streaks of

obsessive-compulsive behaviour — for example, double-checking their parent's health, or the main door of their house.

Calcarea Carbonica

This element is made from the oyster-shell. It, therefore, is as closed as its source is. In terms of psychology, it represents a shelled, encased personality. *Calcarea* types need to hold onto something solid to feel safe. Within themselves, the *Calcarea* persona is yielding — but, they have a tendency to spend too much of their time in relishing and assimilating food. Fat and slow, *Calcarea*, children and adults alike, are homely types — they love to spend their quality time at home, watching TV, nibbling at french fries, or chips, for comfort. They love to be hugged, even cuddled. Security, the cover that is the advantage of top political leaders, is what they aspire for, and also want. Not change. *Calcarea* types are averse to change. Change is intimidating for them — they cannot even touch it with a perch pole. Get the idea? If you have someone stuck in the same job, for 8-10 years, in spite of better opportunities lurking in the bend, you have recognised your *Calcarea* type. What's more, *Calcarea* individuals don't leave the place of their birth, hometown, or familiar surroundings — the reason being, they are always, "Glad to be at home — home, sweet home."

Calcarea is averse to new experiments and new experiences as well. When new things happen, for whatever reason, they are awfully unhurried to accept them. They may even delay their arrival. They don't like others' points-of-view, other than their own, howsoever flawed the idea may be. They often worry about the future, although they have a set tendency to love life in their own confines, without any state-of-the-art technology, or need for entertainment, money, or status.

Lycopodium

This individual often shows a tug of war with one's own psyche. He finds himself inadequate — which he often tries to camouflage. In so doing, he may distance himself from others to counter his lack of self-confidence. This goads

him to being pretentious, arrogant and conceited, while showing he is actually extroverted and self-confident. This may sometimes lead to a fear of being alone at night. *Lycopodium* individuals also fear people — but, they love power, although they lack the discipline of the *Arsenicum* personality.

Lycopodium individuals love sweets — they tend to feast on them, leading to ill-effects. They also tend to be promiscuous; they flirt with a superficial interest. This, in reality, is aimed to satisfy, or satiate their sexual fling. They are not quite the types that seek long-term relationships; the reason being they don't fancy responsibility, or commitment, to make relationships work. They may fall in love at the sight of a pretty woman — but, move over to another who's more attractive, just as quickly — to prove their simulated sense of virility.

Lycopodium individuals are, however, the intellectual types; they are often cautious. They seldom take big risks. This is also a characteristic feature of a *Lycopodium* child — they simply avoid sport activities that 'hurt'. They are more at home with intellectual activities, for example, reading, hobbies, electronic gadgets, or playing computer games.

Natrum Muriaticum

This is one of the commonest constitutional types representing our times; it mirrors suppressed emotional pains, a part of our typical upbringing in a fast-paced culture. People who project the *Natrum* personality are the smart types — they sport a veneer to mask their inner pain and helplessness. To those outside, they appear candid and balanced, as they manage to effectively hold back their emotional angst.

Natrum is so close to our times that its psyche is thought to be a 'normal part' of one's personality. It is, therefore, often missed for the real personality type by doctors themselves, while treating *Natrum* archetypes at the clinic.

Put in précis, *Natrum* individuals are often reclusive; they don't quite express their feelings, they shun company, and detest consolation. Better still, they just can't shed tears, even with glycerine in their eyes. To top it all, they cannot express affection. The archetypal *Natrum* personality presents simplicity on the face of things, but deep within they tend to be complex.

Nux Vomica

Personalities under this type are petulant and edgy. They detest queues or traffic jams. They don't approve of people who are slow at work, temperament, skills, or aptitude. They don't stand nonsense — if they have their way, they give one the impression that they can accomplish everything on their own. Think of workaholics, who expect others to follow them into the trenches, and you have spotted a *Nux* personality. They believe in push management, not pull management skills — they always try to beat you to reach their office desk before you do. They love all the 'good things in life' — alcohol, smoking, stimulants and sleeping pills. These indulgences don't often add to their energy, but they deplete their drive. They are happy when their bank balance is healthy, not otherwise. Lack of financial stability is something they dread, or are paranoid, about. Unlike the *Lycopodium* personality, *Nux* personalities have the ability to acquire power and exercise it with poise and dignity. *Nux* individuals also believe and celebrate the dictum that 'leaders are born, not made'.

Writes Philip M. Bailey, MD, in his book, *Homeopathic Psychology*, "The warrior in the *Nux* personality is in their 'blood'. It is winning that gives meaning to his life. On the other hand, the *Nux* warrior feels restless during peacetime. The *Nux* warrior (man or woman) is in control of his own destiny and will not follow orders from any, except another *Nux* warrior whose skill and experience exceed his own. He does not fight out of bitterness, but out of enjoyment. He is so self-confident and sure of his own powers that he tends to ignore rules and regulations."

Sepia Officinalis

This is primarily the female type. Individuals carrying the *Sepia* trait display a great sense of innate freedom; they stand apart from women around them. They are all by themselves, unencumbered by what others expect of them, or from them — more so, the opposite sex. They are endowed with their own protective coat — they also never escape from a mental battle. They emit a masculine sense of air — aggressive like John McEnroe on the surface, but with a feminine sense of sensitivity residing deep within. *Sepia* cares less for intellectual capabilities — but is belligerent to the point of being hostile, or even aloof to people who

she ought to love best. In other words — her family and children. Interestingly, *Sepia* personalities appreciate all the natural rhythms and nuances in life, with an ability to let go, even if they let go of hurt with difficulty. They may forgive; but, they will never forget.

Silicea

Think of tiny quartz crystals — they are the archetypal timekeepers, come rain or shine. This is what *Silicea* is all about. The *Silicea* personality is captivated by the endless, the immeasurable, the distant past and the remote future. *Silicea* personalities are endowed with a sharp eye for detail, observation, precision and truthfulness. They can spend hours together at a stretch on their interests or passions, without reaching boredom. They have infinite patience and love to fine-tune and improvise, no matter the strain or pressure. Call it fixity of purpose, or goal, and fidelity to a cause to excel, and you have spotted the *Silicea* personality in the crowd. *Silicea* celebrates a cerebral passion. They use the power of the mind, not so much their physical prowess or stamina, which isn't their forte.

When it comes to mental grounding and emotional abilities or knowledge, *Silicea* is both a geek and a scholar. What they may sometimes lack by way of self-confidence, they make up with their industriousness, focus and dedication. They love intellectual monuments, not edifices of opulence alone. Mind over matter is their epitome — it is their bank account and also bank balance. *Silicea* personalities make the finest of thinkers, scientists and techies. They bring a sense of equilibrium in a mad, mad world — a fine sense of balance between right and left brain activity, and technology, while retaining a profound sense of veneration for the spiritual dimension of life.

Sulphur

Just like the mineral's yellow tint, this type represents a blazing personality. *Sulphur* individuals love to play fire with fire, as it were — they also mirror the celestial character in human beings. This ignites their clay-like exterior. They tend to be ragtag philosophers of the top draw, who don't care a damn for their

physical appearance, clothes or style. They appear to present an intellectual façade — in reality, however, they tend to be more inspirational, rather than display their scholarly attributes. They are endowed with a flaming passion — hence, they carry passion on their skin, be it passionate love, amorous eagerness, or any other pursuit one could think of. Besides, they are endowed with a divine sparkle of inventiveness and outstanding creative talent. If creativity is their middle name, *Sulphur* individuals are also born-optimists with an element of eccentricity. Is this because eccentricity is genius? The answer is yes. Just think of it. From Socrates to Albert Einstein, not to speak of the greatest musicians, artists and composers, they have all been *Sulphur* personalities.

miasms

06 the stain-in-illness state



Hahnemann & Genes

Hahnemann's 'animalcule' means 'an animal invisible to the naked eye'. This was a remarkable feat for a man who knew nothing about genetics, or 'DNA'.

The phrase, miasm (for 'stained' in Greek) was first used by Hippocrates to illustrate a contagious agent. Hippocrates suggested that spoiled air and water could spread illnesses. Hahnemann concurred with Hippocrates. Hahnemann went a step further. He demystified Hippocrates' miasmatic principle. He researched for 15 years with intense clinical acumen and outlined his new theory of miasms.

All illnesses or diseases, Hahnemann observed, are products of certain inherited factors or predispositions. This, he indicated, could be passed on from one generation to the other. He called this 'miasmatic animalcule' — or, 'agents' that transferred diseases.

It would be interesting to note that in the early 1700s, the Dutch naturalist Antonie van Leeuwenhoek invented the microscope and observed 'small living animalcules', now known as microbes. Hahnemann did not have ready access to the new device. Yet, he was thinking in terms of micro-organisms vis-à-vis miasms.

Hahnemann's Classification

Hahnemann presented three major types of miasms. He gave them symbolic names: *psora* (from the Greek word, meaning ‘itch’), *sycosis* (meaning ‘fig’), and *syphilis* (meaning, ‘chancre’). He did not, of course, mean that syphilis was sexually transmitted disease (STD). He related each miasm to particular illnesses. Hahnemann also suggested that miasms triggered particular sets of problems. They also caused chronic illnesses — maybe, all illnesses. He did not rule out the possibility of an individual having any one miasm, or all three combined. Modern homeopaths have identified a few more miasms than the original triad that Hahnemann identified.

Hahnemann’s Triad

Hahnemann classified his three miasms with the following characteristics for each.

Psora is the most ancient of miasms — the basis for all miasms. *Psora* is represented by a continuous lack of feelings, a desire to get more of what one may already have, with a need to feel secure, or protected from external and internal threats, even when they don’t exist. Some of the characteristic features of *psora* are anxiety, fear, feeling cold and weakness, accompanied by a constant itchy feeling (this is well represented by the homeopathic remedy, *Sulphur*).

One can easily identify a person born with psoric features — they are often stocky, or plump, with a tendency to weep at trifles, are swamped by fears, even when they are non-existent. Psoric types like to be mollycoddled. They take comfort in fast, or junk-foods, aside from milk, eggs, ice-cream and pastry.



Multiple Layers of Illness

The theory of miasms, on which much of homeopathic practice is based, aims at removing multiple layers of illness, as and when they exist.

In *sycosis*, everything is in excess. It represents individuals who need to relate to people, or have an impetuous tendency to spend impulsively at the shopping mall. Sycotic individuals are often social characters or party types; they are full of energy at night. They have a tendency for excesses — such as discharges and

skin eruptions. They tend to feel warm. Their skin eruptions look like little figs. You can easily spot a good sycotic example, when you see them — warts (*Thuja Occidentalis*).

Syphilis. Destruction is thy name, Syphilis. People born with this trait exhibit distasteful behaviour. They may ill-treat people. They may present self-destructive tendencies, depression and suicidal thoughts. They may also show the presence of bleeding eruptions and ulcers on the skin (*Syphilinum*).

Don't get the idea that microbes cause miasms. Far from it. Put simply, a miasm relates to genetics, or genes, just as much as a 'meme' relates to the mind in contemporary thought. Hahnemann believed that microbes may have caused certain changes in our forebears — this may have led to tendencies (miasms) being transferred to their offspring. You could think of a modern tenet — familial predisposition to stress that happens in predictable, expected ways.

Miasms & Tendencies

It is not that miasms are always designated to particular illnesses. In reality, any illness can represent various miasmatic tendencies. This may be related to the stage of a given, or not given, illness.

Let me illustrate. An individual bogged down by melancholy, or moody blues, may be exceptionally anxious at the arrival of a depressive spell. This mirrors the psoric stage.

The same individual may, after a while, become extremely ill-tempered. This mirrors the sycotic stage.

When the depressive syndrome is left uncared for, or not treated professionally, the individual may develop strong suicidal impulses. This mirrors the syphilitic stage.

Signs to look out for:

- Psora tends to produce irritation, inflammation and hypersensitivity

- Sycosis tends to produce infiltrations, indurations and overgrowth
- Syphilis tends towards granulation, degeneration and ulceration.

Physical

- The psora skin is unhealthy. Psora affects the functions of the digestive and eliminative organs
- Sycosis tends to lead to heavy bones, water retention, overgrowth of tissue and slow metabolism
- Syphilis tends to cause congenital defects, asymmetrical bone structures, deformed teeth and the classic 'bull dog face'.

Temperament

- Psora is full of pseudo-scientific, philosophical, political, or religious views. Psoric individuals are self-expressive, talkative, and self-deceptive; they also think they are full of genius, yet seem foolish and impractical to others
- Sycosis is pessimistic, a hard realist, sceptical, secretive, suspicious, jealous, and has fixed ideas with hidden self-disgust
- Syphilis has a mixture of foolishness and genius with a deep sense of paradox that leads to an obsession with death and destruction. In rare instances, these individuals may display guilt, self-destructive tendencies and this will end in idiocy, insanity or suicide.

Skin

- The skin of psora is dry, rough, unhealthy; every little injury becomes infected and the lesions are itchy with scanty pus
- The skin of sycosis is full of warts, flecks and moles; growths are darkly

discoloured with overgrowth of hair

- Syphilitic skin has brownish-red or coppery colour spots; eruptions do not itch, but have a tendency towards easy ulceration.

Pains

- The pains of psora are prickly, crawling, tickling and burning
- The pains of sycosis are sudden, intense, spasmodic, crampy and colicky
- The pains of syphilis are deep, aching and agonising at night.

Discharges

- Psora has fairly scanty, irritating and itchy discharges
- Sycosis has a pungent, brine-like, fishy odour with watery greenish or dirty brown discharges
- Syphilitic types may have offensive, foul, or putrid discharges.

ten myths about homeopathy 07 demystified

Myth #1. Homeopathy is just ‘sugar pills’, or a placebo, because all medicines look the same.



Diluted, But Powerful

Medicinal reactions in healthy individuals show that homeopathic remedies are active substances — even when they are highly diluted.

This is wrong. Do you know that even the most diluted homeopathic remedies, if taken frequently, may result in ‘provings’, because the remedy matches a particular set of symptoms?

If they were, indeed, just sugar pills, they would not have caused symptoms, or provings to appear.

Points to Consider

1. Placebo effect is only temporary
2. Homeopathic medicinal effects are long-lasting
3. Homeopathy acts in children, animals, and also on plants
4. Actual medicine is traceable below the 6c potency.
5. Clinical and double-blind studies have proven the effectiveness of

homeopathic remedies.

Homeopathic remedies are not dispensed only as sugar pills. They are available in different forms, such as mother tincture, dilution, ointment, tablet, pellets, gel, lotion, oral sprays and even injections.



Evidence-based Medicine

There have been many clinical trials that prove homeopathy works well. During the past 24 years, there have been more than 180 controlled and 118 randomised trials in homeopathy, analysed by four separate meta-analyses. In each case, researchers confirmed the healthy, healing benefits of homeopathy.

Homeopathy is growing in popularity all over the world because its medicines are gentle, efficient, non-toxic, non-habit-forming and safe. Some critics also think, or are convinced of the fact that homeopathy works on the power of suggestion, just like hypnosis. Because, the individual, or patient, is convinced that it works. This is all hogwash. It's hard to visualise that homeopathy would have been so successful and useful to crores of people all over the world in providing therapeutic benefits — not just in acute ailments, but also in serious diseases — for over 200 years.

What's more, homeopathy works well in animals and plants. Need we say more?

Myth #2. Homeopathy is religious dogma. It is simply not science.

This is baseless. Homeopathy has scored innumerable therapeutic victories, or triumphs, in its 200-year-old existence. It's squarely the politics of medicine that needs to be blamed for conventional medicine to be at loggerheads with homeopathy — not the other way around.

Myth #3. Coffee reduces medicinal effects.



Technology to the Fore

In the recent past, homeopathy has made the best possible use of technology and developed new tools for case analysis of patients. This includes sophisticated homeopathic software that allows crossreference for characteristic symptoms, besides effective remedies and thousands of reference searches at the speed

of thought.

From a cup of coffee that cheers to certain foods or ingredients that ‘jazz-up’ our feelings, such as mint, several things have been taboo for a long time. This isn’t quite the case today. However, homeopathic medicines and their effects may be affected, if not neutralised, by certain strongly-flavoured over-the-counter (OTC) preparations, such as anti-cold topical creams, pain balms, not to speak of microwave ovens and certain oils used in aromatherapy, herbal medicine, and ayurveda. It is best to give a short gap (30 minutes) between taking homeopathic medicines and coffee, food, and so on. The reason is that they may impinge upon the natural, therapeutic action of homeopathic medicines.

Myth #4. Homeopathy is vaccine-like therapy.



Beyond Vaccine Therapy

Vaccination, ‘revs-up’ the immune system directly and produces antibodies specific to a particular illness. Homeopathy, on the other hand, works at a more subtle, dynamic level, activating all the inner workings in the body and building general and overall immunity.

Vaccine therapy may be somewhat similar to the homeopathic principle — what can cause, can cure. In reality, this is not the case. Homeopathy follows the principle of similars. A suitable medicine that matches the symptom-picture of the individual or patient is what is given in homeopathy. In vaccine therapy, the same vaccine is given to everyone.

Vaccines are tested on animals; they are evidenced to cause several adverse effects; some of them serious. Homeopathy, on the contrary, is tested on healthy human beings (provings). Homeopathic medicines do not cause, or trigger any side-effects.

For long, homeopaths have successfully used *Anthracinum* for anthrax, *Pertussin* for whooping cough and so on. According to *The Journal of the American Institute of Homeopathy*, during the infamous outbreak of meningitis in Brazil, in 1974, 18,640 patients were given the homeopathic nosode, *Meningococcinum* (prepared from a diseased tissue), as a preventative remedy. Just four cases of meningitis were reported in this group. On the contrary, 6,340

people, who formed the control group, and didn't receive any treatment, developed 32 cases. The homeopathic efficacy is evident.

There is a school of thought now gaining ground — it holds the view that conventional vaccines may be harmful. The latest debate is related to the new swine flu (H1N1) vaccine. It's weighed down by controversy, thanks to its side-effects profile. Many conventional doctors today are of the view that vaccines suppress our immunity. This means they reduce our natural immune function, leaving us vulnerable to a number of illnesses.

Homeopathic medicines do not cause such problems. They are friendly on the system. They cause no tissue damage. They protect, treat and also prevent illness.

Homeopathic 'vaccines' are non-toxic and effective in prophylaxis. For example, *Parotidinum* works well as a preventative remedy for mumps, *Influenzinum* for flu, *Diphtherinum* for diphtheria and so on. This is homeopathy's most fundamental advantage. This is also its medicinal or therapeutic reality.

Myth #5. Homeopathy is no good for life-threatening diseases. You cannot take homeopathy and allopathy together.

Homeopathy can treat extremely serious illnesses and diseases, by correcting the underlying cause. This can complement conventional treatment. However, homeopathy cannot treat by itself life-threatening diseases, or medical and surgical emergencies, such as a heart attack, stroke, or organ damage.

The old or traditional homeopathic opinion was they should not be taken or combined together, because homeopathy believes strongly in the theory of suppression — through the use of certain conventional or allopathic medications. For example, a cold, suppressed by modern medicine, may lead to asthma. Likewise, the application of steroidal creams can suppress an eruption and lead to flare-ups, or other unrelated illnesses, because the underlying factors, the real cause of the problem, or toxins, are not naturally expelled.

Homeopathic medicines eliminate such flagrant mechanisms from the inside out — not just at the superficial level. Today, there is agreement that some 'life-

supportive' conventional medicines can lead to drug-dependence. For example, anti-hypertensive and anti-diabetic medications.

Homeopathy can complement modern medicine in such cases. The idea is to use the two together — synergistically. There's clinical evidence to show that conventional medicine and homeopathy work well in controlling diabetes.

In a study conducted at Athens, a group of patients of diabetes mellitus type-2 were treated with Daonil, a conventional medicine, and a placebo (Group-1) and Daonil and homeopathy (Group-2). The duration of the study extended over a period of nine months of parallel treatment. Group-1 showed 47 per cent improvement; Group-2 showed a hugely impressive 97 per cent improvement.

Homeopathy has also been shown to be a useful adjuvant therapy in post-operative care, or after bypass surgery. The homeopathic medicine *Arnica Montana* is a medicine of choice in either situation.

Besides, homeopathy can also play a balancing role. Some cases require hormone replacement therapy (HRT), but if the patients are not suitable for HRT, because they have had hysterectomies for malignancy, then homeopathy is often useful.

Myth #6. Homeopathy is herbal medicine. It is also quite like ayurvedic medicine.

Homeopathy, herbal, and ayurvedic medicines are different forms of alternative medicine. They are not similar. While homeopathy uses minute or micro-doses of medicines derived from herbs, plants and other sources, herbal medicine is based on the use of actual extracts of herbs and plants; so also ayurveda.

Myth #7. Homeopathy works for human patients, not animals.

Homeopathic medicines work well in animals, even plants. This can't be placebo effect, right? Homeopathy offers a safe and gentle way to treat your pets for allergies, injuries, digestive problems, joint and muscle aches, among other problems. The homeopathic remedy, *Magnesia Carbonicum*, works well in pets showing symptoms of 'separation sickness'.

Myth #8. Homeopathy is easy to learn, so one can treat oneself, family, and

friends.

The early homeopaths encouraged learning in areas where there were no doctors. For long, missionaries learned and 'practised' homeopathy. They have helped and continue to help innumerable people get over every day ailments and illnesses with simple homeopathic medicines.

Anyone can certainly learn the rudiments of homeopathy to treat cold and flu. Not chronic or difficult illnesses. This would need the professional skills of a qualified homeopathic doctor, because of the subtleties involved in the selection of appropriate homeopathic medicines.

Myth #9. Every practising homeopathic doctor is an alternative, or complementary, doctor who is in disagreement with conventional medicine.

This is not correct. For instance, professional homeopathic doctors study for five-and-a-half years full-time in a professional medical college; some of them also study for a post-graduate degree (MD). These doctors are trained to diagnose medically; they call for the use of the same clinical and diagnostic techniques as any conventional medical practitioner. They also conduct the same physical examination; they also seek the same blood tests, X-ray, CT scan, MRI, and so on, when required, to confirm the diagnosis for their patients.

They also refer patients to conventional specialists for their opinion and advice.

Myth #10. Some homeopaths use steroids.

This is incorrect. Professionally-qualified homeopaths do not use steroids. The long-term use of steroids leads to apparent or noticeable side-effects, like weight gain, puffy, bloated face, brittleness of bones and compromised sugar metabolism. All these signs are easy to figure out.

08 the goal of homeopathic treatment

At the Homeopathic Doctor's Clinic

Typically, in homeopathy, patients have a lengthy first clinic visit. During this time, the homeopathic doctor conducts an in-depth review of the individual's health status, their temperament, personality, sentiments, and sensibilities. This is used to guide the selection of a homeopathic remedy.

This is supplemented by follow-up visits, where individuals treated report how they are responding to the remedy. This will help the doctor arrive at decisions about further treatment. In traditional, or classical, homeopathy, only one remedy is administered at any given time.

In a clinic consultation, your homeopathic doctor will also conduct a physical examination. He will look into your drug history — the medicines you are taking, or have been taking — followed by past history, family history, laboratory and diagnostic tests.

Express Your Feelings

You may not be used to talking to your conventional doctor about your feelings, or problems in your personal life. For a homeopathic doctor, as you would have seen, or experienced, your emotions, likes and dislikes, including idiosyncrasies, matter the most.

It may not be always possible for your homeopathic doctor to 'tap into' or 'vet'

everything you'd have said during a previous consultation, albeit he would have recorded your case meticulously. Most homeopathic doctors will be able to tell whether or not you are feeling stressed, anxious, or upset just by looking at you.

It is important to be open with them, if you are having any emotionally-driven feelings. There is no need for you to hide behind the mask. It always helps to be open, because homeopathy is mind and body, holistic medicine. For it to work well and effectively, this connect in health and illness is as important as your symptoms.



The Specifics, Not Just the Illness

From the homeopathic standpoint, 15-20 different individuals with atopic dermatitis, for example, may need just as many different remedies — to treat the specific, characteristic response that the body produces.

When you speak openly, your homeopathic doctor will be able to figure out whether there are any underlying causes for your illness. If your symptoms aren't triggered by such factors, or possibilities, he will be able to address your health concerns, based on the nature of your unique, individualistic symptoms.

Your homeopathic doctor may also suggest ways and means to improve your physical, psychological, or emotional health, while treating you as one whole — not just the sum of the parts. This is precisely the reason why one is treated, effectively and safely, with individualised homeopathic medicines, and counselled about lifestyle, and dietary changes.

The Patient, Not Just the Illness

This needs to be emphasised again. Homeopathy treats the individual; it just does not limit its treatment to the diagnosis of an illness. When you are ill, your illness has its own unique pattern of symptoms. You will tend to get those illnesses that result from the particular pattern of imbalance with your vital force or immune system — one that is unique to your personal temperament and environmental factors.

Yet, the interesting fact is — people with the same illness, or diagnosis, will not need the same homeopathic remedy. There are dozens of homeopathic medicines, for instance, for hyperacidity. The hyperacidity you present will require a homeopathic medicine that matches your particular pattern of symptoms.

Your colleague's hyperacidity, on the other hand, will respond to an entirely different homeopathic remedy.

For instance, the flu you may present with could have resulted after exposure to sudden cold, dry winds. This may be followed by high fever. To your surprise though, one of your cheeks is pale and the other red. You sneeze violently, your nose runs like a drainage pipe, and you have a nagging, dry, croupy cough. You feel totally restless. Your mouth is extremely dry and you can't fill your thirst. The more you drink, the thirstier you will be. You also, at the same time, feel chilled to the hilt. This is individualistic — it's unlike the flu symptoms one of your friends may have. So, you will, according to homeopathy, need *Hepar Sulphuricum*.

Each of us, likewise, experiences certain states that may limit us in some way. *Staphysagria*, a homeopathic medicine, is useful in people who are deeply depressed and angry with self-destructive tendencies — the trigger being emotional distress, or shame, experienced during childhood (Hahnemann thought of childhood trauma, or experiences, long before Freud, the father of psychoanalysis, was born).

This may provoke individuals to feel intense anger, but also feel a number of physical ailments such as allergies, joint pains, and sensitivity to light. It is through the understanding of such states that professional homeopaths are able to treat your body, mind and emotions simultaneously — in other words, help the 'self-correcting' vital force or immunity overcome illnesses, safely, gently and effectively.

A common cold, to cull another example, when treated with homeopathy, can boost your immune defences to a totally new level. In so doing, you'll be able to overcome several micro-organic or viral incursions of daily life on your own.

However, there are certain conditions like advanced cancer, tuberculosis and

schizophrenia. Here the primary aim of homeopathic treatment should be to make patients comfortable by alleviating pain, agitation, depression and suffering.

There is, of course, nothing better than giving your immune defences the push to fight on its own. Our immune system is far smarter than we think — it is a quick learner. Homeopathy knows this best — it gives a gentle thrust to our immune system and helps it to correct itself during illnesses and, in so doing, helps us to achieve optimal health and well-being.

Naturally.

ailments A – Z



Note:

All patients' names, in this section, have been changed to protect their identity.

What

Acne (pimples) or zits, is an inflammatory skin disorder of the sebaceous glands — small microscopic glands that secrete sebum, a natural lubricant.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Over INR. 1,500 million is spent on conventional over-the-counter (OTC) acne, products, every year — even though the results are far from, satisfactory, not to speak. of the side-effects.

- Escalating hormonal levels and excess sebum in young girls and boys (during puberty) can trigger acne
- When excess sebum clogs the skin pores, acne is a possible outcome, along with pustules
- Poor personal hygiene can lead to build-up of grease. This can block the skin pores and cause acne
- Dandruff flakes are yet another cause of pimples, as also heredity, certain cosmetics, smoking and conventional drugs — steroids and anti-depressants — besides junk-food, stress and pollutants

- Some medical disorders, like polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), may also be blamed for acne in women.

Types

Acne presents itself primarily in two forms: 1. inflamed, and 2. non-inflamed acne



‘Scar Struck’

Acne, (acne vulgaris) affects 85 per cent of the teenage and young adult population (ages 12-30). It can also affect 25 per cent of adult men and 50 per cent of adult women at some point. 25,-30 per cent of acne-affected individuals may carry long-lasting scars.

- Individuals with inflamed acne may have plugs of sebum, blackheads, whiteheads as well as small solid rounded bumps, pustules, nodules and cysts
- Non-inflamed acne is characterised by plugs of sebum, blackheads and whiteheads.

When left untreated, non-inflamed acne may develop into inflamed acne.

Deep-seated acne can lead to permanent scars, emotional ‘scarring’, stress, depression, and sometimes suicidal tendencies.

Diagnosis

- Most of us can self-diagnose mild acne with ease. When you are uncertain, or if your problem seems severe, it is necessary to consult a doctor
- Acne is diagnosed by a simple visual inspection by your doctor. There is no special test for it, although ultrasonography can help establish the diagnosis of an underlying problem, such as PCOS, a likely hidden trigger of acne in young women.

Healing with Homeopathy



What Worsens Your Pimples

- *Chronic stress*
- *Steroid use*
- *Oil-based moisturisers and hair products*
- *Heavy make-up, which clogs the pores*
- *Squeezing or picking acne spots*
- *Oral contraceptive pills*
- *Certain, prescription, medications and steroid creams used in atopic dermatitis (eczema)*
- *Changes in the menstrual cycle*
- *Hot, humid climate*
- *Excess exposure to the sun*

Homeopathy believes in individualised, or customised, treatment. It offers different remedies for different types of acne — as it does for any other illness — based on its presentation and also subtleties.

Acne is not just a disorder of the skin; it is also an external manifestation of an internal imbalance, something that needs to be addressed on a deeper or constitutional level.

The homeopathic approach looks at the individuality of the person; it also examines not just the symptoms, but also the personality and temperament of the individual, without limiting itself to treating the outwardly symptoms.

Homeopathy treats the cause, for example, stress, or dandruff, while eradicating the external expression of an inner disorder — in this case, acne.

Homeopathic medicines also stimulate the individual's immunity from within. The result is a permanent resolution of the acne distress, from back-to-front.

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Abuse of cosmetics	Bovista
Dandruff	Sulphur
Drug abuse	Nux Vomica
Emotional stress	Natrum Mur
Gastric disturbances	Carbo Veg
Irregular menses	Pulsatilla
Polycystic ovaries	Apis Mel
Stages	
After delivery	Sepia
During pregnancy	Belladonna
Menopause	Lachesis
Puberty	Pulsatilla
Hormonal factors	
After periods	Medorrhinum
Before periods	Sepia
During periods	Kali Brom
Location	
Back	Calcarea Sulph
Chest	Mezereum
Chin	Hydrastis
Face	Silicea
Forehead	Sulphur
Nose	Causticum

Case study 1

Namita (24), a model, who was troubled by acne for five years, feared that this blemish would ruin her career under arc lights. She sought medical advice. The predictable prescription: topical applications and antibiotics. The relief was short-lived, her problem returned with a vengeance. Namita was also in the habit of picking and squeezing her acne; this led to scars. She would, thereafter, apply cosmetics, or heavy make-up, to conceal her acne, but this worsened the eruptions. Her cheeks, her back and chest, were full of painful acne. She complained that her periods were irregular. We advised her to undergo ultrasonography; the test revealed that she had polycystic ovaries (PCOS) — a likely cause, not only for her acne, but also for her irregular periods. We gave

her *Apis Mellifica*, a homeopathic remedy made from honeybees, which is useful for cysts in the ovaries. Within a few months, the frequency of her acne reduced considerably; her old acne also started to heal rapidly. Her menses became regular. When we asked her to undergo ultrasonography, 10 months later, the result showed that her ovarian cysts — the cause of her acne — no longer existed.

Expert's View:

How did a local problem like acne, which defied conventional treatment, respond to homeopathy? PCOS, a common problem in young women, presents as acne on the outside, along with weight gain and unusual hair growth on the chin. The likely cause is cysts in the ovaries, which secrete the male hormone, testosterone — a major trigger for acne. Homeopathy does not treat skin conditions as a local, or surface, issue; it believes the cause may be from deep within, as Namita's case exemplifies.

Case study 2

Shailesh (19) had large, extremely painful, pus-filled acne on his face, back and chest. He was embarrassed to go to college. His tryst with antibiotics and several over-the-counter (OTC) creams and ointments, was disappointing. Shailesh suffered from seborrhoeic dermatitis, with excessive itching. For an introvert, with a recent history of disappointment in love, Shailesh never expressed his feelings of hurt to anyone. He would keep thinking of his girlfriend and, as a result, lost his academic focus. We prescribed him *Ignatia Amara*, a homeopathic remedy, which is useful for bad effects caused by any recent emotional setback. We also advised him to use Dr Batra's® anti-dandruff shampoo, which contains a natural anti-dandruff active. We impressed upon him not to style or allow his hair to cover his forehead, because when flakes fall, they can activate acne. His acne reduced considerably. In the process, he regained his self-esteem, his self-confidence and also his academic focus.

Expert's View:

Emotional problems cause excessive oiliness on the scalp, leading to seborrhoeic dermatitis. This, in turn, causes dandruff and also acne. Homeopathy believes that one should never lose sight of the emotional component while treating skin disorders from the root.

Self-Help

- Avoid extremely humid conditions — like the sauna, or an unventilated kitchen. Humidity increases your acne distress
- Avoid scratching or picking. This may spread bacteria
- Wash the face 2-3 times a day, with Dr Batra's® Facewash, enriched with olive and tea tree oils, and vitamin B3, and vitamin E, which clean, protect, and moisturise your skin, naturally, without affecting your skin's pH balance
- Don't style your hair to cover your forehead. When flakes fall, they may trigger acne spots
- Control dandruff with Dr Batra's® anti-dandruff shampoo, enriched with *Thuja Occidentalis*, an effective, natural hair stimulant and a rich antioxidant, with proven antibacterial properties
- Monitor acne areas for excess oil production, or infection.

02 addiction

What

Alcohol and tobacco are addictive; they alter a person's state of consciousness in dramatic ways.

They also affect one's central nervous system and psychological stability. Their contribution to loss of life is no less significant.

How & Why



Did You Know?

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), smoking leads to nearly 6-8 million deaths, across the globe, each year.

- Alcohol is a consciousness-altering substance; it alters one's perception of the world and affects one's relationships with family, friends, and colleagues
- People drink alcohol, or smoke, or use drugs, for a variety of reasons. One example is a desire to relax. This leads to a state of active consciousness in which tensions are relieved. Gradually, they may behave in erratic ways
- Most people who drink alcohol, or chew tobacco do not necessarily become addicts; but the big problem is that most of them develop physiological

withdrawal symptoms without them

- Alcoholics are incapable of facing the world without the support of alcohol
- Problem drinkers often begin drinking in order to escape from reality and frustrations in life. This is the basic cause of addiction.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- The early signs, or symptoms, of alcoholism include frequent intoxication, a definitive pattern of drinking or drinking in unsafe situations, such as while driving. Other symptoms may include 'black-out' drinking or radical behavioural changes while drinking, such as getting livid or aggressive. Chronic alcoholism can lead to peptic ulceration, cirrhosis of liver, oesophageal varices and acute pancreatitis. Other effects include anaemia, peripheral neuropathy, cerebellar degeneration, cardiomyopathy, poorly controlled diabetes mellitus, pneumonia and foetal defects because of mothers who drink alcohol during pregnancy
- Drug addiction produces a physiological reaction when the drug is no longer taken. This is called dependence. Without the drug (this includes alcohol), the user suffers from physical reactions such as headaches, nausea, tremors, sneezing, dizziness, stomach pain and an intense craving for the withheld drug
- Tobacco is a powerfully addictive drug, where the smoker quickly develops a tolerance for nicotine. Like any other drug addiction, users experience withdrawal symptoms — sometimes severe — when they stop using nicotine. These include sleeplessness, irritability, anxiety, tremors, and depression. Tobacco and nicotine, in unison, are one of the leading causes of heart disease and cancer — besides, they are also two major causes of death worldwide.

Alcohol, smoking, and drug-related issues are medical, social, and/or psychological problems.

- Your doctor will be able to diagnose your problems of dependence by way

of a physical examination, routine blood and other tests

- They may also order X-ray and other non-invasive tests, aside from biopsy, if one suspects malignancy or foci of a potential threat waiting to explode.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathy can help increase one's will-power, ease, and beat one's craving for alcohol, nicotine and other drugs and also relieve withdrawal symptoms, safely and gently — for example, without the dangerous side-effects of anti-smoking conventional medications, nicotine patches, or other popular smoking deterrents. Conventional smoking deterrents have been linked with difficulty in breathing, cold sweat, fainting, flushing, sleep disorders, heart palpitations and visual disturbances.

The unique benefits that homeopathic medicines provide is that they strengthen the person's overall mindset and constitution, so that they are not only less physically drawn or addicted to the drug, or alcohol, but they feel stronger emotionally and less socially addicted to what the addiction represents to them.

Homeopathy is an individualised, or customised approach where a remedy is selected on the basis of one's personality, temperament, sensitivities, sensibilities and idiosyncrasies. It has the potential to reinforce them physically and psychologically, help them tide over the problem of addiction and to giving up the habit for good.

For the best and the most profound results, a professional homeopathic doctor, who can zero-in on a constitutional remedy for the individual (because each of us is different and unique in both health and illness), and not just address the addiction problem, should be consulted.

Dependence	Medicine
Smoking	Tabacum
Drinking	Acid Sulph
Narcotics	Coffea Cruda

Note: To be taken only under medical supervision

Abhishek (30) was addicted to alcohol and smoking. For the past 10 years, his alcohol intake was escalating steadily, much to his family's dismay. Though he was working in an MNC, he was in financial distress. After a thorough case-analysis, we found that he was extremely sensitive and always suppressed his emotions, especially in front of his strict father. Abhishek seemed to be at the wrong end of the stick — he was facing a lot of flak at his workplace too. This only increased his dependence. We gave him *Staphysagria*. It took just a few months for his alcohol and nicotine intake to reduce. Gradually, he developed a definitive distaste for it. In the course of time, he was able to give up the two habits completely.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy can produce an aversion for addictive substances, over a period of time. It reduces cravings and also relieves withdrawal symptoms, safely and gently.

Self-Help

- Get in touch with self-help groups, share knowledge, experience, and ideate with others who have been through the same experience and overcome their problems. This will boost your confidence and mental strength by which you can avoid going back to addiction
- Deep breathing can be a useful technique, as it can be relied upon when cravings become strong
- Be positive. This will help increase your will-power
- Surround yourself with people who are naturally happy and always see the bright side of life
- Enroll in a gym

- Relax with a nice massage
- Listen to music, unwind with a book, or watch your favourite comedy show.

adenoiditis

What



Did You Know?

10-25 per cent of children suffer from at least one attack of adenoiditis.

The incidence tends to ease as one grows up and the glands begin to shrink.

Adenoids are small, spongy glands that are situated high up in the throat — just behind the nose.

Like tonsils, these glands protect children from catching infection by trapping the bacteria and viruses that enter the body through food or air.

How & Why

- When adenoids get swollen — adenoiditis — it makes breathing somewhat difficult for kids
- Bacterial or viral infections are the commonest causes for infection of the adenoids. Children usually catch these infections from people in the family, or from their friends
- In an attempt to fight the infection, the adenoids get swollen and produce the typical symptoms

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- When the adenoids get swollen or infected, the child develops a blocked, or stuffy, nose. This causes the child to breathe through the mouth
- There may be difficulty in swallowing food and liquids — this often leads to loss of appetite
- The child may snore while sleeping; frequent coughing and disturbed sleep further add to the child's irritability. The child may also suffer from yellowish or greenish nasal discharge; fever is usually mild
- Parents generally sense the onset of the problem, when the child develops a stuffy nose, cough, or mild fever, and also tends to breathe through the mouth. *Note:* By the time a child turns five, adenoids start shrinking and practically disappear around the teenage years. But, before that, they can cause enough trouble for kids prone to the problem and also their parents.

The patient's history helps the doctor in arriving at a probable diagnosis. In addition, an examination of the adenoids helps to confirm diagnosis.

The adenoids can't be seen as easily as you see tonsils, when your child opens the mouth. Hence, the doctor uses a special mirror to examine them. Sometimes, an X-ray may be advised to confirm the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathy comes like a breath of fresh air in treating adenoid problems. In most instances, it does away with the need for surgery. It is only in a few cases, which don't respond to medical treatment, that surgical intervention may be required. In other words, homeopathy should be the first line, or option, in the medical management of adenoiditis.

Child's constitution	Medicine
Fair, fat, flabby	Calcarea Carb
Tall, slim	Tuberculinum
Associated with	

Nasal polyps

Sanguinaria Nit

Tonsillitis

Mercurius Sol

Indications

Child starts rubbing nose as soon as he goes to sleep

Lycopodium

Children who are oversensitive to strong odours

Nux Vomica

Specific remedy

Sambucus Nigra 6c

Case study

Abhishek (4) was brought to us by his parents because he had a recurrent cough and cold, nasal obstruction, and was breathing through his mouth and snoring. They took him first to an ear, nose and throat (ENT) surgeon who diagnosed his adenoid problem and advised removal (adenoidectomy). Abhishek's parents, although worried about his recurrent cold, cough and mouth breathing, wanted to try a non-surgical option, such as homeopathy. After a detailed case-analysis, we found that Abhishek was a happy-go-lucky child, mixing easily with others, with an intense desire to go out and spend time in the open. So much so, he would pester his father to take him out as soon he returned home from office. We gave him *Calcarea Phosphorica*. In just a week's time, his mouth breathing and snoring reduced by 50 per cent. Within six weeks, there was not even a single episode of cold and cough — his face started looking calm, much to his parents' delight. What's more, to their ENT doctor's surprise, the adenoids had regressed completely and the nasal passage was clear.

Expert's View:

Surgery should not be the first, but the last resort for adenoids. It should be performed only when medical treatment fails.

Self-Help

- Treat infections quickly — this will help avoid or prevent the occurrence or recurrence of adenoids

- Care for general health with nutritious diet and good ventilation — this will help one avoid infection, inflammation, and enlargement of the adenoid glands
- Avoid blowing the nose vigorously — this can cause undue pressure in the ear
- Drink plenty of fluids to keep the throat moist and prevent dehydration
- Provide comforting and warm liquids or water with honey, as this soothes a sore throat
- Make your child gargle salt water, as this soothes a sore throat too.

attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder

What

Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a group of behaviours found in many children and adults.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Research indicates that smoking and drug abuse during the mother's pregnancy can lead to ADHD in the child.

Likewise, exposure to environmental pollutants and toxins, such as lead, could also be a possible trigger for ADHD in the child.

ADHD is more common in boys than in girls.

- According to studies, individuals with ADHD do not produce certain chemicals in key areas in the brain that are in charge of organising our thoughts and behaviour
- Studies show that ADHD is more common in children who have close relatives suffering from the disorder.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms include trouble paying attention in school, at home or at work. Experts say that ADHD may also present with at least six of the following symptoms:

- Difficulty following instructions
- Inability to focus — on work or play activities at school and at home
- Tendency to misplace, or lose things needed for activities at school and home
- Doesn't look attentive
- Cannot pay close attention to details
- Disorganised — has trouble planning ahead and executing tasks
- Forgets things quite easily; gets easily distracted.

Try to get as much information as possible about your child's behaviour from people who know your child, or people who know you. Speak to your doctor. Your doctor may have checklists that you and your child's teacher can fill out. This will help them evaluate your child's behaviour, in relation with that of other children.

Your doctor may suggest tests to check your or your child's vision and hearing. In certain cases where a diagnosis cannot be made, your doctor may advise you or your child to consult a psychologist, or psychiatrist.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Restless children who like to move around endlessly	Tuberculinum
Restless children, who spend most of their time dancing, or tapping their feet to loud music	Tarentula
Restless, aggressive, or violent individuals	Mercurius Sol
Restless with extreme fear	Stramonium

Moves hands with restless intensity	Kali Brom
Moves feet constantly; restlessness is confined to limbs	Zincum Met
Restless, but feels safe in the most dangerous of places	Agaricus M

Case study

Saumil (5) had recurrent coughs and colds. His mother told us that Saumil was a restless child, who never sat in one place. He 'loved' interfering in everyone else's work, blurting out in the classroom, running, and jumping around without fear of being injured. Saumil was diagnosed as an ADHD child by a psychiatrist. He was put on Ritalin, which made him sleepy the whole day. We took his detailed case-history and found that Saumil was intrepid and did not fear even jumping from great heights and running over the parapet. Based on his restless fearlessness, we prescribed him *Agaricus Muscarius*. A few months later, he calmed down. Gradually, his attention level at school also improved.

Self-Help

- Nurture your child's interests
- Augment your child's self-esteem
- Find out at which time they are their most attentive
- Give them choices and hands-on activities and stimulating learning activities, like reading, drawing, painting etc.
- Provide positive aspirations and role models
- Encourage them to learn organisational skills and help them appreciate the value of personal effort
- Teach your child focusing techniques, and visualisation
- Establish regular rules, routines, and transitions

- Hold family meetings; instil a constructive image in your child
- Give rewards after your child has finished doing a good job, never before
- Have patience.

acquired

immunodeficiency syndrome

What

This is a deadly infection caused by a virus that attacks and destroys the body's infection-fighting cells — lymphocytes. It causes the dreaded disease AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).

HIV (Human immunodeficiency virus), the virus that causes the condition, was first identified in the US in 1981. It is today considered a major epidemic.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Approximately 4 crore people live with HIV/AIDS in the world today.

- HIV and AIDS are now widespread across the world, affecting all age-groups, including newborns, if the mothers carry the HIV infection
- It is evidenced that certain groups of people are at a higher risk of contracting HIV and AIDS, viz., homosexual and bisexual men; people who use intravenous (IV) drugs; people who share needles for drug use, tattooing, or body piercing; heterosexuals who have more than one sexual partner; and anyone who has sex with anyone belonging to any of these groups; or has a sexual partner tested positive for HIV

- People who receive transfusions of blood or blood products, that haven't been tested for HIV, are also at risk. In addition, medical and healthcare professionals, who by accident are jabbed by a contaminated needle, also risk developing the dreaded disease
- HIV is not transmitted through casual contact — hugging or shaking hands, by eating food prepared by someone with the virus, or via airborne germs
- In the recent past, however, small amounts of HIV have been found in saliva, tears, breast milk, cerebrospinal fluid (CSF), urine and also faeces.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

The disease may present with flu-like symptoms, such as fever, headache, gastrointestinal problems, skin rashes, loss of appetite, and general fatigue, within a few weeks after infection. This is called the acute retroviral syndrome. It is also called the latency period; this can last for as long as 10 years. The lymph nodes in the jaw, neck, armpits and groin are enlarged.

For full-blown AIDS to emerge, it may take months or even years. This is a deadly situation, because the virus that causes HIV is circulating in the bloodstream and can be passed on to others through bodily fluids.

Other symptoms include chills, sweats, significant weight loss, fatigue, diarrhoea, joint and muscle pain, sore throat, a fungal infection of the mouth called thrush, chronic vaginal yeast infections, and viral skin infections, such as herpes sores around the mouth. The list is endless.

Self-diagnosis is, however, not recommended.

- HIV is diagnosed through a blood analysis called the enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA test), which detects HIV antibodies
- If the ELISA test is positive for HIV, there are additional blood tests, such as the Western blot test, to confirm the result.

Healing with Homeopathy

A pilot project in Kenya using inexpensive homeopathic remedies has shown great promise in the treatment of AIDS: “More than 90 per cent of the patients showed significant improvement in their health.” A team of homeopathic medical doctors led by Dutch homeopath Jan Scholten MD, donated their time and energy to this pilot project. The founders were convinced that alternative medicine has a lot to offer in the treatment of HIV infection and AIDS. The report, giving the preliminary results highlighted the dramatic improvement in those taking the homeopathic remedy. Improvement in the quality of life was observed in the whole research group. Restoration of independent functioning became possible for practically the whole population after treatment with *Iquilai*, the homeopathic remedy.

Self-Help

- Eat healthy, fresh foods — they will help keep you strong, provide more energy and support your immune system
- Avoid unpasteurised dairy products and raw food — because food-borne infections and illnesses are often exaggerated in people with HIV
- Avoid close contact with animals, because animals may carry parasites that can cause serious infections in HIV-positive individuals. Cat faeces can trigger toxoplasmosis, a parasitic disease
- Maintain good hygiene and do not share your personal items, such as razors and towels, with others.

miasms

the stain-in-illness state

What

Allergic rhinitis is an inflammatory disorder of the nasal passages — a natural response that occurs when your immune system overreacts to substances that you may have inhaled, such as pollen.

There are two types of allergic rhinitis — seasonal allergic rhinitis (hay fever) and perennial allergic rhinitis, which occurs all year-round. While hay fever is precipitated by outdoor allergens, perennial allergic rhinitis is triggered by household allergens, such as house dust mites (HDM), pet dander and mould.

*Did You Know?*

Allergic rhinitis, or hay fever, affects 20 per cent of the general population.

How & Why

- Allergic rhinitis can affect people of all age groups; two-thirds of allergic rhinitis patients develop it before age 30
- Though the male-female ratio for adults remains equal, among children, boys seem to be more often affected than girls
- Our body's immune system is designed to battle injurious substances like bacteria and viruses

- In allergic rhinitis, the immune system overreacts to substances that are not actually harmful. These include pollen, mould and pet dander. These can cause sneezing bouts, or assaults. The outcome is famously labelled as ‘allergic response’.

Diagnosis

- Allergic rhinitis is easily diagnosed because the person has a stuffy or runny nose, constant sneezing, post-nasal drip, red, itchy, watery eyes and swollen eyelids.
- There may also be itching in the mouth, throat, ears, and face, accompanied by sore throat, dry cough and headache.

A history of allergic rhinitis is usually enough to diagnose the condition. Physical examination may provide tangible clues, along with certain skin tests, such as needle prick, or scratch, to confirm diagnosis. If there is an allergy, a hive which is a swollen, reddened area, may emerge within 20-25 minutes.

Sometimes, a blood test may be considered to detect allergens that could be causing the reaction. Children with allergic rhinitis may squirm and wriggle their nose, or push it upwards with the palm of their hand. Your doctor will ask about your family and personal history of allergies, including some of the following questions:

- What time of the day, or season, do the symptoms tend to get aggravated, or wane, and why?
- Any plants, carpets, or pets at home?
- Have you made any new changes in your diet patterns in the recent past?
- Are you on any medication?

Healing with Homeopathy

Consistency of nasal discharge	Medicine
Thick	Arsenic Alb

Thin	Sulphur
Transparent	Aconite Nap
Watery	Bryonia
Colour of discharge	
Bloody	Ammonium Carb
Grey	Ambra Grisea
Green	Mercurius Sol
White	Natrum Mur
Yellow	Kali Bich
Type of discharge	
Bland	Pulsatilla
Cold	Phosphorus
Excoriating	Allium Cepa
Hot	Sanguinaria Nit
Precipitating factors	
Dust	Solanum Lycopus
Strawberries	Fragaria Vesca

Case study 1

Neelima (29), a computer professional, is a go-getter. Her breakfast is usually fast-food. She watches TV, while eating her quick bite, just before she rushes off to work. She was prone to nasal allergies, and her nasal discharge resembled egg whites. She took anti-histamine pills to keep the problem at bay. When her nose felt blocked, she would pump a hormonal nasal spray for relief. When she returned home, she used to be totally exhausted. If at all she developed a mild fever, she would swallow an anti-flu pill, or aspirin, which provided some relief, while causing hyperacidity, including tummy upsets. Neelima was given *Nux Vomica* based on her overall symptoms, her type A personality and tendency to be a pill-popping go-getter. A few weeks later, she returned with a big smile — for she had gotten over her allergic distress.

Expert's View:

Neelima never allowed her body to fight bacteria and viruses, or used her mind to cope with her daily stress. She always suppressed her allergic response with

anti-histamines. Also, she did not give her inner resources the strength to break the barrier, the nasty nasal cycle. Her body was always in a state of preparedness to beat the offender, but what actually hampered her immunity was overmedication. Homeopathy lowers one's susceptibility and increases one's immunity. In other words, it gently stimulates our immune defences; the result is enhanced immunity and relief from allergies.

Case study 2

Ramesh (25) was diagnosed with allergic rhinitis by an ENT surgeon. He came to us with severe episodes of sneezing and a runny nose. He was allergic to a number of agents in the air as well as in food. His immunoglobulin E, or IgE levels, in blood tests, were found to be high. On analysing his medical history, we found that his sneezing would erupt suddenly, especially with dust particles in the environment. Based on this symptom, we gave him *Pothos Foetidus*, a great homeopathic remedy for dust allergy. This not only relieved him of his present episode of sneezing and runny nose, but also took care of his recurrent attacks and his sensitivity to dust and other allergens. His IgE levels also came back to normal.

Expert's View:

An allergy is an exaggerated response to certain substances that normal people don't react to. Homeopathic medicines act like immune-modulators; they desensitise the person against allergens.

Self-Help

- Keep your house as dust-free as possible by damp mopping, or vacuum cleaning, with a special filter designed to trap fine particles. Fine dust can trigger an allergic reaction
- Avoid triggers — certain food, drinks, perfumes, smoke, paint and chemicals
- Keep your plants and carpets as dirt-free as possible, and pets bathed and

well-groomed; because, dust particles and animal or pet dander can trigger an allergic reaction.

ten myths about homeopathy demystified

What

Anaemia is a condition in which the number of red blood cells (RBC) in the blood is low. Doctors define someone with anaemia as having a low blood count. A person with anaemia is called anaemic.



Did You Know?

Iron-deficiency anaemia affects 45-50 crore women worldwide.

This is primarily a result of heavy bleeding during periods, or malnutrition.

Iron-deficiency is one of important causes of anaemia.

How & Why

- It is suggested that almost 60 per cent of Indian women suffer from hairfall due to low iron levels
- Blood loss, or bleeding, from the gastrointestinal tract is a common cause of iron-deficiency anaemia in adult men
- Eating right may not always correct the problem. It is said that some individuals have deficiencies of certain nutrients — vitamin B12, folic acid, or iron

- Young women are twice as likely to have anaemia than young men — because of their menstrual cycles
- The disorder occurs in the young and the old alike. However, anaemia in the elderly is more likely, owing to certain medical problems.

Anaemia may primarily be a result of heavy menstrual bleeding. Likewise, some wounds can cause anaemia. Iron-deficiency anaemia, or when iron intake is limited or insufficient, due to poor dietary intake, is an important cause. Certain long-term medical conditions can also lead to anaemia; for example, infections, or tumours, or chronic kidney disease.

Anaemia may also occur during pregnancy, the reason being water weight gain. This dilutes the blood, resulting in anaemia. Nutritional imbalance is yet another major cause of anaemia, as is low intake of vitamins, minerals and folates. Vitamin deficiency may be a factor in strict vegetarians, who do not take sufficient B-vitamins in their diet.

Other causes are poor absorption of vitamin B12 (pernicious anaemia), production of abnormal haemoglobin (sickle cell anaemia), thalassaemia (a hereditary disorder), alcoholism (alcohol is toxic to the bone marrow; it slows down the production of red blood cells), bone marrow disorders, viral infections (aplastic anaemia) and rupture of red blood cells (haemolytic anaemia). In addition, certain medications — for example, painkillers, which can lead to bleeding in the gut — cancers, liver disease, lead poisoning and AIDS can also cause anaemia.

Stomach ulcers can cause anaemia too; however, this can be treated and reversed. Certain gastrointestinal ulcers, or cancer of the colon, can slowly leak blood and cause anaemia. When anaemia is a result of a kidney disorder, it requires long-term treatment.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

When anaemia is mild, it may not cause symptoms. It is only when anaemia is severe that symptoms manifest. Examples are fatigue, shortness of breath, light-headedness, palpitation, or rapid heart rate, pale complexion, chest pain,

dizziness and fainting spells. When a person has severe anaemia, the cause must be diagnosed quickly and treated appropriately.

There may also be changes in the colour of stools — black, tarry, sticky, and foul-smelling, maroon-coloured, or visibly bloody stools. This happens when there is blood loss through the gastrointestinal tract. Other indications include rapid heart rate, low blood pressure, rapid breathing, pale, or cold skin, yellow skin, or jaundice, and an enlarged spleen. Young people recover from anaemia more quickly than the elderly.

- Your doctor will investigate the cause of anaemia and treat it according to your individual needs. When a medical, or an underlying, condition cannot be figured out, your doctor will order relevant laboratory tests
- There are many lab tests for anaemia. The complete blood count (CBC) suggests the severity and type of anaemia; stool haemoglobin test detects if the bleeding is from the stomach or intestine; and, peripheral blood smear can determine whether anaemia is related to iron-deficiency
- Your doctor may also order liver function tests (LFT) to determine how your liver is functioning. This may provide a clue to other underlying, or possible, liver illnesses that may trigger anaemia. A bone marrow biopsy may also be considered, when a bone marrow disorder is suspected.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Bleeding piles	Hamamelis
Grief	Acid Phos
Iron-deficiency	Ferrum Met
Malaria	Natrum Mur
Nosebleed	Phosphorus
Nutritional disturbance,-or-imbalance	Calcarea Phos
Uterine bleeding	Trillium Pendulum
Worms	Cina

Case study 1

6-year-old Mayank was brought to us with recurrent coughs and colds since birth. His parents reported that he also had mild breathlessness. A routine blood test revealed that his haemoglobin was 8 gm% which was much lower than the normal of 12 gm%-14 gm%. Mayank was an extremely irritable child; although, his appetite was good, he was not putting on weight. His parents complained that he would often scratch his anus and nose. This made us suspect worm infestation; a routine stool test revealed that Mayank had a mixed worm infestation. This, we analysed, was responsible for his anaemia and breathlessness. He was put on a course of homeopathic deworming with *Cina*. This not only freed him of his worms, the trigger for his anaemia, but also helped him put on weight, while improving his overall well-being.

Expert's View:

The real cause behind anaemia has to be explored. Never forget roundworm infections as a likely cause of anaemia in children.

Case 2

Shobhna, a 35-year-old housewife, came to us with complaints of increased menstruation for over a year, because of which her haemoglobin level had gone down markedly. She was put on iron supplements by the local GP, but she could not 'digest' them. Besides, she developed constipation after consuming them. Slowly, her habit of straining at stools led to piles and bleeding, while passing stools. When she came to us, she said that she preferred her profuse menses to her troublesome evacuation. On detailed case-taking, we found that she was mild-natured, weepy, lethargic and also indecisive. She did not feel thirsty and would consume just 2-3 glasses of water a day. Based on her mild and weepy nature with thirstlessness and menstrual symptoms, we gave her *Pulsatilla*. This not only relieved her heavy periods and anaemia, but also eased her constipation and piles.

Expert's View:

Iron in tonics, or as supplements, has its own side-effects, the most common being constipation. Shobhna took iron pills — this only aggravated her constipation. This, in turn, led to piles. The bleeding therefrom triggered her anaemia to perpetuate her other health problems. Homeopathic treatment helped her absorb natural iron from her daily diet, rather than depend on supplemental iron and its spin-off, constipation. It also broke the cycle of secondary bleeding leading to anaemia.

Self-Help

- Eat a balanced diet that contains plenty of iron-rich foods, such as spinach, tofu, lentils, parsley, soya, turnip, beans and fish
- Keep your doctor updated about your health with regular follow-ups
- Self-care or self-treatment is not recommended in anaemia.

the goal of homeopathic treatment

What

Anal fissure is a painful condition, caused by a tear in the lining of the anal passage.

How & Why



Did You Know?

The condition is most common in infants, though adults are also prone.

No gender predilection is seen. Some women are prone to suffer from fissures after childbirth.

Either way, for those who suffer from anal fissure, it can be a dreaded feeling to kick-start the day with painful stools.

- Anal fissures are caused by trauma to the anus and anal canal. The cause usually is overwrought bowel movement or constipation
- Many individuals can report the exact bowel movement during which their pain began
- Constipation, especially the passage of hard stools, can lead to overstretching of the delicate anal lining, causing a tear
- Surface tears heal quickly by themselves, if proper care is taken, whereas deep tears take a longer time. The latter occurs because of a spasm in the

anal opening — primarily due to decreased blood supply and also infection.

Anal Fistula

An anal fistula is often a result of a previous abscess. This is actually a small tunnel that forms under the skin and connects a previously infected anal gland to the skin on the buttocks — outside of the anus. Symptoms include pain and swelling around the anus, accompanied by fatigue, fever and chills. There may also be skin irritation around the anus, along with drainage of pus, which relieves the pain and lethargy. Complications — such as infection — from an anal fistula are often a result of surgical treatment or intervention.

Diagnosis

Severe, sharp pain during the passage of stools is the hallmark of the condition. The pain may continue for some time even after passing stools.

There may be bleeding — bright red colour — along with stools, and one may notice this on the toilet paper. To avoid pain, some individuals often suppress the urge for stools, but this only ends up worsening the constipation. It may also lead to harder stools the next time.

- A medical history would be enough to confirm the diagnosis. Your doctor may gently inspect the anus to confirm the presence of fissures
- When rectal bleeding is present, an endoscopic evaluation may be necessary to exclude the possibility of a more serious underlying problem of the anus and rectum
- In certain cases, your doctor may ask you to undergo X-ray, sigmoidoscopy, or colonoscopy, to study the entire colon and rule out malignancy.

Healing with Homeopathy

Stages	
Infants	Kali Iod
Pregnancy	Sepia
Indications	
Bleeding	Natrum Mur
Burning	Graphites
Itching	Petroleum
Better/worse	
Better, cold water	Ratanhia
Worse, after application of lotion or ointment	Aloe Soc
Specific remedy	Nitric Acid 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside
Anal fistula	Medicine
Precipitating factor	
Post-surgery	Calcarea Phos
Specific remedy	Silicea 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study 1

Ratnamala (30) came to our clinic with symptoms of anal fissure that began three months ago, following her pregnancy and childbirth. She complained of pain after passing motions; this was followed by a sensation ‘as if pins were pricking the rectum’. Even soft stools would cause pain. Her fissures were deep and her doctor suggested surgery. Based on her medical history and symptoms, we prescribed *Collinsonia*. Within a few weeks, her fissure was significantly better and she was free from pain.

Case study 2

Sunil Arya (45) came to us complaining of a purulent discharge mixed with blood from the anus, along with pain before and after stools. He also suffered from low energy levels, and would feel exhausted easily. During case-analysis, we found that Arya was irritable by nature and had an irregular lifestyle as far as his eating and sleeping habits were concerned. Coupled with these, he was also addicted to alcohol and smoking — this added fuel to the ‘bowel fire’ and aggravated his problems. We prescribed *Nux Vomica*. This reduced the discharge from the anal opening as well as the pain by 75 per cent. After two months of regular treatment, his fistula cleared; there was no discharge. The pain in the

anus also disappeared.

Expert's View:

Individuals with anal fistula and anal fissures often think that surgery is the only option. Surgery should be considered only if a measurable trial of homeopathic treatment fails. In most cases that we have treated, we have done away with the need for going under the knife.

Self-Help

- A diet rich in fibre along with plenty of fluids helps in softening the stools
- A warm sitz bath — immersing the buttocks and hips in a tub filled with warm water — helps relax the anal muscles, thereby promoting the healing of the fissure
- Be gentle while cleaning the anal area after passing stools
- Use petroleum jelly, or a local anaesthetic cream, to ease the pain, provided it does not lead to irritation.

What

The term, ‘asthma’, comes from the Greek word, *aazein*, which means, ‘to exhale with open mouth; to pant’.

Asthma is a psychosomatic disorder — triggered by allergens, dysfunctional relationships, domestic violence and stress.

Asthma disrupts normal familial functioning; it can also affect the individual’s social life and belief in their abilities. For most asthmatics, life is a big challenge; but, asthma can also teach resilience.

Have you heard of asthmatic individuals who managed to attain great success in life, by battling tough situations? For example, the renowned Olympian athlete Jackie Joyner-Kersey, battled asthma and achieved superstardom.



Did You Know?

There are over 30 crore asthmatics in the world.

Over 2.50 lakh people die from asthma every year.

How & Why

- Causes include allergies and stress — these are said to make one susceptible to the condition

- A combination of family history and exposure to allergens or irritants, like pollen and mould, mites, animal dander, smoke and chemicals, are major trigger factors for asthma
- Likewise, certain conventional medications, like painkillers, or certain foods, aside from obesity, or infections, can trigger asthma
- Asthma is also caused by emotional factors. Researchers suggest that anxiety is often the ‘effect’ of asthma, not necessarily the ‘cause’.

Asthma in Children

A common cause of school absenteeism, asthma accounts for an estimated 14 million lost school days, with nearly three million doctor visits and two million hospitalisations each year.

Children with asthma often suffer from cough and wheeze; they also experience chest tightness and shortness of breath. Research indicates that viruses, rather than bacteria, are to blame for such flare-ups.

Many parents do not believe children need not have a wheeze to be labelled asthmatics. Because, for the most part, the only symptom present may be frequent, annoying cough, particularly at night, or during any physical activity. Children who have suffered from a disease of the air passages, recurrent bronchitis, or allergic bronchitis are predisposed to asthma, or asthma-like symptoms. Respiratory infections, including flu, can also trigger asthmatic episodes in them.

Exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke is just as important; it is a widely-accepted cause of childhood asthma. Also, the children of parents who smoke are more prone to asthma than children of parents who don’t smoke. Most children, who suffer from respiratory allergies and asthma, are known to suffer from skin allergies like atopic dermatitis or eczema.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Asthma presents itself with cough, mostly dry cough (sometimes with mucous, or phlegm), wheezing, an audible whistling sound while breathing out and breathlessness, accompanied by chest tightness or pain. There may also be some difficulty when lying down, due to breathlessness.

Your doctor will conduct a physical examination, followed by case-analysis — looking into your family and personal history. Most doctors rely on a combination of medical history, physical examination and laboratory tests. This may include clinical parameters to diagnose asthma and discern it from other lung disorders, or conditions, such as bronchitis or pneumonia. These include:

- Spirometry, to measure the air taken into and out of the lungs
- Peak flow monitoring to assess lung function
- Chest X-ray
- Blood tests
- Allergy tests.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathy treats the person, the individual, suffering from asthma by taking a holistic outlook. It examines not just the symptoms one experiences during an attack, but also all the changes and variations that occur on the physical, mental and emotional levels — this helps to determine how a person's health and well-being have been altered. Homeopathy analyses the hereditary factors and environmental triggers, too — to complete the individual's constitutional portrait, while stimulating the individual's immunity by treating the cause of the illness — and, not just the illness state or diagnosis.

Weather/seasonal variations	Medicine
Better, open air	Ammonium Carb
Better through, or during, thunderstorm	Silicea
Worse, summer	Syphilinum
Worse, winter	Arsenic Alb

Worse, monsoon	Nat Sulph
Worse, open air	Silicea
Time	
Worse, 12.00 pm	Lobelia Inflata
Worse, 10.00 am-11.00 am	Ferrum Met
Worse, 10.00 pm	Mephites
Worse, 11.00 pm-2.00 am	Ars Iod
Worse, 2.00 am-3.00 am	Kali Carb
Worse, 4.00 am-5.00 am	Natrum Sulph
Position	
Better, bending backwards	Calcarea Carb
Better, lying down	Psorinum
Better, rocking	Kali Carb
Better, sitting	Arsenic Alb
Better, standing	Cannabis Sativa
Better, walking	Drosera
Position	Medicine
Worse, bending backwards	Hepar Sulph
Worse, raising arms	Spigelia
Worse, standing	Sepia
Worse, walking	Stannum Met
General	
Better, eating	Graphites
Better, with eructations	Carbo Veg
Worse, music	Ambra Grisea
Worse, while urinating	Ignatia
Hormonal factors	
Worse, after menses	Nat Mur
Worse, before menses	Sulphur
Worse, during menses	Spongia T
Precipitating factors	
Anger	Chamomilla
Coffee	Belladonna
Dust	Pothos Foetidus
Emotional upsets	Natrum Mur
Exertion	Lycopodium
Fright	Aconite Nap

Hysterical reaction	Moschus
Disappointment in love, or heartbreak	Acid Phos
Odours	Phosphorus
Vaccination	Thuja

Case study 1

Anil, a 19-year-old college student, was suffering from chronic asthma for nearly 10 years. He was tired of using inhalers and steroids and the occasional injections to combat acute attacks. His regular activities were hampered to such an extent that his absenteeism affected his studies. Because of this, he was depressed and desperate. During case-analysis, we found that, strangely, he felt better when he bent his head backwards, and not forwards as is the case with most asthmatics. Based on this unusual symptom, we prescribed him *Hepar Sulphuricum*. The medicine relieved him of his breathlessness and extended his symptom-free periods. He also got better grades.

Expert's View:

Generally, asthmatics cough and feel breathless. They usually feel better when they bend forward; asthma is often worse while lying on one's back. Here was a case, which was unique with its unusual modality — the patient felt better when he was bending backwards. This is the beauty and peculiarity of homeopathy. It treats the person, not the disease in isolation, while looking into the finer aspects of the individual's symptom-picture, characteristics and presentation.

Case study 2

Master Tapan (6) came to us with his anxious parents. His asthmatic problem began when he was three-years-old. To manage his symptoms, he was put on antibiotics, expectorants, and steroids. The only position which gave the little boy some relief was lying in the knee-elbow position. This unique symptom led us to prescribe him *Medorrhinum*. Tapan responded favourably to treatment; his dependence on allopathic medicines was gradually lessened and then stopped in a span of 4-6 months.

Expert's View:

This is yet another case of an unusual position giving relief to the patient. The position the individual adopts often helps us select a not-too-commonly used homeopathic remedy too. This shows how atypical individualistic symptoms and sharing uncommon or peculiar characteristics with your homeopath can actually help you to get better.

Self-Help

- Follow your doctor's advice. Don't stop taking daily medication because you feel better. Monitor your health daily
- If you smoke, quit smoking. Tobacco smoke is one of the most common triggers of asthma
- Keep the house as dust-free as possible. Dust is a common asthma trigger
- If you can, remove carpets and heavy draperies. They're dust-catchers that easily breed dust mites, another trigger for asthma
- Vacuum-clean your mattress twice a week. Mattresses and pillows can harbour dust and mites
- Cover your mouth and nose with a scarf in cold weather, which is yet another common asthma trigger
- Mould is another common allergen that triggers asthma. Keep moulds in check. Dry wet laundry immediately; wash and disinfect bathrooms and showers regularly
- Pet dander can trigger asthma symptoms; minimise your exposure to dander
- Artificially flavoured and coloured foods and drinks are one of the most common triggers of childhood asthma. Avoid their intake.

What

Atopic dermatitis, or eczema, is an inflammatory skin disease.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Eczema affects about 20 per cent of all children and 1-2 per cent of adults.

It is relatively more common in girls than in boys.

- Eczema affects people of all ages and all ethnicities. The condition is most common in infants
- Statistics suggest that about 85 per cent of people start suffering from eczema before five years of age
- Eczema often resolves by age three in about half of eczema-affected infants. In others, the condition stays, or recurs, all through life
- People with eczema often report a family history of the condition, or other allergic conditions, such as allergic rhinitis, or asthma
- Contrary to popular belief, the disorder is not contagious. It does not spread from one person to another.

In addition:

- Eczema may be a consequence of several factors working together, and not just one factor in isolation
- Some researchers suggest that abnormal immune function, with skin defects, may be a factor, just as much as gene defects that lead to abnormalities in certain proteins, such as filaggrin, that help maintain normal skin
- Some forms of eczema are triggered by substances that come in contact with our skin, such as soaps, cosmetics, clothing, detergents, jewellery, or sweat
- Environmental allergens may also cause outbreaks of eczema. Changes in temperature, or humidity, or even psychological stress, can lead to outbreaks of eczema.

Types

There are various types of eczema. Contact dermatitis and atopic dermatitis are two of the most common forms.

Others include photodermatitis due to sun allergy, stasis dermatitis, or coagulation, or pooling, of blood in the legs due to poor circulation, and neurodermatitis, which is localised — most notably in the forearms, or back of the neck, or the outer part of the ankle.

The contact form occurs when substances, or chemicals, including detergents, shampoos, over-the-counter (OTC) products, or cosmetics, or hair dyes affect the skin, causing an allergic reaction.

The atopic form relates to a genetic tendency for eczema. It tends to occur in individuals, who have a strong family history of allergic conditions. This may, at times, co-exist with allergic rhinitis and asthma.

A condition called discoid eczema appears as a distinct patch of eczema on normal skin.

There is also what is called as seborrhoeic form of eczema. It presents itself in infants in the nappy area and on the scalp. In adults, it appears on the scalp, and in the skin between the nose and sides of the mouth. The underlying cause may sometimes be yeast infection.

Yet another form of eczema that affects the legs is caused by varicose veins. It is characterised by intense itching and small or, at times, large blisters.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

People with eczema suffer from itchiness of the skin, with a parched appearance, along with scaling. The skin may crack, become red or inflamed, leading to infection. The acute form may sometimes manifest as a colourless or ‘sticky’ fluid — along with crusts and scabs. This is called ‘wet’ or ‘weeping’ eczema.

Eczema in infants often affects the face, diaper area, the front of the knee and the back of the elbow. It may also be first seen on folds, like the back of the knee and the front of elbows of children.

- A physical examination of the skin as well as the individual’s history is imperative. During the consultation, your doctor will ask questions related to changes in the environment, or contact with certain materials, whether or not aggravated in specific, or other, situations
- Because, the symptoms of eczema are similar to other skin diseases, including infections, or reactions to certain medications, the diagnosis is not simple
- Your doctor may order a biopsy, a test involving the removal of cells or tissues for examination, to rule out other skin diseases that may mimic eczema — for example, psoriasis
- When one has allergic contact dermatitis, allergy tests, including a skin patch test, may be carried out to identify and confirm the most likely cause of the condition.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathic treatment of eczema aims at treating the person having eczema, not just the disease in isolation. Eczema, or any other skin disorder, is simply an external manifestation of internal mayhem. Homeopathy suggests that illnesses often develop owing to lowered resistance, or compromised immune function.

Homeopathic medicines add zest to our immune mechanism. In other words, they gently propel the power of our immune system to scour the illness from its roots. Homeopathy avoids the use of external applications in treating eczema, or any other skin disease. It selects an appropriate remedy to treat the individual — keeping in mind their physical, mental and emotional states, family history, and so on. In addition, homeopathy ‘scans’ the type of eczema, its site, the factors that irritate and ease it, besides looking at the individual’s temperament, likes and dislikes.

Eczema is evidenced to respond to homeopathic treatment most favourably. Homeopathy not only removes eczema from its roots, it also prevents the possibility of recurrence — a worrying prospect of conventional treatment. This isn’t all. Homeopathy also helps to get rid of the possibility of hypersensitivity disorders such as allergies or asthma being triggered once eczema is treated successfully.

Location	Medicine
Back	Silicea
Chest	Calcarea Carb
Folds of skin	Graphites
Genitals	Rhus Tox
Hands	Dulcamara
Head	Psorinum
Legs	Arsenic Alb
Neck	Lycopodium
Palms and soles	Petroleum
Type	
Dry eczema	Sulphur
Moist eczema	Graphites
Seasonal variations	
Worse, monsoon	Nat Sulph

Worse, summer
Worse, winter

Kali Bich
Petroleum

Case study

Little Anuj (3) was brought to our clinic since he was suffering from itchy eruptions all over his body that exuded blood and pus. His t-shirt and shorts were stained with blood. His parents informed us that Anuj suffered from this agony since birth. They had tried the best conventional treatment, but in vain. No amount of steroid creams and emollients provided any relief to Anuj. On performing a detailed case-analysis, we found that Anuj was highly irritable, crying and screaming all the time. Interestingly, he was comparatively calm when he was carried by someone. However, when he was put down on his bed to sleep, he would start yelling and also get violent. We asked his mother about her emotional condition during pregnancy; she revealed that she went through a lot of suppressed emotions and anger at that time. Based on her suppressed anger during pregnancy and excessive anger in her child, we gave Anuj *Chamomilla*. This not only reduced the itchiness, eruptions and discharges, but also calmed him down and made him sleep soundly. His eruptions too reduced — this was something that had not happened before.

Expert's View:

Stress during pregnancy, high pressure at work, problems in relationships, certain life events, or even rejection of an unwanted pregnancy, may have a major impact on the newborn child — in the form of allergies, recurrent coughs and colds and failure to thrive. Homeopathic medicines are sometimes prescribed not only on the basis of the patient's past or family history, but also on the basis of certain emotional reactions during the mother's pregnancy.

Self-Help

- Wear cotton clothing; try to maintain an even temperature in your surroundings, since rapid temperature changes can cause itching

- Avoid clothes and bed covers made of scratchy synthetics, wool and other materials with a rough texture, as these can irritate the skin
- Hot baths can cause itching; tepid water is better
- Keep finger nails short to help prevent damage to skin caused by scratching
- As far as possible, avoid any known triggers that you feel can aggravate your eczema
- Don't get overheated. After an active workout, or after engaging in some sport, dab sweat away with a damp cloth and pat dry or shower as soon as you can, because sweating can irritate the skin and lead to itching.

backache

What

Backache, or lumbago, means lower back pain. The ache generally begins in the first lumbar vertebra, which is in level with the frontal end of the ninth rib.



Did You Know?

Nearly 75-80 per cent people experience some form of backache during their lifetime.

Your backache can occur while walking up the stairs, lifting a bag, or even watching TV.

What starts off as a feeling of something going 'click' in the lower part of the spine, or a little twinge, can get worse in 24 hours.

It may also extend downwards, along the small of the back. The pain may be present in the centre of the back too, or along the spine, or on either one, or both sides of the spine.

Backache is the second-most frequently reported reason for visiting the doctor, after the common cold.

How & Why

- One of the primary causes of backache is improper posture, muscular tension, straining of joints, nutritional imbalance and lack of exercise

- In some instances, kidney or prostate problems, menstrual disorders, arthritis and influenza, can also cause backache
- Other causes include stress and strain, resulting from sitting for a long time, lifting weights incorrectly, wearing high heels and also emotional problems — these can trigger painful muscle cramps and backache
- It is also suggested that being overweight can lead to back problems.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

“Ah, my back aches,” just making this declaration is one common symptom. This ache can range from a dull, constant ache to sudden, sharp pain. Acute, or short-term, backache can come on suddenly. It usually lasts for a few days to a few weeks. It often goes away on its own, although it may take a while for this to happen. When backache lasts for more than three months, it is labelled as chronic backache.



Did You Know?

Backache is one of the leading causes for missed workdays for people under age 45.

Statistics suggests that 8 out of 10 people experience low backache, at least once during their lives.

- When the backache is severe and does not get any better in 3-4 days, it is imperative to speak to your doctor. One should get medical attention promptly, if the backache begins following an injury, or a mishap
- Your doctor will be able to diagnose your backache by evaluating your ability to sit, stand, walk and lift your legs. When your backache becomes a cause for concern, certain diagnostic tests may be necessary to confirm the cause of your backache — such as testing your reflexes, with a rubber reflex hammer. This will help to establish the type of pain, the location of pain, or whether you have muscle spasms
- In most instances, a medical history and a brief physical examination are good enough

- Blood tests may also be necessary, at times, as also imaging tests, such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), to diagnose, or rule out, tumours or other possible causes of pain
- In certain instances, your doctor may advise you to consult a neurologist and go through neurological tests — to establish the probable cause of backache.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location of pain	Medicine
Left side	Sulphur
Right side	Lycopodium
Better/worse	
Better, motion	Rhus Tox
Better, pressure	Kali Carb
Better, standing	Belladonna
Worse, motion	Bryonia
Worse, pressure	Arnica
Worse, standing	Sulphur
Hormonal factors	
Worse before menses	Kali Carb
Worse after menses	Bryonia
Worse during menses	Pulsatilla

Case study 1

Sunita, a 26-year-old housewife, came to us with severe lower back pain that she had been suffering from for two years. It all started after her marriage when her in-laws did not treat her well and ‘favoured’ their other daughter-in-law. Sunita carried this feeling of hurt and kept brooding over it. This slowly led to her back pain. Based on her suppressed emotions, she was given *Natrum Muriaticum*, which not only relieved her of back pain, but also made her capable of tackling her day-to-day stresses in a more positive manner.

Expert's View:

This case exemplifies the importance of the psychosomatic nature of what are commonly believed to be purely physical ailments. Homeopathy can effectively treat physical problems, which may have an emotional basis.

Case study 2

Bhisham Arya (35), a sales manager in a pharma company, came to us with excruciating lower backache — this had incapacitated him from sitting or walking. The only position in which he would feel better was lying on bed. All his tests, including the CT scan and MRI, were normal. On detailed case-taking, we found that the way he sat on his chair was inappropriate. The executive chair, which he used, did not have a proper back rest — the likely cause of his backache. Bhisham was advised to adapt the right posture and also change his office chair. He was prescribed the homeopathic remedy, *Rhus Toxicodendron*, which helps reduce back strain. A few weeks later, Bhisham came smiling. His back pain no longer troubled him.

Expert's View:

Backaches are often postural. One should identify and correct postural disorders in individuals who complain of backache and not merely prescribe medicines at the 'drop of a symptom'.

Self-Help

- Prevent low backache by maintaining a healthy weight, and follow your doctor-approved back exercise programme, like extension exercises:
 1. Lie face down, legs together, and stretched-out, arms bent with hands behind neck; head and neck, in a neutral pose
 2. Lift the upper body (chest and shoulders) off the ground (breathe out slowly as you do this exercise)
 3. Go as high as possible, without overexerting; keep position for two seconds

4. Breathe in and go back slowly to starting position. This completes one rep. Do 3-5 reps; increase, when you get stronger to a maximum of 8-10 reps.

- Adopt a good posture at work; use an ergonomically-friendly chair
- Keep your computer screen in alignment with the level of your eyes; take short walks at regular intervals
- When you want to lift something, bend your knees and lift them, rather than overstretch.

bad breath

What

Bad breath, or halitosis, can result from poor dental hygiene. It may also be a sign of other underlying health concerns, or illnesses.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Statistics suggests that over 5-6 crore people may have bad breath.

Nearly 90 per cent of all bad breath is of oral origin.

Over INR 800-1,000 crore per year is spent on. OTC anti-bad breath products, which merely mask bad odour, not bad breath.

- Bad breath is made worse by the types of foods we eat and also our lifestyle habits
- When you don't brush daily, or floss at regular intervals, food particles stay in your mouth. This promotes bacterial growth between, and on, the teeth, gums and also the tongue. This leads to bad breath
- Bad breath can occur when dentures are not properly cleaned
- Smoking or chewing tobacco-based products can cause bad breath, tarnish

teeth, and negatively affect our sense of taste

- Dry mouth, or xerostomia, can cause bad breath. This is often triggered by disorders of the salivary glands, or by breathing through the mouth
- Among illnesses that can cause bad breath are respiratory tract infections, such as bronchitis or pneumonia, chronic sinus infections, post-nasal drip, diabetes, chronic acid reflux, or hyperacidity, liver or kidney disease. Certain conventional medications — for example, anti-hypertensives — can also trigger bad breath.

Diagnosis

Many individuals with bad breath may be oblivious of the fact that they have it. Bad breath presents itself in the form of foul smell, bad taste, or taste changes, dry mouth and a coating on the tongue.

- Diagnosis is often based on a complete medical and dental history and also evaluation
- Your dentist will examine your mouth, ask about your bad breath problem, dietary habits, tobacco use, certain medications, medical conditions and also family history
- A halometer, which measures volatile chemical sulphur compounds in our breath, may also be used for the purpose
- Sometimes, X-rays may be taken, along with periodontal charting, to determine if bad breath is due to gum or periodontal disease.

Healing with Homeopathy

Hormonal factors	Medicine
Before menses	Sepia
After menses	Mercurius Sol
Associated with	

Cough
Dental caries
Dysentery
Gastric disturbances

Capsicum
Kreosote
Mercurius Cor
Pulsatilla

Case study

Ravi, a 45-year-old businessman, came to us with bad breath, which had bothered him for over three years. He had consulted many dental surgeons, but in vain. On carrying out a detailed case-analysis, we found that he suffered from long-standing constipation, was extremely irritable, and would shout at the slightest provocation. He was addicted to alcohol and smoking. In order to hide the stench from his mouth, he had gotten hooked to chewing scented tobacco. Based on his short-tempered nature, and irregular lifestyle, we prescribed him *Nux Vomica*, a remedy that suits irritable patients who are fond of tobacco. A few months later, Ravi was free of his bad breath problem as well as his chronic constipation.

Expert's View:

An apparently local problem is often a lifestyle problem. Homeopathy is effective in treating lifestyle disorders, like bad breath, which appear to be local, but are often precipitated by the way we live.

Self-Help

- Drink plenty of water; it will help control halitosis
- Clean your tongue with a special tongue scraper to remove bacteria
- Brush your teeth after every meal
- Eat plain yogurt (*dahi*), this can help to keep your breath fresh; it decreases the levels of offensive bacterial compounds produced in the mouth

- Gargle with a glass of water after adding half a lemon (juice) to it
- If you suffer from chronic halitosis, try to avoid foods such as blue cheese, salami, tuna, curry, garlic, onions, anchovies, red meat, milk, coffee and colas.

bed-wetting

What

Bed-wetting, or nocturnal enuresis, is the involuntary passage of urine during sleep, at an age when bladder control is normally expected.



Did You Know?

About 1 per cent of bed-wetters may have problems attaining bladder control, even up to 18 years.

Bed-wetting is more prevalent among boys as compared to girls.

How & Why

- Bed-wetting is common in children, though 0.5 per cent of adults also suffer from it
- Most children develop control of urination by age five; however, almost 10 per cent of children continue to wet the bed up to seven years of age
- Children whose parents have had bed-wetting problems are more likely to gain bladder control later than normal children — this implies heredity as a possible causative factor.
- Immature bladder, deep sleep, laziness, bladder infection, diabetes, and stress are other causes seen with varying frequencies.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There are two types of bed-wetting. In primary bed-wetting, the child has never attained bladder control; he has always been passing urine in bed. This may be due to delayed development of the nervous system of the child.

Secondary bed-wetting is a condition in which the child has attained bladder control for a period of at least six months, but starts passing urine in bed again. This may be due to urinary infection, stress, diabetes, or a problem with the nervous system.

Older children with bed-wetting often feel embarrassed and humiliated; this may further worsen their condition. They are often scared to report the episode to parents, fearing rejection or reprimand.

- The history given by parents and physical examination of the child can help the doctor arrive at a provisional diagnosis of primary or secondary bed-wetting
- Urine analysis, urine culture, and radiological studies may be required to rule out or confirm the causative factors, if any.

Healing with Homeopathy

Group	Medicine
Adolescents	Lac Caninum
Boys	Rhus Tox
Old men	Aurum Met
Weak children	China
Women	Silicea
Precipitating factors	
Anxiety	Kali Phos
Catheterisation	Mag Phos
Fright	Aconite Nap
Habit	Equisetum
Head injury	Silicea
Nervousness	Gelsemium

Worms	Cina
Time of recurrence	
First sleep	Sepia
Towards morning	Ammonium Carb
Winter	Causticum
Specific remedy	Verbascum Q (Mullein Oil); 20 drops, in half cup of water, one hour before bedtime.

Case study

Vishal (8) came to us with his mother. He had an ill-at-ease look. His mother said that he passed urine in bed daily. She also said that she would wake him up once or twice during the night, yet he would pass urine in bed. During his case-analysis, we found that Vishal had the habit of sleeping on his stomach. Based on this symptom, we prescribed him *Medorrhinum*. His mother soon called to tell us that Vishal did not wet his bed for 5-6 days. From then on, he made quick progress and got over his problem completely.

Expert's View:

In many cases of bed-wetting, especially in adult males, phimosis could be an underlying problem. In children, it is often emotional — in many cases, a stern father.

Self-Help

- Make sure your child visits the toilet before going to bed; avoid giving them any beverage two hours before bedtime. This will help to develop bladder control
- Encourage them to drink 7-8 cups of water, throughout the day
- Your child should be able to reach the toilet easily — leave the lights on
- Reduce your child's discomfiture

- Don't blame the child for wetting the bed — play a proactive role. This will help
- Never ever punish your child for wetting the bed. This will make things worse and also affect their self-esteem
- Use a points system; reward them as they make progress.

benign prostatic hypertrophy

What



Did You Know?

Statistics suggests that for 60-year-old men, there is a 50 per cent chance of benign prostate hypertrophy.

At age 90, this increases to over 90 per cent chance.

Benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH), also called benign prostatic hyperplasia, or enlargement, affects the prostate gland in men.

The prostate is a gland found between the bladder, where urine is stored, and the urethra, the tube that urine passes through.

When men age, the prostate gland gradually enlarges. When it becomes larger, it tends to press on the urethra. This causes the flow of urine to slow down, or become less forceful. 'Benign' refers to a condition not caused by cancer or infection.

How & Why

- Over 40 million men in the world are subject to symptoms of BPH. The condition generally begins in one's 30s and progresses slowly

- Symptoms usually begin after age 50
- Nearly 50 per cent males, over age 50, develop symptoms of BPH. However, only 10-15 per cent of affected individuals may need medical, or surgical, intervention
- BPH is a normal part of the aging process in men. It is brought on by hormonal imbalance and cell-growth factors. Genetics may be yet another cause, as may be abnormal prostate tissue in some individuals.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Most symptoms of BPH start gradually — the foremost being waking up more often at night to empty the bladder. Or, there may often be a pressing need to void the bladder during daytime.

Common symptoms include increase in frequency of urination, or the urge to urinate, urgency, where the need to urinate cannot be deferred, incontinence, nocturia, or waking up to urinate more than once at night, urinary hesitancy, or the need to wait for the urine stream to begin, urinary intermittency, where the urine stream starts and stops erratically, straining to pass urine, burning sensation in the urethra (dysuria), and dribbling (drops), or leaking of urine after urinating.

Other symptoms include decreased volume or strength of flow. There may also be identical symptoms — for example, in bladder infection and bladder cancer — which your doctor would be able to diagnose.

- Your doctor will analyse a complete history of your symptoms. This is followed by a rectal examination to check the ‘feel’ of the back of your prostate gland
- Your doctor may also ask for urine tests to diagnose infections, followed by a blood test. When required, a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test, ultrasound exam, or a biopsy of the prostate, is used to confirm the diagnosis and rule out malignancy (cancer or tumour).

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Injury	Arnica
Sexual abuse	Thymol
Stricture	Mercurius Sol
Associated with	
Haemorrhoids (piles)	Staphysagria
Impotency	Clematis
Specific remedy	Sabal Serrulata Q, 10 drops in a half-cup of water, till symptoms subside.

Case study

Velu (58) loved travelling. His enlarged prostate often played the spoilsport with his favourite activity. During the night, he would get up to urinate 3-4 times. This would extend to 6-8 times during the day. He also had more than a few episodes of UTIs during the last 4-5 months, which added to his woes. He was advised TURP (transurethral resection of the prostate) by his surgeon. He decided to opt for homeopathic treatment, instead. Following a detailed case study, we prescribed him *Sabal Serrulata*. This not only reduced the size of his enlarged prostate, as seen on sonography, but it also reduced his annoying and embarrassing symptoms of frequency, urgency, and dribbling of urine. Velu was delighted with the results. He now goes on his much-loved tours without the ‘frequent call of nature’ playing the ‘party pooper’.

Self-Help

- Don’t drink liquids for two hours before bedtime, this will help you avoid nightly jaunts to the washroom
- Avoid coffee and alcohol, they tend to increase urine production
- If you are taking medications, speak to your doctor and ascertain if any of them can trigger increased urination, or constrict the muscles around the

urethra — this may reduce the flow

- Attend to your first urge, or call, to urinate. When you postpone or wait for too long, it may overstretch the bladder muscle
- Have a regular time for urinating, may be every four hours; this will help retrain the bladder
- Exercise regularly. This will help reduce problems caused by an enlarged prostate
- When you have difficulty in retraining the bladder, try to urinate or urinate again, after some time.

biliary colic

What



Did You Know?

Biliary colic affects approximately 2-4 per cent of men and approximately 3-8 per cent women over age 60.

About one-third of overweight individuals with gallstones may suffer from biliary colic.

Biliary colic is a severe cramping pain in the right upper abdomen.

How & Why

- Biliary colic is caused by gallstones in the gallbladder, a small, pear-shaped sac under the liver that stores bile, or in the bile ducts — small tubes that drain bile from the liver into the gallbladder and small intestines
- Other factors include rapid weight loss, diabetes and certain gastrointestinal conditions
- Biliary colic is uncommon in individuals below 20 years; its incidence increases with age
- Pregnant women and those on contraceptive pills, or hormonal replacement therapy (HRT), have a greater chance of developing biliary colic.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Symptoms include steady-to-severe pain located in the upper area of the abdomen. This may last for half-an-hour, or more, amidst pain-free intervals
- There may sometimes be extreme pain, with nausea, especially after eating a rich meal. The pain can last for a few hours and may radiate to the right shoulder, or back. There may sometimes be jaundice
- Food intolerance, hyperacidity, indigestion, gas and burps are common symptoms associated with the problem
- Colic tends to present itself at night — the reason being the gallbladder shifts to a horizontal position, making it easy for stones to enter the gall duct.

Your doctor will review your symptoms, ask for your medical history, and perform a thorough examination to diagnose the disorder. Ultrasound may be considered to view the internal organs. A CT scan may also be used to locate gallstones. A special type of X-ray (cholecystography) may also be advised to analyse the gallbladder.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Excess alcohol	Carduus Mar
Gallstones	Berberis V
Jaundice	Nux Vomica
Anger	Staphysagria
Colour of stool	
Dark green	China
Clay	Chelidonium
Better	
Bending backwards	Dioscorea
Bending double	Colocynth
Hot fomentation	Mag Phos

Worse

Eating

Tight clothes

Bread and pastry

Specific remedy

Colchicum

Lachesis

Antim Crud

Berberis Vulgaris Q, 8-10 drops
in half a cup of water, thrice
daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Kamini Iyer (35), a housewife, was suffering from excruciating pain in her abdomen. Her pain was so severe that she was not able to walk straight; she felt better only by bending forward. She was unable to sleep due to pain. She was advised painkillers — her sonography revealed stones in the bile duct, the cause of the pain. She was also advised surgery. She wanted to avoid it. Based on the peculiar modality of feeling better by bending forwards, we prescribed her *Colocynthis*. This relieved her colic. A repeat follow-up sonography showed that her biliary ducts were clear of stones.

Self-Help

- Eat high-fibre foods like peas, lentils, beans, raspberries, whole-wheat pasta, artichokes and barley
- Avoid high-fat and high-cholesterol foods like butter, cheese and meat
- When medical measures don't provide relief, surgery may be the best option.

A boil is an infection of the skin, or the hair follicle; it is a painful sore filled with pus.

How & Why

- Boils have a global prevalence and anyone can develop them. People on certain medications, like steroids, are at a higher risk of developing boils, due to a weakened immune system
- In most cases, boils are caused by *Staphylococcus* bacteria. Ingrown hair, a splinter, or foreign material lodged inside the skin, plugged sweat glands, or an injury to the skin — all of these can promote the growth of *Staphylococcus*, leading to the formation of boils. In addition, certain diseases or medications can also trigger recurrent boils.



Did You Know?

The frequency of boils is higher in individuals who suffer from, diabetes and kidney failure.

Types

There are three major types of boils:

- *Cystic acne*: Deep-seated boils that occur on the face
- *Hydradenitis suppurativa*: Painful boils in the armpits, due to infected sweat glands

- *Pilonidal cysts*: Deep-seated boils, occurring in the cleft between the buttocks.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- A boil usually starts off as a localised, painful hard sore. In a couple of days, the sore becomes larger, softer, and more painful, and fills up with pus. Pus is nothing but a collection of white blood cells, bacteria and some proteins. The boil now develops a 'head' which drains off by itself, or needs to be drained out
- The most common areas where boils develop are the face, armpits, shoulders, buttocks and back. When the infection is severe, the person with boils may develop fever and swollen lymph nodes.

An examination of boils is sufficient for diagnosis. However, in cases of recurrent boils, your doctor may need to investigate you for diabetes, or reduced immunity triggered by other diseases or medications.

Healing with Homeopathy

Appearance	Medicine
Large boils	Nitric Acid
Small boils	Arnica
Indications	
Advanced boils with pus	Mercurius Sol
Boils that refuse to heal	Gun Powder
Early stages, before pus is formed	Belladonna
Slow-to-mature boils	Silicea
Type of boil	
Blood boils	Phosphorus
Bluish-coloured boils	Anthracinum
Associated with	
Burning	Arsenic Alb
Extreme pain	Hepar Sulph
Greenish pus	Secale Cor
Periodical, or cyclical patterns	Arsenic Alb
Recurrent tendency	Sulphur

Other factors

Boils in areas where there is injury	Dulcamara
In children, who are prone to boils	Mag Carb
Specific remedy	Hepar Sulph 6C, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside
Topical application (lotion, cream)	Calendula

Case study

Chandra (55), a diabetic, came to us with boils all over his body. The boils were painful; they would appear in crops and disappear only to reappear after a few days. Chandra's diabetologist attributed them to his rising blood sugar levels and contemplated increasing his insulin dosage. But, his wife, an avid homeopathy follower, persuaded him to come to us. Based on the symmetrical appearance of boils, and their tendency to come up in crops at short intervals, we gave him *Arnica Montana*. Within a span of two months, Chandra's boils disappeared.

Self-Help

- Apply warm compresses and soak the boil in warm water. Keep a wash cloth in warm water and use it to squeeze out the surplus moisture. This will decrease the pain and help draw the pus to the surface
- When the boil starts draining, wash it with an antibacterial soap until all the pus is gone
- Continue to wash the infected area 2-3 times a day and use warm compresses until the wound heals
- Do not pop the boil with a needle. This may only worsen the infection
- Speak to your doctor when the boil does not drain out, or if you have fever with boils — more so, if you are a diabetic or have heart disease.

17 bronchitis

Bronchitis refers to acute inflammation of the air passages within the lungs. It occurs when the trachea, or windpipe, and the large and small bronchi, or airways, within the lungs get infected.



Did You Know?

Bronchitis is one of the top five reasons for seeking medical care.

Reports suggest that approximately 3-4 crore people in India are affected by chronic bronchitis.

How & Why

- Studies suggest that 82 per cent of bronchitic episodes occur in autumn or winter. The disorder is widespread throughout the world
- Bronchitis occurs most often during the cold and flu seasons — many viruses also cause the problem. This includes influenza A and B, or the flu viruses
- Many bacteria too are known to cause bronchitis — for example, *Mycoplasma pneumoniae*, which causes pneumonia
- Inhalation of tobacco or cigarette smoke, fumes, chemicals, spores, or dust can trigger bronchitis
- Bronchitis mostly affects the elderly with a weakened immune system, smokers and anyone with repeated exposure to lung irritants, for example,

fumes and chemicals

- Viruses that cause acute bronchitis are spread into the air by the affected person through coughing — when one breathes in these viruses, or touches any surface ‘coated’ with such viruses, infection is possible
- Smokers and individuals working in areas, or industries, surrounded by fumes are more likely to be affected by acute bronchitis. They also suffer from it for a longer duration of time.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There are two types of bronchitis.

Acute bronchitis occurs after a bout of common cold or sinus infection. It may be accompanied by fever with chills, muscle pain, nasal congestion and sore throat. Cough is a major symptom of acute bronchitis. This may last for a week or two. It may be dry or produce phlegm (mucous). Excess phlegm production may suggest an upper respiratory tract infection (URTI) or pneumonia.

Chronic bronchitis is bronchitis that may have lasted longer than three months. Causes include cigarette smoking, which irritates the airways and produces excess mucous. People exposed to long-term chemical fumes, dust and other substances, are prone to developing chronic bronchitis. Wheezing may sometimes occur, mimicking asthma. This may cause breathlessness too.

- Your doctor will conduct a complete physical examination and ascertain whether you are coughing up mucous, have trouble breathing, feel tight in the chest, and how long you have had these symptoms
- Your doctor will also inquire into your habits — especially, smoking or whether you have been exposed to fumes, chemicals or irritants
- Your doctor may also institute pulmonary, or lung, function tests to calculate the capacity of the lungs to exchange oxygen for carbon-di-oxide, using peak flow monitoring (PFM) and spirometry. Spirometry is a medical tool used to determine and understand the working of the lungs. PFM determines the maximum rapidity with which a person can breathe in, or

breathe out air

- A pulse oximetry may also be used. This is a small apparatus that measures the oxygen content in the blood
- Chest X-ray and CT scan may be used to provide the complete image of your lungs, detect other conditions, and also confirm diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type of cough	Medicine
Cough with profuse expectoration	Hepar Sulph
Dry cough	Drosera
Expectoration	
Difficult	Antim Tart
Easy	Stannum Met
Form of expectoration	
Bloody	Stannum Met
Purulent	Silicea
Watery	Arsenic Alb
Taste of expectoration	
Salty	Phosphorus
Bitter	Pulsatilla
Sweetish	Calcarea Carb
Position	
Better, lying on abdomen	Medorrhinum
Better, lying on back	Lycopodium
Better, sitting	Antim Tart
Worse, sitting	Kali Carb
Worse, lying down	Causticum

Case study 1

Akshay's (15) symptoms included severe, dry, hacking cough through the last 2-3 weeks. We found that his cough aggravated at night, keeping him awake. Akshay, his parents told us, felt better with little sips of cold water. The cough, we were also told, always came in three paroxysms. Based on these atypical symptoms, we prescribed him *Cuprum Metallicum*. Akshay was soon able to

sleep well and regained his health quickly.

Expert's View

In most episodes of bronchitic cough, the presenting symptoms may vary with each individual — dry or wet — with easy or difficult expectoration. In this case, paroxysmal coughing led us to prescribe *Cuprum Metallicum*.

Case study 2

Cyril (60), a retired bank officer, approached us with chronic cough symptoms, which never left him for years. He had tried various medications with no real relief. The cough went on increasing in frequency and severity with every medication he took. On detailed case-analysis, we found that Cyril was showing signs of retirement blues. Besides, he had a unique symptom. Whenever he coughed, there was a lot of rattling in the chest, but nothing, no mucous or phlegm, came out. This prompted us to give him *Antimonium Tartaricum*. Within a few weeks' time, it not only relieved him of his chronic cough, but also made him a staunch follower of homeopathic healing.

Expert's View

In older patients suffering from chronic bronchitis with symptoms of 'Radha ki maa — aji sunthe ho' type of coughing bouts, *Antimonium Tartaricum* helps instantly.

Self-Help

- Don't smoke; avoid inhaling second-hand smoke. Tobacco is a major trigger of bronchitis
- Avoid prolonged periods in damp, cold areas, or highly polluted areas, or exposure to fumes and chemicals
- If you have been diagnosed with chronic bronchitis, follow your doctor's

instructions

- Report to your doctor immediately, if you develop flu, or pneumonia-like symptoms. The two illnesses may sometimes be dangerous and life-threatening.

What

Bursitis is the inflammation of a bursa.

The bursa is a fluid-filled sac, which acts as a cushion between a bone and tissues — for example, skin, ligaments, tendons and muscles.



Did You Know?

Bursitis does not just affect the joints in the shoulder, elbow, knee and hip; it can also affect the heels, toes and pelvis.

How & Why

- Anyone can get bursitis
- Bursitis can occur from injury and irritation caused by the overuse of a particular joint. This may be a result of sports, involving repeated movements, or profession, or household work, which involves recurring movements
- When bursitis affects the knee, a result of prolonged kneeling, it is called prepatellar bursitis. Bursitis of the elbow is, likewise, called olecranon bursitis.
- Bursitis may sometimes be the outcome of rheumatoid arthritis and also bacterial infections.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Pain and limited movement, in the affected area
- The skin may appear red and swollen. There may also be sensitivity over the bursa; pain with movement of overlying muscles and tendons, along with puffiness of the bursa.

Bursitis is diagnosed by way of a physical examination in a clinic consultation, along with analysis of one's medical history and symptoms. If necessary, your doctor may order a small sample of fluid from the inflamed bursa to be taken for lab tests to diagnose infection.

In some cases, an X-ray may be advised.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Fingers	Ruta
Knee	Sticta
Type of pain	
Stinging	Apis Mel
Stitching	Bryonia
Throbbing	Belladonna
Worse	
Cold damp weather	Rhus Tox
Slightest motion	Bryonia
Touch	Belladonna
When approached	Arnica

Case study

Amina Khatoon (55) suffered from severe right-sided hip pain; this had incapacitated her from walking or sitting. Even lying down on the affected side was impossible. She could not offer her daily prayers, as kneeling was impossible. On analysis, we found that she was quite the anxious type. If anyone in the family was ill, she would become overanxious. She also told us that her thigh pain radiated downwards to her knee. We put her on *Kali Carbonicum*.

The medicine gave her good, tangible relief from intense pain; it also reduced her anxiety levels.

Self-Help

- A padding close to the surface of ankles and knees may relieve pain
- Give adequate rest to the area involved
- Swimming, or any other water-resistance exercise is useful to combat pain
- Place small ice-packs on the affected area for about 10-15 minutes, 2-3 times a day; this will reduce inflammation
- An elastic bandage (compression) may be applied on knees and elbows for quick relief from pain.

What

Cancer is a group of cells that have lost their normal regulatory mechanism. The result is unregulated cell growth.

The dreaded disease represents a group of more than 100 different diseases — all of them highlighted by uninhibited, abnormal growth of cells.



Did You Know?

Cancer cells can develop from healthy cells. The 'process called transformation — is as complex as the disease itself.

The first step, where cancer cells grow from healthy cells, is termed as initiation.

This can. begin almost anywhere in the body and can spread, or metastasise, throughout the body.

Sometimes, cancer can affect and spread to the lymph nodes — tiny, bean-shaped structures that filter the flow of lymph, which is an important part of the body's immune system. Clusters of lymph nodes are located in different parts of the body — the neck, the groin and the armpits.

How & Why

- Most experts suggest that cancer results from a complex interface of genetic and environmental factors, not just a single factor
- These factors may be external and internal. The former include lifestyle *faux pas* — smoking, chewing tobacco, alcohol overuse and obesity

- Environmental factors that are implicated in the cancer upsurge are radiation and chemicals, including viral and bacterial infections that injure cells and undermine the immune system.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms are often subtle, not apparent. Some symptoms — or, what are often called warning signs — are best detected by an expert.

There are also symptoms that develop only after the disease progresses — they are not helpful in the early detection of cancer. You would do well to pragmatically evaluate symptoms, with your doctor, like nausea, loss of appetite, fatigue, and vomiting.

Some important symptoms of cancer are:

- Weight loss
- Weakness
- Night sweats
- Loss of appetite, or anorexia
- A recent change in bowel habits — alternating between constipation and diarrhoea
- Blood in urine
- Blood in stools
- Abrupt depression
- Recurrent fever
- Persistent, long-standing cough
- Change in the size or colour of a mole, or a skin ulcer that does not heal

- Puffy lymph nodes
- Constant pain.

There are a number of tests to diagnose cancer and also uncover how far the disease has progressed. Tests for diagnosis can be simple laboratory investigations. The tests are selected depending on the type of cancer suspected; they are also geared to look at symptoms, age, and medical condition, besides results and analyses obtained from other investigations.

- Biopsy is an important test used to detect cancer. This test involves the removal of the tumour in part, or *in toto*, and examining it to determine if cancer cells are present
- X-ray and imaging tests, like CT, PET, bone scan, ultrasound, MRI and endoscopy, are also used to determine whether the cancer has spread to other areas in the body. In addition, these tests are also essentially used to evaluate the size and location of the tumour — depending upon the expert's reading of the situation. However, it may be mentioned that imaging tests alone are not decisive; they are also not accurate to diagnose cancer
- Laboratory tests are conducted on a sample of blood, urine, and other body fluids. The most common test is the complete blood count (CBC), which measures the components of blood, including white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets
- Staging is another specialised investigation. The process of describing the size and location of the tumour or whether the cancer has spread to other parts of the body is called staging. This is essential to determine the choice of therapy and also ascertain a person's recovery outlook. Staging is referred to in terms of I, II, III and IV. The lower stage of the disease is usually associated with a better recovery status. It may also be mentioned that a person may be diagnosed with stage zero (0) cancer. The label would only signify that the disease is restricted to the place where it originated and has, as yet, not reached any of the neighbouring areas.

Self-diagnosis, however, is not recommended. It is advisable for anyone who has any of the above symptoms to be quickly evaluated by a doctor. Time is of

essence; any time lost could be disastrous.

Healing with Homeopathy*

Type	Medicine
Blood	Natrum Sulph
Bones	Phosphorus
Breast	Silicea
Lung	Senega
Ovaries	Lachesis
Prostate	Sabal Serrulata
Rectum	Alumina
Skin	Secale Cor
Stomach	Bismuth
Type	Medicine
Testes	Conium
Throat	Hydrastis
Tongue	Nitric Acid
Uterus	Sepia *(Strictly under medical supervision)

Case study

Shyam Prasad (59), a retired government official, came to us because his voice had become gruff for many years. The cancer was diagnosed by an oncologist. He had already taken chemotherapy, but the roughness of voice did not get any better; it got worse. His oncologist gave him a life expectancy of six months. We were able to elicit just a few symptoms as Prasad could not speak clearly. The only available data was that his voice seemed to improve just a little bit with sips of cold water or when he coughed, albeit he was able to expel just a little mucous at a time. Based on these two symptoms, we gave him *Causticum*. The result was unbelievable. His hoarseness disappeared. Would you believe it? Prasad was alive and doing well, at the time of printing this book eight months on.

Expert's View:

One may use homeopathic remedies to target the tumours directly. In this case, the homeopath selects remedies that matches the symptom-picture of the tumour. Homeopaths using this approach also consider other parameters, such as the individual's food cravings and disposition, but their primary focus is to target the tumour and reverse its growth. Some homeopaths aim at remedies for the tumour site itself (in the form of injections) to aggressively stimulate a response. Another approach is to use homeopathic remedies to assist in healing the patient's eliminative channels (kidneys, urinary tract, lymphatic system and liver), and strengthening cell detoxification. In this case, your homeopath may use drainage remedies. These are low potency remedies that are used to target specific systems, or detoxify particular substances (e.g., heavy metals). Homeopaths using this approach select the drainage remedy based on an in-depth analysis of the case.

Self-Help

Experts acknowledge that about one-third of all deaths from cancer can be prevented. Not by way of refined preventive methods, but through simple practices.

- Lifestyle measures such as balanced diet, reducing weight, if one is obese, and undertaking some form of moderate physical activity, or exercise
- Give up smoking. This is, quite simply, the most important thing one can do to reduce cancer risk
- While risk factors such as age, or ethnicity, cannot be controlled, detection is best aimed at identifying who among us may be at a higher risk of developing cancer through regular check-ups and screening
- People who have close relatives with cancer or close relatives who have died of cancer, especially at a young age, may be at risk. For example, a woman whose mother or sister had breast cancer is twice as likely to develop breast cancer than someone without such a family history.

carpal tunnel syndrome

What

Carpal tunnel syndrome (CTS) is a form of compressive neuropathy, or damage to the nerves. It is characterised by weakness, pain, and numbness in the hand and wrist, aside from restricted movement of the fingers.

Did You Know?

Women are more likely than men to develop CTS.

CTS is more common in people between ages 40 and 60.

In addition, there may also be loss of strength in the muscles, pain shooting from the hand up the arm and as far as the shoulder, along with night-time tingling in one or both hands, causing sleep problems.

- The word ‘carpal’ is derived from the Greek *karpos*, meaning wrist. The wrist joint is surrounded by fibrous tissue. The space between the wrist bone and the fibrous tissue is called the carpal tunnel. CTS occurs within this tunnel
- The carpal tunnel is filled with tendons, or bundles of collagen fibres, which attach muscle to bone and control finger movements. Tasks requiring highly repetitive and forceful movements of the wrist — e.g., computer keyboard use — can cause swelling around the tendons. This results in a ‘pinched’ nerve, the cause of CTS.

How & Why

- Statistics suggests that the incidence of carpal tunnel syndrome is 1-3 cases per 1,000 subjects, annually; its prevalence is now said to be about 50 cases per 1,000 subjects in the general population, thanks to the constant use of computers and other gadgets
- Frequent, repetitive hand movements can lead to carpal tunnel syndrome. Not surprisingly, it is most common in people whose jobs require pinching, or gripping, with the wrist held bent. People at risk include those who use computers, carpenters, grocery store staff, assembly-line workers, musicians, technicians and mechanics
- Pastime activities such as gardening, needlework and golf can also bring on the symptoms. CTS tends to be hereditary. It may also be associated with certain health conditions, such as diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, hypothyroidism and menopause. High caffeine, tobacco, or alcohol intake, are other trigger factors
- CTS may also be brought on by injuries to the wrist, such as fracture. It is common during the last few months of pregnancy too.

Diagnosis

The main symptom of CTS is numbness of fingers. It may interfere with hand strength and sensation; it can also cause reduced hand function.

- Other symptoms include — numbness or tingling in your hand and fingers, especially the thumb, index and middle fingers
- There may be pain in your wrist, palm or forearm, which is often worse at night than during the day
- The pain may be so bad, that it can wake the sufferer up. There may also be trouble while gripping objects, such as the doorknob, or the steering wheel of a car, along with weakness in the thumb

- Sometimes, the pain is so severe that your entire hand, extending to your forearm, gets affected and painful. If you are right-handed, the right hand tends to be worse affected; likewise, the left hand, if you are left-handed.

CTS is often diagnosed by a physical examination and, at times, by simple tests in the clinic to determine if there is loss of sensation, or weakness, in one's thumbs or fingers.

Procedures ranging from nerve conduction study, electromyography (EMG) and X-ray to Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) are used in certain cases to diagnose the cause and the extent of injury.

Healing with Homeopathy

Pain, better/worse	Medicine
Better by applying ice-cold-water	Guaiacum
Worse, lifting	Rhus Tox
Worse, grasping	Causticum
Worse, holding	Guaiacum
Worse, writing	Mag Phos
Indications	
Drops things; lacks grip	Bovista
Long-lasting, or recurring pain	Causticum
Numbness of wrist	Zincum
Sharp, or shooting pains	Hypericum
Tingling feeling in hand	Aconite Nap
Tremendous stiffness	Ruta Graveolans

Case study 1

Padma (33), a successful manager with a leading IT company, was experiencing weakness in her wrist and two fingers, especially while writing or holding the telephone. One day, while driving her car, she suddenly started getting severe tingling and numbness with stitching pain in her palms. She immediately sought an appointment with a neurologist, who confirmed that she had carpal tunnel syndrome. When she opted for homeopathic treatment, she enumerated her symptoms to us, on the basis of which she was given *Arnica Montana*. Within a few weeks after taking the medicine, Padma felt better. The weakness, tingling

and numbness disappeared gradually, and she was back with renewed gusto at her workplace.

Case study 2

Sudhanshu (22), a college student, felt tingling numbness and burning in his wrist and thumbs, so much so that his studies were affected. During his case-analysis, it was found that Sudhanshu was a PC addict, who played computer games for hours at a stretch. He reported that his tingling, numbness and burning were significantly better when ice was applied over the painful areas. He was given *Guiaicum*, a remedy that matched his symptoms. Within a few weeks, his tingling sensation and numbness were gone.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy does not believe in killing pain or local distress. In CTS cases, the cause is often a possible occupational or overuse factor. Padma was long used to holding the telephone, and craning her neck, while taking notes. Sudhanshu, too, was affected by sheer overuse of his hands and wrists — using the keyboard and mouse. In both cases, the stressor was the same; but, the symptoms were different. Sudhanshu felt better with ice-cold applications, while most inflammations are better with warm fomentation. They needed two different remedies.

Self-Help

- Wear a wrist splint for 4-6 weeks and keep the wrist in a neutral position while at rest
- If there is no relief, your wrist splint is not likely to help. Seek your doctor's advice.

cervical spondylitis

What



Did You Know?

Cervical spondylitis affects males and females equally though it 'presents itself earlier in males.

It usually runs a slow and progressive course.

By age 60, most women and men show signs of cervical spondylitis on imaging, even though they may not have apparent symptoms.

Cervical spondylitis, also called cervical spondylosis, is derived from two Greek words that mean neck (*cervical*) and vertebra (*spondylo*).

It is a disorder in which there is an abnormal wear and tear of the cartilage and bones of the neck, or cervical vertebrae.

How & Why

- The major cause is aging. Other causes that can make a person more likely to develop spondylitis are past neck injury, or spine surgery and severe arthritis
- Long-standing degeneration of the vertebrae and the intervertebral discs may be caused by repeated strain, poor posture, certain occupations, heredity and smoking.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Neck pain and stiffness are one of the earliest presentations of cervical spondylitis. The pain may radiate from the neck to shoulders, arms, forearms, hands, the lower part of the head and upper back. Along with pain, there may be abnormal sensations — tingling; numbness — loss of sensation, or weakness in any of the above areas
- Non-specific headaches in the lower part of the back of head and a feeling of loss of balance are other symptoms. Some individuals may experience swelling, with pain in the lower areas on the back of the head
- There may also be loss of reflexes in certain areas. This may be a result of compression of the spinal nerves. Other symptoms include numbness in the arms and shoulders.

A history of your complaints and examination findings provide most of the details necessary to diagnose cervical spondylitis.

Sometimes, certain tests may be required to confirm diagnosis as well as to assess the extent of damage that has already occurred — these include X-ray of the cervical spine, CT scan, MRI, electromyogram (EMG) and contrast CT scan — after a dye is injected into the spinal column.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Injury	Hypericum
Mental stress	Natrum Mur
Physical exertion	Arnica M
Indications	
Pain from neck to the arms and fingers with numbness	Kalmia
Sensation of weight and weariness in nape of neck	Paris Quadrifolia
Stiffness and constriction of neck and back	Cimicifuga
Specific remedy	Rhus Tox 30c, 5-6 pills, every two hours, for relief from pain.

Case study

Sushma (25) came to us with pain in her neck radiating to her right arm; this was associated with tingling and numbness in her fingers. This was troublesome for her as she was newly married — what annoyed her was she was not able to do her daily household chores, much to her mother-in-law's disappointment. Sushma had already visited an orthopaedic surgeon who had diagnosed her condition as cervical spondylitis. He had advised her to use a neck collar, some painkillers, and anti-anxiety medications. She could only get minimal relief. When she came to us, we found that her pain had started gradually, descending from the neck to hand. It was also associated with numbness. We picked up this peculiarity of pain with numbness and prescribed *Kalmia Latifolia*. This not only helped her to overcome her neck pain and tingling, but when she regained her strength and contributed to the running of the household, it also made her mother-in-law happy.

Self-Help

- Maintain a healthy weight. Lose extra flab, if any
- Alcoholic drinks weaken bones. Consuming more than two alcoholic drinks per day increases one's chances of developing weakened bones
- Exercise regularly to maintain neck strength, flexibility and range of motion
- Always wear your seat belt while travelling in a car; jerks are no good for your complaints
- When working on a computer, or watching TV, take short, frequent breaks
- Avoid long periods of inactivity
- Use a thin pillow; sleep on a firm mattress. This helps to ease the pain.

chapped lips

What

Licking your lips does not always mean that the food is tasty. It may well be a sign of chapped lips.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Some ingredients in lipsticks can actually cause chapped, lips.

Alcohol: Even when. the amount is small, it dries up your lips

Perfu, me: Your lipstick, may smell awesome, but fragrance dries your lips

Matte: The wax in matte lipsticks causes the lips to lose moisture quickly.

Anyone can have chapped lips, but people who work for long hours in dry, cold conditions, or those who are exposed to excessive heat are affected more frequently. Smokers definitely demonstrate a higher prevalence of chapped lips.

A thin oily layer protects the lips from drying; frequent licking can remove this layer leading to excessive drying and cracking.

A variety of factors ranging from exposure to cold and dry weather, vitamin deficiency, anaemia, allergy to lip products, frequent licking and dehydration

can lead to chapped lips.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- The hallmark of chapped lips is dry cracks on the lips. The skin may be peeling; the lips may get swollen sometimes. They may also bleed due to deeper cracks
- Frequent licking of lips is one symptom of chapped lips that you can recognise easily.

For the most part, no tests are required for the diagnosis of chapped lips. The signs and symptoms are sufficient for the doctor to diagnose and treat the condition.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Centre of lips	Natrum Mur
Corner of lips	Veratrum Alb
Lower lip	Pulsatilla
Upper lip	Causticum
Indications	
Chapped lips after exposure to cold wind	Arum T
Chapped lips with cracks	Calcarea Carb
Chapped lips with swelling	Kali Bich
Specific remedy	Petroleum 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Purnima (18), a college girl, had dry chapped lips that would bleed. They were painful, more so while eating or drinking. She also had a deep crack in the middle of her lower lip. On analysis, we found that she had a mild temperament. She was also visibly sensitive and would weep at the slightest provocation. Surprisingly, in spite of her dry lips, she was absolutely thirstless and could do

with just a glass or two of water the whole day. Based on her sensitive nature and also thirstlessness, we prescribed her *Pulsatilla*. In a span of four weeks, her chapped lips healed completely.

Self-Help

- Apply petroleum jelly or unscented lip salve. This will soothe the lips
- Use a lip balm with an SPF of 15-30 — it is protective
- Drooling can irritate the lips while sleeping. Use a lip balm or a dab of vitamin E oil before bedtime
- Hydrate the body. Drink a few extra glasses of water to prevent skin cell dehydration and promote good lip health.

chicken pox

What



Did You Know?

You don't get chicken pox from, chicken. So, why the name? 'Because, the lesions or pocks (pox) look like chick peas placed on top of your skin. Chick pea — that's where the name of the illness originates from.

One of the most common childhood illnesses, chicken pox is a viral infection. It is highly contagious.

How & Why

- Chicken pox has global prevalence; it affects more than 60 million kids worldwide, every year
- It is commonly seen in children in the 5-10 age group; it can sometimes affect adolescents and adults, albeit less commonly
- Males and females are equally affected. March, April and May are supposedly the most 'congenial' months for outbreaks of chicken pox.

Any person who has not had chicken pox earlier, or is not vaccinated against it, can catch the varicella-zoster virus, the organism that causes chicken pox from an infected individual.

This virus is transmitted via direct contact with the skin of the infected person or their respiratory droplets, while coughing or sneezing. Chicken pox is highly contagious for about 2-3 days before and 4-5 days after the appearance of the first rash.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- This self-limiting illness lasts for about 1-2 weeks, after which the lesions, or pock marks, resolve on their own, usually leaving behind lifelong immunity
- Chicken pox typically starts with fever, malaise, and sore throat lasting a day or two. Thereafter, an itchy rash appears on the trunk; it gradually spreads to the limbs and face
- The rash looks like an insect bite to begin with, but progresses to form fluid-filled blisters, or vesicles that get filled with pus. Crust formation is the last stage; the crusts usually don't leave behind any scars unless they are picked, or there is infectivity with bacteria, because of scratching
- Chicken pox generally tends to be mild in children, but may be severe when adults are affected. Vaccinated individuals may, in rare instances, develop a mild form of chicken pox.

The typical manifestation of chicken pox is enough for the doctor to diagnose the condition.

However, blood tests or examination (under microscope) of the fluid from the vesicles may be required to confirm the diagnosis in atypical cases.

Healing with Homeopathy

According to appearance	Medicine
Eruptions are large and get infected	Mercurius Sol
Eruptions are large and slow to emerge	Antim Tart
The skin area around the eruptions is pink and	Apis Mel

puffy and itchy, with stinging pains

Better/worse

Better by cold applications

Ledum Pal

Better with near-scalding hot water

Rhus Tox

Worse, exertion and from overheating

Urtica Urens

Preventative medicine

Variolinum 6c, 5-6 pills, two doses only

Case study

Master Aman (6) was brought to us by his parents with red, itchy rashes all over the body that had begun four days ago. He was also suffering from cold and cough. He had high fever too. He was diagnosed as suffering from chickenpox. The skin rash was extremely itchy; it was aggravated when Aman was indoors, rather than when he was out in the open. He would often scratch certain areas to the point of bleeding. He supposedly felt better with cold water. Based on his 'itchiness being better by cold applications', we gave him *Sulphur* — this eased his rash and fever and also allowed him to sleep 'like a baby' after four uncomfortable, scratchy nights.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy acts best in paediatric illnesses, like chicken pox and measles. It helps in reducing uncomfortable symptoms such as severe itching, associated with the illness, while reducing its duration. Homeopathy also helps in reducing the rate of possible complications.

Self-Help

- Try not to scratch pox spots, since this can lead to scarring
- Keep children's nails short to minimise damage from scratching
- Relieve itchiness by keeping skin cool, wear light clothing and bathe or sponge skin with tepid water. This will help reduce high temperature

- Adding half-a-cup of bicarbonate of soda to a warm bath can be soothing
- Try to stay away from public areas; avoid contact with people who haven't had the infection, especially newborn babies, pregnant women and people with weakened immune systems
- Children should be kept off school until all the pox spots have crusted over.

chronic fatigue syndrome

What



Did You Know?

CFS affects more than five million people worldwide.

According to the American College of Physicians, the prevalence of CFS ranges from 1,775 to 6,321 cases per lakh.

Chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) is characterised by a state of chronic fatigue.

It has no definitive basis; it is often accompanied by cognitive difficulties.

Statistics suggest that there are millions of people worldwide with fatiguing illnesses who complain of chronic fatigue.

How & Why

Some researchers suggest that CFS may be caused by an infection due to a virus, albeit no definitive causal relationship has been determined or established.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- CFS is characterised by long-standing fatigue with an uncertain cause. If a

person having chronic fatigue can identify the source, or nature, of the fatigue, they probably do not have CFS

- Common symptoms include fatigue, headaches, sore throat, and tender or painful areas in the neck or armpits due to swollen lymph glands. There may also be muscle soreness, shifting pains in the joints, loss of memory or focus, sleeplessness and extreme fatigue following an exercise regimen — this may last for more than 24 hours
- CFS, in quantifiable terms, is characterised by a state of chronic fatigue that persists for more than six months, accompanied by cognitive difficulties.

There are no tests for the diagnosis of CFS. The diagnosis is empirical, based on exclusion clinical criteria, or certain nonspecific tests to rule out other illnesses.

The diagnosis primarily rests on historical criteria — for the most part on inexplicable fatigue that may have lasted for more than six months, along with cognitive dysfunction.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Acute illness	Acid Phos
After influenza	Natrum Salicylate
Anxiety	Arsenic Alb
Effects of previous illness	Carbo Veg
Grief	Acid Phos
Precipitating factors	Medicine
Lack of sleep	Nux Vomica
Mental exertion	Picric Acid
Mental exhaustion	Zincum Met
Overwork	Kali Phos
Indications	
Bruised or sore feeling, as if beaten	Arnica M
Dullness, dizziness and drowsiness with muscular pains	Gelsemium
Pains ‘as if the bones were breaking’	Eupatorium Perfoliatum

Case study 1

Amrita was 29, but she felt like 69. She was tired, really tired. She had been living this way for close to five years, since moving from New Delhi to Mumbai. She was exhausted after coming home from work as a manager. She was also inexplicably tired during weekends. She never seemed to be able to catch up on her rest, even when she slept 9-10 hours. Amrita felt the fatigue was like a cloud which came over her. Her body, her core, felt like it had just faded away. The fatigue interfered with everything in her life. The cooking, gardening, and creative projects which had once captivated her now seemed just too much of an effort to get into. She could also not enjoy her time away from work. Her husband complained that she seemed to have no interest in sex. Amrita was suffering from CFS. She approached us. Based on her symptoms, we gave her *Gelsemium Sempervirens*, which slowly and steadily eased her fatigue and dullness, and started making her feel like a new woman. Four months later, she also began to take renewed interest in all her activities both at office as well as home.

Case study 2

31-year-old Sunita described such extreme fatigue that she required three different alarms to get her out of bed each morning. This had been going on for years and she could remember having trouble as far back as when she was 19. Sunita felt worse after the least exertion, especially after mental work. She felt she was a failure. She also suffered from frequent headaches — which were relieved by strong pressure. Based on her symptoms, we prescribed *Picric Acid*. Within a few weeks, Sunita showed progress. It did not take long thereafter for her to take up her new chores without the fear of failure.

Expert's View:

The two cases illustrate an apparent fact — that homeopathy is individualised, or customised medicine. In Amrita's case, she had weakness with drowsiness and

she carried a clouded, hazy feeling — as if everything was fading. She did not lack confidence, but she felt simply exhausted, unable to feel better with work or rest. Sunita's fatigue embodied a pattern with complete breakdown — a long history. She felt worse with the least mental exertion. She lacked confidence; she felt she was a failure. The same illness in two individuals having different presentations needed two different remedies.

Self-Help

- One can't prevent CFS — there is no known preventative measure available for CFS yet
- Avoid stressful situations, as far as possible — this can lead to CFS episodes
- If you have been diagnosed with CFS, follow your doctor's advice and treatment
- Seek the help of a psychotherapist, if you have accompanying symptoms of depression and anxiety, as a result of CFS.

What

Common cold is an extremely contagious illness of the mucous membranes, lining the upper respiratory tract. It varies in its manifestation, depending upon the areas involved, the intensity of infection, or inflammation, often leading to complications.

How & Why



Did You Know?

There are over 200 viruses in the air that can cause the common cold — an illness symbolised by sneezing, a distorted baritone voice, or nasal twang.

Common cold tends to be more prevalent in winter and monsoon, more so in children.

Factors that lead to cold infections may be over-crowding, sudden exposure, variations in weather conditions, smoke, dust, odours or pre-existing disorders like allergies, adenoid growth, chronic sinusitis, septic tonsillitis, or any related infection of the nasopharynx.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- A cold attack is often sudden. It presents with chills, body aches or pains, a low-grade feverish feeling, throat irritation, and frequent sneezing
- The nasal discharge may initially be watery, plentiful and sometimes excoriating. When a cold turns ripe, the nasal discharge may become thick and purulent
- As the cold progresses, one's sense of smell and taste may get affected; the eyes may water profusely, just like when one chops onions.

Your doctor will diagnose a cold by the presentation of symptoms — these include nasal congestion and discharge, due to inflammation of the mucous layers of the nose, or rhinitis; sneezing, watery eyes; sore throat; difficulty in swallowing; dry cough; malaise; generalised body ache, or pain; and, at times, mild fever and sweating.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Dry, cold weather	Aconite Nap
Warm, moist weather	Gelsemium
Wet, cold weather	Rhus Tox
Colour of nasal discharge	
Brown	Kali Sulph
Green	Sepia
Yellow	Kali Bich
Yellowish-green	Tuberculinum
Changeable	Calcarea Carb
Type of nasal discharge	
Bland	Euphrasia
Bloody	Ammonium Carb
Burning	Allium Cepa
Cold	Phosphorus
Hot	Sanguinaria Nit
Thick	Silicea
Thin	Sulphur
Symptoms increase during	

Evening	Pulsatilla
Morning	Arsenic Alb
Night	Nitric Acid
Noon	Lycopodium

Case study

Ram (20) came to us with severe episodes of sneezing and a runny nose, which was troubling him for over six months. When we took his detailed case history, we found that his sneezing used to begin suddenly and get intense after exposure to cold. The sneezing came in bouts; Ram would sneeze 15-20 times at a stretch, after waking up in the morning. Based on this symptom, we gave him *Sabadilla*. This not only relieved him of his sneezing bouts and running nose, but also eased his recurrent trysts with common cold.

Self-Help

- Take lots of water, a diet with high fibre content, and additional vitamin C by eating *amla* (Indian gooseberry)
- Do steam inhalation 2-3 times (for 10-15 minutes each time)
- Use saline nasal drops to relieve congestion
- Regular use of green tea has been found to be beneficial in individuals who are prone to catching colds frequently.

conjunctivitis

What

Conjunctivitis, or pink eye, is the inflammation of the conjunctiva. The conjunctiva is a delicate membrane lining the inner eyelid and covering the white of the eye.

How & Why



Did You Know?

Conjunctivitis affects people who are prone to eye allergies or have a tendency to allergic conditions that affect the sinuses, nose or the lungs.

- The disorder can be caused by allergies, or viral, or bacterial infections
- Viral and bacterial conjunctivitis are spread by touch or contact
- Allergic conjunctivitis occurs after direct contact with an allergen. This can happen through the air, or if the allergen is on your hands and you touch your eyes
- Common allergens include pollen, fungal spores, pet hair, or dander and dust
- At times, the conjunctiva may get irritated by wind, smoke, perfumes and

air pollution, though these are not labelled allergic substances

- Viral conjunctivitis may be triggered by the same rhinoviruses that cause the common cold. This form of conjunctivitis is often spread by coughing or sneezing
- Bacteria and viruses can get into your eyes through contact with contaminated objects — these include cosmetics, false eyelashes, contact lenses, towels, hankies and hands
- Conjunctivitis can affect the newborn too when it passes through the birth canal.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms include — watering, redness, itching and swelling in the eye area. If the symptoms are caused by pollen, they will occur each year around the same time.

Allergic conjunctivitis usually affects both eyes. Viral or bacterial conjunctivitis can affect one or both the eyes.

Viral and allergic conjunctivitis may produce a clear discharge, while the eyes with bacterial conjunctivitis may have a thick, creamy discharge called pus.

The eyes are more likely to be sensitive to light, burn, and feel as though they are closed and crusty upon waking.

- Your doctor will ask about your symptoms, including when they began and how long you have been experiencing them and examine your eyes
- When there is a suspicion of infection, your doctor may take a sample of the pus to test for bacteria and also examine your lymph nodes for swelling, a sign of infection
- When symptoms are suspected to be caused by allergies, your doctor will look into your history of allergies and common allergens that you may have

had contact with

- Your doctor may refer you to an allergist to investigate for specific allergens.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type	Medicine
Allergic, after exposure to dust, wind, sun	Belladonna
Bacterial, with yellow pus-like discharge	Hepar Sulph
Viral, most common type	Euphrasia
Precipitating factors	
Anxiety	Argentum Nit
Injury	Hamamelis
Vaccination	Thuja
Indications	
Bland discharge	Allium Cepa
Discharge, with swelling of eyes	Apis Mel
Hot, watery discharge	Belladonna
Intense itching	Sulphur

Case study

Ashish (30) came to us with redness and itching in both eyes with thick and profuse yellow discharge and pricking pain. His eyelids would clump together in the morning on waking up. He would apply antibiotic drops, but the discharge and itching persisted. On the basis of his thick, yellow and profuse discharge and agglutination of eyes, we prescribed *Pulsatilla*. Within six hours, the discharge from his eyes became watery; the pain reduced too. Within a day's time, both his eyes became perfectly clear and all right.

Expert's View:

This is a perfect example of how quickly homeopathy can take care of acute ailments, if only we observe the presenting symptoms carefully — like, in this

case, the thick, yellow and profuse discharge. Homeopathic remedies can also reduce pain and discomfort caused by acute ailments like conjunctivitis more quickly than one would expect.

Self-Help

- Wash hands with Dr Batra's® Handwash frequently — to prevent spreading the infection, or reinfection
- Use separate towels and washcloths, so that others will not be at risk
- Apply cold compresses to prevent or reduce itching or discharge
- Wash the eyelids gently and soak off debris; do not pick at them
- Never rub the eyes; this can increase the problem.

What

Colic, also known as infantile colic, is excessive, inconsolable crying in otherwise healthy babies. The crying is not so much due to hunger or pain; for most part, the cause cannot be determined.

How & Why



Did You Know?

About 3-17 per cent of infants suffer from colic.

Some estimates suggest that 40 per cent of infants experience colic. It starts around 2-3 weeks after birth and lasts up until 12-16 weeks before it generally resolves.

- Colic tends to be more common if either, or both, parents have suffered from colic during their childhood
- The frequency is identical in bottle-fed and breast-fed babies
- The exact cause of colic is unknown, although many theories have been doing the rounds for years — gas, allergy to formula milk and lactose intolerance
- Overfeeding, in order to curb the crying spells, often worsens the colic. In addition, if the mother has smoked during the third trimester, or is under

stress of any kind, the infant is more likely to develop colic.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Colic generally starts as an episode of inconsolable crying, at the same hour every day
- It is termed as colic when the crying lasts for up to three hours a day, for at least three days a week, or when this pattern is repeated for three weeks
- During colic, the baby has a flushed face; there may also be passing of wind; interruption of sleep and feeds is common. The episodes start suddenly for no apparent reason
- Though not a serious condition, colic can severely affect the family members of the affected child, because they don't find any valid reason for the baby's crying
- It can be frustrating and exhausting for parents to deal with daily episodes of colic and disturbed sleep.

Your doctor will recognise colic by the 'blueprint' of crying. As long as the child continues to feed well, is active, and gains weight appropriately, no investigations are required. In most instances, this is the case.

If your doctor suspects any underlying problem, more investigations need to be carried out to arrive at the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Colic, along with gas	Senna
Colic, due to milk	Mag Mur
Colic, due to uncovering (removing clothes)	Rheum
Better by	
Bending	Colocynth

Bending backwards

Dioscorea

Carried on shoulder

Chamomilla

Indications

Child is quiet all day, cries all night

Jalapa

Child weeps all day, sleeps all night

Lycopodium

Case study

Little Mayank came to us in his mother's arms with a pain in his tummy and greenish loose motions since a week. He refused to be examined and was irritable the moment his mother tried to put him on the examination table. His mother said that Mayank always wanted to be carried; it looked like he felt better when his stomach was pressed against her shoulders. Based on his irritability, along with a desire to be carried, and the greenish colour of his motions, we prescribed him *Chamomilla*. The medicine not only relieved him of his colic and loose motions, but also reduced his irritability.

Self-Help

- Cuddle, rock, pat, and comfort your baby
- A pacifier may help calm a baby with a strong need to suck
- Try soft music with a slow, soothing beat or rhythm; it helps calm the baby
- Massage the baby's stomach and shoulders gently
- If colic occurs at a fixed time, cuddle the baby and help it to relax
- Be patient – colic by and large stops when the baby is 3-4 months old
- When colic does not ease, speak to a professional homeopath.

constipation

What

Constipation is a condition in which bowel movements occur infrequently. When this happens, the intestinal contents can harden and the hard, dry stools can be painful, or difficult to pass.

Generally, an adult who has not had a bowel movement for more than 3-4 days is considered constipated.



Did You Know?

Long-standing, or chronic constipation, may be a sign of a serious underlying illness — viz., high blood calcium levels, hypothyroidism, depression, diabetes, kidney disease, lead poisoning, spinal cord injury, Parkinson's disease and, colorectal cancer.

How & Why

- Constipation is a common complaint. It can occur at any age
- It is more common among children and women, especially elderly women than men. It also has a tendency to occur during pregnancy.

The causes are a dime a dozen — right from not drinking enough fluids, to eating a low-fibre diet, lack of exercise, prolonged bed-rest following an illness, or hospital stay, stress, travel, laxative overuse and delaying the urge to pass

stools.

The disorder may sometimes be caused by impaction — a result of the stools being trapped in the lower portion of the large intestine. Impacted stool often affects the elderly, the disabled and children.

Likewise, anal fissures, or small cracks in the lining of the anus and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) can also cause constipation, as also certain conventional medications — most notably, anti-depressants, antacids, anti-histamines, anti-hypertensives, aspirin, iron and calcium supplements.

Waste is toxic. It is, therefore, not healthy to carry a heavy, constipated, or toxic load in the body.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Constipation is easy to recognise, especially when you have to strain to pass stools. Or, if you pass stools every few days. Or, if you feel uncomfortably full; or, if you feel there is some stool lodged in the rectum that does not seem to come out. Or, you dread to pass stool, lest it ‘cuts’ your anus. Or, you have a headache; or, you don’t feel energetic at the workplace, or home. Or, you have gas.

When you are constipated, bowel movements are not as frequent as you would like them to be.

You may, therefore, strain to push the hard stools that are difficult to pass. This occurs even after attending to the urge, because the rectum sometimes feels half-emptied. People with constipation often feel bloated and complain of gas and frequent headaches. This may affect one’s health, mood, concentration and also productivity.

- Your doctor will diagnose your condition through a physical examination. He will ascertain the frequency and type of bowel movements you have and ask about your medicinal history — whether you are taking OTC medications or prescription drugs

- During the physical examination, your physician will press your abdomen to feel for any hardened areas
- A rectal examination may be performed, besides a routine blood, urine, and stool test, including other diagnostic tests — sigmoidoscopy to examine the rectum and lower intestine, or sigmoid colon, or colonoscopy to view the entire colon
- A barium enema X-ray may also be performed in some cases — this is performed after you drink a barium solution. The test may reveal blockages, if any, in the intestine on the X-ray.

Healing with Homeopathy

For constipation in	Medicine
Bottle-fed babies	Nux Vomica
Children	Silicea
Menopausal women	Graphites
Old people	Bryonia
Specific for all	Senna 6c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside
Associated with	
Bad breath	Carbolic Acid
Bleeding from the anus	Collinsonia
Colic	Aloe Socotrina
Depression	Oleander
Enlarged prostate	Sabadilla
Fear	Belladonna
Flatulence	Mercurius Sol
Frequent urination	Sarsaparilla
Headache	Natrum Mur
Heat	Veratrum Alb
Itching of anus	Sulphur
Nausea	Cocculus
Prolapse, rectum	Aesculus
Urine retention	Cantharis

Vertigo	Calcarea Phos
Weakness	Kali Bich
Worse at/in	
School	Ambra Grisea
Sea	Bryonia
Seashore	Mag Mur
Precipitating factors	
Cooking in aluminium vessels	Alumina
Mental shock	Mag Carb
Sedentary habits	Nux Vomica
Travelling	Platina
When away from home	Lycopodium
Wine	Zincum Met
For constipation	Medicine
When there is	
Urge	Nux Vomica
No urge	Opium
Type	
Painful	Nitric Acid
Painless	Pulsatilla
Hormonal factors	
After menses	Graphites
Before menses	Silicea
During menses	Sepia

Case study 1

Milan Shah, a businessman, complained of hard, painful stools with occasional bleeding. His job demanded sitting for long hours and he ‘feasted’ on stimulants to stay awake and alert at work. His irregular eating and sleeping routines affected his digestion and bowel habits. Presuming that he had to pass stools at least once daily, he started using laxatives till they stopped working for him. He now developed laxative-dependent constipation. When he was given *Nux Vomica* — selected on the basis of his sedentary lifestyle, excessive consumption of stimulants, and abuse of laxatives — his constipation soon became a thing of the past.

Expert's View:

Our body reacts in equal and opposite ways to medications or drugs. This leads to dependency. A small dose of a laxative helps to begin with. When this becomes a habit, one often requires a larger dose to create the urge for stool, leading to a stage when nothing works.

Case study 2

Kalyan Singh (41), a businessman and frequent traveller, presented with a peculiar problem. He preferred to pass stools when no one was around. This was because he would pass a lot of noisy gas, along with his stools. It would cause him a great deal of embarrassment, or so he thought. He also avoided staying at any of his friend's or relative's homes beyond a few hours for the same reason. He was self-conscious of his flatulence. When he once attended a wedding, he filled up the commode with tissue paper, to reduce the 'blip-blop' noise of the stools falling in the water. Because of his 'noisy distress', he would also often postpone his daily visit to the loo. Slowly, he became a subject of chronic constipation. His unique set of symptoms called for *Ambra Grisea*. Within a few weeks of treatment, Singh was not only relieved of his constipation, but also his flatulence, and the uncomfortable 'gas-chamber' feeling. Today, he visits his friends and relatives and stays with them happily, without his 'noisy bowel' worries.

Expert's View:

This case illustrates the psychosomatic cause for constipation, triggered by embarrassment — a remarkable symptom.

Self-Help

- Exercise regularly. Walk, swim, or do something that makes you feel active at least 4-5 times a week. Move around, or walk after you eat. This helps to regularise bowel movement; it also improves bowel health

- When you have the urge for stool, attend to the call. Don't hold, or defer, because the urge will pass
- Try to train your bowels for passing stools at a regular time. This means you can attend to the call every day at the same time — especially after breakfast, or dinner
- Eat small meals and do not skip meals — this will help you to regulate your bowel activity slowly
- Say 'no' to processed or junk-foods — white breads, pastries, doughnuts, sausage, burgers, potato chips and french fries. They lack fibre on one hand; they are not healthy, on the other. They slacken your bowel movement.

What



Did You Know?

People of all ages are affected by corns, though the prevalence of corns is higher as one ages.

Corns are relatively rare in children.

A corn is a small swelling, usually seen on the feet and hands; it basically comprises of thickened, dead skin.

In other words, when the skin is subject to constant friction against another surface, the body naturally tries to protect the skin by thickening the ‘alarmed’ area.

Over a period of time, this thickened skin forms into a callus — an area of tough and hardened skin, mostly dead skin cells.

A highly localised callus with a waxy core that goes deep inside the skin is called a corn.

How & Why

- Corns often crop up on pressure points and places that are subject to constant friction — the soles, ball of the big toe, in between the fingers and toes.

- Ill-fitting shoes, high heels, an abnormal bone structure, and joint diseases that have led to deformities are common triggers. They pressurise certain areas of the skin and lead to the formation of corns.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Corns are generally present as hard localised growths that are pale, or yellow in colour. Deep pressure on a corn causes pain — this is one reason why you often go ‘ouch’ if you step on it early in the morning, while getting off the bed. Soft corns are slightly different; these develop in between the fingers and toes. They are more painful as compared to hard corns; they hurt badly, when the adjacent fingers or toes rub against each other.

The look and feel of a corn is enough for your doctor to make a diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type of corn	Medicine
Horny	Antim Crud
Inflamed	Sulphur
Soft	Silicea
Location	
Heel	Sepia
Soles	Antim Crud
Toes	Silicea
Type of pain	
Aching	Lycopodium
Boring	Ranunculus Scleratus
Burning	Ignatia
Pinching	Baryta Carb
Shooting	Natrum Mur
Specific remedy	Antim Crud 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till corns reduce.

Case study

R. Chandran (58) came to us with corns all over his soles (on both feet). The corns were hard, but sensitive; he was unable to walk on the floor without wearing padded shoes. He could never imagine walking without them. His nails were brittle and out of shape. Based on the sensitive nature of his corns and brittle nails, we prescribed *Antimonium Crudum*. When he returned after a month, most of his corns had fallen off; the rest were on the verge of falling off. The pain had reduced considerably. What's more, Chandran could now walk without his padded shoes.

Expert's View:

Some people have an inherent tendency to develop corns and calluses. Homeopathy targets this predisposition and removes corns from the 'roots'.

Self-Help

- Use over-the-counter pads. Apply pads to protect areas where corns and calluses develop
- Soak your hands or feet in warm, soapy water; this softens the corns and calluses
- During or after a bath, rub corns or calluses with a pumice stone or washcloth to remove layers of toughened skin. Don't use a pumice stone if you have diabetes; you risk infection
- Do not cut or shave corns or calluses, this can lead to infections
- Apply a moisturiser to your hands and feet, this will keep your skin soft
- Ill-fitting footwear is often to blame for corns and calluses. Wear shoes that do not constrict, or squeeze, your toes
- Use well-fitting, cushioned shoes, with soft socks, until your corn or callus disappears.

cracked heels

What

Cracked heels are a common problem. The skin at the edge of the heels thickens and develops cracks. Cracked heels often make people go ‘ouch’ the moment they step on the ground, especially after resting.



Did You Know?

The trendy “open-back” sandals, a rage with women as well as men, are a possible trigger for cracked heels.

They do not offer support to the fat pad on the heels, causing it to expand sideways — this worsens the problem.

How & Why

- Anyone can suffer from cracked heels
- Obese individuals and those who have to stand for long periods are at increased risk
- The condition tends to also have an increased prevalence with advancing age



Did You Know?

Diabetics with cracked heels are prone to developing infections on the feet due to the cracks.

This can be difficult to treat because of nerve damage caused by high sugar levels.

This is reason enough why diabetics need to take good care of their feet and prevent cracked heels.

There's often a history of some thickening and hardening of the skin at the rim of the heels, which later develops into cracks. The cracks deepen over a period of time and, if this happens, there is pain while stepping on the ground.

Bleeding may occur from the cracks, though this is not common. Some patients may also complain of itching.

A wide range of factors, from dry skin to open-back footwear, ill-fitting shoes, or vitamin deficiency, can lead to cracked heels.

Abnormalities in the structure of the feet, diseases such as diabetes, eczema, psoriasis, as well as occupations needing prolonged standing, are other probable causes.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- The primary sign of cracked heels is the growth of dry, hard, thickened skin, or callus, around the edge of the heel
- A look at the heels is usually enough to diagnose cracked heels. Besides this, the individual's case history will suffice to understand what conditions precipitated its onset
- Lastly, to understand the exact cause of cracked heels, your doctor may ask you to undergo an X-ray of the feet, blood investigations for diabetes and other conditions.

Healing with Homeopathy

Season	Medicine
Worse, summer	Sarsaparilla

Worse, winter	Petroleum
Constitution	
Fat women	Graphites
Thin women	Sepia
Associated with	
Bleeding on touch	Nitric Acid
Deep cracks	Hepar Sulph
Thick skin	Antim Crud

Case study

Jaya (37) came to us with deep and painful cracks on her soles that began appearing 8-10 years ago. The cracks tended to get worse during winter. Due to the painful cracks, she was almost incapacitated; she could barely walk short distances. Based on this seasonal aggravation, especially during winter, and the deep cracks, we gave her *Petroleum*. A few weeks later, the cracks disappeared and the soles regained their original smooth texture.

Self-Help

- Add oil to your bath water. This will help lock the moisture in your heels. Also, it will soothe and ease the cracks. After you take a bath or shower, pat your heels clean. While your skin is still damp, apply moisturising cream. The moisturiser will help your heels retain water and stop them from becoming dry
- Soak your feet before going to bed. Mix half lukewarm water and half mineral oil. Make sure that the water is not too hot, because it can actually dry out your skin. Soak for approximately 10 minutes and massage your feet to make sure the oil enters the skin
- Apply moisturiser to your heels before you put socks on. This is soothing and comforting.

31 dandruff

What

Dandruff is a scaly, dry skin that forms on and flakes off the scalp.



Did You Know?

•Dandruff can affect newborns too. This is characterised by a scaling, crusty scalp. It is called ‘cradle cap’.

How & Why

- Dandruff affects millions of people of all age groups — from teenagers to adults
- It seems to be more common in men and more likely in people who have oily skin, or certain illnesses, or immune deficiencies
- It also tends to affect individuals who have unkempt hair, or don’t wash it regularly, or are stressed out.

Clinicians say that there may be an underlying link between dandruff and certain types of fungus found in hair follicles. The fungus, common on normal scalp, feeds on oils in the skin and may trigger the skin cells to reproduce more quickly than before. In due course of time, these new cells create a glut of dead skin cells. These flake off and become conspicuous.

In addition, dandruff may also be a result of seborrhoeic, or contact dermatitis, and psoriasis too.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Dandruff often manifests with typical flaky, white scales.

It is easy for your doctor to diagnose it. However, when dandruff is severe or when you are also suffering from scalp irritation, or infection, your doctor may perform a physical examination, along with certain routine, or basic, tests to diagnose the likely cause of your dandruff.

Healing with Homeopathy

Colour of flakes	Medicine
White	Natrum Mur
Yellow	Kali Sulph
Type of dandruff	
Dry, scaly	Mezereum
Sticky	Thuja
Associated with	
Anxiety	Kali Phos
Itching	Sulphur
Offensive smell	Psorinum

Case study

Heena (17) was brought to us by her parents. In spite of having tried various treatments, her problem of recurrent dandruff persisted. She had thick, flaky scales on the scalp, which used to fall on her eyebrows and face. She had intolerable itching and bleeding eruptions on her scalp, along with hair loss; her scalp smelled bad. We felt that it ‘enveloped’ the entire consulting room. Combing was difficult; Heena had, therefore, cut her hair extremely short. Her friends mocked her; she, therefore, avoided going to college. After eliciting her clinical history followed by examination, she was diagnosed as also having scaly fungal eruptions on the scalp. This was confirmed by a Wood’s lamp examination. *Calcareo Sulphuricum*, a remedy selected on the basis of her

symptoms as well as her personality, gave her quick, tangible improvement. Her itching, bleeding eruptions and the foul odour, responded to treatment just as quickly.

Expert's View:

Dandruff is often precipitated by anxiety, leading to excess sebum formation. A homeopathic anti-dandruff medicine often helps.

Self-Help

- Do not scratch or brush the scalp too hard; it may lead to infection
- Brush hair gently before washing scalp and hair
- Keep the scalp clean. Use Dr Batra's[®] anti-dandruff shampoo, daily
- Cover your scalp with a scarf or hat to protect it from extreme weather conditions
- Manage stress by practising relaxation techniques
- Prevent excess oil accumulation on scalp. Avoid hair style accessories like blow dryers, gels, sprays and harsh colours
- Avoid greasy, sweet and oily food — they will worsen your dandruff.

32 depression

What

All of us experience depression at one time or another — a response to a situation, loss or sad event.



Did You Know?

Depression affects more than 200 million people around the world.

In the worst scenario, depression can lead to suicide. Over the world, a million people take this extreme step, every year.

Most episodes of depression last for six to nine months.

When depression lasts longer, or the symptoms go away only to return again, it is called chronic depression.

Chronic depression interferes with daily activities; it also leads to a loss of interest in activities that are normally enjoyable.

How & Why

- Depression is a major public health concern. It can affect people of all ages and backgrounds; women are twice as likely to suffer from it as compared to men
- Depression does not affect the individual alone; it has repercussions on

one's family, friends, as well as work

- There are also costs involved in terms of lost productivity and absenteeism from work, due to depression and depressive states
- Depression is one of the principal causes of disability all over the world
- People with a family history of anxiety, despondency, or bipolar disorder, or having alcohol or drug abuse problems, are more likely to develop the problem
- The condition also has a propensity to worsen as time progresses. It can substantially affect the individual's life at home and in social circles.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms may include a persistent feeling of sadness, isolation, feelings of emptiness, spells of crying, irritability, lack of interest in things that one would have loved doing, lack of urgency, or energy, excessive sleepiness, or sleeplessness, hopelessness, decreased sex drive, dread of everything, aside from backache, headache, digestive problems and muscular cramps.

As depression advances, there is an air of negativity in everything — what's more, the individual seems to expect failure at every step. There is also just no happiness in life, and career, or so they think.

- Your doctor will diagnose depression on the basis of common signs and symptoms
- A special questionnaire may be used for evaluation
- Your doctor will also ask about any drug, or alcohol abuse, or physical illnesses that may have lead to depression
- In chronic depression, your doctor may refer you to a psychiatrist, who will look into your health issues, home and work environments, loss of job, marital discord, or experiences that may have had a bearing on how you

feel about yourself and others

- Blood tests may be considered for women patients, when there is a suspicion of a hormonal disorder.

Healing with Homeopathy

Most of us experience depression at sometime or the other. Depression may have a material cause — related to certain illnesses, or even a physical injury. Likewise, emotional factors can contribute to, or aggravate, depression. Psychological factors can trigger depression too. This is the reason why homeopathy believes that there is a strong need, or rationale, for different ways, or remedies, to treat the problem — keeping in mind its cause and effect.

Depression, homeopathy also believes, is not just a question of attitude, or behaviour; it is essentially a question of internal imbalance. It needs to be addressed on a deeper, or constitutional, level.

Homeopathy does not merely look at the symptoms, because no two individuals having depression present with the same symptoms. In other words, homeopathy analyses the overall illness portrait of each individual. It treats the individual, not just the disorder, with a remedy that suits the individual's requirements best.

It also aims at diagnosing the unique nature of the person and symptoms experienced during a depressive episode, while analysing the individual's temperament, or responses. In so doing, it goes to the root of the wide-ranging subtleties of depression that appear to be inconsequential in other forms of treatment.

Put simply, homeopathy does not treat depression by masking, or suppressing, the symptoms. It targets the 'source' and erases its ugly tentacles from the inside out. This results in tangible, or permanent, resolution of the depressive state or condition.

Stages	Medicine
Children	Calcarea Carb
Old people	Aurum Met

Puberty	Helleborus
Hormonal factors	
Better, during menses	Lachesis
Worse, after menses	Ferrum Met
Worse, after delivery	Sepia
Worse, before menses	Pulsatilla
Worse, during menopause	Lachesis
Worse, during menses	Sepia
Weather	
Better, open air	Pulsatilla
Worse, clear weather	Stramonium
Worse, cloudy weather	Ammon Carb
Worse, open air	Kali Carb
Worse, sunshine	Stramonium
Worse, wet weather	Elaps
Precipitating factors	
Alone, without others around	Arsenic Alb
Bad news	Calcarea Phos
Cause not known	Phosphorus
Coition (sex)	Natrum Phos
Darkness	Phosphorus
Disappointment in love	Ignatia
Domestic issues	Sepia
From smell of flowers	Hyoscyamus
Head injury	Nat Sulph
Masturbation	Acid Phos
Music	Graphites
Sad stories	Cicuta
Better/Worse	
Better, weeping	Phosphorus
Better, consolation	Pulsatilla
Worse, consolation	Natrum Mur
Worse, weeping	Stannum Met
Case study	

Rashmee, a 35-year-old housewife, came to our clinic, accompanied by her

husband. She had a history of depression for over five years, and she was on anti-depressants ever since. Her husband told us that she was listless, uninterested in any activity, and would sit near the window gazing at the horizon for hours. She was also aloof to her husband and their two children. When we analysed her case, we found that she developed her depression following surgery. This involved the removal of her uterus, because of a tumour. The removal of her uterus, along with the ovaries, triggered hormonal imbalance and subsequently her depression began. Based on her listless indifference towards her loved ones, coupled with hormonal discrepancy, we prescribed *Sepia Officinalis*. When she came again after a month with her husband, she was a changed woman. Her husband told us that she had started taking interest in her daily activities and was more loving and caring towards her family.

Expert's View:

All depressive patients present with similar symptoms, but they result from different causes. One must bear in mind that while treating depression, the cause of depression usually clinches the diagnosis in choosing the right homeopathic remedy.

Self-Help

- Recognise symptoms of depression, howsoever insignificant they may appear to be
- Keep an eye on what you eat, the amount of sleep you get and exercise — they all add to your feel-good feeling
- Unwind, listen to soft, soulful music, or melodies, having not more than 60 beats per minute; this is hugely relaxing. This is evidenced to bring down the level of cortisol, a chemical, a probable trigger of depression
- Take control, if need be, with the help of a counsellor — this is critical for you to feel relaxed and healthy again

- If you feel that you nurse thoughts of suicide, speak to your doctor promptly.

What

Diabetes mellitus (DM), or diabetes, as most of us know, is a disorder in which the islets in the pancreas fail to secrete adequate insulin. Or, it can also be the body's decreased ability to use insulin.



Did You Know?

Diabetes is reaching epidemic proportions.

Six years ago, the International Diabetes Federation estimated that nearly 15-20 crore people around the world suffered from diabetes.

By 2025, this figure is expected to rise to over 35-40 crore, when over six per cent of the world's population will be living with diabetes.

How & Why

In healthy individuals, food is digested to release glucose into the blood. This causes the pancreas to release insulin into the bloodstream. Insulin helps in the transportation of glucose from the blood to the liver and muscle cells for metabolism.

When the pancreas fail to produce adequate amounts of insulin, or if there is insulin 'resistance', diabetes can set in.

There are two types of diabetes — insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM), also known as juvenile-onset diabetes, or Type 1 diabetes, and non-insulin-

dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM), also known as maturity-onset diabetes, or Type 2 diabetes.

In both types, any excess sugar in the blood, known as hyperglycaemia, needs to be expelled by the kidneys.

Type 1 Diabetes

In Type 1 diabetes, the body's immune system damages the beta cells in the pancreas resulting in low insulin levels. When left untreated, this can sometimes cause diabetic coma and death.

Eating foods containing carbohydrates such as polished rice, potatoes, bread, and cereals will elevate your blood sugar and insulin levels. This sugar-raising effect of a food is called the glycaemic index. This is used to measure how quickly carbohydrate is absorbed by the body.

Studies have found that people with Type 1 diabetes have better control over their blood sugar levels by following a low glycaemic index diet (e.g., oats; fruits).

It may also be mentioned that diabetics with neuropathy (diabetic nerve damage) have found that following a vegan type diet — i.e., avoidance of all meat, eggs, and dairy products — improves their conditions. When you avoid meat and dairy products, the chances of developing heart disease and kidney problems, which diabetics are susceptible to, are also reduced.

As for diabetics who smoke, they are definitely at a higher risk of developing heart disease and kidney problems. Diabetics who consume excess amounts of alcohol are, of course, at a much higher risk of developing problems in their eyes.

Type 2 Diabetes

Non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM), or Type 2 diabetes, typically occurs in obese individuals over 35 years of age, albeit some obese children have been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes due to lack of exercise and poor diet. The clinical symptoms of NIDDM are often mild.



Increased Prevalence

The prevalence of diabetes is rising at an alarming rate throughout the world, due to increased life expectancy, obesity and sedentary lifestyle. Of particular cause for concern is the dramatic rise of diabetes in children and adolescents.

India is host to the largest diabetes population in the world. An estimated 3-4 crore people in our country are diabetic. This corresponds to eight per cent of the adult population.

Some Type 2 diabetics have sufficient amounts of insulin in the blood. Diabetes occurs, not because of shortage of insulin, but because the cells become desensitised due to the ‘down-regulation’ of insulin receptors.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Excessive thirst, frequent urination, weight loss and excessive hunger are prominent symptoms.

Type 1:

Frequent urination, excessive thirst, especially for sweet drinks, extreme hunger with sudden weight loss, weakness, fatigue, blurred vision and irritability. Severe cases may have no symptoms.

Caution:

When there are extremely high levels of blood sugar, diabetic coma is a possibility.

Type 2:

Frequent urination, unusual thirst, fatigue, blurred vision and weight loss are symptoms. What is important is that these symptoms appear more slowly than in Type 1. In women, there may be recurrent vaginal yeast infections (candidiasis) and fungal infections in the groin area or under the breasts.

Most physicians recommend that people over age 45 should undergo routine tests for diabetes at regular intervals — at least, twice a year. Younger adults should undergo tests if they have any of the predisposing factors. Pregnant

women should be evaluated regularly.

- Your physician may order a fasting plasma glucose test. In this test, blood is drawn after the individual fasts for eight hours. Normal levels are up to 110 mg/dl. The diagnosis of diabetes is made when this level is 126 mg/dl or higher on two different days. Levels between 110 mg/dl and 126 mg/dl are considered impaired fasting glucose. Such individuals are labelled to be at risk of developing diabetes later.
- Glucose tolerance test (GTT) is another procedure which is used for fasting glucose testing. In this test, a fasting glucose level is drawn, when the individual drinks a glucose solution. Two hours later, the glucose level is evaluated. Generally, blood sugar increases somewhat after drinking the glucose solution; it decreases after two hours. In diabetics, the initial level is extremely high; what's more, it does not reduce appreciably after two hours.
- Glycosylated haemoglobin test (GHT) is used to examine blood for levels of Haemoglobin A1c, or glycosylated haemoglobin. This is a simple lab test that shows the average amount of sugar (glucose) that has been in a person's blood over the last three months. The test shows if a person's blood sugar is close to normal, or too high. It is also said to be the best test to evaluate if an individual's blood sugar is under control or not. A normal non-diabetic HbA1c is 3.5-5.5 per cent. In diabetics, about 6.5 per cent is good.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Emotional upset	Natrum Mur
Medicine, or drug-induced	Nux Vomica
Shock	Opium
Associated with	
Carbuncles and boils	Gymnema Sylvestra
Extreme dryness of mouth and throat	Cephalandra Indica
Extreme mental and physical weakness	Acid Phos
Lung complaints	Calcarea Phos
Specific remedy	

Maintains blood sugar at a normal level; the urine remains free of sugar Insulin 6c (under medical supervision only)

Case study 1

A. B. Shah (47) had a history of diabetes and hypertension since the last 12 years. Although he was on conventional medicine, he was now suffering from tingling, burning, tiredness, irritability, increased hunger and frequent urination. His blood sugar was 192 fasting and 300 post-prandial with glycosylated Hb 10, indicating poor control of blood sugar. He was advised to continue with the same dosage of conventional medicines, along with homeopathic treatment. Following homeopathic treatment, he showed progress. Within a year's time, his symptoms reduced considerably. He was advised daily exercise — walking for half-an-hour — and also given a diabetic diet chart. His blood sugar came down to 90 (fasting) and 135 (post-lunch) with glycosylated Hb at 8.7.

Case study 2

Shyamprasad (62), a known diabetic for 15 years, was detected with diabetic retinopathy as well as neuropathy. His symptoms were not distinctive, except for a mild blurring of vision. He did not take his diabetes seriously. His wife commented that he never followed the diet plan and regimen his doctors advised him to follow, though he was aware of the complications of the disorder. Considering this unique symptom — apathy regarding one's illness — he was given *Gelsemium Sempervirens* and prescribed a new diet regimen and fitness routine. After two years of regular homeopathic treatment, his blurring of vision reduced. His retinopathy, as well his neuropathy, also responded favourably to homeopathic treatment.

Expert's View:

In conditions like diabetes, one should always speak in terms of management rather than cure. Homeopathic treatment, along with the intake of hypoglycaemic drugs and insulin can prevent the progression and complications of diabetes. Homeopathic medicines administered on time help maintain insulin levels and taking conventional anti-diabetic drugs at the minimum dosage

possible could allow one to gradually taper the dose and also discontinue them later.

Homeopathy Complements Conventional Medicine

Homeopathy can complement modern (conventional) medicine in diabetes. In one study in Athens, a group of patients with diabetes mellitus Type 2 was treated with a conventional oral anti-diabetic drug and placebo (Group-1). Another group was given the same oral anti-diabetic drug and homeopathy (Group-2). The duration of treatment lasted nine months of parallel treatment. Group-1 showed 47 per cent improvement, while Group-2, on conventional medication and homeopathy, showed 97 per cent improvement.

Self-Help

- Eat healthy — eat high fibre food, fruit and vegetables, and foods that are low in fat, salt and sugar
- Speak to a dietician to help you plan your diet right
- Exercise regularly. Exercise lowers your blood glucose level. However, speak to your doctor before you start an exercise regimen. Bear in mind your sugar levels may drop at times
- Keep your family and friends informed of your condition. Wear a badge, or carry a diabetic card, this will be useful during an emergency
- Avoid cigarettes. Tobacco increases the risk of cardiovascular disease, such as heart attack or stroke
- Avoid, or reduce, your alcohol 'fix', if any. Do not drink alcohol on empty stomach; it can cause either high or low blood glucose levels. Besides, alcohol can affect insulin treatment and blood glucose monitoring
- Take care of your feet. Diabetics are prone to develop problems with their feet, including infections and foot ulcers. Keep your nails short (you can scratch and 'infect' your skin otherwise) and wash your feet with warm

water every day. Wear shoes that are approved by a foot, ankle, and lower leg medical specialist (podiatrist or chiropodist). Check your feet regularly for any cuts, blisters or grazes, because you may not be able to feel them, if there is any damage to the nerves in your feet

- Have regular eye tests. You should have your eyes tested at least twice a year to check for retinopathy
- Follow-up with your doctor regularly; diabetes should not be taken lightly.

34 diarrhoea

What

Diarrhoea is derived from the Greek words, *dia* ‘through’, and *rrhoia* ‘flow’. The condition is marked by an increase in the amount, frequency and liquid nature of bowel movements.



Did You Know?

‘Diarrhoea, affects 400 million. people each year, and causes more than, one million. deaths, especially in. children. in. the developing world. Statistics suggests that 7-8, children, die of diarrhoea every minute, because of poor quality drinking water and malnutrition.

Generally, the colon can take in several times more fluid than needed — on a daily basis. Diarrhoea occurs when this facility is exceeded.

Diarrhoea is usually mild. It is okay when it appears more than thrice in a day, lasts a day or two, and resolves on its own.

Diarrhoea can be acute, or chronic — lasting more than 2-3 weeks.

How & Why

- Anyone can get diarrhoea. The average person experiences diarrhoea around four times each year. A particular bacterium, *Escherichia coli*, is endemic in many parts of the world. Each year, diarrhoea affects approximately 50 million tourists and business people who travel to areas where *E.coli* are endemic

- Diarrhoea often resolves on its own. In most instances, the cause may not be evident. Acute diarrhoea is often caused by a virus, bacteria or parasite. When diarrhoea is caused by bacteria, there may be blood or large amounts of mucous in the stools
- Traveller's diarrhoea, or 'Delhi belly', a common malady, is caused by organisms in contaminated food, or water
- Certain medications, like antibiotics and painkillers, can also bring about bouts of diarrhoea. Certain food or stress can cause diarrhoea too
- Chronic diarrhoea may be a result of a disorder, such as irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). Other causes include lactose intolerance and hormonal disorders, aside from AIDS, colon cancer and tumours of the bowel.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms of dehydration include dry mouth, dry eyes, infrequent urination, and urine with a dark colour and strong odour. Symptoms of diarrhoea may also include fever, nausea, vomiting and stomach pain. The loose stools may include blood, or pus, and undigested food particles.

When simple measures fail, or when diarrhoea persists, your doctor will take a history of symptoms, ask about any changes in your diet, medications taken and family history of intestinal illnesses.

- Diagnostic tests are usually performed when diarrhoea is acute and when one has fever ($>102^{\circ}\text{F}$), with dehydration, blood in the stools, severe abdominal pain, a diagnosed immune disease or antibiotic use
- The most frequently used diagnostic test is stool culture, in which a sample of bowel material is analysed for blood, bacteria, parasites, or toxins, or medicine-induced diarrhoea
- Your doctor may also order blood tests to check electrolyte levels and blood count. In certain cases, sigmoidoscopy, in which a flexible viewing tube is inserted through the anus to examine the lining of the rectum and anus, may be ordered.

Healing with-Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Anger	Colocynth
Antibiotics	Tuberculinum
Anticipation	Argentum Nit
Anxiety	Arsenic Alb
Bad news	Gelsemium
Beer	Sulphur
Cabbage	Petroleum
Castor oil	Bryonia
Chocolates	Lithium Carb
Coffee	Cistus Can
Cold weather	Nitric Acid
Dentition	Mag Carb
Emotional excitement	Sepia
Precipitating factors	Medicine
Fat food	Pulsatilla
Fear or anxiety	Kali Phos
Fruits	Antim Crud
Gastric upset	Nux Vomica
Getting wet	Rhus Tox
Hot weather	Bryonia
Any change in diet	Allium Sativa
Milk	Calcare Carb
Onions	Thuja
Oranges	Acid Phos
Pastry	Kali Chloratum
Tobacco	Tabaccum
Stages	
Children	Aethusa Cy
Adults, old people	Gambogia
Indications	
With pain	Chamomilla
Without pain	Podophyllum
Diarrhoea alternates with	
Asthma	Abrotanum

Constipation
Eruptions
Gout
Headache
Rheumatism

Nux Vomica
Dulcamara
Antim Crud
Podophyllum
Kali Bich

Case study 1

Ruchi (19) visited us and said, “I cannot eat sweets. When I eat sweets, I get diarrhoea.” The conventional practice is to treat diarrhoea with antibiotics, or anti-diarrhoeal drugs, without addressing the cause. Homeopathy, on the other hand, approaches diarrhoea by treating the cause, and not merely the outcome. Ruchi was given *Pulsatilla*, because the remedy addresses diarrhoea that is a result of eating sweets. She felt all right quickly and safely.

Case study 2

15-year-old Monica had to keep visiting the toilet every time she appeared for her exams. Exams were a nightmare, and she dreaded the thought of it. She was prescribed *Gelsemium Sempervirens* on the basis of her anxiety before exams. This not only treated her problem, it also gave her the big push to get over anticipatory anxiety — the cause of her frequent visits to the loo before exams.

Self-Help

- Keep yourself well-hydrated. Maintain electrolyte balance
- Diarrhoea is often self-limiting, but one can't take chances with it
- Consult your doctor and seek their advice when diarrhoea doesn't improve within 24-36 hours, or is accompanied by severe pain, vomiting, high temperature or when blood is present in the stools.

35 dry eyes

What

When the tear-secreting glands around the eyes do not produce adequate tears, one may experience symptoms that constitute ‘dry eyes’.

Tears are multi-functional — they moisturise the eyes, provide lubrication and protect them from infection.



Did, You Know?

More than 15 per cent of the general population above 40 years of age is affected by dry eyes.

Dry eyes are also one-and-a-half times more common in women, as compared to men.

How & Why

- Decreased production or rapid evaporation of tears can lead to dry eyes
- Some of the common causes are prolonged exposure to dry air, such as air-conditioners, inadequate blinking, staring at computers for long periods and excess heat
- The production of tears may reduce due to a number of other reasons, including conditions like Sjögren’s syndrome, or dryness in mouth and eyes, rheumatoid arthritis, blepharitis, or inflammation of the eyelid and vitamin A deficiency.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

You may feel a gritty sensation, as if there's some foreign body, or sand in the eyes, itching, redness and pain. In some cases, there may be excess tears — this happens when the brain senses that tears are less and 'floods the eyes' as recompense.

These 'compensatory tears' are largely composed of only water and have low quantities of the lubricating properties of normal tears. There may also be increased sensitivity to light and blurring of vision.

- The history is usually sufficient for diagnosing dry eyes
- Examination of the eyes helps to confirm the diagnosis
- In addition, your ophthalmologist may conduct certain tests — e.g. Schirmer's test — to measure the amount of tears produced by the eyes.

Healing with Homeopathy

When worse	Medicine
Afternoon	Natrum Sulph
Evening	Lycopodium
Morning	Zincum Met
Night	Sulphur
Precipitating factors	
Artificial light	Arsenic Alb
Bright light	Mang Acid
Menses	Mag Carb
Reading	Natrum Mur
Warm room	Pulsatilla

Case study

Ambarish, a 28-year-old MNC executive, came to us complaining of dryness in the eyes. On detailed case-taking, we found that he used to wear contact lenses and work in an air-conditioned environment, and was often glued to the computer. During examination, we found that his eyes were red and congested.

He also complained of photophobia and burning. Due to this, he said that he'd give some rest to his eyes repeatedly and this hampered his work. Based on the redness of his eyes and photophobia with dryness, we prescribed him *Belladonna*. This corrected his problem and enabled him to work without any hitch.

Expert's View:

No one knows the value of a well until it runs dry. Likewise, tears are worth their weight in gold when one has dry eyes. Artificial tears are not devoid of side-effects. Homeopathy can bring some freshness to your eyes and clear dry eyes, safely. It can provide comfort for weary eyes long used to computer use and reading. Homeopathic treatment aims at treating and improving lachrymal secretion, ocular movement, and infections, gently. Homeopathic medicines are evidenced to activate the secretion in the tear ducts and prevent recurrent eye infections too.

Self-Help

- Avoid excessive air movement — like sitting under a ceiling fan or in front of an oscillating fan. This can dry out your eyes faster
- Warm compresses and eyelid scrubs help by providing a thicker, more stable lipid layer. The cleansing action decreases the number of bacteria in the eyes
- If you notice your eyes are dry while you are reading or watching TV, take frequent breaks to allow your eyes to rest and become moist — this is helpful
- Position your computer appropriately to minimise eye strain. Your monitor should be at, or just below, your eye level
- Stop smoking — this will reduce the irritation in your eyes.

eating disorders

What

Eating disorders reflect your attitude to food, weight and body size. They also project your emotional status and whether or not you have an inflexible approach to eating or exercise. Either way, your eating habits can make or break your health and happiness.



Did, You Know?

Eating disorders affect more women. — nearly 90 per cent — than. men.

The exact nature, or cause, for this statistical upsurge is not known, although eating disorders know no socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural barriers — no one is, perforce, exempt.

How & Why

- Factors that determine eating disorders are low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, anger, lonesomeness, troubled family or personal relationships, emotional problems, being taunted about size or weight, or physical abuse
- Other causes include cultural pressures that celebrate ‘size-zero’, thinness, or the ‘perfect body’, biochemical or biological variants, besides a strong family history of eating disorders.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

People who exhibit eating disorders often show signs of depression, anxiety, drug abuse and also childhood trauma. Research suggests that they may also be

at risk of early osteoporosis, diabetes, and heart disease.



Healthy Eating Habits Hold the Key

Experts say that one can prevent anorexia and, bulimia by developing healthy eating habits and, a strong body image from an early age.

This can be achieved, through parental support, proper education and, active individual involvement in corrective therapy.

There are two main types of eating disorders, *anorexia nervosa*, and *bulimia nervosa*. Anorexia nervosa, or ‘controlled’ eating is primarily a picture of self-starvation, or refusal to maintain a minimum normal body weight. Bulimia nervosa, or uncontrolled eating, is characterised by progressive intake until vomiting rids one of food, along with essential nutrients.

Individuals with anorexia often engage in self-induced vomiting, use of laxatives, diuretics or excess exercise, in order to control their weight. They also see themselves as overweight, even though they are hazardously thin. It is not uncommon for these individuals to become withered. When the fad ‘not to eat’ becomes extreme, early death is a lurking possibility.

Symptoms include weight loss, sometimes severe; a strong fear of gaining weight; distorted body image; and, electrolyte imbalance. Signs include irregular heart rhythms, heart failure, osteoporosis, menstrual problems and suicidal tendencies.

Individuals with bulimia exhibit a mysterious, uncontrolled eating routine, followed by inappropriate ways of purging the body of food before it is digested. This includes vomiting, laxative abuse, diet pills, excessive exercise, or fasting. Most bulimics binge and purge privately. They maintain normal, or above the normal body weight, but they often conceal the disorder from others, including their family and friends.

Bulimia nervosa can cause feelings of self-disgust, awkwardness, electrolyte imbalance, heart muscle damage, inflammation of the gullet, wearing away of the tooth enamel and damage to the salivary glands. The disorder can also lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes and disorders of the gall bladder.

- Your doctor will look for the following signs — thin body, dry or yellowish skin, abnormally low blood pressure, history of amenorrhoea, abdominal pain, constipation and lethargy
- Most individuals exhibiting anorexia nervosa may have soft, feathery hair on the arms and chest. There may be a history of vomiting, with erosion of the tooth enamel, and Russell’s sign, or scars on the back of the hand
- Your doctor will also assess body weight and other health conditions such as metabolic disorders, brain tumour and disorders of the digestive tract
- To diagnose bulimia, your doctor will, after a thorough physical examination, elicit your complete medical history. They will look for swollen salivary glands, tooth enamel erosion and signs of irritation to the fingers, especially the knuckles
- A blood test for low potassium levels may be considered.

Healing with Homeopathy

Anorexia	Medicine
Precipitating factors	
Fear of becoming fat	Natrum Mur
Fear of ‘suspicious food’, or being ‘poisoned’	Hyoscyamus
Hormonal disturbances	Sepia
When people fast to pacify God or divinity	Veratrum Alb
Bulimia	Medicine
Precipitating factors	
Grief or major disappointment	Ignatia
Guilt	Staphysagria
Trepidation, often related to weight	Carcinosin
With craving for	
Alcohol	Medorrhinum
Chocolates	Argentum Nit

Anorexia: Case study

Anita (19) would go on crash diets and exercise for long hours to lose weight, although she was underweight. This worried her parents. Her condition was

diagnosed as anorexia nervosa. The homeopathic medicine, *Platina*, selected on the basis of her obsession with her ‘appearance and fear of becoming fat’, helped to tackle her eating disorder effectively.

Bulimia: Case study

Anjali (36), mother of a 15-year-old girl, had an unhappy childhood. Her father was an alcoholic. He used to be abusive and violent towards her mother. Anjali became timid, and this led to the suppression of many of her childhood dreams. Unfortunately, her married life was not good either. Her husband had many extra-marital affairs. Anjali couldn’t deal with him and went into depression. Her daughter confessed that she felt there was something weird about her mother. She said her mom used to fast for days together, to lose weight. However, she’d also lose control and eat a lot of chocolates, sweets, ice-cream and pastries. Her daughter said that, after eating, Anjali would feel guilty and induce vomiting. Anjali was diagnosed with bulimia, a result of low self-esteem. She was prescribed *Staphysagria*, on the basis of prolonged emotional suppression. She soon showed remarkable improvement in her condition.

Expert’s View:

Anorexia and bulimia often have their foundations in emotional problems. It is important in such cases to go back in time, or history, to childhood suppressions and repressions.

Self-Help

- Have a regular time for breakfast, lunch and dinner. If you are underweight, have morning, afternoon and night-time snacks
- Take one small step towards a healthier way of eating. Do not rush towards either extreme. If you don’t like eating breakfast, just drink a glass of water or fruit juice. When you get used to this habit, try to eat a little, a piece of bread, toast, or *chapatti*. Follow this practice every day; it will lead to good eating habits eventually
- Consult your doctor, have regular follow-up and know what the reasonable or appropriate weight is for you. Also, understand its importance.

excessive
sweating

What

Excessive sweating, or hyperhidrosis, in medical terminology, affects millions of people worldwide — approximately, three per cent.

‘Sweating it out’ is okay, when you exert yourself. But, what about sweat that just drips from your hands, armpits or feet — even when you don’t move an inch? It’s irritating and embarrassing — also, sweaty hands are a social embarrassment.

*Did You Know?*

Many people who suffer from excessive sweating may be high-strung, restless and less confident.

What’s more, excessive sweating often creates a stigma — when you have moist, drenched hands, it makes you cringe and hesitate before offering your hand for a handshake.

How & Why

Excess sweating does not mean sweating while playing a game of tennis. It is about sweaty hands, feet or underarms, loaded with sweat — day-in and day-out — for no obvious reason.

The hypothalamus, a part of the brain, regulates our body’s sweat functions. It sends sensory signals to the sweat glands, when sweating is required. The nerves, needed to trigger such sweaty responses, are located in the chest cavity. This is called the sympathetic nervous system.

When these nerves send ‘prompts’ to the sweat glands, sweat is produced. In individuals, who sweat profusely, the sweat glands refuse to comply with these signals. The result is a sizeable volume of sweat that trickles from the palms and feet. This may also include one’s underarms, chest, belly or face. In certain cases, excessive sweating may be related to a latent medical condition. This would require proper diagnosis and treatment.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Sweat is something you can see, feel and identify promptly. You’d also be able to figure out whether it is normal sweating, because of excess heat, or temperature, or sweating without a cause, or with a cause, such as being anxious or nervous. That is, when it drips like a faucet, so to speak.

Most individuals with sweaty palms, underarms, or feet, may have the following emotional or psychological portrait.

- Constant wiping of the hands with a handkerchief
- Avoid shaking hands with others
- Difficulty writing and using paper
- Difficulty with make-up and clothes — the sweat tends to appear on clothing, giving it an ungainly, moist appearance
- Problems with intimate relationships; the individual may, sometimes, be socially withdrawn
- Lost in thought, tense, anxious; may have lack of focus, or poor concentration.
- Problems while handling money, using the computer keyboard, gadgets, or playing musical instruments
- Difficulty getting a manicure; due to sweat on the feet, a pedicure may be unpleasant.



Surgical Side-Effects

The most common side-effect of conventional surgical 'procedures to stop sweating is compensatory sweating on. the treated person's thighs, abdomen, back, and legs. This may be intense; it may require medical attention.

Other side-effects may include weakness or numbness of the upper extremities, dry skin on. the scalp face and neck, decreased heart rate, and profuse sweating on. the face, especially while eating.

The classical presentation of excessive hand, or foot, sweat is the unrestrained appearance of sweat — for no apparent reason. The problem does not generally occur during sleep. The irony, of course, is there seems to be often no correlation between being anxious, or active, because excessive sweating can happen at times when the person is not really on the move, or nervous.

Excessive sweating is suggested to be a hereditary condition. Put simply, it occurs on account of excess activity of the sympathetic nervous system — the autonomous part of our nervous system. We have no control on its function. The system is its own boss.

It would be advisable for a person with excessive sweating to consult a professional homeopathic doctor, who will be in the best possible position to prescribe a suitable remedy.

- Your doctor will look into noticeable signs of sweating during the consultation. One or two tests may also be performed to diagnose excessive sweating — such as the starch-iodine test. In this, an iodine solution is applied to the sweaty area. When it dries, starch is scattered on the area. The starch-iodine mishmash turns into a dark blue colour when there is excess sweat. In a similar manner, a special paper is placed on the affected area to absorb sweat. It is then weighed. The heavier it weighs, the more sweat there is in the area
- Your doctor will also ask you about the location of sweat — face, palms, or armpits, or all over the body. Or, the time pattern — day, night, anticipatory, or sudden; the triggers, such as anxiety, or on recalling a certain event. Other symptoms that may be looked into are — weight loss, palpitation, cold or clammy hands, fever, if any, or loss of appetite, or

hunger.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Back	China
Face	Pulsatilla
Head	Calcarea Carb
Palms and soles	Silicea
Precipitating factors	
After sex	Graphites
Anger	Sepia
Anxiety	Arsenic Alb
Panic	Kali Carb
Unpleasant news	Calcarea Phos
Odour	
Bitter	Digitalis
Burnt	Belladonna
Cheesy	Hepar Sulph
Garlic	Sulphur
Honey	Thuja
Offensive	Baptisia
Oily	Petroleum
Onion	Lycopodium
Spoiled egg	Sepia
Colour — stains on clothes	
Blood-like	Lachesis
Blue	Indigo
Green	Cuprum Met
Indelible	Mag Carb
White	Selenium
Yellow	Carbo Animalis
Worse	
Eating	Mercurius Sol
Open air	Psorinum
Sleep	Rhus Tox
Walking	Nux Vomica

Case study

Rajkumar, a 45-year-old banker, came to us with profuse sweating since his childhood. The sweating was so much that he had to wear two layers of inner vests in order to hide the stains of sweat as well as the odour. He would apply a lot of talc or dusting powder, but could not get rid of the sweat. What was peculiar was he used to sweat a lot while he was awake; there was absolutely no perspiration when he slept. Based on this peculiar symptom we gave him *Sambucus Nigra*. His sweating, over a period of time, reduced to a great extent.

Self-Help

- Wear loose-fit cotton clothes — they absorb sweat and don't give out an awful smell as quickly as synthetic garments do
- Exercise regularly. This can improve your body's overall circulation, make it easier for you to stay cool and improve your confidence level
- Make sure you eat a balanced, healthy diet, with plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables; avoid smelly foods such as onions, garlic and stimulants like coffee. They make you, nay your sweat, smell bad
- Bathe or shower twice every day. This helps to prevent the build-up of bacteria that give sweat its odour
- Shave the underarms. This can reduce the surface area for bacteria to interact with sweat and, therefore, reduce odour
- Make sure to dry armpits, body and feet thoroughly after a shower, as dampness can promote bacterial growth and bad odour.

What

Influenza (flu) is a viral infection; it is extremely infectious.



Did You Know?

Flu is often, confused with the common, cold — even though the symptoms of flu develop quickly and tend to be more severe than the typical sneezing of a common cold infection.

How & Why

- Influenza epidemics occur throughout the world, most often during winter
- There are three different types of the influenza virus, called A, B, and C, that cause flu epidemics. Most flu cases are caused by influenza A. The other two viruses are less frequent, they trigger mild symptoms
- Flu is caused when the virus is inhaled, or by being close to an infected person who coughs or sneezes. Likewise, it can spread by contact with something contaminated by the infected individual's secretions.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Flu symptoms begin suddenly. Body aches, headache, high fever, chills and fatigue are common; they may often force the infected person to stay put in bed. Once the fever subsides, there may be respiratory symptoms — e.g., a sore throat, mild cough and runny nose. Cough may be severe and long-lasting. It takes weeks for the person to recover fully from weakness and fatigue. Children

with flu may complain of nausea and vomiting, as well as confusion or delirium. However, stomach upsets and diarrhoea are uncommon symptoms of flu.

- In most cases, flu is diagnosed by its signs and symptoms. The virus is diagnosed by your doctor on the basis of its distinctive set of symptoms and by way of a blood test or culture of the infected individual's secretions
- When a secondary infection is suspected, your doctor may perform a physical examination, along with a throat culture and chest X-ray.

The important point is that anyone who has symptoms of flu, or is at risk of complications, should see a doctor promptly.

Healing with Homeopathy

Time when symptoms are worse	Medicine
3.00 am	Arsenic Alb
7.00 am - 9.00 am	Eupatorium Perf
9.00 pm	Bryonia
Precipitating factors	
Exposure to cold air	Aconite
Getting wet in the rain	Rhus Tox
Sun and summer	Gelsemium
Nature of onset	
Gradual	Gelsemium
Sudden	Aconite
According to thirst for water	
Thirst for large quantities, at long intervals	Bryonia
Thirst for small quantities, at short intervals	Arsenic Alb
Thirstlessness; no thirst at all	Pulsatilla

Case study 1

Rohan, a manager in an airline, came to us after he experienced a sudden onset of high fever accompanied by chills and rigours, three days ago. He also complained of intense headaches, severe muscle and bone pain. He was vomiting too, which became worse when he drank water. In spite of being thirsty, he said that he could not drink much water. Taking into account the chills

he was feeling every morning one hour later than the previous day, and the severe bone-breaking pains, along with the vomiting caused by drinking water, we prescribed him *Eupatorium Perfoliatum*. He responded to the medicine within a few hours. His fever and bone pains reduced quickly; they did not recur again.

Case study 2

Shyam (25) came to us with rapid onset of high fever; he felt cold and his body ached. His thirst was minimal. He was restless due to soreness of the body and was unable to lie down in one position even for a minute. Based on his intense body pain, restlessness and thirstlessness, we prescribed him *Baptisia Tinctoria*. Within an hour, after the first dose, his body ache and soreness reduced; after three doses, his fever came down. Meanwhile, his blood tests showed that he had dengue, but thanks to homeopathic treatment, the dreaded illness was beaten in its track, pre-empting a possible sequel.

Expert's View:

When you use homeopathic treatment in the early stages of an illness, even before classical pathological symptoms develop, it can help cut short their clinical course, reduce the distress, prevent complications, and also shorten the convalescence time — even in serious cases.

Self-Help

- Rest in bed. Avoid physical exertion. Avoid consuming alcohol and tobacco
- Drink plenty of fluids such as water, fruit juices and clear soup
- For children, ORS (Oral Rehydration Solution) packets are a good way to replenish the body
- Steam inhalation helps open up a blocked nose, making breathing easier
- Avoid touching hard surfaces where flu viruses may remain alive: handrails, telephones, doors, faucets and counters

- Wash your hands often, with Dr Batra's® Handwash, especially after visiting a public place, or at work
- Cough and sneeze into a soft tissue, or handkerchief. Dispose soft tissues after using them
- Stay away from people who have the flu, if possible.

food poisoning

What

Food poisoning refers to illnesses caused by eating contaminated food. It is also known by the name bacterial gastroenteritis, or infectious diarrhoea.

How & Why

Food poisoning is caused by bacteria, viruses, environmental toxins, or toxins, that naturally occur within the food itself — for example, mushroom, seafood and plant food.

The most common bacterial causes of food poisoning are caused by *Salmonella typhi*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli*, *Campylobacter jejuni*, *Shigella*, and *Clostridium botulinum*. *E. coli*, *campylobacter*, and *shigella* often cause traveller's diarrhoea. In most cases, the cause is undercooking, or poor hygiene.



Did You Know?

Food poisoning affects over 100 million people, every year.

It tends to most often affect infants, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems.

Travellers are also at a, higher risk, because of poor sanitation and contaminated water in certain parts of the world.

Salmonella is found in many foods, including the egg yolk of infected chicken, poultry, fish, shrimp, and dairy products. *Salmonella* is destroyed by cooking. However, food poisoning occurs because of contact with faeces, or if the cook

doesn't wash his/her hands properly. Staphylococcus bacteria live in dust, air, and sewage. They spread because of compromised sanitation practices and unhygienic handling of food stored at room temperature, such as salad dressings, cream-filled pastries and milk products.

E. coli causes severe food poisoning. The strain is found in cow or dairy products. Shigella thrives in crowded living places and areas where sanitation is poor. It finds contaminated food and water a perfect 'soil'. It is primarily spread through faecal material, because the bacteria build their flourishing abode in the intestines. *C. botulinum*, which causes botulism, can only live where there is no oxygen. Examples are home canned foods, not heated adequately before canning, or heated at low temperature. Not that commercially canned foods are exempt. Interestingly, botulism in infants has been linked to honey.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms include abdominal cramps, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever, muscle pain, weakness and fatigue. With the exception of *C. botulinum*, there is often inflammation and swelling in the intestines. Dehydration is also a complication because of the loss of fluids. The severity of the symptoms of infection depends upon the type of bacteria.

Symptoms of salmonella food poisoning begin within 12-72 hours after eating contaminated food; most often, they may last for 2-5 days. Symptoms of food poisoning caused by staphylococcus start abruptly, usually within 2-8 hours; they tend to be sometimes severe. *E. coli* causes severe cramps and watery diarrhoea, rarely vomiting and fever, within 1-3 days of ingesting the bacteria. However, diarrhoea may become bloody within 24 hours of its onset. It may last for 1-7 days.

If any of the above symptoms are present, it is best to speak to a doctor. Self-diagnosis, or treatment, is not recommended.

- Your doctor will examine and evaluate your symptoms, ask about foods you have eaten within the last few days before symptoms developed and ascertain if other people ate the same food and developed the same symptoms

- Your doctor may ask you to undergo a stool test to confirm the presence of the offending organism and also diagnosis
- You may also have to undergo blood tests. If available, the contaminated food is also tested.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Acids	Antim Crud
Alcohol	Nux Vomica
Bad food	Arsenic Alb
Bad water	Podophyllum
Bread	Causticum
Cabbage	Lycopodium
Cakes	Pulsatilla
Cheese	Arsenic Alb
Coffee	Nux Vomica
Cold drinks	Carbo Veg
Fish	China Ars
Precipitating factors	Medicine
Fruits	Arsenic Alb
Milk	Aethusa Cy
Pork	Cyclamen
Potatoes	Alumina

Case study

Yash (30) came to us with severe bouts of diarrhoea and vomiting since three days. He was not able to retain any food or water. He had a burning pain in his stomach. He also felt extremely thirsty and drank small quantities of water at a time. On analysis, we found that he had attended his office party, four days ago, where he had eaten meatballs. He looked anxious. Based on the causation of food poisoning, and his thirst for little sips of water, accompanied by anxiety, we prescribed him *Arsenicum Album*. Yash was quickly back on his feet, his vomiting and loose motions stopped. He was at his office desk, the next morning.

Self-Help

- Avoid solid foods until the diarrhoea stops
- Avoid dairy products; this can worsen diarrhoea, due to a temporary state of lactose intolerance
- Drink plenty of water — avoid milk or caffeinated beverages, though — to replace fluids lost by diarrhoea and vomiting
- Take an electrolyte solution; give children the same solution to prevent electrolyte imbalance
- Consult your doctor if you can't drink fluids.

What

A fracture is a break, or crack, in a bone.

How & Why

- Anyone, at anytime, can fracture a bone. More so, those individuals who have low bone density (osteoporosis), bone tumours, certain cancers, or a fragile bone disease called osteogenesis imperfecta, are at higher risk
- Children and adults who play active or professional sport are also prone to fractures
- A fracture is usually caused by some trauma to a bone — a result of a fall, physical accident, motor accident, or illness. Sometimes, normal everyday activities can lead to bone fracture if the person has an illness that weakens the bones
- Common symptoms include pain, swelling and bruising from internal bleeding. One can't bear any weight or pressure on the injured area, or move without severe pain. The area around or below the fracture may feel numb or paralysed.



Did You Know?

Middle-aged women are more likely than their male counterparts to experience bone fracture, because, of osteoporosis.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There are different types of fractures, such as closed, or simple fracture, in which the skin around the fractured bone is not broken. An open or compound fracture reveals the bone and makes the wound susceptible to infection. When the fracture is all the way through the bone, it is called a *complete fracture*. *Greenstick*, or incomplete fractures are commonly seen in children.

Yet another type of fracture is called *stress fracture*. This presents itself in the form of small cracks in a bone, as a result of repetitive activities that plant a great deal of stress on the bone. What's more, one can have just one fracture or multiple fractures at the same time.

If any of the above kinds of fractures take place, it is best to speak to a doctor. Self-diagnosis or self-treatment is not recommended.

- A bone fracture is diagnosed by a physical examination and X-ray of the injured area. All the same, some forms of fractures are complex to decode on an X-ray. When this happens, other diagnostic tests, such as CT scan, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), or bone scans, may be ordered
- Supplementary laboratory tests to determine whether blood has been lost, or when there is a suspicion of infection, may be carried out.

Healing with Homeopathy

Medicine	
Specific remedy	Symphytum 30c, 5-6 pills, thrice daily An excellent remedy to promote quick healing of fractures, so much so, it is commonly known as "bone-knit." Used as a specific for all cases of fractures.

Expert's View:

Homeopathic remedies can ease the pain and swelling associated with broken

bones, as well as help to accelerate the healing process. However, an orthopedic doctor's advice should always be sought, because correct assessment and proper setting of a fracture is important for healing.

Self-Help

- Avoid any stress on the broken bone
- Incorporate certain exercises to accelerate healing and return of bone function in consultation with a physiotherapist.

41 fungal infections

What

A fungal infection is caused by a type of fungus — it infects the top layer of the skin, hair or nails.



Did You Know?

Fungal infections can occur anywhere on the body.

Ringworm, is contagious; fungal infections are not.

Fungal infections are difficult to treat and hard to 'kill' with conventional medications.

Fungal infections of the skin are known as ringworm (*Tinea*).

There are many types of ringworm, viz., body ring-worm (*Tinea corporis*), jock itch (*Tinea cruris*), athlete's foot (*Tinea pedis*), scalp ringworm (*Tinea capitis*), nail ringworm (*Tinea unguium*), and quite uncommonly, beard ringworm (*Tinea barbae*).

How & Why

- Anyone can get a fungal infection of the skin. However, jock itch is much more common in males. Scalp ringworm is seen more often in children
- Fungal infections, such as ringworm, are caused by certain types of fungi that like warm, moist areas of the skin, such as between the toes or fingers, in the groin, and on other parts of the body where there are folds of skin.

Ringworm is not caused by a worm

- The fungus can be carried by kitten and puppies, combs, brushes, pillows, hats, and towels, and is found in areas that favour dampness, such as locker rooms and showers.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Ringworm manifests as a rash, with ring-shaped, pink or red patches and a clear midpoint
- The rash may also itch. Jock itch in the groin may appear in the form of a red, ring-like rash. It can be extremely itchy and can also lead to small, painful blisters
- Athlete's foot appears as a scaly, itchy rash. It may be mild. It can sometimes lead to cracking and peeling, if there is also a bacterial infection
- Scalp ringworm causes round patches of hair loss, broken hair, or an itchy, crusty scalp. Scalp ringworm is extremely transmittable among children
- Nail ringworm is more common on the toenails than fingernails. It makes the nail appear thickened and dull. The infected part of the nail may disintegrate from the rest of the nail
- In certain instances, fungal infection in one part of the body can cause a rash in another part. This is a result of an allergic reaction to the fungus.

It is easy for a doctor to diagnose fungal infections. Your doctor may also take a sample of the infected skin to study under a microscope — to find out the cause of the infection.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Face	Hepar Sulph
Groin	Mercurius Sol
Scalp	Graphites
Upper part of body	Sepia

Specific remedy

Chrysarobic Acid 6c, 5-6 pills,
twice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study 1

Divas Gupta (19) presented with symptoms of ringworm of the nail and detachment of the nail from the nail bed — in all his fingers and toes. He first noticed the problem in October 2008. He consulted a local doctor and took treatment for over six months. There was no improvement. He began to feel uncomfortable and avoided social interaction, because of this apparent cosmetic glitch.

When he came to us for homeopathic treatment, we found that he was a gentle, organised type of person. It was apparent that he did not like to share his problems with anybody. When under stress, he reported that he had the habit of biting his nails — an obvious defence mechanism. We found him to be someone who trusted his friends. He would often go out of his way to help everyone — but, he also had the tendency to procrastinate. When stress got the better of him, he wanted to be left alone. He simply did not like anyone consoling him.

Interestingly, he showed signs of being an impulsive ‘shopaholic’ — he loved shopping. He also hogged on salty food. We prescribed him *Natrum Muriaticum*, which matched his distinctive individuality and sensibilities. He responded to homeopathic treatment quickly and is now free of any complaints.

Case study 2

Kumar (18), a college student, came to us with severe itching in his groins and in-between his toes which had begun three years ago. He had taken various treatments — each time, the fungal infection came back with a bang, causing him great distress and embarrassment. Sometimes, the itching was so severe and uncontrollable that he had to scratch the area wherever he was, irrespective of the situation. During case-review, we found that he used to sweat a lot, especially in his genital area and since he was staying in a hostel he would reuse his undergarments often — without washing them. We gave him *Chrysarobic Acid*. He was also advised to wash his clothes regularly and keep his genital area dry. Within three weeks, his skin became clear. His fungal infection never recurred.

Expert's View:

This case exemplifies the value of hygiene and how skin conditions can be treated with a well-selected homeopathic remedy.

Self-Help

- Keep your skin and feet clean and dry; moisture is good 'soil' for fungal growth
- Shampoo regularly, especially after a haircut; it eases the irritation, if any
- Do not share clothing, towels, hairbrushes, combs, headgear, or other personal care items; they can spread the infection
- Keep the groin area clean and dry. Do not wear clothing that can irritate or rub the groin
- Do not wear tight clothing, especially rough textured clothes. Wear cotton underwear that is loose-fitting. Wash athletic supporters often
- Wash and dry the groin area well, especially after bath or exercise. Apply dusting powder to help absorb perspiration.

42 gallstones

What

Gallstones are small, hard deposits, made up of cholesterol, calcium salts, and bile pigments called bilirubin, that form in the gallbladder.

Did You Know?

Gallstones usually occur in adults between ages 20 and 50; they tend to affect women in this age group more than men.

The risk of gallstones in both sexes increases with age.

The gallbladder is a small, muscular, pear-shaped organ located under the liver. It stores a greenish-yellow fluid secreted by the liver, called bile, required to help digest and absorb fat. When needed, bile flows from the gallbladder into the small intestine through a passage called the common bile duct. Gallstones can form in or pass into the bile duct. Gallstones in the gallbladder are called cholelithiasis. Gallstones in the common bile duct are called common-duct stones, or choledocholithiasis.

How & Why

- In general, the bile contains dissolved cholesterol. When the bile contains too much cholesterol, it is unable to dissolve it all; hence, the surplus cholesterol solidifies. These tiny crystals move around in the gallbladder together to form gallstones
- Some illnesses too contribute to gallstones — diabetes, pancreatitis, or heart

disease; obesity or rapid weight loss; high hormonal levels during pregnancy; certain medications like contraceptive pills; and, certain habits like alcoholism, tobacco and smoking.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms include nausea, tummy upset, hyperacidity and gas. When a gallstone blocks a bile duct, nausea, vomiting, chills, and fever may begin. There may also be a yellowish tint on skin and whites of the eyes (jaundice). This shows that the infection has progressed to the liver.

Small gallstones don't cause problems or symptoms. Larger gallstones can, as they may obstruct the passageway and cause infection. Typical symptoms include extreme abdominal pain that radiates to the back, chest or in-between the shoulder blades.

- Your doctor will conduct a thorough physical examination, looking for signs of tenderness in the abdomen and jaundice, along with diagnostic tests
- Tests that may be recommended include blood tests, ultrasound scans and X-ray of the gallbladder (cholecystogram)
- A dye test called endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography (ERCP), or a radioisotopic scan, may also be used to diagnose gallstones in the ducts.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Anger	Staphysagria
Excess alcohol	Carduus Mar
Jaundice (obstructive jaundice)	Nux Vomica
Pain, better by	
Bending backwards	Dioscorea
Bending double	Colocynth
Hot fomentation	Mag Phos
Pain, worse by	
Bread and pastry	Antim Crud

Eating
Tight clothes

Colchicum

Lachesis

Carduus Mar Q, 20 drops in half a cup of water, twice daily. *Note:* Should not be taken in cases of obstructive jaundice.

Specific remedy

Case study

Nikita (44) came to us with chronic pain in the abdomen, which had bothered her for over five years. The pain was in the umbilical region and would radiate to the back. She would experience the pain more while eating fried food, which she relished. Looking at her tendency to put on weight, her craving for fatty food and her age group, we suspected gallstones. This was confirmed by an X-ray, which showed multiple gallstones and a thickened gall bladder. We prescribed *Carduus Marianus*, in mother tincture form, to dissolve the gallstones. After three months, a repeat X-ray showed the stones had dissolved, much to Nikita's relief and also happiness.

Expert's View:

This case shows how a case that perhaps required surgery can be tackled with homeopathy. When the gallstones are small, homeopathic medicines often help in dissolving the stones. Homeopathy also helps to control the tendency for gallstones. If the stones are big and impacted, they may need surgical intervention.

Self-Help

- Maintain ideal or healthy weight. Avoid coffee and eat low-fat diets. This helps to prevent gallstones and also reduce pain and inflammation
- Eat healthy foods, high in fibre, to improve bowel transit time and give bulk to stools
- Eat *amla* (Indian gooseberry) and other citrus fruits rich in vitamin C. Vitamin C has been shown to prevent the formation of gallstones

- When you suspect a flare-up, or are taking birth-control pills, seek a doctor's opinion promptly.

What

All of us have it sometime or the other, the difference being of degree. Some people think they have too much of it.



Did You Know?

Most people produce about 1-3 pints of gas and pass it about 10-15 times a day.

How & Why

Gas makes many people feel awkward. It is a major reason for people to visit their doctor the world over. Hippocrates said, “Passing gas is necessary to well-being.” The Roman Emperor Claudius proclaimed that, “All Roman citizens shall be allowed to pass gas whenever necessary.” However, passing gas, or flatulence, for many of us is not only embarrassing, but also considered improper.

- Excess gas in the digestive tract is an outcome of increased intake of gas, for example from the air we swallow, while eating, or chewing gum, besides increased production of gas caused by certain undigested foods
- It may also be the outcome of eating gas-generating foods, such as cabbage, or due to certain illnesses or disorders.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Symptoms, such as passage of gas, abdominal bloating or pain, or belching, including the offensive odour gas produces, are classical indications
- Your doctor may document what you eat. He will also review the diet you follow and the amount of gas passed to determine the nature of the problem
- Simple tests like measuring the amount of hydrogen in your breath after you eat suspected foods, followed by a test to analyse flatus for gas content, may be ordered. This separates the gas produced by swallowing air from gas produced in the gastrointestinal tract
- When an underlying problem is suspected, your doctor may ask you to undergo tests for infection, diabetes, malabsorption, chronic amoebiasis, cirrhosis of the liver, poor thyroid function and cancer
- When you report abdominal pain, an X-ray may be necessary to track intestinal obstruction or perforation, if any. When lactose intolerance is suspected, your doctor may advise you to avoid milk and milk products.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Abdomen as a whole	China
Lower abdomen	Lycopodium
Upper abdomen	Carbo Veg
Indications	
Odourless	Agaricus
Offensive odour	Sulphur
With noise	Pulsatilla
Without noise	Sabadilla
With pain	Veratrum Alb
Without pain	Bismuth
Precipitating factors	
Emotions, from unpleasant news	Nux Moschata
Fruits	China
Hysteric	Asafoetida
Milk	Nat Sulph
Medicines	Nux Vomica

Potatoes	Alumina
Starch	Natrum Carb
Sugar/sweets	Argentum Nit
Vegetables	Capsicum
Stages	
Children	Argentum Nit
Childbirth	Podophyllum
Old people	Phosphorus
Pregnancy	Calcarea Fluor
Better	
Before menses	Sepia
During menses	Cocculus
Worse	
Before stool	Aloe Soc
During stool	Calcarea Pic
Following stool	Picric Acid
Case study	

Sunita (45) complained of indigestion and gaseous distension of the abdomen with flatulence that had lasted many years. The peculiarity of her flatus was that if any part of her body was pressed, she would ‘fart’. So much so that whenever she felt heavy in her abdomen, she would press her tummy, and pass gas. With this, she would feel better. She also had a strange sensation of “a ball rising from her stomach to her throat choking her.” Based on her two queer symptoms, we gave her *Asafoetida*. This not only relieved her of the gas problem and removed the “ball-like” sensation, in her abdomen, it also restored her digestive function back to normalcy.

Self-Help

- Avoid carbonated drinks, fizzy drinks, including soda pop. They increase bloating as the carbon-dioxide trapped in the bubbles generates gas. This may also slow down stomach emptying time
- Exercise regularly; it helps to release hormones that promote bowel activity

- Avoid too-hot or too-cold foods and chewing gum, because you may be involuntarily drawing in more air
- Limit coffee, tea and chocolate; they tend to over-stimulate your digestive tract. This may lead to gas
- Keep a gas diary. People have different reactions to specific foods. This will be handy when you speak to your doctor.

44 gingivitis

What

Gingivitis is an inflammatory process — a result of bacterial invasion, or prolonged exposure of the gingival, or gum, tissues to plaque.

How & Why

- Apart from infection, gingivitis often develops as a result of stress, or steroid medicines — these drugs encourage the growth of certain bacteria in plaque
- Gingivitis can also occur during and after pregnancy, or due to the use of oral contraceptive pills



Did, You Know?

Gingivitis affects 85 per cent of children between ages 4 and 13.

Boys tend to have more severe and prevalent gingivitis than girls until early teens. The incidence is higher during adolescence, possibly due to hormonal influences and compromised dental hygiene.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Bleeding gums
- Bright red or red-purple appearance of gums
- Gums that are tender when touched, but otherwise painless

- Mouth sores
- Swollen gums
- A shiny appearance on the gums.

Gingivitis can be either acute or chronic.

Acute gingivitis is self-limiting.

Chronic gingivitis affects more than 90 per cent of the population. It results in gingivitis that resolves with adequate plaque control and improved hygiene.

A severe form of the disorder called acute necrotising ulcerative gingivitis (ANUG) is painful, ulcerative and oedematous. It produces bad breath, or halitosis, and bleeding gingival tissue.

Smoking, malnutrition, viral infections and, possibly, stress are suggested to be some of the predisposing factors for ANUG.

Generalised gingival enlargement, or swelling, may be caused by conventional medicines — e.g., anti-hypertensive drugs, such as calcium channel blockers — pregnancy and systemic diseases, like leukaemia and Crohn's disease.

- Your dentist will examine your mouth and teeth and look for soft, swollen, purple-red gums. He/she will also examine deposits of plaque and tartar that may be seen at the base of the teeth
- Dental X-ray and dental bone measurements can determine whether the inflammation has spread to the supporting structures of the teeth.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Spongy, bleeding gums	Mercurius Sol
Bleeding, when cleaning gums	Staphysagria
Easily bleeding gums	Lachesis
Gums detached from teeth	Carbo Veg
Location	

Lower side
Upper side

Petroleum
Kreosote

Case study

For the last six months, Rohan (8) had been suffering from bleeding gums. Due to this, it was painful for him to brush his teeth. On examination, we found that some of his teeth had caries and his gums were receding too. A foul odour emanated from his oral cavity. His tongue was flabby and there was excess saliva almost ready to pour out as he opened his mouth. He would salivate at night while sleeping. Based on these symptoms, we prescribed *Mercurius Solubilis*. This stopped the bleeding from the gums; it also reduced his excess salivation and the bad odour in the mouth.

Expert's View:

Look at the tongue — whether it is thick, flabby, or has a moist coating. *Mercurius Solubilis* is an extremely useful remedy in gum and oral disorders.

Self-Help

- Prevent gingivitis with good oral health care — brush your teeth after each meal
- Seek your dentist's advice to remove plaque build-up and combat gingivitis
- Once the plaque is removed, flossing at regular intervals will help to reduce plaque formation.

What

Gout is a form of sudden, acute, recurring arthritis that commonly affects the big toe. It may also sometimes affect other joints — the foot, leg, arms and hands.



Did You Know?

Men are more likely to get gout if they have a family member with the disorder and are alcoholics themselves.

How & Why

There is no age-related exemption when it comes to gout. It has a tendency to affect over 75 per cent of men.

Typical symptoms begin in one's late 30s-40s. Women usually don't show symptoms before their 60s.

- Clinicians believe that women develop gout later in life because the female hormone oestrogen protects against hyperuricaemia, or excess uric acid. When oestrogen levels fall, after menopause, urate crystals tend to build up in their joints
- Gout also affects people who are overweight, find alcohol irresistible, or are on diuretics for high blood pressure, and have high triglyceride levels, or fatty substances in the bloodstream

- Gout is associated with unusually high levels of uric acid, a waste product found naturally in the bloodstream. In addition, high levels of uric acid in the blood may also cause crystals. These are called urate crystals; they form and reside in the fluid around the joints. When white blood cells, our warriors of immunity, encircle and assault the urate crystals, it results in redness, pain and puffiness.

Dehydration is another common cause of high levels of uric acid. It is also ironical, that some people who may have normal uric acid levels develop gout. Likewise, gout may also begin after an illness, or surgery.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Gout comes without warning, often at night. The most commonly affected joint is the big toe. There may also be pain in other joints — the heel and ankle. The hand, wrist or elbow may also be sometimes affected.

The gouty pain may sometimes be so severe that the affected person may not be able to tolerate any weight on the joint. Even the mildest touch is unbearable. There is often redness and swelling in the area, along with a warm feeling.

Other symptoms may include mild fever, chills and a rapid heartbeat. At first, only one joint may be affected and there may be a lull for many months. But, when gout symptoms return, they tend to last longer and affect multiple joints. The urate crystals may now form hard lumps, or tophi, under the skin, around the joints, in the kidneys, other organs and around the outer edges of the ears.

- Gout is often diagnosed based on your symptoms and a physical examination of the affected area
- Blood tests can determine uric acid levels, albeit these levels are often normal during an episode
- Sometimes, your doctor may insert a special needle to remove a sample of joint fluid. This will show urate crystals in the fluid when studied under a microscope. The presence of tophi confirms the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Ankle	Pulsatilla
Elbow	Ars Hyd
Feet	Ledum Pal
Hand	Carbon S
Knee	Rhus Tox
Legs	Apis Mel
Toes	Benzoic Acid
Associated with	
Asthma	Sulphur
Diarrhoea	Antim Crud
Profuse menses	Sabina
Precipitating factors	
Suppressed discharges	Thuja
Suppressed menses	Abrotanum
Suppressed skin conditions	Eupatorium Perf
Worse	
Before a thunderstorm	Rhododendron
Cold, damp weather	Dulcamara
Slightest movement	Bryonia
Touch	Arnica
Better	
Cold applications	Ledum Pal
Specific	Colchicum 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms disappear

Case study

Wilson (54) got up suddenly one night with excruciating pain, redness and swelling in his left big toe. Wondering if he had injured himself, or been bitten by some insect in his sleep, he rushed to his doctor, who diagnosed his problem as gout, a disease caused by increased uric acid in the body. For weeks following treatment, there was no improvement. When he visited us, we took his detailed case history. It revealed that Wilson felt better when he applied ice-cold water or ice-cubes on the painful area. We also found that his problem was triggered by a sedentary lifestyle, faulty diet and alcoholism. Based on his symptoms and personality, Wilson was prescribed *Ledum Pal*. Within a matter of days, his pain and swelling subsided. Today, he doesn't even remember the time he went

through the pangs of his gouty agony.

Expert's View:

Homeopathic treatment is based on the peculiar symptoms the individual presents, as was the case with Wilson, who felt better with ice-cold applications. Homeopathy not only helps in controlling the pain during an acute attack of gout; it also helps in preventing the recurrence of such episodes, and in reducing stiffness, while improving joint mobility.

Self-Help

- Rest and elevate the affected joint, if possible, to reduce congestion
- Apply ice-packs, if it suits you, for 20 minutes at a time, several times a day to ease pain
- Avoid foods high in purines; they may increase blood uric acid levels. Examples: anchovies, organ meat, red meat, asparagus, mushrooms, spinach, dried beans, peas, lentils and cauliflower
- Consume purine-neutralising foods instead. Examples: fresh fruits, especially cherries and strawberries, most vegetables and celery juice
- Limit alcohol consumption, as this may bring on a sudden gout attack
- Drink extra 4–5 glasses of water per day; water is a natural lubricant for joint health
- Maintain a healthy weight and blood pressure; any increase can trigger gout.

46 hair loss

What

This refers to excessive hair loss from the scalp.

It is customary to lose some hair each day as part of the cycle of growing new hair and shedding some. However, when there is excess hair loss, it becomes a cause for concern.

Hair loss can affect men, women and children.



Did You Know?

Recent studies suggest that there has been a 250 per cent rise in hair loss cases, especially in the 16-25 age group.

How & Why

Hair loss affects about 85 per cent of men and 45 per cent of women. While marginal hair loss and thinning on the crown occurs in 25 per cent of women by age 45, it may grossly affect 65 per cent of men at a much earlier age. The commonest hair loss pattern seen in males, and less commonly and severely in some females, is the frontal recession form, which exposes the temples.

- A family history of hair loss makes receding hair line a potential genetic anomaly. You can easily blame it on your genes, for nearly 50 per cent of all cases of premature baldness are hereditary. Other causes include dandruff, atopic dermatitis, or eczema

- Scalp hair is also sometimes damaged by cosmetic procedures like prolonged traction, permanent weaving, colouring, shampoo, soap, including faulty scalp massage, iron-deficiency anaemia and thyroid problems
- Certain conventional medications — e.g., steroids and anti-cancer drugs — may also cause diffused hair loss. Short-term hair loss may occur in women taking oral contraceptive pills.

There are other triggers for hair loss, including parasitic infection, stress and emotional problems, including daily application of treated, or chlorinated, water to the scalp, lack of exercise and gout.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms include thinning of hair, appearance of bald spots, a change in pattern of growth, a history of hair loss, or baldness in the family.

Men are at an inherited disadvantage — their hair loss blueprint is four times greater than women.

The most common type of hair loss is androgenetic alopecia, or male pattern baldness; it worsens with age. It's marked by a receding hairline, with bald spots over the crown. The cause may be genetic, smoking, alcohol, depression, body-building anabolic steroids and creatine supplements. Other causes may include hormonal (DHT-dihydrotestosterone) problems, thyroid disorders and excess stress.

Many women notice hair loss three months after they've had a baby. This hair loss is hormonal. During pregnancy, high hormonal levels cause the body to keep hair that would normally fall out. When the hormones return to pre-pregnancy levels, hair falls out and the regular cycle of growth and loss begins anew. The normal hair loss symptom in women is overall diffused thinning of the hair, unlike male pattern baldness. Women losing hair show thinning of hair strands.

Hair loss may sometimes predict an underlying disease. Hair starts thinning 5-6 weeks before the detection of insulin-dependent diabetes. Likewise, hair loss on the crown is said to imply a three-fold increased risk of heart disease in men.

Alopecia areata

Alopecia areata, or loss of hair in patches, is a common type of hair loss. Although it can affect any hair-bearing area of the body, the term connotes patchy hair loss from the scalp. The condition, though benign in most cases, can cause tremendous emotional and psychosocial stress in affected individuals.

Among all hair disorders, none arouses as much interest as alopecia areata. The reason for this is the uniqueness with which the disorder presents itself:

- Alopecia areata can affect people of any age — from infancy right up to the 80s
- It can affect any part of the body. In certain cases, it can extend to the eyebrows, eyelashes, facial hair (beard; moustache) and can cause bald spots anywhere
- It can progress rapidly leading to complete loss of scalp hair in a span as short as 15 days, or can limit itself to one small persistent patch throughout a person's life
- It has phases of remission and relapse even when the individual is on medication. In rare instances, it can relapse 20 years after the first episode
- In certain cases, hair loss is more extensive
- It may sometimes progress to total loss of hair on the head (alopecia totalis) or complete loss of hair all over the body (alopecia universalis).

Diagnosis of alopecia can be made by a physical examination and thorough case taking — while looking at every possible angle. From your lifestyle to stress, use of medications and so on. In addition, the condition may be diagnosed by a history of a preceding illness — e.g., lupus, an immune disorder.

Diagnosing alopecia areata is probably one of the easiest things for your doctor to do, since the patches are so characteristic. Typically, a close examination of the lesion reveals a smooth bald patch. One of the characteristic findings of alopecia areata is 'exclamation point hair'. This unusual appearance of hair can

be found in areas of hair loss. On close examination, with a hand lens, these are seen as short, broken-off hair that is narrow and closer to the scalp, like an exclamation point.

Your doctor may also advise certain tests to find out the cause of hair loss:

- *Blood tests for related conditions:* To rule out anaemia, diabetes, lupus and thyroid disorders
- *Folliscope (PC-based video microscopy):* To study the condition of the scalp and the pattern of hair thinning. This magnifies the hair follicle over 200 times
- *TrichoScan:* Measures and analyses hair loss with digital imaging
- *Biopsy:* In suspected cases of scarring alopecia areata, this may sometimes be performed.

Healing with Homeopathy

Stages	Medicine
After delivery	Sepia
Childhood	Baryta Carb
During menopause	Lachesis
During puberty	Pulsatilla
Location	
Occiput	Silicea
Sides	Phosphorus
Vertex	Lycopodium
Cause	
Acute grief	Ignatia
Colouring/chemical treatment	Sulphur
Dandruff	Sulphur
Drug-induced	Nux Vomica
Fever	Lycopodium
Hormonal/genetic	Thuja
Nutritional deficiency	Ferrum Phos
Stress	Natrum Mur

General indications

Brittle hair	Psorinum
Dry	Thuja
Greasy	Acid Phos
Sticks together	Mezereum
Specific remedy for hair loss in patches (alopecia areata)	Fluoric Acid 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, under medical supervision

Case study 1

Simran (40) loved to dress up elegantly. She liked being presentable at all times, but her hair loss was causing her great misery. She experimented with all kinds of home remedies and parlour treatments for four years. When she came to our clinic, we took her case history and examined her scalp and hair. There was some widening of the partition and considerable thinning of hair from the sides. Her hair was also rough and dry. We did a video microscopic study — which magnifies the scalp and hair follicles over 200 times. This revealed that she had female pattern baldness. On case-analysis, we found that Simran suffered from irregular menses. She loved to interact with people. She was helpful and forgiving by nature. However, many took undue advantage of her good nature; this hurt her badly. She was also hasty and impulsive. She was, likewise, particularly fond of shopping and wearing new clothes. Her selection always used to be unique, she said. She had a peculiar aversion towards people who were not ‘good to look at’. On the basis of her symptoms, she was put on *Natrum Muriaticum*. Within six months of treatment, her hair loss reduced; the ‘widened’ hair partition on her scalp also narrowed down. The quality of her hair improved. Her menstrual cycles too returned to normal.

Expert’s View:

Hair loss is just not a surface, or superficial, problem. It is often the outcome of an underlying aspect — emotional or psychological — including one’s temperament. In Simran’s case, her hair loss emanated from all the suppressed ‘hurt’ she felt because people who she trusted took undue advantage of her good nature. Besides, she suffered from menstrual problems — this had a bearing too on her hair loss. When her internal emotions and menstrual problems were restored to health, Simran felt better than ever before.

Case study 2

When Jayant (24) reported with what was diagnosed as male pattern baldness, we used trichology, the science of hair and scalp, to separate his hair loss from other disorders. A video microscope magnified Jayant's scalp 200-plus times. The study showed that each follicle had 2-3 strands 'pulled out' with typical gaps between the hair follicles. There was no evidence of male pattern baldness. When this was followed by a detailed case-analysis, it revealed that Jayant used to habitually pull his hair out when under pressure, or stress. His was a classical case of trichotillomania, or pulling hair on purpose. Jayant responded favourably to *Kali Phosphoricum*.

Expert's View:

Trichotillomania is far from a cosmetic malady. It is an expression of personal frustration, stress or anxiety. It is as much a mind disorder as it is of the body. This is reason why homeopathy, thanks to its mind-body, holistic approach, is ideally positioned to help us deal with such disorders, providing, as in Jayant's case, a safe and enduring resolution from the 'comp(u)lling' illness.

Self-Help

- Avoid extremely humid conditions — this may have a bearing on your hair health
- Avoid scratching or picking hair
- Control dandruff with Dr Batra's® anti-dandruff shampoo, enriched with *Thuja Occidentalis*, an effective, natural hair stimulant and a rich antioxidant, with proven antibacterial properties
- Get a head massage done by a qualified masseur or therapist, as per your special needs; it is relaxing and healthy for your scalp and hair
- Monitor your hair loss and follow-up with your doctor on a regular basis.

47 heel pain

What

The plantar fascia is a ligament that connects the heel to the toe.



Did You Know?

Heel pain. significantly affects middle-aged, overweight individuals, whose work involves 'prolonged standing.'

The disorder is evidenced to be more common in females than males.

When excess stress is placed on the plantar fascia, one of the major transmitters of weight when walking or running, there is trouble in the making. This is what heel pain is all about.

How & Why

Heel pain, or plantar fasciitis, is a common condition that affects about 10 per cent of the population.

As one gets older, the plantar fascia becomes less like a rubber band, and more like a rope that doesn't stretch well. The fat pad on the heel becomes thinner; it may not absorb as much shock caused by walking, like before. The extra 'shock' damages the plantar fascia, this may cause it to swell, tear, or bruise. You will now detect a bruise, or swelling, on your heel.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms are typically worse, first thing in the morning, when the plantar fascia is taut; even simple movements bring on pain. As the fascia loosens, the pain may subside, but can return after prolonged walking or standing.

When one has plantar fasciitis, the plantar fascia becomes inflamed and sore, making normal activity, or walking, painful. Other indications may be pain felt at the bottom of the heel, usually worse upon rising, or pain that increases over a period of time.

- Your doctor will enquire about the type of pain you have, when it occurs and how long you've had it, or what gives you relief, or what aggravates the problem
- When required, your doctor may advise certain diagnostic imaging studies, such as an X-ray, to distinguish the different types of heel pain, or to rule out heel spurs.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Both heels	Aranea Diadema
Left heel	Rhododendron
Right heel	Ammonium Mur
Cause	
Pain felt by shopgirls due to standing for long periods	Squilla Maritima
Wine	Zincum Met
Better/worse	
Better, walking	Valeriana Officinalis
Better, evening	Pulsatilla
Worse, standing	Berberis Vulgaris
Worse, walking	Causticum

Case study

Mona (28), an employee at a supermarket, came to us with excruciating pain in her heel. This prevented her from standing at the counter, which her job was all about. She feared that she'd lose her job, owing to her painful heel. Her X-ray

showed plantar fasciitis. Based on the possible cause of her problem, that is, standing for long hours, we gave her *Squilla Maritima*. This provided her quick relief — she is now happy with her job and also her heel.

Self-Help

- Avoid activities that put pressure on your heels — running, standing for long periods, or walking on a hard surface
- Place an ice-pack on your heel for 20 minutes, three times a day
- Wear shoes that fit properly and provide plenty of support
- If you're a sportsperson, wear a silicon padding and replace your shoes every six months
- Heel cups or wedges may provide relief. Speak to a foot care specialist about your needs
- When simple measures don't provide relief, speak to your doctor.

What

High blood pressure is defined as a maximum — systolic; or, the blood pressure when the heart is contracting — pressure of greater than 140 mmHg (mercury) and/or a minimum — diastolic; or, the force of blood in the arteries as the heart relaxes between beats — pressure of 90 mmHg.



Did You Know?

Over 60 crore people are affected by hypertension worldwide, leading to 50-60 lakh premature deaths each year.

Normal blood pressure is less than 130/85 mmHg. Anything above these figures is considered high blood pressure (hypertension).

Hypertension puts the patient at risk of complications. Regardless of whether it is mild or severe, high blood pressure, also called the ‘killer disease’, needs appropriate medical attention and management.

Hypertension can be classified as essential, or secondary.

Essential hypertension may have no specific cause. If untreated, it increases the risk of stroke, heart attack, heart failure, kidney problems and diabetes.

Secondary hypertension develops from an underlying pathological cause (e.g. kidney disease), which requires specialised treatment.

How & Why

- There are many causes affecting the development and progression of high blood pressure. For example: cigarette smoking, physical inactivity, stress, obesity, high blood cholesterol and diabetes. The risk factors are two-fold: controllable and not-controllable.
- If you have any two of any of the following risk factors — high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol and cigarette smoking — the chances that you will have a heart attack are four times greater than if you have none.
- However, if you have all the three major controllable risk factors — high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure and smoking — the chances are eight times greater.

It is possible to control the three major risk factors, as also other risk — viz., diabetes, obesity, a sedentary lifestyle, type A personality, aggression, certain medications and medical conditions. But, there are also risks you cannot control — male susceptibility, heredity and increased age.

If you have increased risk of heart disease, you should get rid of the risk factors. As for those with genetic-related phenomena, or a strong family history of premature coronary disease, you must take all preventive steps possible. For one important reason — you are definitely at a high risk. You will have to promptly undertake the following measures — quit smoking, avoid alcohol, restrict salt usage, limit calorie intake, exercise regularly, reduce your emotional stress levels, get tested for hypertension and elevated fat.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Regrettably, hypertension has no perceptive symptoms. This is why it is called the ‘silent killer’. The best way to monitor it is to have regular blood pressure check-ups by your doctor, especially if you have any of the risk factors (e.g., family history, high blood cholesterol) for developing the disorder.

Most individuals who may have high blood pressure, may not know it. So, check with your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms: headache, dizziness, blurred vision, nausea and vomiting, chest pain and shortness of

breath.

- The first thing your doctor does is record your blood pressure with a blood pressure cuff, or sphygmomanometer. This is done not once, but on a few occasions
- Your doctor may consider blood tests to assess risk factors for heart disease and stroke as well as complications of hypertension. These include complete blood count (CBC), electrolytes, BUN (blood urea nitrogen), and creatinine and GFR (glomerular filtration rate) to measure kidney function
- A fasting lipid profile to analyse cholesterol and triglyceride levels in the blood, as also tests for thyroid or adrenal gland function, are often advised
- Other tests that may be ordered are chest X-ray, electrocardiogram (ECG), echocardiogram (2D-echo) and Doppler ultrasound.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Hyperthyroidism	Lycopus Virginicus
Irritability and anger	Nux Vomica
Mental stress	Natrum Mur
Tobacco and rigid arteries in the aged	Strophanthus
Indications	
Extreme breathlessness on least exertion	Crataegus Oxycantha
Headache and visible throbbing in the blood vessels of the neck	Glonoine
Hypertension in nervous, hysterical individuals	Valeriana
Specific	Rauwolfia Serpentina (under medical supervision)

Case study

Avinash, a 42-year-old businessman, came to us with hypertension which began three years ago. He had been on anti-hypertensive medications, but his systolic pressure was high, about 170 mmHg and his diastolic pressure was 98 mmHg. His pressure was linked to his stress levels and lack of sleep.

Avinash's case-analysis revealed that he was a self-made man, who had worked hard to make his dreams come true. He was born in a poor family and had to take up the responsibility of his younger siblings. He gave up education early and started working when he was just 15. He used to be the irritable type and would express his anger if only the opposite person was younger than him. He would always prefer to be in the company of people. He could just not stay alone.

Based on his history, he was prescribed *Lycopodium*. This was continued, along with his anti-hypertensive medications, for the first five weeks. After his blood pressure started coming under control, his anti-hypertensives were gradually reduced. He was asked to get his blood pressure monitored, regularly — this would remain around 140/80 mmHg. After six months of regular treatment, his BP was under good control. He also felt much more relaxed than ever before.

Expert's View:

This case illustrates how homeopathy can play a complementary role in the treatment of major disorders like hypertension, especially stress-induced hypertension. It can also help control high blood pressure effectively, more so when conventional medicines cannot do much on their own. Timely administered homeopathy medicines can help prevent complications that arise from high blood pressure, and also stressful living.

Self-Help

- Aim for a healthy weight range for your height and body type in consultation with your doctor
- Even a small amount of weight loss can make a major difference in lowering or preventing high blood pressure. You must burn more calories than you take in to lose weight
- Crash or fad diets are not helpful and may be dangerous — they may rob you of essential nutrients
- Eat healthy food; limit salt intake

- Don't smoke; avoid alcohol — they can aggravate your blood pressure levels
- Manage stress with relaxation techniques; laugh a while, every day, or join a laughter club. Laughter releases more endorphins, the feel-good chemical; this, in turn, helps reduce your blood pressure
- Monitor your blood pressure and follow-up with your doctor, on a regular basis.

49 hyperthyroidism

What

Hyperthyroidism is the over-activity of the thyroid gland. It occurs when the thyroid gland — a butterfly shaped gland located in front of the windpipe and connected just below the larynx — produces more thyroid hormones than needed.



Did You Know?

Hyperthyroidism affects females 5-10 times more commonly than males; it can occur at any age, although it's common in the 20-40 age group.

Thyroid hormones are substances secreted by the thyroid gland; they are responsible for controlling growth, development and energy usage in the body. When these minutely-available hormones are secreted in excess of their requirement, the body throws up symptoms — such as excess hunger, weight loss, fatigue, hyperactivity, tremors and intolerance to heat.

How & Why

A large number of cases are diagnosed with sub-clinical hyperthyroidism wherein the patient has no apparent symptoms of hyperthyroidism; abnormal levels of thyroid hormones are sometimes detected in routine laboratory tests.

Hyperthyroidism can result from multiple causes. These include the autoimmune condition called Graves' disease, thyroid nodules, inflammation of the thyroid gland, or thyroiditis, over-dosage of thyroid hormones, excess iodine intake, or

certain drugs.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Hyperthyroidism may have vague symptoms, especially at the onset. Some of the presenting symptoms include excess appetite, weight loss, in spite of eating well, goitre (enlarged thyroid gland), tremors, muscle weakness, fatigue and palpitations. Affected individuals are generally intolerant of heat and have excessive perspiration, with warm moist skin.

Other signs are hair loss, brittle nails, staring gaze, reduced concentration, sleeplessness and decreased libido. Other symptoms include anxiety, tiredness, sleep disturbances, bulging of one or both the eyes, vision problems, diarrhoea, quicker heart rate, and shortness of breath. Women may experience reduced menstrual flow or irregular menstrual cycles.

- The features of hyperthyroidism are characteristic of the condition; however, certain laboratory tests help to establish the diagnosis and also determine the cause
- These include thyroid hormone levels, thyroid scan and thyroid ultrasound.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Increased heart rate	Natrum Mur
Palpitation on slightest exertion	Thyroidinum
Weight loss, in spite of eating well	Iodum

Case study

Sridevi (35) came to us with a swelling on the right side of her throat. She had protruding eyeballs and a staring look. It all started with her second pregnancy in 2006, when she was diagnosed as suffering from hyperthyroidism, based on her high levels of thyroid hormone and low levels of thyroid stimulating hormone. She went from one doctor to another and as her condition did not respond to medication, she was advised surgery. It was then that she decided to come to us. Based on a thorough case-analysis, she was prescribed *Spongia Tosta*. Within a

span of four months, Sridevi's thyroid swelling started dwindling in size and returned to normal level much to her delight.

Expert's View:

This case demonstrates how a purely surgical problem like thyroid adenoma can be reversed through homeopathy, and how one can also avert the surgeon's knife.

Self-Help

- Have regular check-ups and pay attention to your symptoms. Report changes, if any, to your doctor
- Include broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, rutabagas, spinach, turnips, peaches and pears — they help to curb thyroid production, naturally
- Caffeinated drinks and dairy products should be avoided
- Supplemental vitamin/mineral combinations, which can also help ease hyperthyroidism, should be taken under supervision.

hypothyroidism

What

Hypothyroidism develops when the thyroid gland doesn't produce enough thyroid hormone.

When your thyroid gland is unable to make the required minute quantities of thyroid hormones, you end up having too little thyroid hormones — this is what hypothyroidism is all about.



Did You Know?

Hypothyroidism affects about 10 per cent of women worldwide — and about 3-5 per cent of the general population.

It often goes unnoticed even though it makes one feel persistently weak and tired.

How & Why

Some of the common causes are severe iodine deficiency, pregnancy, radioactive iodine treatment, or surgery of thyroid gland, congenital absence of thyroid gland, or a defective thyroid gland, pituitary disease, and certain medications or drugs.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms include fatigue, depression, modest weight gain, intolerance to cold, excessive sleepiness, dry, coarse hair, constipation, dry skin, muscle cramps, increased cholesterol levels, decreased concentration, vague aches and

pains, and swelling of the legs.

- Hypothyroidism can lead to goitre, or swelling of the thyroid gland. This can affect your looks and may interfere with swallowing or breathing
- It may also be associated with an increased risk of heart disease, primarily because of high levels of “bad” cholesterol
- Depression, peripheral neuropathy, or pain, numbness and tingling in the area affected by nerve damage, and muscle weakness, or loss of muscle control are other associated concerns
- Myxoedema, which presents with intense cold intolerance and drowsiness, followed by profound lethargy and unconsciousness, is yet another probable outcome
- Low levels of thyroid hormone can cause infertility. Babies born to women with untreated thyroid disease may have a higher risk of birth defects than babies born to healthy mothers.

Diagnosis is confirmed by your doctor through physical examination and by ascertaining your signs and symptoms. Investigations that may be ordered to confirm diagnosis are serum T3, T4, TSH, anti-thyroid antibodies, anti-TPO antibodies and a thyroid scan.

It is best to speak to a doctor. Self-diagnosis is not recommended.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Stress-induced	Natrum Mur
With enlargement of thyroid gland	Spongia
With excessive weight gain	Calcarea Carb
Specific remedy	Thyroidinum (under medical supervision)

Case study

Anupama (40), a housewife, said she had irregular menses and an inability to

lose weight. In the last six months, she said that she had “put on lot of weight... about 20 kg.” She attributed this to her inactivity and sedentary life. She also complained of hair loss and thinning of hair. On examination, we found her hair to be coarse and rough. It also lacked the sheen and lustre of normal healthy hair. Of late, she was also intolerant of cold air and would often switch-off the fan, much to the annoyance of her husband and children, even during the summer months. Based on her symptoms, we advised her to get her thyroid profile done. She came back to us with the report — hypothyroidism. Her detailed case-analysis showed that she felt insecure with her varied fears and anxieties. She was also indecisive by nature and often craved for support of others. Based on her personality, we prescribed her *Calcarea Carbonica*. She was also advised to repeat her thyroid values after six months. Her thyroid levels were now back to normal, her menstrual rhythm was restored, her sensitivity to cold was reduced and she was able to shed her excess weight too.

Self-Help

- Regular exercise and a high-fibre diet often help in maintaining thyroid function and preventing constipation
- Tea made from bladder wrack, or seaweed (*Fucus Vesiculosus*), is helpful in reducing weight and easing hypothyroid symptoms
- Surgery may be required, if one has a large goitre with frequent relapses, notwithstanding adequate medical measures and treatment.

irritable bowel syndrome

What

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is a common problem, in which the intestines squeeze too hard, or just not hard enough.

As a result, the food may move too quickly, or too slowly, through them.



Did You Know?

More than one-fifth of the global population suffers from, IBS.

IBS affects more women than men.

How & Why

IBS affects people of all ages; it tends to be more common before 35 years of age in more than half of the affected individuals.

The exact cause of IBS continues to evade medical researchers. A large number of causes are suggested to trigger its onset. These include stress, immune system disorders and heredity.

Some of the other triggers of IBS episodes include milk and milk products, lactose intolerance, chocolate, tea, coffee, colas, alcohol, hormonal changes, stress and certain medications, such as anti-inflammatory medications, steroids and aspirin.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Do you feel the urge to rush to the loo every time you eat something different, or are faced with any kind of stress? Have you noticed any change in your bowel habits, abnormal bloating, or heaviness of abdomen that keeps coming and going? If yes, you may well have IBS.

The key symptoms are constipation, diarrhoea, alternating with constipation, gas, bloating, and heaviness of abdomen, fatigue, backache, headache, anxiety and depression. The manifestation varies from case to case. The duration, severity and type of symptoms are also individual-specific.

In some cases, the symptoms may be mild and persistent at all times. In others, the symptoms may appear only during times of stress and disappear completely for a while. There are also certain instances in which the condition appears suddenly, without any warning, and follows a haphazard pattern. Some people are affected so badly that it may be difficult for them to continue with their daily activities, attend social functions or travel.

- A proper medical history is usually sufficient to diagnose IBS; there are, of course, no specific tests to diagnose it
- Your doctor may order certain tests to confirm the diagnosis — these include blood and stool tests, sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, CT scan, and lactose intolerance tests.

Healing with Homeopathy.

Researchers believe that there may possibly be a tendency, which predisposes an individual to IBS. Homeopathy addresses this likely disposition; it treats the individual, not just one's intestinal and bowel symptoms. This holistic approach enables homeopathy to bring about a tangible change in the individual's response to their distressing symptoms.

Homeopathy also looks at the individual's personality. For instance, if a person expresses that his/her uneasiness is aggravated when he/she is stressed or disturbed, the homeopathic approach aims to address such psychological,

mental, and emotional patterns, with a curative remedy. In so doing, it re-establishes the individual's internal workings and functioning.

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Anger	Chamomilla
Anticipatory anxiety	Argentum Nit
Exhilarating news	Gelsemium
Fast, fatty food	Pulsatilla
Fear	Acid Phos
Grief	Ignatia
Indignation	Staphysagria
Mental exertion	Nux Vomica
Indications	
Abdominal pain followed by offensive smelling diarrhoea	Podophyllum
Cutting pains and cramping, better by bending double	Colocynthis
Intolerant of milk, leading to gas and spluttery diarrhoea	Natrum Carb
Sudden, urgent urge for stools in the morning	Sulphur

Case study

Sumeet (23) suffered from chronic diarrhoea. This was misdiagnosed as amoebiasis. A CT scan was ordered. It showed that Sumeet had irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). His symptoms of frequent stools, passing gas and reduced appetite, began to slowly worsen. When he came to us, he appeared to be overtly depressed. On case-analysis, we found that he also had protein intolerance and lactose malabsorption, with a tendency to get anxious and stressed-out before examination results, or medical reports. He described his nature as being extremely anxious, especially before an appointment, or when he had to reach somewhere on time. This was when his tummy distress would amplify. He also complained of associated gaseous distension of his stomach and loud burps. We put him on *Argentum Nitricum*. Two months after homeopathic treatment, he began to tolerate foods much better than before; his weight improved slightly, though he was still weak. A month later, his father reported that Sumeet could now eat almost everything, except milk and milk products, and that he was moving about comfortably at home. His bowel movement was now normalised

to once, or twice a day. After about 6-8 months of homeopathic treatment, Sumeet also began to enjoy his food a lot more than ever before.

Expert's View:

Most IBS patients are obsessed with their stomach. They count the number of times they pass stools, or gas.

Self-Help

- Keep a food diary to track which food creates more problems, and avoid these problem foods
- Add adequate vitamin B (egg, whole grains), essential fatty acids (fresh nuts, seeds, cold-water fish), and acidophilus (plain yoghurt, or *dahi*) to your diet. They are good for your gut health
- Avoid protein from red meat and unfermented dairy foods, as they may sometimes cause inflammatory responses, because of their saturated fat content. This also includes stimulants such as coffee, tea, alcohol, sugary carbonated drinks, unrefined grains, confectionary, cakes and biscuits.
- Large meals may lead to increased cramping and abdominal discomfort, so it's advisable to take small and frequent meals
- If you suffer from excessive gas and bloating, avoid gas-causing beans, cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli. Drinking through a straw and chewing gum can also aggravate gas trouble
- Exercise regularly, go for a walk, or do yoga
- Get at least 6-8 hours of sleep daily; it is therapeutic and relaxing
- If you are stressed, practice relaxation techniques.

What

Jaundice is the yellowing of the skin and the whites of the eyes. It is caused by a build-up of ‘cellular debris’.

The liver is our body’s processing plant — it treats chemical wastes and expels them into the intestine as bile.



Did You Know?

Jaundice is not exactly a disease; it is a warning signal. It indicates that the liver is having functional problems.

It is also the first junction for nutrients waiting to be absorbed by the digestive tract. The liver pulls together chemicals from the blood for processing and releases them into the bile. There’s one substance, bilirubin, among them, which plays a key role in the entire jaundice drama.

Bilirubin is a yellow chemical in haemoglobin. Haemoglobin carries oxygen into our red blood cells. The liver converts bilirubin into bile. This aids in the digestion of fatty acids and neutralisation of stomach acids. When there is far too much bilirubin for the liver to cope with, or when its function is compromised, jaundice, and its yellow turnout, may well be the potential outcome.

How & Why

- The incidence of jaundice varies with ethnic groups and geography. Prevalence is high in East Asians and American Indians. It is also higher in people living at high altitudes. Jaundice is the most common illness requiring medical attention in newborn babies
- About 45-50 per cent of term and 75-80 per cent of pre-term babies develop jaundice in the first week of life. It is also a common cause of relapse and re-admission to hospital after early discharge of newborn babies
- Jaundice is not caused by excess bilirubin alone, there are other causes. These include excessive breakdown of red blood cells; hereditary illness; exposure to toxic chemicals; alcohol excess; liver diseases, such as hepatitis; bacterial infection; certain medications; junk-food; parasitic infestation; and, mechanical obstruction that blocks the outflow of bile from the liver.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms are yellow skin, yellow eyes, nausea, vomiting, headache, body ache, fever, dark urine, abdominal pain, loss of appetite, feeling disgusted with certain foods, abdominal swelling, and yellow or light-coloured stools.

There are two main types of jaundice among several forms that exist. These are:

- *Haemolytic, or medical, jaundice:* This occurs due to the breakdown of red blood cells. The excretory function of the liver is not impaired. However, the red blood cells disintegrate so rapidly that the liver simply cannot excrete bilirubin, as quickly as it is formed
- *Obstructive, or surgical, jaundice:* This is caused due to the obstruction of bile flow from the liver. It can lead to extreme itching due to build up of salt and other bile constituents. It needs quick, corrective action and treatment.

Diagnosis is made on the evaluation of the case and physical examination.

- Investigations for bilirubin levels, blood, urine, stool, enzyme tests (SGOT,

SGPT), and ultrasonography are often used to confirm diagnosis. They are also used to rule out certain underlying problems and possible complications

- Jaundice may also be accidentally detected during a routine physical or laboratory test, and is confirmed by checking for the presence of anaemia, enlarged liver and spleen, abnormal red blood corpuscles (RBC), excess bilirubin, along with escalated levels of faecal urobilinogen.

Healing with Homeopathy*

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Hepatic and gall bladder obstruction	Chelidonium
Gall stones; pancreatic disease	Chionanthus
Indications	
Bright yellow, hard stools	Carduus Mar
Yellow urine and clay-coloured stools	Chelidonium
Dark urine and light-coloured stools	Chionanthus
Frothy urine and light-coloured stools	Myrica

*(Note: Only under medical supervision)

Case study

Clayton (25) had jaundice. He had noticed the first signs, three days ago. He had taken some natural powders, but his jaundice showed no improvement. When we saw him, his serum bilirubin level was high and his urine was positive for bilirubin. His appetite was poor; he was feeling extremely weak. His tongue was coated yellow and indented by the marks of his teeth. He had continuous nausea; he felt better with hot beverages. He also complained of pain in the liver region, radiating to his back. Based on these symptoms, we gave him *Chelidonium*. Two days later, the yellowness started reducing, his appetite became better, and his weakness reduced.

Self-Help

- Avoid meat, fatty, or junk-food, alcohol and smoking. They can worsen the condition
- Follow a healthy, spice-free diet; it is soft on your gut
- Add radish, tomatoes, lemon, dates, black pepper, ginger, cardamom and green tea to your diet to ensure good bowel movement
- Drink plenty of cane sugar or orange juice, or barley water; keep yourself well hydrated to prevent dehydration
- Do not share razors, or any personal items; maintain good personal hygiene
- Rinse your clothes in warm water and wash
- Use Dr Batra's® Handwash to wash your hands at regular intervals, especially before eating food.

kidney stones

What

Kidney stones are small, hard crystal masses that form in the kidneys. They can obstruct the flow of urine.

How & Why

While anyone can develop kidney stones, the disorder often affects men after they turn 30, including those who have had kidney stones in the past. If one of your relatives has kidney stones, it is possible for you to develop the disorder.



Did You Know?

Kidney stones are formed by a number of substances — calcium, oxalate, uric acid, phosphate, and, magnesium.

High levels of calcium caused by a fault in the kidney may be a cause, as can be a diet high in oxalates (poultry, meat and fish), renal tubular acidosis, irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), some forms of cancer, and thyroid disorders. Sometimes, kidney stones may also occur as a result of cystinuria, a rare congenital disorder, in which too much of cystine, an amino acid, is present in the urine and forms stones.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms include pain during urination, chills, fever and blood in the urine. Some people may pass small stones in their urine without displaying any apparent symptoms.

Kidney stones can obstruct the flow of urine through the ureter, the tubes that carry urine to the bladder. As the urine backs up, it creates pressure. This causes the kidneys to bulge and get affected. In a similar manner, it can cause spasmodic pain in the abdominal area, or the back. Pain can extend to the genital area too, accompanied by nausea and vomiting. Bacteria too can grow there; this can lead to urinary tract infections.

- Your doctor may suspect kidney stones when there is a sudden, severe pain in the abdominal area or back. He will also perform a thorough physical examination, along with a complete medical history to rule out other possible causes
- Urine tests to look for blood and traces of crystals in the urine and X-ray or ultrasonography (USG) to identify the presence of kidney stones are suggested
- One good tool for diagnosis is the intravenous pyelogram (IVP). A small amount of a dye is injected into a vein, and this dye travels through the urinary system. It will show blockages, if any, caused by kidney stones.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location of stones	Medicine
Right kidney	Lycopodium
Left kidney	Nux Vomica
Specific remedy	Berberis Vulgaris Q 20 drops in half a cup of water, twice daily, till stones dissolve

Case study

When 40-year-old Swaminathan came to us for treatment of his kidney stones, his reports said that he had one stone in the right kidney, measuring 12.8 mm and a swelling. He also had a small stone in the left kidney, measuring 7.6 mm.

He was asked to opt for surgery and given painkillers, during the interim, by his doctor.

A technologist by profession, Swaminathan was a fastidious man. He also described himself as being dominating by nature. His childhood had been unpleasant, since his father was also dominating. Even though he was successful in his career, Swaminathan had a strong fear of failure. Before taking up any task, he would be anxious about whether he could accomplish the given task or not.

We prescribed *Lycopodium* for his complaints. Within a month since starting the treatment, there was tangible improvement. He would no longer get episodes of pain that had troubled him earlier. When a repeat ultrasonography was done, a few months later, the report was normal — there were no stones in either kidney. This is the magical beauty of homeopathy — gentle and sure.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy works effectively on kidney stones. However, the success of homeopathic treatment depends on the following parameters: 1. Size of stones: the smaller the stones, the easier to treat; the larger the stones, more difficult. 2. Type of stones: calcium oxalate stones are easier to expel; uric acid stones, are more difficult. 3. Position: a stone in the lower calyx is easier; upper calyx very difficult; staghorn stones almost impossible. Kidney stones should be treated only under medical supervision, because they can sometimes lead to compensatory enlargement of kidneys and secondary hypertension, or high blood pressure.

Self-Help

- Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration and uric acid build-up — this is also one way to prevent kidney stones
- If you are diagnosed with kidney stones, follow your doctor's advice regarding fluid intake and other measures that may help you pass the stone

naturally

- Seek your doctor's help when pain does not subside after rest; also, report any signs of discomfort or infection to your doctor immediately.

What

Head lice are small, wingless insects that swarm the scalp area.



Did You Know?

Head lice love the scalp. They live by sucking blood from the skin, and attaching their eggs to the hair.

The eggs are called nits.

How & Why

- Head lice are extremely transmissible. They spread through shared combs, brushes, or other personal items that have been in contact with the infected person's scalp
- Anyone who has personal contact with someone infected can get head lice
- Head lice are common in pre-schools and elementary schools, where children play together. It is easy for the lice to spread from one child to another.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

You can recognise the problem by the presence of lice, nits, or white flakes and itching. Head lice are usually found behind the ears and at the nape of the neck.

They can sometimes cause a few symptoms. When they reproduce, there may be white flakes, or nits, at the base of the hair, somewhat like dandruff. They firmly attach themselves to the scalp, so they can't be brushed away, even if one wants to. When lice increase in their number, they cause intense itching and also infection.

Your doctor will take your medical history and conduct a physical examination. He/she will check for lice and nits in your hair.

Pubic Lice

Pubic lice, or crab lice, are usually spread by sexual contact. This type of lice likes living in the hairy areas of the body. Any type of close body contact with an infected person, or using the person's blankets, towels, or other personal items that might have been in contact with the infected area, can cause infection. Crab lice are extremely infectious.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indication	Medicine
Lice with itching and unpleasant discharge from scalp	Psorinum
Specific remedy	Staphysagria Q, mixed with 10 ml of coconut oil, as local application.

Case study

Nikita (5) sported long hair. She came to us, with her mom, complaining of intense itching in her hair. She had recurrent lice, in spite of anti-lice and other treatments. It was impossible to prevent lice infection as she was in constant touch with other 'lice-bitten' children at school. There was an unpleasant smell emanating from her scalp. Based on the recurrent nature of lice and the offensive odour from her scalp, we prescribed her *Psorinum* — a few doses were enough to get rid of her lice problem and also the intense itching associated with it.

Self-Help

- Wash bedding, clothing with hot, soapy water, and dry them at high heat
- Soak brushes and combs in hot water for 10 minutes
- Vacuum-clean your floor and furniture regularly.

lichen planus

What

Lichen planus, an inflammatory condition, manifests itself with rows or clusters of dark, flat-topped skin lesions.



Did You Know?

Lichen planus affects 2 per cent of the world population. —most notably it affects one's skin, mouth and genitals.

It is, however, neither infectious, nor contagious. Apart from being chronic, the disease has periods of remissions, when symptoms disappear or reduce in intensity, or relapse.

Lichen planus is an auto-immune disorder; it tends to run a chronic course.

How & Why

- What exactly causes lichen planus has not been clearly understood yet
- Some probable causes include immune reactions, chemicals, certain drugs, like anti-inflammatory medications, or long-term use of certain antibiotics, excess stress, heredity and amalgam dental fillings.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Lichen planus can be easily identified by the typical location of the spots and their characteristic ‘violaceous’ appearance. The skin eruptions often involve the insides of the wrists, ankles, lower back, scalp, nails and mucous membranes that line the mouth, nose, vagina, penis and the anus. Small clusters in rows of flat-topped eruptions come up in these places; itching may vary from mild to severe. New eruptions may appear at sites of skin injury such as a superficial scratch. This is called Koebner’s phenomenon.

Oral lichen planus shows up as a small, pale, raised area — a lacy network on the inside of the cheeks. It rarely involves the tongue. The lesions are extremely sensitive to spicy food.

- Symptoms, medical history, and findings from an examination are sufficient for the treating doctor to diagnose lichen planus
- There may be cases in which the early lesions resemble those of psoriasis or atopic dermatitis, or candidiasis, especially when there is oral involvement. A punch biopsy may be required in such cases to confirm diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Stress-induced	Natrum Mur
Drug-induced	Nux Vomica
Tolerance to heat/cold	
For persons who can tolerate hot weather, rather than cold	Arsenic Alb
For persons who can tolerate cold weather, rather than hot	Arsenic Iod

Case study 1

Seema (39) was suffering from lichen planus for over a year. Her lesions first appeared as small, discrete, dry, purplish raised spots on the arms, which itched. They gradually started spreading over her legs, thighs, hands, scalp and other parts. Being a lethargic person by nature, Seema didn’t like any physical activity. She would prefer to finish her work quickly and take rest, thereafter.

She always liked to keep her things neat and tidy, though. What marked her daily chores was anticipation about the future — this was always on top of her mind. She was scared of the dark since childhood; so, she would avoid sleeping in a dark room alone. Based on her symptoms, we prescribed her *Phosphorus*. In a span of 4-5 weeks, Seema experienced relief from her lichen planus despair.

Case study 2

Manish (27), a skin and VD specialist, came to us with oral lichen planus. He had already used steroids and other topical applications for two years without any relief. On detailed case-taking we found that he did not care about his appearance at all. He wasn't well-dressed — but, he was truly the intellectual, scholarly type. He would never sit still and wanted to speak with everyone. He was leading a sedentary life and always confined himself to his study. On the basis of his temperament, we prescribed him *Sulphur*. In a matter of three months, all his lesions disappeared. Once a sworn critic, he now became an avid follower of homeopathy.

Expert's View:

Most individuals with lichen planus tend to present with a history of stress. Most often, a suitable homeopathic medicine, given on the basis of one's constitution, is effective.

Self-Help

- Apply cool compresses; this may control itching
- Keep your skin well hydrated; use olive oil or a mild skin moisturiser, like Dr Batra's[®], over the lesions to prevent them from drying up; dry skin is often more itchy
- Avoid skin injuries as new lesions tend to appear at places of injury
- Keep your nails short, when your itching tends to be severe

- Take adequate measures to control stress; practice yoga
- Avoid drinking alcohol and consuming tobacco products, when you have lichen planus in the mouth; they often worsen the problem.

What

Measles, also called rubeola, is a highly contagious viral infection. It manifests as a typical skin rash with flu-like symptoms.

Despite the availability of a dependable vaccine to prevent it, measles continues to be one of the leading causes of death among school-going children in certain communities, especially in the developing world.



Did You Know?

Children with measles must never be given aspirin for fever-this can sometimes be fatal.

It is called, Reye's syndrome.

How & Why

- Measles is caused by a virus; it is highly communicable through respiratory secretions. It can be easily transmitted to unvaccinated people who come in close contact with infected individuals. Unvaccinated children have the highest risk of developing the condition
- More than 25 million people are affected by measles every year, according to WHO.

Measles largely affects young children of school-going age, especially during spring and winter. Breast-fed infants younger than six months do not usually

develop measles, because they are naturally protected, from such attacks, by antibodies in their blood from the mother.

Some people say, “Love is like the measles — all the worse when it comes late in life.”

The complications of measles can uncommonly turn fatal, so it should not be ignored. These may include severe respiratory infections, pneumonia, extreme dehydration due to diarrhoea, blindness, encephalitis and ear infections.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Flu-like symptoms, accompanied by a body rash, are typical of measles. The fever starts 10-12 days after exposure to the virus and continues for about a week.

The child may have a runny nose, cough, congested eyes, weakness and malaise. After 2-3 days of fever, a reddish-brown rash gradually spreads over the body, starting from the face and neck and thereafter covering almost the entire body. This passes off in 5-6 days. People who recover from measles generally develop life-long immunity. In malnourished children and people with poor immunity, or those taking immunosuppressant drugs — such as steroids — complications can develop quickly.

- If the child is taken to a doctor during the early stages of fever, the doctor can identify measles by the presence of small red spots with a whitish centre inside the mouth. These are called Koplik’s spots. These are the earliest signs of measles seen in most, if not all, cases. If the rash has already developed, the appearance of the rash, clinical symptoms and history of recent contact with a measles patient are enough for the doctor to diagnose it
- Blood investigations can confirm the diagnosis, but they are not usually required.

Healing with Homeopathy

Fever, type	Medicine
Comes abruptly, and reduces rapidly	Belladonna
Gradual	Gelsemium
Sudden	Aconite
Precipitating factors	
Change of weather	Bryonia
Dry, cold air	Aconite
Sun	Belladonna
Associated with	
Delirium	Croton T
Drowsy, dull feeling	Gelsemium
Irritability	Coffea
Post-measles cough	Pulsatilla
Sleeplessness	Ferr Phos
Violent anger	Belladonna
As a preventative	Morbillinum 200c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, for 3-4 days

Case study

Amit (5) was brought to us by his parents for high fever (103°F), which had not reduced for three days. The fever had started suddenly. His face was red and flushed; his head was hot. Surprisingly, his lower limbs were comparatively less warm. His eyes were inflamed too and he could not bear light in the room. He coughed continuously. He also developed a fine rash on his face. He was extremely irritable and cried a lot. Based on the suddenness of fever, flushed face and photophobia, we prescribed him *Belladonna*. It not only took care of his fever quickly, but also the rash and his irritability.

Self-Help

- Drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration
- Use soft tissues, with a little moisturiser, to wipe your nose — to ease breathing difficulty and prevent skin sores

- Suck a toffee to soothe your throat
- Eat a balanced diet with plenty of fruits and vegetables. This will ensure that you get all the essential nutrients to recuperate quickly.

What

Menstruation is the monthly shedding of a woman's uterine lining. Though this can be uncomfortable and sometimes problematic, it is the body's way of signifying that the reproductive system is functioning properly.

How & Why

It is common for women to experience menstrual cycle problems.

Types

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is a combination of physical and emotional, or mood, disturbances. It occurs after a woman ovulates and is followed by menstruation. Common symptoms include depression, irritability, crying, oversensitivity and mood swings. For some women, PMS symptoms can be controlled with lifestyle changes — e.g., exercise, nutrition and family support.

Other symptoms include fatigue, gas, breast tenderness (mastalgia), acne, and appetite changes, with food cravings.

Painful Periods (dysmenorrhoea), or painful menses, is a common complaint. It may occur as a result of irregular contractions of the uterine muscles. It may have a hormonal basis — in its order of development. The problem may be divided into the following categories:

- *Mechanical dysmenorrhoea*: Caused as a result of uterine malfunction
- *Congestive dysmenorrhoea*: Caused due to 'jamming' in the pelvic organs
- *Spasmodic dysmenorrhoea*: Caused due to contraction of the uterine muscles.

Heavy Periods (menorrhagia) is functional uterine bleeding. It may be caused owing to imbalance in the production of the two female hormones, oestrogen and progesterone. It may also occur due to the gradual failure of the ovarian function. This can sometimes cause excessive bleeding. Extended and unusual bleeding, over a span of time, calls for proper clinical evaluation to rule out tumours in the uterus.

Amenorrhoea is lack of menses, or non-occurrence of menstrual flow, in post-pubertal women. It may also be related to defective ovarian function. This isn't, of course, the rule in all cases. For instance, amenorrhoea during pregnancy is a natural menstrual phenomenon. However, an alarm may be sounded when menses fails anytime between menarche, when it first begins, and menopause, when it stops.

There are two forms of the disorder: *primary* and *secondary*. The former presents itself when menses have never occurred; the latter, when they have appeared, and are subsequently suppressed.

Primary amenorrhoea may emerge when there are anatomical problems in the lower genital tract, for example: absent uterus, or imperforate hymen. Thyroidal problems may be another cause, as also organic diseases, for example, ovarian tumour. The problem may also erupt with no apparent cause. One may connect them to emotional or psychological underpinnings, or distress. Other causes may include anaemia, malnutrition and tuberculosis.

Symptoms are often variable. They may include headache, heaviness of limbs, respiratory distress, acidity or bloating, exhaustion, depression, nosebleed (vicarious menstruation), swelling of lower limbs and palpitation.

Infrequent Periods (Oligomenorrhoea): This may occur when menopause approaches. In this condition, periods of normal duration occur less frequently than once every 26-28 days. For some women, infrequent periods are a norm —

this may be related to a specific hormone cycle.

Leucorrhoea: This is a non-bloody discharge from the vagina. It is usually white; at times, yellow. Normal vaginal discharge is clear, or white. Leucorrhoea is usually present in an amount just enough to lubricate the vaginal walls. Occasionally, there may be excess discharge at the time of ovulation.

Leucorrhoea may also be caused as a result of bacterial and fungal infection — or, from inflammatory, or malignant (tumour) changes in the endometrium, or the lining in the uterus and fallopian, or uterine, tubes.

Menopause: The word, menopause, refers to the permanent cessation of menses, between ages 45 and 50. It's either a result of a normal physiological event, or a consequence of surgery or radiation therapy. Menopause may be divided into 1. physiological and 2. psychological menopause. The former is related to the failure of ovarian function; the latter to the recognition of the fact that a women's reproductive life is at its concluding stage. Some women accept this change without worries; others, owing to myths attached to the expected process, develop anxiety and also emotional upheaval.

Healing with Homeopathy

Amenorrhoea	Medicine
From	
Disappointment in love	Helleborus
Fright	Aconite
Grief	Ignatia
Ovarian atrophy	Plumbum Iod
Temperament	
Hysterical women	Silicea
Nervous women	Arsenic Alb
Associated with	
Asthma	Sulphur
Aversion to food	Platina
Aversion to sex	Natrum Mur
Backache	Aesculus
Constipation	Alumina
Cough	Sanguinaria

Desire for sex	Dulcamara
Loss of appetite	Lycopodium
Loss of voice	Phosphorus
Milk in breasts	Rhus Tox (After ruling out pituitary tumour)
Nose bleed	Bryonia
Specific remedy	Pulsatilla 30c (under medical supervision)

Menorrhagia	Medicine
Time	
Afternoon	Natrum Sulph
Evening	Murex
Morning	Bovista
Night	Mag Carb
Precipitating factors	
Abortion	Sabina
Dancing	Crocus Sat
Delivery	Caulophyllum
Excitement	Calcarea Carb
Exertion	Ambra Grisea
Forceps delivery	Calendula
Fright	Ustilago
Grief	Ignatia
Hysterics	Platina
Hormonal factors	
Before menopause	Lachesis
Menopause	Sarsaparilla
Nursing	Phosphorus
Associated with	
Fainting	Ipecac
Mania	Sepia
Sleepiness	Nux Moschata
Worse by	
Lying down	Kreosote
Motion	Erigeron Can
Sitting	Ammon Carb
Standing	Cocculus

Walking	Lillium Tig
Better by	
Walking	Mag Mur
Specific remedy	Phosphorus 30c (under medical supervision)
PMS	Medicine
Associated with	
Acne	Mag Mur
Backache	Kali Carb
Constipation	Silicea
Cough	Sulphur
Diarrhoea	Bovista
Fever	Calcarea Carb
Headache	Belladonna
Irritability	Sepia
Pain in abdomen	Colocynth
Pain in extremities	Gelsemium
Profuse perspiration	Thuja
With moody or weeping tendency	Pulsatilla
Leucorrhoea	Medicine
Colour	
Black	Secale Cor
Bloody	Nitric Acid
Green	Mercurius Sol
Grey	Argentum Met
Honey-coloured	Natrum Phos
Pus-like	Mercurius Sol
White	Natrum Mur
Yellow	Sulphur
Consistency	
Milky	Calcarea Carb
Sticky	Kali Bich
Thick	Arsenicum Alb
Thin	Graphites
Transparent	Borax
Extent of discharge	
Profuse	Silicea
Scanty	Sarsaparilla

According to menstrual variation	
After menses	Calcarea Phos
Before menses	Bovista
During menses	Kreosote
Instead of menses	Arsenic Alb
Leucorrhoea	Medicine
Odour	
Ammonia-like	Ammonium Carb
Cheese-like	Hepar Sulph
Fishbrine-like	Psorinum
Green corn-like	Kreosote
During	
Daytime only	Alumina
Lying	Pulsatilla
Night only	Causticum
Rest	Fagopyrum
Stool	Viburnum Opulus
Urination	Calcarea Carb
Walking	Bovista
Dysmenorrhoea	Medicine
Precipitating factors	
Anger	Chamomilla
Fright	Aconite
Associated with	
Constipation	Collinsonia
Convulsion	Tarentula
Depression	Natrum Mur
Fainting	Cyclamen
Fever	Ferrum Phos
Frequent urination	Medorrhinum
Headache	Gelsemium
‘Horrible pain’, with crying and weeping	Coffea
Irregular menses	Millifolium
Nausea and vomiting	Veratrum Alb
Pain in breasts	Calcarea Carb
Sleeplessness	Cocculus
Worse by	

Flow	Cimicifuga
Motion	Borax
Walking	Sabina
Better by	
Bending double	Colocynth
Discharge of clots	Viburnum Opulus
Flow	Caulophyllum
Lying	Mag Mur
Warmth	Arsenic Alb
Specific remedy	Mag Phos 6x Dissolve 4-5 tablets in half cup of warm water and sip every 10 minutes.
Menopause	Medicine
Associated with	
Anxiety	Arsenic Alb
Arthritis	Calcarea Carb
Depression	Kali Brom
Diarrhoea	Apis Mel
Dullness	Folliculinum
Giddiness	Crotalus H
Hot flashes	Lachesis
Hysteria	Ignatia
Increased sexual desire	Murex
Irritability	Sepia
Leucorrhoea	Sabina
Nosebleed	Acid Sulph
Sleeplessness	Coffea
Weeping tendency	Sulphur
Weight gain	Graphites

Case study 1

Namrata (27), a housewife, came to us with complaints of not being able to conceive after five years of marriage. All her medical reports and her husband's health reports were normal — this depressed her further. She thought she was destined to not be a mother. On detailed case-taking, we found that Namrata had suffered from white discharge for 6-8 years. The discharge was acrid and hot; it

even corroded her undergarments. She also told us that her greatest fear was sitting in a Giant Wheel (Ferris wheel), especially when it came down. Based on this peculiar symptom and her hot, acrid leucorrhoea, we gave her *Borax*. When she came for a follow-up, she was relieved of her white discharge. Six months later, she conceived too.

Expert's View:

Homeopathic prescriptions for leucorrhoea depend on the colour, the nature of discharge, and accompanying symptoms. *Borax* helped Namrata to get rid of her acrid leucorrhoea, which was actually the cause of her infertility — the excess acidic environment, a result of leucorrhoea, in the vagina was not allowing the sperms to survive. When this was corrected, Namrata was able to conceive, naturally.

Case study 2

Maya (18) came to us with severe menstrual pain or colic; this was a regular pattern for over four years. The colic would continue all through her menstrual cycle. On detailed case-taking, we found that Maya was a touchy individual — she would get hurt at trifles, or even when someone spoke loudly. She hardly drank water, but preferred to eat a lot of pastries. She would shed tears at the slightest provocation and feel better the moment somebody consoled her. Her menstrual history revealed that she had dark, scanty bleeding. Based on her symptoms, we prescribed *Pulsatilla*. When she came for follow-up, she reported that her periods were normal.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy does not act merely at the physical level; it gently works at the neuro-endocrinal level correcting hormonal imbalance, if any, while regulating the periods. Painkillers only reduce pain; they do not alter the internal physiology. Homeopathy, on the other hand, aims at the core, restoring functional balance.

Case study 3

Sheetal (45), a manager in an MNC, visited our clinic with symptoms of irregular menses and hot flashes. She also complained of dryness and irritation in her vagina and painful intercourse, because of which her interest in sex had diminished. She was contemplating hormone replacement therapy (HRT), but was worried about the side-effects. She also complained of bloating and irritability before her menses. On detailed case-analysis, we found that she was aggressive, always wanting to be ahead everywhere; she was also neatly and tidily dressed. Based on her symptoms and temperament, we prescribed *Lachesis*. In a couple of months, most of her symptoms including hot flushes, irritation in the vagina and bloating disappeared. Her interest in sex also returned. Her periods became regular for about six months, after which they stopped uneventfully.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy helps to deal with women's health issues, including menopausal problems, safely — as nature wanted it to be, without side-effects. In a study, 80 out of 102 patients reported improvement of menopause symptoms after homeopathic treatment. The primary symptoms were hot flashes, sweating and tiredness, anxiety, sleeping problems, mood swings and headaches. Those who were referred to homeopathy could not take HRT, or HRT was unsuccessful, or did not want to, or had come off it. In a study carried out at an NHS Well-Woman Clinic in Sheffield, UK, 81 per cent of 102 patients reported improvement from menopause symptoms following homeopathic treatment.

What

Migraine is more than a nagging headache; it is actually a complex syndrome. What distinguishes the disorder, from other types of headaches, is periodic or episodic ache, or pain.



Did You Know?

Migraine affects 5-25 per cent women and 2-10 per cent men worldwide.

How & Why

What actually causes migraine is not yet fully understood, notwithstanding scientific advance. It is suggested that it often results from a variety of factors — blood vessel enlargement and release of certain chemicals from the nerve fibres. Once this happens, the nerve fibres ‘curl’ around blood vessels. This leads to a swelling, just under the skin of the temple.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

The following sequel is a lurking prospect: headache, feelings of nausea, diarrhoea, or vomiting. During a migraine episode, there may also be a delayed emptying of the stomach into the small intestine. This may affect absorption of food and blood circulation. It also increases one’s sensitivity to light and noise.

Migraine rules the head like a tyrant. Picture this — intense attacks of periodic headaches, preceded by visual disturbances, blind spots, tingling in the arms and legs, followed by sleepiness. Migraine pains may, of course, differ in their nature, frequency and duration, but they all compel the affected individual to literally pray for relief.

- There may be a genetic element too, although migraine is more common in women, right from the teenage years and motherhood to menopause. It also tends to affect people who strive for perfection in everything they do
- A migraine headache may start suddenly. It may also be gradual; this generally affects the unsuspecting individual in the wee hours of the morning. It may also have a tendency to ruin one's weekends
- Any which way you look at it, migraine often robs its 'victims' of the pleasures of relaxation, often a holiday
- Migraine may also be brought on by a known or an unknown allergen, a social event or meeting, possibly due to anticipatory anxiety
- Pain may be intense, usually on one side of head, 'as if in a vice-like grip'
- Giddiness
- Sensory loss in hands
- Sudden change from happiness to depression, or vice versa
- Aversion to light, profuse watery eyes
- Loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting at the peak of the attack
- Gas, bloating, loose stools or copious urination.

It is also a paradox that not all migraine sufferers experience all the above symptoms, or severity of pain. These individuals may be subject to mild, sometimes bursting type of headache, without the classical symptoms of migraine.

- The diagnosis of migraine is based on what the affected individual describes to the doctor. This is followed by a detailed physical examination and history-taking. You are asked about your symptoms, when headaches occur, how often, where the pain is, its duration and whether other symptoms come before, during, or after the headache
- Your doctor may also ask you to keep a diary of events to help document your headache's characteristics, your lifestyle, diet, menstruation and medications used
- Most doctors institute a series of blood tests to screen for thyroid disease, anaemia, or infections that can cause migraine. When a definitive diagnosis cannot be arrived at, your doctor may order tests such as computed tomographic (CT) scan or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to rule out brain disorders. When a brain aneurysm is suspected, an angiogram may be advised.

Healing with Homeopathy

From the therapeutic viewpoint, homeopathy provides the best possible long-term solution for migraine. It presents through its medicinal armamentarium the most comprehensive, safe and effective treatment for a vast majority of migraine 'victims'. Homeopathy has an excellent clinical record in treating the disorder, safely and successfully.

Homeopathy aims at treating the individual who carries the 'burden' of migraine on his/her head, rather than the problem *per se*. Remember, no two individuals with migraine display the same set of symptoms, peculiarities, sensitivities, or temperament. Homeopathy elicits and treats such special characteristics, from the back-to-front, looking at the possible causes or triggers.

Homeopathy suggests that a certain medicine that can cause migraine-like symptoms can also treat individuals having migraine and exhibiting the same, unique set of symptoms. However, what distinguishes homeopathy from other medical systems is no two individuals with migraine may be prescribed the same medicine. Rather, the appropriate medicine takes its cue from the nature of each individual's distinguishing symptoms. One individual with migraine, for

example, may feel relieved by pressure; while another may have an identical headache, made worse by pressure. This calls for the use of two different homeopathic remedies.

Location	Medicine
Left-sided migraine	Spigelia
Right-sided migraine	Iris Versicolor
Stages	
Menopause	Lachesis
Puberty	Pulsatilla
Hormonal factors	
After menses	Pulsatilla
Before menses	Kreosote
During menses	Belladonna
Precipitating factors	
Anger	Chamomilla
Fasting	Sulphur
Flatulence	Carbo Veg
Fright	Aconite
Head bath	Belladonna
Mental exertion	Natrum Mur
Sun exposure	Glonoine
Food triggers	
Beer	Kali Bich
Cheese	Bryonia
Chocolate	Lycopodium
Coffee	Nux Vomica
Wine	Gelsemium
Associated with	
Hiccough	Aethusa
Redness of eyes	Kali Brom
Vertigo	Lachesis
Vomiting	Robinia

Case study

As far as Amrita (29) was concerned, only three things were certain in life — death, taxes and her periodic monthly headaches. Amrita had accepted the first

two inevitabilities, but could not get rid of the agonising pain in her head that had virtually imprisoned her for over 4-5 years. The accompanying nausea, dizziness, irritability and weakness were distressing. Despite conventional medical treatment, Amrita's headaches were unresponsive to therapy. She now decided to switch over to homeopathy. On case-analysis, we found that Amrita's headaches were made worse by rest, better from motion, or vomiting. She was put on *Iris Versicolor*. She soon forgot that she had migraines.

Self-Help

- Get good sleep for 6-8 hours every day. Studies have shown that people who sleep well are better equipped to prevent migraine attacks
- Eat regular meals; skipping meals or irregular snacking may trigger an acute attack of migraine
- Exercise regularly; exercises and relaxation techniques, such as yoga, go a long way in easing migraine
- Avoid foods that may trigger migraine attacks, like old cheese, alcohol, chocolate, yeast, stale meats, monosodium glutamate (MSG), red wine, soybean and coffee.

Childbirth is a joyous, profound and significant time for all parents. Each birth is different and, in some ways, it is impossible to plan everything right.

All the same, and irrespective of whether it is natural home birth, or hospital delivery, homeopathic remedies can be of great help in the lead-up during childbirth and after-care.

There are many possible challenges and difficulties during childbirth.

- *Physical:* Nausea, constipation, reflux, backache, slow labour, weak contraction, cramping and exhaustion.
- *Emotional:* Fear, anxiety, agitation and mental exhaustion.
- *Post-partum problems:* Bruising and soreness, excessive bleeding, fatigue, depression, sleeplessness and mastitis.

First Trimester (1-12 weeks)

Nearly 80 per cent of pregnant women experience nausea and vomiting during the first trimester of pregnancy. These symptoms are often worse in the mornings, but can occur at any time of the day.

Morning sickness is usually at its worst between weeks 6 and 12; nausea and vomiting can be a problem at any stage of pregnancy. This is usually caused by hormonal changes and increased levels of progesterone. Some women may feel worse when their stomach is empty; so, it is a good idea to eat several small

meals throughout the day.

Many women also feel extremely tired during the early weeks. Frequent urination is common; there may be a creamy white discharge from the vagina.

Some women crave certain foods like pickles and non-food items like chalk — this is called pica. Sometimes, extreme sensitivity to smell may worsen the nausea.

Second Trimester (13-28 weeks)

Appetite may increase. By the 22nd week, most women would have felt the baby move. During the second trimester, nausea and vomiting often fade away; the pregnant lady feels better and energetic. Heart rate increases, as does the volume of blood in the body.

The second trimester of pregnancy is generally less eventful than the first. This is the time to undergo various tests, to determine the Rh factor, Venereal Disease Research Laboratory (VDRL), urine and blood pressure and to rule out kidney problems.

Diseases in the mother, either inherent or contracted, can damage the foetus. For instance, jaundice can bring forth stillbirth, chickenpox, or cause foetal varicella defect syndrome. Likewise, venereal disease can lead to congenital syphilis and diabetes can cause post-maturity problems.

All these can be effectively and safely tackled with homeopathic treatment.

Third Trimester (29-40 weeks)

By this time, many women begin to experience a range of common symptoms. Many feel warm, sweat easily and find it hard to be comfortable. Kicks from an active baby may cause sharp pains and lower backaches are common.

Around the 36th week, the baby's head drops down low into the pelvis. This may relieve some pressure on the upper abdomen and the lungs, allowing the

woman to breathe more freely. However, the new position places pressure on the bladder and the rectum causing other complaints of pregnancy, such as increased urinary frequency, constipation, acidity and piles. The infant's position in the womb gradually begins to shift in preparation for its arrival into the world, and with this the baby's weight pulls the lower part of the mother's body forward, causing her to compensate by increasing the pelvic tilt and curving the small of her back. This may give rise to backaches. In addition, the expanded uterus can also increase the possibility of varicose veins in the lower extremities due to tardy blood supply.

Homeopathy during Childbirth

During childbirth, the cervix is sometimes slow to dilate, there is pain, excessive bleeding, retained placenta, and other difficulties. Homeopathy can help the mother have an easy delivery with relative comfort.

A double-blind, placebo-controlled trial showed that the length of labour for those following homeopathic treatment was on an average three hours 38 minutes shorter than those taking a placebo. The number having difficult births was also substantially lower at 11 per cent with the homeopathic remedy as against 40 per cent with the placebo (*Source: Cahiers de Biotherapie*, April 1987, 94: 77-81).

A study carried out in Switzerland revealed that in pregnant women, using homeopathy, the frequency of situations requiring a Caesarean section was remarkably low (*Source: Hochstrasser B, Mattmann P, 1999, Mainstream Medicine Versus Complementary Medicine [Homeopathic] Intervention: A Critical Methodology Study of Care in Pregnancy, Switzerland*).

Newborn

- *Asphyxia*: Soon after the baby enters the world, the infant announces its presence with its first breath, the characteristic mewling. The doctor's first problem with the safely-delivered new life is when the mewling does not take place on schedule. This is common in premature, weak babies and

those born of mothers who were heavily sedated during pregnancy

- Also, if the umbilical cord is twined around its neck, the child will asphyxiate and be unable to cry and take its first breath
- *Neonatal Jaundice*: Almost 60 per cent of children develop jaundice during the first few days of birth. This starts from the second or third day, reaches its peak on the sixth day and starts diminishing; it usually disappears within 10 days. Most of the time, this is physiological in nature and needs no treatment. But, certain types of jaundice may complicate matters, such as haemolytic jaundice, resulting from a congenital absence of bile ducts; or, obstructive jaundice. While certain cases need surgical intervention, others respond well to homeopathic drugs used for jaundice
- *Infantile dermatitis*: Children who suffer from infantile eczema tend to have dry skin. They also have a high sensitivity to itching, together with an increased risk of developing other atopic illnesses like asthma, allergic rhinitis and allergies. Homeopathic medicines treat skin diseases holistically without any side-effects. They stimulate the body's own healing mechanisms, thereby minimising the chances of recurrence and offer long-term solutions
- A clinical trial was conducted in Obitsu Sankei Hospital, Saitama, Japan; in cases of intractable atopic dermatitis (IAD), 88 per cent showed reduction in itching, 77 per cent showed improvement in sleep due to overall improvement in IAD. The overall results showed that 75-80 per cent of patients were better with homeopathic medicines.

Note: It is not advisable to ignore complaints during pregnancy as this could have repercussions on the development of the foetus. Though some complaints are common, if they affect you more than is 'normal' consult your obstetrician without delay.

Healing with Homeopathy

First Trimester	Medicine
Constant vomiting and nausea	Symphoricarpus Racemosa 6c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms disappear

Iron-deficiency anaemia	Ferrum Phos 6x, 4-5 tablets, twice daily, for 3 months
To ease digestive problems like reflux, or heartburn (hyperacidity) and reduce nausea	Natrum Phos 6x, 4-5 tablets, twice daily, till symptoms disappear
Second Trimester	Medicine
Jaundice during pregnancy	Nux Vomica 30c. To be taken only under medical supervision.
Pregnancy-induced diabetes	Syzygium Jambolanum 6c (Only under medical supervision)
Third Trimester	Medicine
Backache	Rhus Tox 30c
Constipation	Senna 6c
Piles with backache	Aesculus 30c
Varicose veins	Calcarea Fluorica 6x
Tetanus (preventive)	Ledum Pal 200c
During childbirth	
Indicated during labour to help in delivery; to relieve over-exertion; and, reduce bruised feeling after delivery	Arnica 30c
Reduces mental exhaustion during labour	Kali Phos 6x
Useful in difficult labour, where the cervix is slow to dilate and the pains are strong, but ineffective	Caulophyllum 30c
Common Lactation Problems	
To increase the flow of milk	Asafoetida 30c
Mothers producing excessive milk	
Restores normal flow of milk	Borax 30c
Weaning	
Useful in drying up the milk	Lac Caninum 30c
Newborn: Health problems	Medicine
Asphyxia neonatorum	Antim Tart (strictly under medical supervision)
Infantile eczema	Nat Sulph
Jaundice in newborn babies	Chelidonium
Neonatal thrush	Borax
Retention of urine in newborn babies	Aconite

Case study 1

Shanti (28) came to us because she was experiencing recurrent abortions. She

had conceived thrice earlier; each time she had lost her baby in the third month. She was now two months pregnant. When we took her case history, we found that she habitually aborted in the sixteenth week. Based on this indication, we prescribed her *Apis Mellifica*. She was asked to follow-up during the following month; but, she missed her appointment. She came eight months later with a box full of sweets and a cuddly baby in her arms, a normal full-term baby. She said since her in-laws were so protective, they did not allow her to go out of the house; so, she could not visit our clinic for follow-up.

Expert's View

Homeopathy helps in cases of recurrent abortions, gently, effectively and safely.

Case study 2

Nandini (23) came to us with continuous vomiting. She was two months into her pregnancy. Her day would start and end with vomiting. She was not able to retain anything — neither water nor food. The only thing she liked was pickles; she said she was 'just surviving on them'. She also said that her attending gynaecologist had prescribed some medications, but they had not helped her. Based on her lean, thin constitution and intense craving for pickles, we prescribed her *Sepia Officinalis*. It took less than three days to control her vomiting. Besides this, her appetite was back to normal and she began to put on weight. Seven months later, she delivered a healthy, full-term baby.

Expert's View:

Hyperemesis gravidarum, or morning sickness of pregnancy, can be persistent in certain women — this can sometimes lead to a drop in blood sugar levels and cause dehydration. Homeopathic medicines, prescribed on the basis of cravings of the mother-to-be, correct such problems.

60 mouth ulcers

What

Mouth ulcers are painful sores affecting the inner lining of the mouth. They start-off as blisters, usually on the inside of the cheeks, lips or on the gums.



Did You Know?

Mouth ulcers may erupt as a result of stress, apart from nutritional imbalance.

Women are more affected as compared to men.

How & Why

- Mouth ulcers affect almost 15-30 per cent of the population. They are also more prevalent among young adults; they are relatively uncommon in childhood or old age
- A variety of factors such as vitamin B12 deficiency, poor oral hygiene, hot food, self-biting, broken teeth, injuries from toothpicks and rough foods can cause mouth ulcers. Other relatively less common causes include bowel disorders, allergy, oral lichen planus and fungal infections. Mouth ulcers may sometimes be the earliest sign of oral cancer.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Mouth ulcers present as shallow, whitish or yellowish sores, with an inflamed halo on the inner lining of the mouth or gums. Initially, there may be mild burning, which gradually increases; there is often great sensitivity to spicy and hot foods. Appetite may be affected. There may be a single ulcer, or a cluster, but most tend to subside in 7-10 days.

- Your doctor can diagnose mouth ulcers by examining your mouth
- In case of recurrent ulcers or chronic cases, you may be asked to undergo blood tests and biopsy to rule out bowel disorders or malignancy.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Gums	Kreosote
Inside cheeks	Mercurius Sol
Lips	Borax
Palate	Aurum Met
Tongue	Psorinum
Under the tongue	Lycopodium
Colour	
Bluish	Acid Mur
Purple	Plumbum Met
White	Kali Mur
Yellow	Belladonna
Type	
Painful	Nitric Acid
Painless	Phosphorus
Indications	
Bleeding	Kreosote
Burning	Arsenic Alb
Itching	China
Perforating	Kali Chlor
Rapidly forming ulcer	Borax
Precipitating factors	
Close cheek bite	Natrum Mur
Drug-induced	Pulsatilla

Gastric disturbances

Nux Vomica

Specific remedy

Mercurius Sol 30c, 5-6 pills,
twice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Ramkumar, a businessman, came to us with recurrent mouth ulcers that incapacitated him from eating anything spicy, which he always craved. He also had the habit of chewing tobacco — a habit he had reduced lately, but not completely stopped. Along with the mouth ulcers, he also complained of excessive salivation and a foul odour emanating from his mouth. When we saw his tongue, it was flabby and moist. Based on the appearance of his tongue, his excessive salivation, bad odour, and recurrent mouth ulcers, we prescribed him *Mercurius Solubilis*. We spoke to him about the threat of malignancy and the importance of oral hygiene. This was enough to motivate him to give up his tobacco habit and stop the tendency to develop mouth ulcers.

Self-Help

- Brush your teeth at least twice a day; get regular professional dental cleaning and examination done at least once in 6 months
- Cover the ulcer with a wet tea bag, or place a fresh piece of ginger in your mouth. The tannin in tea and gingerols in ginger help to soothe and dry up the sore
- Avoid excess stress. Take time off for exercise, sleep, and relaxation
- Change your toothbrush every 2-3 months.

61 nasal polyp

What

Nasal polyps are sac-like growths of inflamed tissue, lining the nose or sinuses.



Did You Know?

Nasal polyps typically start at the top of the inside of the nose and grow into the open areas.

Large polyps can block, the sinuses or nasal airway.

Sensitivity to aspirin can also cause nasal polyps in some individuals.

How & Why

It is reported that people with certain health conditions are more likely to develop nasal polyps: asthma, chronic sinusitis, allergic rhinitis, and chronic nose block.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms are mouth breathing, nose block, partial or complete loss of smell, a runny nose and a sporadic sinus headache.

Meet your doctor, if you have difficulty while breathing through your nose.

- Your doctor will diagnose nasal polyps, based on medical history and

physical examination

- During the physical examination, the nose may show a greyish grape-like mass in the nasal cavity
- Your doctor may also order a CT scan of the sinuses to track the area where the polyps are located.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left nostril	Merc i.r
Posterior nares	Teucrium M
Right nostril	Causticum
Indications	
Discharge of large clinkers with loss of smell; crawling sensation in nostrils	Teucrium M
Dryness of nasal mucosa and asthma-like symptoms due to polyps	Lemna Minor
Polyps bleed easily	Phosphorus
Profuse watery mucous with burning pain	Sanguinaria Nit
Profuse watery and extremely acrid discharge	Allium Cepa
Blocked nose with fetid yellow discharge	Calcarea Carb

Case study

Aditya (29) would wake up with a blocked nose every night. He would also get breathless and literally gasp for breath. This was his ordeal for over two years, for which he was prescribed nasal sprays, anti-allergics and antibiotics by the local doctor. Lack of sleep was taking a toll on his workplace productivity. On examination, we found that Aditya had nasal polyps, which were obstructing his breathing. He also complained of loss of smell. Based on his history, we prescribed him *Teucrium Marum*. A few weeks later, Aditya reported good progress. Three months later, we found that the size of his polyps had reduced considerably. He was also able to sleep well and breathe without any problems at night.

Self-Help

- Removing polyps with surgery helps resolve breathing difficulty, but the problem is that nasal polyps often return
- There are no preventive measures for nasal polyps; therapy aimed at the cause often helps
- Treating sinus infections quickly would be helpful.

What

Nosebleed occurs when membranes inside the nose are irritated, injured and bleed.



Did You Know?

Nosebleed in women can sometimes appear instead of menses.

This is called 'vicarious menstruation'.

How & Why

Nosebleeds can affect any age group. It tends to be common among individuals who take certain medications that affect the blood's clotting ability. It is also seen more often in men than in women, albeit the problem is not unusual in children.

- Nosebleed is a result of irritation of the mucous membranes in the nose. It can be caused from cold, dry winter air, violent sneezing, nasal polyps, sinusitis or nose blowing due to infection or allergies
- Other causes include habits such as repeatedly picking the nose and trauma to the nose, head or facial area
- Certain medical conditions are also to blame — for example, high blood pressure, kidney, or liver disease, leukaemia, bleeding disorders or vitamin

K deficiency. Nosebleed also occurs when drugs like cocaine are inhaled through the nose

- Likewise, a deviated nasal septum or foreign object in the nose can also cause nosebleeds.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Bleeding from the nose is an obvious symptom. In most cases, nosebleed occurs from the front, or anterior, part of the nose, or nasal septum, an area that is laden with tiny blood vessels. Nosebleed, from the back, or posterior part of the nose, is less frequent, but can be dangerous.

See your doctor if:

- The bleeding lasts for more than 20 minutes
- The bleeding is caused by an injury, a fall, or something hitting your face
- You get nosebleeds often.

Your doctor may order blood tests to evaluate the cause, such as bleeding disorders.

- If the nosebleed persists, or is recurrent, your doctor may use a heating instrument, or chemical swab, or application of a topical medicine called thrombin that promotes local clotting of blood to stop bleeding
- If bleeding continues unabated, your doctor may place nasal packs to compress the vessels and stop the bleeding.

It is uncommon for one to be hospitalised for surgical treatment, or undergo a procedure to plug the bleeding vessels in the nose.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left nostril	Hamamelis

Right nostril	Veratrum Alb
Type of blood	
Bright	Phosphorus
Clotted	Rhus Tox
Hot	Belladonna
Warm	Dulcamara
Worse	
Bed	Carbo Veg
Hot weather	Crocus Sativus
Rising from bed, chair	Bryonia
Sleep	Mercurius Sol
Standing	Acid Sulph
Stooping	Ferrum Met
Stages	
Children	Ferrum Met
Menopausal women	Lachesis
Old people	Secale Cor
Pregnancy	Sepia
Puberty	Pulsatilla
Associated with	
Alcohol intake	Nux Vomica
Colds	Pulsatilla
Cough	Drosera
Headache	Aconite
Precipitating factors	
After bath, or getting wet in the rain	Dulcamara
Anger	Arsenic Alb
Blowing nose	Arnica
Boring finger	Silicea
Emotions	Carbo Veg
Exertion	Crocus Sat
Injury	Elaps
Hormonal factors	
After menses	Sulphur
Before menses	Lachesis
During menses	Ambra Grisea
Instead of menses (vicarious menstruation)	Bryonia

Case study

Anuja (25) visited us with a chronic problem she had been suffering from for many years — bleeding from the nose. She had visited many doctors and ENT surgeons for treatment. But, all her reports were normal. It was a mystery for everyone. She used to bleed from her nose at least once a day. When we spoke to her in detail, we found that she was an extremely intense type of person and would get angry at the slightest provocation; yet, the peculiarity of her anger was that she used to repent immediately. The character of her bleeding was thick, stringy blood, which would hang from her nostrils like a string. Based on these two peculiar symptoms, we gave her *Crocus Sativus*. When she visited us a month later, she was happy to report that her nasal bleeding had stopped completely.

Self-Help

- To reduce blood pressure and avoid swallowing blood, sit upright and lean forward
- Use the thumb and index finger to pinch the soft part of nose (5-10 minutes); breathe through the mouth. If bleeding doesn't stop, hold for another 5-10 minutes
- Don't irritate the nose (picking, rubbing or blowing it); this may lead to fresh bleeding
- Apply a water-based lubricant to your nostrils
- If bleeding does not stop within 20 minutes, seek your doctor's advice immediately.

What

Obesity is a chronic disease.

Being overweight is defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of 25.0 to 29.9.

Obesity is defined as having a BMI of 30.0 or above.

Your body mass index (BMI) is a yardstick derived from the computation of your weight related to your height.



Did You Know?

Obesity is an epidemic in the Americas and Europe.

Reports suggest that over 6-8 per cent of the population, in India, is obese and, the numbers are growing, thanks to fast-food, change of lifestyle and sedentary habits, among other factors.

How & Why

Obesity is believed to be an outcome of certain interactions between our genes and the environment.

While overweight is defined as ‘abnormally high body weight due to excessive accumulation of body fat’, there are certain ethnic differences in the distribution of subcutaneous fat. Yet, the general cause of the disorder is plain overeating. Besides this, excess weight may also result from abnormal retention of water,

bizarre muscular development, or some tumours, including a few endocrinal disorders.

- Excess weight is a global epidemic, a disease, a sign of illness — a complex syndrome. Thanks to its growing incidence, it is being studied as closely as any other serious disease
- New research implicates genetic, emotional, metabolic, sociological, and environmental factors as causative mechanisms
- Excess weight also has a predisposition in children. Some endocrinologists suggest that the hereditary aspect may not be largely congenital (present at birth), although eventual overweight, or excess weight, may be a direct consequence of ‘the clean plate syndrome’, a rule which some mothers insist their children follow
- Life expectancy of overweight individuals, after the age of 35, is often associated with a death rate much higher than that of people with normal weight.

While increased body weight places a greater load on the circulatory system, regulation of body temperature is affected as well, due to reduced heat insulating effect. This, in turn, brings on profuse sweating and also a host of serious illnesses — from heart disease to diabetes.

For some women, pregnancy is a major risk factor. Unlike before, underactive thyroid glands (hypothyroidism) are no longer implicated as a trigger for obesity, since most obese individuals treated for hypothyroidism do not generally shed their excess flab or body weight.

A sedentary lifestyle with lack of exercise and an uncontrollable urge to feast on food is a major factor for obesity. Regular physical exercise not only increases energy, it also helps control the appetite and the urge to eat.

Overweight women are often vulnerable to urinary incontinence, irregular menstrual cycles, and infertility.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Obesity occurs gradually, over a period of time. When you gain weight, you will notice that your clothes feel tight and no longer fit you like they did before. There is, of course, more to obesity than your clothes feeling tight. Obesity is a serious disease.

It is easy to find out if one is overweight or obese, by measuring your waist circumference and calculating your BMI. Likewise, your waist-to-hip ratio helps to determine your risk of heart disease. How is this done? First, measure your waist circumference and divide it by your hip circumference.

Men, who have a ratio greater than 1.0, and women, with a ratio greater than 0.8, are at the highest risk for heart disease and heart failure. For women, the risk for diabetes increases when their waist is more than 35 inches. For men, the risk increases when their waist is more than 40 inches.

- Your doctor can diagnose your condition by using several parameters, beginning with a physical examination. This will include weight and height measurements to calculate your BMI, besides your detailed medical history, your family's health background, your dietary and exercise habits, your smoking and nicotine intake, alcohol use or abuse, as well as earlier attempts at losing weight
- They may also order blood tests to check your fasting glucose, cholesterol, triglycerides levels, apart from other obesity-related illnesses, or syndromes.

Healing with Homeopathy

International clinical trials have shown that homeopathic remedies act as fat burners in overweight individuals. They also stimulate and hasten the body's metabolic rate and, therefore, help lose weight, without side-effects.

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Delivery, after pregnancy	Kali Carb
Depression	Natrum Mur
Drug-induced	Pulsatilla

Hypothyroidism	Calcarea Carb
Menopause	Graphites
Sedentary lifestyle	Nux Vomica
Remedies that are evidenced to	
Burn fat	Fucus V 6c
Reduce water retention	Natrum Sulph 6x
Specific remedy	Phytolacca Berry Q, 20 drops in half a cup of water, half-an-hour before meals

Case study

Mridula (20) came to us with weight problems. She was suffering from mood swings, bouts of depression and lacked interest in routine activities because of her weight issues. Thyroid function tests pointed towards hypothyroidism. On the basis of her detailed case history and analysis, she was prescribed *Graphites*. She was regularly tracked by a body composition monitor for weight, body fat, bone mass, visceral fat, muscle mass, total water content, BMI, and metabolic age. As the treatment progressed, she shed her excess weight and regained her lost confidence.

Expert's View:

An extract of sea kelp (*Fucus Vesiculosus*) has been used as a homeopathic remedy for over 100 years to speed up the metabolic rate and break down fat. The medicine has been widely researched and accepted by the UK Medicines Control Agency as a suitable ingredient for oral administration with a medical claim for the treatment of obesity. It has also now been established that homeopathic medicines can help in burning calories without side-effects.

Self-Help

- Don't skip your breakfast. A good breakfast jumpstarts your metabolism, allowing you to burn more calories during the day

- Mix proteins with complex carbohydrates. This will ensure that you get a steady flow of energy as the body converts food relatively slowly to glucose. This also prevents excess insulin production and minimalises the potential of your body to store food as fat. Examples: lentils, legumes, milk (regular and soya), egg, meat, fish and tofu. Complex carbohydrates are rice, oats, whole wheat, jowar, *ragi*, and *bajra*
- Drink plenty of water, at least 2.5 litres a day and even more in hot weather, or if you are exercising. This will help replenish your fluid levels and prevent dehydration
- Limit things that lead to dehydration, such as alcohol, tea and coffee
- Eat a varied diet, with a mix of nutrients; avoid sugar. Eat little and often
- Follow the 80:20 principle; eat healthily 80 per cent of the time, so you can eat tempting foods 20 per cent of the time. Let a social occasion not dampen your mood!
- Exercise; walking is the best physical activity. It burns your calories; it also gives you a feel-good feeling
- Children should be taught healthy and nutritious eating and exercise habits at an early age
- Studies show a direct connection between the amount of television adults and children watch and their body weight. Watch TV less and exercise more
- Prevention efforts aimed at children, when practised by adults, are often successful
- Studies show that it is easier to teach and motivate children to eat well and also exercise than it is for adults to implement similar behaviour, or other good habits, later in life.

64 obsessive compulsive disorder

What

Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) is an illness that causes people to have unwanted thoughts and repeat certain 'compulsive' behaviours over and over again.

The disorder is characterised by invasive thoughts — these thoughts often produce anxiety. This is expressed by repetitive behaviour, aimed at reducing anxiety.



Did You Know?

OCD can occur at any age, from pre-school age to adulthood — more so, around age 20-40.

OCD tends to run in families. When a parent has OCD, there is often an increased possibility for the child to develop OCD, although the risk is minimal.

How & Why

- OCD falls under the broad category of anxiety disorders. Anxiety disorders encompass conditions such as panic disorder, social phobia, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). OCD is a multifactorial illness.
- Research suggests that genes play a role in the development of the disorder, although no specific genes have been identified yet.
- Some researchers indicate biological factors involving the brain. When it is

present in the older age group (40+), it may be a ‘spin-off’ of a stressful event in life.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Symptoms range from repetitive hand-washing and extensive hoarding of thoughts to preoccupation with sexual, religious or aggressive impulses
- People with OCD are entrapped in recurrent, unwanted thoughts, which they feel they cannot control. Rituals such as ‘cleansing’, counting, or checking, are often performed in the hope of preventing a ‘bad omen’ or thoughts, or making them go away. Performing such rituals, however, provides only temporary relief
- Likewise, not following these rituals often tends to increase anxiety markedly. Such disturbing thoughts or images are called obsessions; the rituals performed to try to prevent, or dispel, them are called compulsions.

A lot of healthy people can identify themselves with having some of the symptoms of OCD, such as checking the gas-stove several times before leaving the house. But, the disorder is diagnosed only when these activities consume at least an hour a day, are distressing, and interfere with daily life.

There is no laboratory test for OCD.

Diagnosis is made on a detailed examination of one’s emotional past, current symptoms, family history, and ruling out other psychological disorders like depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and delusions.

Healing with Homeopathy

Compulsions about	Medicine
Checking and rechecking the house door and lock	Arsenic Alb
Continuously checks and rechecks things	Tuberculinum
Irresistible desire to be suspicious and jealous	Lachesis
Washing face constantly	Pulsatilla
Washing hands constantly	Medorrhinum

Obsessive thoughts that

He has committed a crime and is about to be arrested	Zincum Met
He is guilty of crime	Aurum Met
‘Marriage is sin’, with a morbid fear of the opposite sex	Pulsatilla
There are robbers at home; will not sleep till every corner of the house is checked	Natrum Mur

Case study

Sandip (18) approached us with his habit of washing hands 20-25 times a day. “I can’t touch any door, or window-counter in public areas. I know it doesn’t make any sense, but I am terrified of germs that could kill me. I can’t go out in public. I am so scared, because if I touch anything, I have to wash myself,” he said. This was a kind of a vicious cycle. Sandeep had developed the behaviour over three years. In spite of counselling and psychiatrist visits, the problem continued to trouble him. We put him on *Syphilinum*. He was back to his usual self — sooner than we thought.

Self-Help

- Recognise that OCD is a condition; it is not you, or your personality
- Try to know the cause, and think positive
- Refocus all your thoughts; use some actions to change intentionally. This helps to get a better grip of the OCD ogre
- When you feel compelled to do something obsessive, just go out for a walk or listen to soothing music. You will notice the change, slowly
- Congratulate yourself when you have learnt to tell yourself that you can control your OCD tendencies.

65 osteoarthritis

What

Osteoarthritis (OA) is a degenerative disorder. It often affects the hips and knees as well as the joints of the hands, feet, and spine.



Did You Know?

OA affects eight crore Indians today.

Experts believe that it may affect 15-20 crore by 2020.

How & Why

OA usually affects the middle-age group; a vast majority of individuals develop joint pains by the time they are 65 years old. Before 55, the condition is more common in men, whereas after 55, it seems to be more common in women.

A large number of cases of osteoarthritis have no known cause — they are called *primary osteoarthritis*. When the condition occurs due to a known cause, it is called *secondary osteoarthritis*.

- When the cartilage, the cushion between the bones in a joint, begins to ‘wear off’, the movements of the joints cause pain. As the cartilage weakens, the bones begin to rub against each other, causing severe pain and reduced movement
- Certain factors may speed up the breakdown of the ‘cushion’ between

bones — repeated joint injury, heredity, obesity, diabetes, or the presence of any other joint or bone disease

- Some studies suggest that a decline in oestrogen levels after menopause may lead to a greater risk of OA and premature death in women. Other studies suggest the risk of OA of the knee joint in women increases 40 per cent for each 10-pound weight gain
- Osteoarthritis occurs more rapidly in older adults with joint injuries than in younger people
- Individuals who have held, or hold, jobs requiring extreme physical labour may risk osteoarthritis.

Additional causes may include muscle weakness, congenital abnormalities (abnormal development of the hip joint), joint infections — bacteria, viruses, fungi and mycobacteria — certain metabolic and hormonal anomalies, such as Paget's disease, where the bone is remodelled inappropriately; acromegaly, a slow progressive disease characterised by excessive circulating growth hormones; and haemochromatosis, or iron-storage disease; besides low dietary intake of vitamin C and vitamin D.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There may be a gradual onset of aching pain in the joint; this may worsen with exercise, during the monsoon or winter. One often feels better after resting. There may be joint swelling and limited mobility of the joint. Morning stiffness is noticed in many arthritic individuals. Over a period of time, the pain may significantly affect day-to-day activities and also functioning. Deformities of the joints may be seen in certain advanced cases.

- A medical and family history, along with a physical examination, is usually enough for diagnosis. However, an X-ray of the affected joint, arthroscopy (visualising the interior of joint through a tiny camera passed inside from a small incision) may be required in some cases
- Other investigations include X-ray, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI),

computerised tomography (CT scan), joint fluid analysis, and blood tests, especially when an infection is suspected.

Healing with Homeopathy

Better/worse	Medicine
Better, motion	Rhus Tox
Better, rest	Bryonia
Worse, standing	Sulphur
Worse, squatting	Calcarea Carb
Worse, stretching	Calcarea Phos
Worse, monsoon	Rhododendron
Worse, warmth, summer	Ledum Pal
Worse, cold, winter	Calcarea Phos
General indications	
Arthritis after injury	Arnica
Much swelling, little pain	Apis Mellifica

Case study 1

M.J. Joshi (47) came to us with knee joint pains, which made it difficult for him to walk or stand, especially after getting up from a sitting position. Being a religious person, he was used to long hours of prayer, while squatting on the floor. He could just not squat on the floor due to osteoarthritis — this not only hampered him, but made his life painful as well. He approached us with the hope of getting over his agony. After a detailed case study, it was found that Joshi was a dominating person and a strict disciplinarian, who had recently retired from government service. He had supposedly been a terror in his office; everyone was scared of him. Joshi was given *Lycopodium*. After a few weeks of treatment, he was able to carry out his daily prayers without pain or discomfort.

Expert's View:

In this case, a purely degenerative disease gets a homeopathic remedy selected on the basis of the patient's constitutional personality. Most patients with OA present with common symptoms of pain, stiffness, and swelling of the joints.

What differentiates one patient from the other is their personality.

Case study 2

Romaa, a frail 40-year-old housewife, was diagnosed with osteoarthritis by her orthopaedic surgeon. No amount of medication, primarily painkillers, provided her tangible, long-term relief. When we probed into her life, we found that she had a traumatic past with recurrent abortions and was now a mother of three children — this was sapping her energy and making her extremely ill-tempered. She would yell at her children, scream at her husband, and make everyone's life, including hers, a living hell. Based on these symptoms and her skinny constitution, we prescribed *Sepia Officinalis*, along with regular hot and cold fomentation and exercise. This helped her stand on her feet, slowly. It also restored harmony back into her family life.

Expert's View:

What was peculiar in this case was that Romaa was not overweight as most OA sufferers are. Her weight was 50 kg and she was lean and thin. Homeopathy, which is based on the law of individualisation, saw the person behind the patient in Romaa. Hence, the prescription was not based on OA, but on Romaa, the person. Homeopathic medicines are selected based on what makes the patient and his/her complaints unique — symptoms, life experience, personality, values, beliefs, habits and also emotions.

Self-Help

- Being overweight may increase the risk for osteoarthritis in the knee. Reduce your weight in consultation with your doctor, if you are on the higher side of the weighing scale
- Regular exercise may help strengthen the quadriceps muscle and potentially stimulate cartilage growth. While sitting in a chair, straighten your leg. Hold for six seconds. Then, lower your leg and rest for up to ten seconds. Repeat 8-12 times with each leg. Check with your doctor and trainer about

getting started on an exercise programme that would suit your needs best

- Antioxidant vitamins C and E are said to provide protection to the joints. They help to maintain healthy collagen. Fresh fruits and vegetables are the main sources of vitamin C; eating your veggies 4-5 times a day will easily meet your body's needs. Sources of vitamin E are avocados, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, spinach, watercress, Brussels sprouts, fish and nuts. Vitamin D and calcium, sunlight and milk build and maintain strong bones
- Applying a hot pack may relieve pain, as will a warm poultice
- Consult a specialist in assistive devices (prosthetist) to improve the function of moveable parts of the body, or support, align, prevent, or correct deformities. Splints or braces also help in joint alignment and weight redistribution.

66 otitis media

What

Otitis media is infection of the middle ear. There are two types of otitis media: 1. acute, where symptoms begin suddenly and are severe, and 2. chronic, when symptoms occur frequently and last for a month or longer.



Did You Know?

Otitis media is often a complication of a cold or allergy.

People who swim are prone to it too (swimmer's ear).

It is also common in children, especially kids exposed to cigarette or tobacco smoke.

The chronic form may sometimes show symptoms of effusion, which is nothing but accumulation of fluid behind the ear drum.

How & Why

Our ear consists of the outer, middle and inner ear. The middle ear is located behind the eardrum. It is connected to the back of the nose by the eustachian tube, which allows air into the middle ear and fluids to drain.

Each time we swallow, the eustachian tube opens and keeps pressure equal on either side of the eardrum. When allergies, viral or bacterial infections, annoy the delicate nasal passages, it causes a swelling in the eustachian tube. This reduces the ear's ability to drain fluids. It also results in a pressure situation in

the middle ear, providing the ‘soil’ for bacteria to grow in the trapped fluid.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There is often pain and pressure in the ear. The pain may be aggravated while lying down. Other symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting, dizziness and temporary hearing loss. There may sometimes be a cracking sound, when you swallow.

Acute otitis media is usually painful. Chronic otitis media is generally less painful.

- Your doctor will take your medical history and perform a detailed physical examination. He may use an instrument called the otoscope to check the inside of your ear for swelling, or redness
- The doctor may also attach a small tube to the otoscope, through which he can blow a small puff of air to check for movement of the eardrum
- A procedure called tympanometry to test for fluid in the middle ear is performed in certain cases
- When ear infections are chronic, a procedure called tympanocentesis is performed, where a sample of middle ear fluid is taken. This fluid is sent to the laboratory to establish what type of bacteria is the cause of the infection.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left ear	Ferrum Met
Right ear	Lycopodium
Colour of discharge	
Bloody	Calcarea Sulph
Brown	Kali Sulph
Green	Hepar Sulph
Milky	Kali Chloratum

Purulent	Silicea
White	Natrum Mur
Yellow	Kali Bich
Form	
Painful	Mercurius Sol
Painless	Pulsatilla
Consistency of discharge	
Thick	Calcarea Carb
Thin	Graphites
Odour of discharge	
Cheesy	Silicea
Meat-like	Psorinum
Offensive	Aurum Met
Sour	Sulphur
Precipitating factor	
Abuse of mercury	Nitric Acid
Cold exposure	Aconite
Malaria	Carbo Veg
Measles	Pulsatilla
Suppressed eruptions	Sulphur
Specific	Skookum Chuck 6c, 5-6 pills, 2 hourly, till symptoms subside

Case study

Piyush, an 8-year-old lad, had recurrent colds and cough with a yellowish-white and extremely offensive discharge from his ear that smelled like cheese. His parents were tired of giving him antibiotics. Of late, his condition became so bad that he was advised surgery. Keen on avoiding surgery, they opted for homeopathy. After diagnosing Piyush with chronic otitis media, we prescribed *Hepar Sulphuricum*, based on the odour of his discharge. Regular follow-up showed a marked reduction in the intensity and frequency of his symptoms.

Self-Help

- Get plenty of rest, take your medications as advised by your doctor

- Drink lots of fluids to prevent dehydration
- See your doctor, if your symptoms worsen.

67 polycystic ovarian syndrome

What

Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS) is typified by the build-up of numerous cysts in the ovaries, along with high male hormone levels, lack of ovulation and metabolic disturbances.



Did You Know?

PCOS often manifests in one's teenage years.

Nearly 10 per cent of women may be affected with PCOS worldwide.

How & Why

PCOS is a common condition among women. Women with PCOS tend to have irregular menses. In some women, periods may sometimes stop.

While researchers are not certain about the exact cause of PCOS, it is known that an imbalance of the endocrine system is responsible for many of the changes associated with PCOS. However, it is still not known what exactly causes such changes.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

The most common symptoms are menstrual irregularities, increased body and

facial hair, acne and infertility. Women with PCOS find it difficult to get pregnant, because during the normal maturation process of a woman's ovum, the egg develops within a cyst inside the ovary. Lack of ovulation in women with PCOS does not allow the egg to mature.

- Your doctor will look into your complete medical history, menstruation, reproduction and weight gain
- He/she will conduct a pelvic examination to determine the size of the ovaries and ascertain unusual hair growth, acne, or other changes
- Blood tests that measure hormonal levels, glucose, and insulin may also be suggested
- An ultrasound is often used to determine the size and shape of the ovaries and also diagnose the condition.

Self-diagnosis is not recommended. When one suspects, or has, PCOS symptoms, it is best to consult a doctor promptly.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Right ovary	Lycopodium
Left ovary	Lachesis
Indications	
Delayed menses	Pulsatilla
Depression	Natrum Mur
Hair loss	Thuja Occ
Increased weight	Calcarea Carb
Specific remedy	Apis Mel 30c (under medical supervision only)

Case study

Sushma (32) suffered from hair loss, irregular menses and a host of other problems. She also suffered from depression, irritability and a gradual increase in weight. A sonography (USG) of the pelvis revealed she had polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS). A thorough case-analysis was done; this revealed

that she was timid and shy, since she had been brought up in a protective environment since childhood. The outcome: Sushma used to be always dependent on her parents for every little thing.

We prescribed her *Calcarea Carbonica*. A few weeks later, her hair loss gradually reduced. Over a period of time, the volume of hair on her scalp improved as well. With continued treatment, she experienced tangible relief from hair loss. Her periods too became regular and she no longer suffered from depressive spells like before. A repeat sonography, after six months, revealed that the cysts had disappeared.

Self Help

- Exercise regularly. Exercise ups your metabolism and helps you manage your PCOS symptoms better
- Avoid processed foods, because they contain chemicals, additives and artificial colourings. They worsen your PCOS symptoms
- Avoid sugar, soda, fruit juice and refined carbohydrates; they affect insulin resistance
- Avoid cold foods and ice-cold drinks; they take longer to go through the digestive tract; they also slow down your body's metabolism. Individuals with PCOS often have slow metabolism
- Avoid alcohol and smoking. They disturb hormonal balance and affect fertility.

peptic ulcer

What

Peptic ulcers are open sores in the lining of the stomach, oesophagus, or duodenum.

*Did You Know?*

*About 75-85 per cent of peptic ulcers are associated with *Helicobacter pylori*, a spiral-shaped bacterium that lives in the acidic environment of the stomach.*

Interestingly, only 40-50 per cent of such individuals visit the doctor.

How & Why

The lifetime risk for developing a peptic ulcer is approximately 10 per cent.

Contrary to popular belief, ulcers are not caused by spicy food.

Instead, stress, or a type of bacteria called *Helicobacter pylori* is usually the cause. Peptic ulcer can also get worse with drugs, such as aspirin and other painkillers, such as non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID).

The lining of the stomach is usually protected from the damaging effects of stomach acid. When this protection mechanism fails, an ulcer is formed.

Other causes may include heredity, old age, alcohol abuse, diabetes, and lifestyle factors such as radiation therapy, burns, physical injury, or trauma, chronic

anxiety, coffee and smoking.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Common symptoms are abdominal pain, with a burning or nibbling sensation
- There may be pain, which gets worse 2-3 hours after eating, and on an empty stomach; also, night-time pain is predominant
- Pain is often relieved by milk, an alkali. There may also be heartburn, indigestion, belching, nausea, vomiting, poor appetite and weight loss.

Your doctor will note down your symptoms and risk factors, including how long you have experienced indigestion and pain, if you have lost weight recently; they will also ask what medications you have been taking, whether you smoke or drink, and how often, or if anyone in your family has had such ulcers.

Your doctor will also conduct a thorough physical examination of your abdomen and chest as well as the rectum to look out for signs of bleeding. A blood test is done to ascertain whether you are anaemic and have occult bleeding.

An endoscopy exam may also be done; likewise, a tissue sample will be taken to test for *Helicobacter pylori*.

Other tests include a blood test checking for antibodies, a breath test after drinking a substance called urea and a stool test to determine the presence of the bacteria. The breath test, a simple procedure, is said to be almost 95 per cent accurate.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Pain relieved by eating	Anacardium
Pain comes immediately after eating	Kali Bich
Pain in stomach an hour after eating	Pulsatilla
Pain better by taking warm drinks	Lycopodium
Pain better by taking cold drinks	Phosphorus

Pressure several hours after eating	Nux Vomica
Vomiting in gastric ulcer	Geranium Maculatum
Vomiting	
Vomiting both liquids and food immediately	Arsenic Alb
Vomiting water as soon as it turns warm in the stomach	Phosphorus
Vomiting water, but food is retained longer	Bismuth

Case study

Subhash Rao (45), a CEO of a leading company, complained of burning and discomfort in the stomach. This used to be worse after meals. Rao used to indulge a lot in alcohol and smoking, thanks to what he called ‘high-profile parties’. His symptoms became so bad that his antacids stopped helping him; as a result, his work and productivity began to suffer. His job obviously demanded a lot from him; this added to his woes and extreme irritability. To add to this he was a perfectionist by nature. His position, irritable personality and ‘spirited’ indulgence of stimulants led to the selection of *Nux Vomica*. In less than four weeks, Rao returned to his desk fresh and raring to go with his good old zeal.

Self-Help

- Eat a diet rich in fibre, especially fruits and vegetables. This may reduce your risk of developing an ulcer and speed up your recovery time
- Include foods containing flavonoids — apples, celery, cranberry juice, onions, garlic, and green tea. They can hamper the growth of *Helicobacter pylori*
- Avoid spicy foods, coffee, aerated drinks, alcohol and smoking. They may increase your stomach acids and make existing symptoms worse
- Practice relaxation techniques, such as yoga. This helps to reduce pain and your need for painkillers.

What

A phobia is a persistent fear of a situation, activity or thing. It causes one to avoid it.

There are three major forms of phobias: social phobia, or fear of public speaking, meeting new people, or other social situations; agoraphobia, or fear of being outside; and specific phobias, or fear of a specific thing, or circumstance.

Phobias are not usually reported, because phobia sufferers often avoid situations about which they are phobic.



Did You Know?

Phobias affect 15-20 people out of every 150 in a given population.

Women are said to be twice as likely to experience phobias, as compared to men.

How & Why

There are no known specific causes for phobias. Experts say these may be family traits or cultural influences of how one is brought up — or, phobias may be triggered by life events.

If one has a family member with phobias, the chances of one ‘catching the phobia bug’ is about three times more likely than those who don’t have such a

family history.

Overtly protective or aloof parents may also raise children who tend to have phobias. A generalised tendency to be fearful may be yet another cause. For example, an individual who fears one dog may fear all dogs in the vicinity.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Symptoms of phobias often include panic attacks, juxtaposed by feelings of alarm, dread, or terror, followed by tremors, sweating, lack of clarity, nausea, rapid heart rate, difficulty breathing and an overpowering urge to get away from the situation — the probable cause of phobic reaction
- Sometimes, people affected by phobia may take extreme measures to run away, or avoid the fearful situation
- Self-diagnosis is, however, not recommended. Phobias are best diagnosed and treated by a doctor.

A doctor will most likely ask a number of questions to understand all the symptoms one may be experiencing, and will also perform a physical examination.

Sometimes, a phobia may be associated with conditions such as anxiety disorders, or panic disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Your doctor may also order routine laboratory tests to ascertain whether phobic symptoms could be the side-effect of certain medications and to rule out other possible causes.

Healing with Homeopathy

Common fears	Medicine
Accidents	Carbo Veg
Airplanes	Calcarea Carb
Animals	Tuberculinum

Appearing in public, or public speaking	Gelsemium
Being alone	Lycopodium
Birds	Natrum Mur
Cockroaches	Phosphorus
Crossing a bridge	Sulphur
Crossing a street	Ferrum Phos
Crowd	Pulsatilla
Dark	Stramonium
Death	Aconite
Dogs	Belladonna
Downward movement	Borax
Heights	Aurum Met
Misfortune	Medorrhinum
Narrow lanes, or places	Argentum Nit
Open space	Lyssin
Opposite sex	Sepia
Poverty	Bryonia
Common fears	Medicine
Robbers	Ignatia
Sharp instruments	Spigelia
Snakes	Lachesis
Specific remedy	Kali Phos 6x,4-5 tablets, thrice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Binay Khullar (45), an accounts manager, came to us because he had been suffering from palpitations for six months. The palpitations would start as soon as he got into a crowd or a narrow street. He always preferred the staircase, not the lift, to reach his sixth floor office. He dreaded railway stations and malls for “fear of suffocation.” On detailed analysis, we found Binay was an extremely anxious person; his anxiety would escalate if he had to reach somewhere at a given time. Based on his sense of fear and anticipatory anxiety, we prescribed him *Argentum Nitricum*. When he visited us a month later, he was a changed man. His anxiety and fear no longer troubled him. He said that he could now travel comfortably in the train, spend time at the mall, or theatre, with his family, and also use the lift to reach his office.

Expert's View:

Phobias often play havoc in the lives of those suffering from them. Instead of treating them with anti-anxiety medicines, it is better to use a safe homeopathic remedy for specific phobias.

Self-Help

- Don't panic when you see a 'fearful' situation, or object. Tackle it head-on
- During 'confrontation', breathe deeply as if you were doing yoga or aerobics; it will ease your sense of alarm
- If you can find any thoughts related to your phobia, jot them down in a diary, or journal, and think of counterstrategies
- When you manage to get over your anxiety in a certain situation, remind yourself each time that you did it yourself
- Speak to your doctor about your fears and follow-up regularly.

What

Piles, or haemorrhoids, are abnormally inflamed or engorged blood vessels in the anus. It can, at times, cause great pain and discomfort to the sufferer.



Did You Know?

Over 40 per cent people all over the world, suffer from piles.

Lack of exercise, junk-food, and sedentary lifestyle, are factors that trigger the disorder.

How & Why

- Bad lifestyle habits are the most common causes of piles
- Other causes include stress, bad bowel habits, pregnancy and childbirth
- When one does not attend to piles, it can lead to bleeding and prolapse of the engorged veins
- When piles are retracted, bleeding can be a dangerous situation, leading to shock
- Sometimes, strangulation of piles can also occur. This is associated with severe pain. Other notable complications include thrombosis (blood clot), ulceration and uncommonly gangrene, or tissue death, or necrosis. There may also be fibrosis (excess tissue) as well as discharge of pus.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Pain is common in external piles — this can get worse while straining to pass stools. Bleeding may also come in splashes, while pressing for stools. Bleeding may be profuse in some cases. In external piles, the swelling can be felt around the anal opening. In case of internal piles, it cannot be felt initially. When the disorder progresses, the piles protrude. There may also be discharge of mucous with itching around the anal orifice. There is more to piles than pain and discomfort.

- *Chronic constipation:* When one is constipated, one tends to exert pressure to empty the bowels. Slowly, the pressure affects the blood vessels in and around the anus. This may lead to piles
- *Bleeding:* Fresh blood from the anus is one of the earliest symptoms of piles. Bleeding can occur during, before, or after passing stools. Individuals, who have piles, often feel that they have not been able to evacuate their bowels completely.

There are grades, or types, of piles:

- First-grade piles develops inside the anal canal or the rectum
- Second-grade piles are protrusions from the anus; they return inwards on their own
- Third-grade piles is similar to second-grade piles, but the protrusion needs to be pushed back manually
- Fourth-grade piles is protrusion that hangs outside of the anal canal.

Grade 1 and 2 can be significantly helped with homeopathy. In Grade 3 piles, symptoms can be relieved, but the condition may not be completely treated. In Grade 4 piles, there would be symptomatic relief with homeopathy. Surgery may be considered, if symptoms are unbearable and persistent.

- Your doctor will evaluate your case, inquiring into your lifestyle, habits and stresses, if any

- He/she will also conduct a physical examination and ask you to cough
- Second degree piles can protrude on coughing and then return; third degree piles will remain and protrude. These are often easily visible
- Your physician may do a digital examination. They may also use a proctoscope — to examine the extent and type of the problem
- Sometimes, sigmoidoscopy is done to analyse and initiate appropriate treatment.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type	Medicine
With bleeding	Hamamelis
Without bleeding	Paeonia
Associated with	
Backache	Belladonna
Constipation	Nux Vomica
Diarrhoea	Mercurius Sol
Fissure	Nitric Acid
Headache	Collinsonia
Associated with	
Itching	Sulphur
Pain	Kali Chloratum
In women	
Delivery (childbirth)	Kali Carb
Menopause	Lachesis
Menses, after	Cocculus
Menses, before	Phosphorus
Menses, during	Ignatia
Better/worse	
Better, warmth	Arsenic Alb
Better, cold	Aloe Soc
Better, sitting	Calcarea Carb
Worse, sitting	Thuja
Worse, standing	Aesculus

General

Children

Acid Mur

Mental exertion

Causticum

Without constipation

Aesculus

Case study

Naresh (35) suffered from excruciating pain in the rectum. This would continue for hours after passing stools. At times, he also passed blood, along with stools. The pain he described to us was, “like sharp pins or splinters.” His job as a jewellery designer involved sitting for long hours — this further aggravated his problem. In fact, he could barely focus due to pain and discomfort in the anal area. He realised that his condition was related to constipation that he had been suffering from for over 12 years. When we examined him, it was confirmed that Naresh was suffering from piles. He was prescribed *Collinsonia*, which matched his symptom-picture. This relieved Naresh of his chronic constipation and also his piles problem.

Self-Help

- A sitz bath is most useful. It is recommended three times a day, for 15 minutes, after each bowel movement
- Sit in a few inches of warm water in a tub; this helps to reduce swelling and pain
- Make sure to dry the skin around your anus, so that it doesn't rub and get torn.

71 post-traumatic stress disorder

What

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a form of anxiety disorder that some people get after experiencing, or witnessing, a dangerous event.

How & Why

- Anyone can get PTSD at any age
- Most PTSD sufferers include war veterans and survivors of physical and sexual assault, abuse, accidents, disaster, and other serious or grave events or situations
- It is not that one has to go through a dangerous event to show symptoms of PTSD. It can also affect individuals who witness a family member, or friend, go through and overcome danger or harm
- A sudden, unexpected death of a loved one can also trigger symptoms of PTSD
- Danger brings a sense of fear in us all. It is this budding fear that leads to many instant changes in the body — these are changes that prepare us to defend against danger or avoid it. Psychologists call this the ‘fight-or-flight’ response. It is actually a healthy reaction that nature provides us to protect ourselves from danger or harm. However, in PTSD, this reaction gets warped or changed.



Did You Know?

People who suffer from PTSD often feel stressed out or frightened, even after the dangerous or harmful situation is long gone.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

PTSD is characterised by the following symptoms:

Individuals relive, or *re-experience* the event. This shows in the form of flashbacks and trauma — like in the movies — along with symptoms, such as a racing heart, or sweating. There may also be episodes of bad dreams, accompanied by fearsome thoughts.

These symptoms can affect one's everyday routine and productivity. What can also trigger symptoms are words, objects, or situations that remind one of past events.

In addition, there is what is called *patterned response*. This includes avoiding or staying away from places, events, or objects, which are reminders. As symptoms escalate, one may feel emotionally numb, depressed, with little or no interest in activities one enjoyed in the past. Ironically, some people affected by PTSD may have difficulty remembering the event itself. For example, a car accident may prevent the person from driving, or travelling in it — just out of fear.

PTSD is also characterised by symptoms of extreme arousal — where one may get easily anxious, or startled, or edgy, and have sleep problems, along with angry outbursts, or tantrums.

Sometimes, symptoms recede after a few weeks. This is called acute stress disorder, or ASD. When the symptoms last more than a few weeks and become an unending crisis, it is called classical PTSD. Likewise, some people with PTSD may also be free from symptoms for a few weeks or months.

Children and teens can also experience PTSD with extreme reactions to traumatic events. They may, however, not show all the symptoms like adults do.

In small children, symptoms can include bed-wetting, forgetting how or being unable to speak, fear of the event recurring while playing with friends on the sportsfield, or not leaving their parents' hand.

Some children and teens may also show symptoms like adults, along with troublesome, impolite or negative behaviour. Older children may feel 'accountable' for not preventing injury or death. They may also nurse thoughts of vengeance.

If any of the above PTSD symptoms are present, it is best to speak to a doctor. Self-diagnosis is not recommended.

- The diagnosis is made after a psychiatrist, or psychologist, who has specialised in mental illnesses, speaks with the person who has symptoms of PTSD
- PTSD is diagnosed if the following symptoms have lasted for at least a month: one episode of 're-experiencing'; three instances of 'avoidance'; two instances of 'extreme arousal', along with symptoms that interfere with daily life, school or work, while being with friends, or while performing essential tasks.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Delayed shock, or when the person insists he is fine and denies that anything is wrong	Arnica
Great sensitivity and nervousness after hearing bad news	Ignatia
If a person feels extremely weak, sluggish and exhausted after a shock	Carbo Veg
If a person feels paralysed with fear or grief after hearing bad news	Gelsemium
Sudden shock or anxiety after a severe fright	Aconite Nap

Case study

Akash (29) was suffering from PTSD. He was a regular train commuter in Mumbai. A few years ago, when he was travelling by train, the compartment in which he was travelling was ripped apart by a bomb, in a terror attack. He was one of the survivors, as well as witnesses. Though he survived the blast, he was literally marooned with gruesome memories. He suffered from repeated visions of blood and death, fearful dreams, palpitations, profuse sweating, troubled sleep, fear of public places, crowds and lack of confidence — thus he stayed away from work. On the basis of the shock and trauma, which were firmly entrenched in his subconscious, we gave him the homeopathic medicine *Opium*. This not only rid him of his troubled thoughts, but also gave him his much-needed sound sleep. Eventually, his physical symptoms also got better; today, he is leading a normal and happy life like before.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy not only takes care of apparent symptoms at the physical level, but also clears mental aberrations which can harm and make one vulnerable to deep-seated emotional illnesses.

Self Help

- Spend time with friends; coping is easier when people support each other
- Get back to your everyday routine. Familiar habits are comforting
- Take time to grieve and cry if you need to. Let your feelings gush out instead of suppressing, or hiding them
- Seek support from your family, friends and other community resources
- Set small goals to tackle big problems. Take one step at a time; there is no need to do things at one shot
- Eat healthy food and take time to walk, stretch, exercise, and relax, even if it is for just a few minutes

- Make sure you get enough rest and sleep. People need more sleep than usual when they are stressed
- Do something that feels relaxing — like taking a warm bath, a walk, sitting in the sun, petting your dog or cat, or playing with kids
- Turn off the TV and distract yourself by doing something you enjoy.

What

Psoriasis is a progressive inflammatory disorder of the skin. Some researchers believe that an inherent tendency is responsible for its development and progression.



Did You Know?

Over 200 million people worldwide have psoriasis.

Over 3 million new cases of psoriasis are diagnosed every year.

The word psoriasis comes from the Greek word *psora*, which means, ‘itch’.

Although the precise cause of psoriasis is still a conjecture, what’s obvious is the presentation — red patches or plaques on skin, covered by silvery scales.

The disorder is not contagious. You cannot get psoriasis if you touch someone with psoriasis, or swim in the same swimming pool. It is also often not vicious enough to affect general health.

Yet, any which way you look at it, psoriasis is more than an itchy problem; it is a major social stigma.

How & Why

Psoriasis often runs in families. For instance, if both parents are affected, their children have a 60 per cent chance of developing the condition. Interestingly, some people with mild symptoms of psoriasis may be blissfully unaware of its existence.

All the same, the scaly problem can affect people of all ages — even though it has a distinctive tendency to affect young adults around age 20 and the elderly in their fifth or sixth decade.

- Some common causes are stress, a distressing life event, skin injury, and severe sore throat. Most individuals affected by the disorder point out that their problem first appeared after experiencing a stressful situation or event
- What activates psoriasis is not universal to all. What may cause psoriasis in one individual may not cause the disorder in another
- Researchers are still investigating how and why psoriasis develops. Some say it is likely that our immune system and heredity play an important role in its development. It is also suggested that when a person has psoriasis, the T-cells — defence cells that combat unwelcome invaders, for example, bacteria and viruses — wrongly generate a response in skin cells. This response triggers a mechanism for new skin cells to form within days, rather than weeks. Those that develop psoriasis inherit genes that can cause psoriasis. Scientists have identified one of the genes called PSORS1, which helps our immune system combat infections
- Not everyone who inherits the genetic trigger for psoriasis develops the disorder. The defining point is the individual has to inherit the exact blend of genes and also be receptive to the vagaries of the disorder to develop the problem.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Psoriasis is multi-faceted. What is universal is its emblematic outward expression: thickening and reddening of patches of skin. These may be present on the elbows, knees, scalp, lower back, and lower extremities, with thick silvery-white scales of dead skin that may itch substantially. In a majority of

cases, psoriasis may wane and reappear, for no obvious reason. The ferocity of each outbreak may differ, along with generalised illness.

More than Just Skin Deep

Many people with psoriasis witness changes in their fingernails and also toenails. When the nails begin to draw from the nail bed and develop a yellowish-orange colour, with pitting and ridges, it could be the first sign of psoriatic arthritis (joint pain).

When not treated suitably, psoriatic arthritis can lead to joint damage.

The skin cells in psoriasis grow too quickly. The body does not shed these excess skin cells, as is the case when one has healthy skin. When this happens, excess cells accumulate on the surface of the skin, forming lesions.

These lesions differ in appearance with the type of psoriasis. There are five major types of psoriasis: *plaque* (broad, raised area on the skin), *guttate* (spotted as if by drops), *pustular* (small, elevated, circumscribed lesions), *inverse* (psoriasis in the armpits and groin), and *erythrodermic* (recurring reddish, psoriatic patches covered with silvery scales). There is also another form called *psoriatic arthritis* (psoriasis with joint pain).

- Your doctor will diagnose psoriasis from its appearance, or presentation of symptoms and also on the basis of a physical examination
- Physical examination will reveal a large number of dry skin cells, sometimes without signs of inflammation or infection
- Changes in the nails that look like fungal infection are typical of psoriasis. This is often a clinching feature
- A tiny skin sample is used for tests in the laboratory to substantiate the diagnosis. This involves a microscopic examination of the tissue, taken from the affected skin patch. This can help distinguish psoriasis from other skin disorders.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
All over body	Mezereum
Folds of skin	Graphites
Nails	Sepia
Palms and soles	Petroleum
Scalp	Graphites
Itching: Better/worse	
Better, cold bath	Fagopyrum
Better, hot bath	Rhus Venenata
Better, open air	Pulsatilla
Worse, hot bath	Calcarea Carb
Worse, undressing	Rumex
Seasonal variation	
Worse, summer	Kali Ars
Worse, winter	Mezereum
Cause	
After depression	Natrum Mur
After drug abuse	Nux Vomica
Cause	Medicine
After injury	Arnica
After suppressed anger	Staphysagria
After throat infection	Hepar Sulph
Associated with	
Joint pains	Rhus Tox
Pus	Merc Sol

Case study 1

14-year-old Natasha had psoriasis since age eight, following her father's death. Her lesions covered more than 85 per cent of her skin area. She stopped going to school, owing to her ungainly psoriatic patches, and stayed at home with her grandmother. She had loved her father and now missed him deeply. She was given *Magnesium Carbonicum 200*, based on her symptoms, which included "feelings of insecurity due to emotional separation." After eight months of treatment, her skin was clear and free of psoriatic patches.

Expert's View:

This case shows how emotions can trigger and activate autoimmune problems, such as psoriasis. It must be remembered that in skin affections, there is often an underlying psychosomatic factor. Children are like sponge; they absorb emotions. They also mirror those emotional expressions by way of outwardly manifestations — most often on the skin. Natasha too expressed her feelings of uncertainty, along with emotional disconnection. This was actually the latent cause for her psoriatic patches. When her feelings were addressed with *Magnesium Carbonicum*, which is almost 'specific' to the problems of emotional separation and insecurity, she was able to overcome her scaly skin distress.

Case study 2

Sudeep (15) came to us with psoriasis all over his body, with severe flaking, scaling and itching. He was lethargic and always wanted to lie down in bed, or sleep. He did not like to play, or do any kind of mental or physical exertion; so he had put on a lot of weight. He was an introvert — who did not like to spend time with friends. Sudeep showed clear signs of anxiety, with profuse sweating on his scalp and face. The only child to his parents, it was obvious that he was extremely pampered by them. We put him on *Calcarea Carbonica*, a remedy which is useful in anxious, overprotected, and over-pampered individuals, who have a tendency to sweat excessively.

Expert's View:

Sudeep was an emotionally apprehensive child. He depended far too much on others. He could, therefore, not establish his own identity. In addition, he was over-pampered by his doting parents, and was susceptible to day-to-day stressors. Unlike Natasha's skin problem, which was triggered by insecurity caused by emotional separation, Sudeep's case represented emotional insecurity due to overprotection. This was the latent trigger for his psoriatic eruptions. His every movement was tracked by his parents and he was constantly 'drilled' about 'taking care'. He was over-dependent on them, and lived in his own self-imposed cocoon.

Self-Help

- *Keep skin moist.* Use Dr Batra's® Moisturiser, enriched with aloe vera, a natural moisturiser, which heals and soothes the skin. This should be an important part of one's self-care kit for psoriasis. Dry skin makes psoriatic itchiness worse than it needs to be
- *Bathe, but beware.* Bathing is an important part of psoriasis self-care, yet frequent bathing can also dry the skin out, causing problems. One, big tip for those who have psoriasis: avoid hot water. This can irritate the skin. Pure water dries skin. Use lukewarm water instead. Don't towel off, pat yourself dry; then apply Dr Batra's® Moisturiser
- *Get some sun, with care.* The ultraviolet light in sunlight is a proven treatment for psoriasis, but sunburns can make psoriasis worse. Use Dr Batra's® Sunscreen Cream (SPF 30), enriched with echinacea — a natural antibiotic cleanser, which protects cells from bacterial infections — and, begin with some limited sun exposure. About 15-20 minutes a day, thrice a week
- *Quit smoking.* A study found that people who smoked more than a pack a day were twice as likely to have severe psoriasis than those who smoked half a pack or less. The negative effect of smoking is believed to be stronger in women with psoriasis than in men
- *Drink moderately, or not at all.* Psoriasis is more common in people who drink excess alcohol. Psoriasis in men may be exaggerated more by drinking than in women. Drinking less may or may not improve psoriasis, but it will improve overall health. More than one drink a day for women, or two drinks per day for men, is too much
- *Consider diet changes.* Many people with psoriasis have claimed improvement after cutting down on foods such as sugar, white flour, gluten, and caffeine, and by adding flaxseed, or essential fish oils into their daily diet. There is also a possible connection between obesity and psoriasis; many dermatologists feel a healthy weight could improve the condition.

What

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic, systemic inflammatory disorder of the joints, leading to swelling, stiffness and pain.



Did You Know?

Rheumatoid arthritis can occur at any age; in most cases, it begins between ages 25 and 55.

A potentially crippling disease, it runs an irregular course, marked by phases of unpredictable hikes and spontaneous relief.

How & Why

Rheumatoid arthritis is an autoimmune disorder, i.e., a condition in which the immune system mistakenly attacks the joints and surrounding tissues and gradually progresses to attack other systems and organs of the body.

There are a number of theories that point towards factors such as genetic inheritance, infectious causes and environmental factors as probable triggers. Certain factors, which put an individual at a higher risk of developing RA, include smoking, and hormonal changes, such as pregnancy and breastfeeding. Pregnant women with RA have an increased risk of premature delivery and high blood pressure during the last trimester.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Morning stiffness is common. It can last up to a few hours. Joint pains are usually better after rest; they are worse on movement. Fever and weight loss are also common symptoms
- RA primarily affects the small joints of the hands and feet, wrists, ankles, elbows, knees and shoulders. The muscles, tendons, and ligaments surrounding the joints are often affected
- Common symptoms include symmetric joint pains, usually affecting more than five joints at one time. There may also be a marked swelling of the joints, heat, redness, pain and limited mobility
- In a small percentage of cases, the affected joints may fuse completely, leading to immobility. Joint deformities may occur in advanced cases.

Your medical history is usually sufficient for the doctor to diagnose RA. Tests, such as complete blood count, erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR), rheumatoid factor, and X-ray of the joints can help confirm the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

According to direction of pain	Medicine
Ascending	Ledum Pal
Descending	Kalmia
Character of pain	
Stinging	Apis Mel
Stitching	Bryonia
Throbbing	Belladonna
Worse	
Before storm	Rhododendron
Cold, dry weather	Bryonia
Damp, wet weather	Dulcamara
Every other day	China
Melting snow	Calcarea Phos
Motion	Arnica
Night	Kali Iod
Rest	Kali Carb

Touch	Colchicum
Warmth	Pulsatilla
Better	
Cold applications	Ledum Pal
Damp weather	Causticum
Motion, walking	Rhus Tox
Open air	Kali Iod
Pressure	Bryonia
Warmth	Arsenic Alb

Case study

28-year-old Gita came to us with joint pains in her fingers, which were worse when kneading flour. Both her hands were equally affected; the stiffness seemed to be more pronounced in the morning. It would get better as the day progressed. She was diagnosed with RA after her blood tests were positive. The disorder slowly affected her knees as well as her ankles. Taking into consideration the descending nature of pains, she was prescribed *Kalmia Latifolia*. This eased her rheumatic agony.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy looks at the peculiarity of the direction of pain among other symptoms, especially in joint disorders — for example, from above downwards and vice versa. In many cases, homeopathy has been shown to alter RA factor from positive to negative, safely and effectively.

Self-Help

- Individuals having rheumatoid arthritis need to balance rest and exercise. Take more rest when the disease is active; exercise more when it is not active
- Reduce stress on joints with self-help devices — for example, zipper pullers and long-handled shoe horns

- You may also use support devices to help while getting on and off chairs, toilet seats and beds
- Heat can help reduce your pain, relax muscles and increase blood flow. You can apply heat to painful areas in many ways. For instance, you can take a hot shower, or bath, or sit in a sauna. You can also use a hot pack, an electric heating pad, or a heat lamp
- Maintain healthy weight; excess weight can put unwanted load on your joints and increase the pain
- A diet programme designed by a dietician with enough, but not excess calories, protein and calcium, will be helpful.

What

Scabies, a skin infection, is seen as small, itchy bumps on the skin. It is caused by tiny mites that can be easily transmitted from one person to another via close contact.



Did You Know?

An estimated 30 crore people contract scabies every year.

The disorder is particularly common in crowded places, such as schools and hospitals.

How & Why

The prevalence of scabies is said to be higher in the lower socio-economic group due to lack of hygiene and poor living conditions. It can easily attain epidemic proportions, when left unchecked.

Sarcoptes scabiei is a mite that causes scabies. This tiny mite cannot be seen with the naked eye, but can be identified with a magnifying glass. The females of this species rapidly burrow under the skin, causing intense itching, and lay eggs there.

Direct skin-to-skin contact with an infected person spreads the disease, as does sexual contact.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Unlike other itchy skin conditions that have waxing and waning symptoms, scabies causes a stubborn itch — it simply does not give the affected person any respite.

Scabies generally affects the hands and feet, more so the webs between fingers and toes. It can also affect the inner side of the wrists, folds under the arms, the elbows, and the area around the genitals and breasts. The eruptions may be fluid-filled and can get crammed with pus in case of secondary infection. Scaling and scab formation are not uncommon. A hot bath usually worsens the itching.

- Your doctor can identify the burrows caused by the mite, with the help of a magnifying glass. Sometimes, the mite can be identified by its peculiar appearance as a tiny black speck under magnification
- In addition, the typical itching caused by scabies mites, which persistently gets worse at night, confirms the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Chest	Causticum
Elbow	Bryonia
Finger joints	Psorinum
Knee	Arsenic Alb
Associated with	
Bleeding	Mercurius Sol
Dryness	Silicea
Moisture	Graphites
Suppression	Sulphur

Case study

Amey (10) came to us with itching eruptions all over his body. He had visited a dermatologist who had diagnosed it as scabies. He was advised lotions and tablets, which gave him only partial relief. This was a recurrent problem for

Amey and his younger sister. On examination, we saw Amey had itching in the bends of joints in-between fingers; this would increase at night in bed, and also after undressing. The itching was accompanied by burning and soreness, especially after scratching. His skin looked rough and scaly with the formation of little vesicles and pustules. His itching appeared to be better when cold water was splashed on the eruptions. Based on the recurrent nature of scabies and itching aggravated at night, by warmth and better by cold, we prescribed *Sulphur*. After a month of treatment, the itching and eruptions reduced to a great extent. Soon, Amey was able to attend his school without any embarrassment.

Self-Help

- Soak affected area in cold water or apply a cool, wet washcloth to irritated areas of your skin. This will reduce itching
- Wash clothes, towels and bed linens every 2-3 days, preferably with hot water
- Use a high heat dryer rather than air drying, because the mites can survive on non-living objects for days
- Keep your nails clean and trim — this will help to take out any mites or eggs that may be present
- Vacuum-clean your blankets, bedding and furniture — dispose off the vacuum-cleaner bag immediately
- Avoid scratching; this will only aggravate the problem.

What

Sciatica refers to pain, irritation, numbness and tingling in the legs.

The pain often travels from the back or hips, along the back of thighs, right up to the legs or feet. It must be noted that sciatica is a symptom of a disease — not a disease by itself.



Did You Know?

Sciatica tends to be common with increasing age, especially in the age group of 30-50 years. Laidback individuals, pregnant women and diabetics are more commonly affected.

How & Why

Age-related degenerative changes in the spine and obesity are common reasons for sciatica. In addition, a prolapsed disc, fracture, rheumatoid arthritis, or ankylosing spondylitis, and narrowing of the spinal canal (canal stenosis) are other causes of sciatica.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Back pain or hip pain, which usually affects any one side is the earliest symptom. The pain travels down the buttocks and the back side of the legs. It may also move to the feet

- The pain can be dull or sharp, or shooting in nature. Many people report numbness of the legs; there may also be weakness of leg on the affected side. The pain tends to get worse with prolonged sitting or standing, coughing and sneezing.

Sciatica can be diagnosed by your doctor based on the history and certain examination findings. In addition, tests like X-ray, CT scan, and MRI may be advised.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left side	Colocynthis
Right side	Mag Phos
Precipitating factors	
Influenza	Mag Phos
Injury	Hypericum
Measles	Morbillinum
Time, worse during	
Afternoon	Ammonium Mur
Evening	Kali Iod
Morning	Sepia
Night	Mercurius
Worse by	
Cold	Rhus Tox
Heat	Ledum
Lying down	Natrum Mur
Motion	Bryonia
Pressure	Lycopodium
Standing	Valeriana
Walking	Ledum
Better by	
Cold	Kali Iod
Heat	Arsenic Alb
Lying down	Ammonium Mur
Motion	Ferrum Met

Pressure		Mag Phos
Standing		Mag Phos
Walking		Ferrum Met
Associated with		
Anxiety		Spigelia
Atrophy (muscle wasting)		Plumbum Met
Fainting		Chamomilla
Numbness		Gnaphalium
Specific remedy		Gnaphalium 6c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms disappear

Case study

Waheeda (35), a housewife, came to us with severe shooting pains in her left leg, radiating from her back, down to her ankle. The pain was so intense that she could not walk or stand; the only way she felt better was by pressing her leg firmly and sitting. The pain was accompanied by numbness of the whole leg. Her CT scan was normal. Based on the peculiar symptom of pain associated with numbness, we gave her *Gnaphalium*, which immediately relieved her of the agonising pain; it also put her back on her feet. She was advised to do some light exercises, avoid high heels, and sitting or standing for extended periods. She has had no sciatic pain ever since.

Self-Help

- Do not bend, lift heavy things, or sit in a soft, low chair; your pain will get worse
- Use cold packs to reduce inflammation and relieve discomfort
- Apply heat to the areas that ache. If you continue to have pain, try alternating warm and cold packs
- Stretching exercises for your lower back can help you feel better
- Water exercise or other low-impact exercise, such as stationary bicycling,

will help you stay active without worsening your symptoms

- You may feel better when lying on your back on a firm surface, with a pillow under your knees. Try it.

76 senile dementia

What

Dementia is a slow decline of mental functioning, such as concentration, memory and judgment. It may affect one's general ability to attend to and perform routine daily activities.



Did You Know?

Dementia usually occurs in people after age 65, or following an injury or illness that affects brain function.

Although the disorder presents itself in the elderly, it is in no way a part of the normal aging process.

How & Why

- The disorder is caused by the death of brain cells — a result of memory disorders such as Alzheimer's disease or strokes which compromise blood flow to the brain
- Other causes may include extremely high fever, dehydration, systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), Lyme disease, long-term drug or alcohol abuse, vitamin deficiencies and poor nutrition, hypothyroidism, hypocalcaemia, multiple sclerosis, brain disorders, Parkinson's disease, and AIDS
- Likewise, a head injury that affects the brain, or certain medications can also cause the disorder.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- The most common symptom is the progressive nature of simple forgetfulness leading to a nagging incapacity to remember names, faces, directions and recent events
- Some symptoms take a long time to actually manifest. Not so when the cause is an injury or stroke; in this case, symptoms occur abruptly.

A medical history, accompanied by a complete physical and neurological examination, will be performed, following which your doctor will note down behavioural patterns within your family and others. Tests to evaluate one's mental functioning, such as recalling words, objects, lists and recent events are often done. Blood tests, X-ray, or MRI, or CT scans, are used to determine the cause of dementia.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	
Atherosclerosis, or narrowing of the arteries	Baryta Carb
Grief over loss of spouse	Conium
Decreased blood flow	Phosphorus
Indications	
Mental overexertion	Picric Acid
Confusion of identity	Alumina
Indications	
Cannot remember familiar streets	Glonoine
Cannot remember names	Lycopodium
Cannot remember right words	Anacardium
Case study	

Vijaya (71) was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. She had a modest level of memory loss and confusion. She talked of her fears of what was happening to her and what lay ahead. Her main concerns were about her 'past life'. She described a life of many hurtful moments, of people doing things that made her feel bad; of feeling alone and sorry for herself; of all the love she felt, but

couldn't express; of her headaches and arthritis pain. Based upon this and her symptom-picture, we gave her *Natrum Sulphuricum*. Within a few months, she began to feel happy. Her past and present memory now seemed to be better. She was less tired. She said that she felt much better than she had in years. She no longer felt dragged down by the past. Over the next 5-6 years, there was an extremely slow decline into dementia; this was much slower than the average for Alzheimer's patients. Whenever she didn't feel as good, she would take a dose of her remedy (there was a sticker on the bottle for recall) which lifted her spirits for a few weeks each time.

Self-Help

- Repeat what you say 2-3 times. This will help you recall things a little bit better
- Write and rewrite appointments and other activities in a diary. Keep it next to your bed; keep looking at it, now and then
- Write messages on post-it notes; place them on the fridge, TV, telephone, bathroom mirror and computer screen, so that you see them often
- Paste a list of important phone numbers at a vantage point
- Keep clocks and calendars where they are most visible — so you can track time and dates
- Label important items, from food to medicines
- Stick to habits and routines that are easy to adopt and follow.

Stress, tough work-life schedules, junk-food, sedentary habits and bio-clocks gone ‘wide of the mark’ have led to a host of lifestyle diseases in men — including sexual problems. Erectile dysfunction is one among them.

Erectile Dysfunction

Erectile dysfunction (ED) is a persistent or recurrent inability to attain, or maintain adequate penile erection, until completion of sexual activity. Called impotence earlier, ED can affect men of all ages. The likelihood of ED increases with age; however, men as young as 18-20 years of age may also seek treatment for this disorder.

The cause of erectile dysfunction is generally one of the two factors — psychological, or physical.

- Psychological factors include feelings of nervousness related to sex
- Feelings of inadequacy, stress at work or home
- A troubled relationship with your partner may contribute to psychosocial issues, hindering normal sexual function.

Performance Anxiety

Performance anxiety is a major problem — this results from depression and anxiety related to sexual performance.

Other psychological causes include stress, anger and low self-esteem. A history of sexual abuse, guilt about sexuality and early homosexual experiences can also trigger sexual dysfunction.

Many physical factors and disorders can lead to ED, the most important being high blood pressure, elevated cholesterol levels, vascular diseases (e.g., arteriosclerosis), diabetes, prostatic problems and so on.

In addition to these, ED may also be present as a side-effect of medications, such as antihistamines, antidepressants and anti-hypertensives.

Conventional medicine recommends psychotherapy, and exercises, to help increase blood flow and hormones, which act as mood elevators, besides oral drugs to correct ED. These methods often fail to take care of the cause, the origin of the disorder — besides, they carry the risk of side-effects.

Mental or emotional physical stress usually causes ED in many individuals. A majority of sexual dysfunctions are primarily psychogenic in origin; they are, therefore, sensitive issues for patients to discuss.

Premature Ejaculation

Premature ejaculation can create havoc in a man's life. It is a condition in which the man ejaculates sooner than desired by himself or his partner. It is difficult to quantify this in terms of time period, because of the significant variability in the duration for which both partners desire the sexual act to last.

Classification

Ejaculation disorders can be classified as follows:

- *Inhibited or retarded ejaculation:* When ejaculation is slow to occur or is delayed, it's termed as inhibited or retarded ejaculation. Psychological factors play an important role in retarded ejaculation
- *Retrograde ejaculation:* When the ejaculate goes backwards into the

urinary bladder instead of being expelled out through the outer end of the penis, it's termed retrograde ejaculation. Surgery on the bladder neck or prostate and diabetes may be the cause

- *Premature ejaculation:* This is the commonest form of ejaculation disorders. It refers to ejaculation that occurs before, or soon, after penetration.



Did You Know?

Most men experience premature ejaculation at least once in their lifetime; and, approximately one-third experience it 50 per cent of the time during the sexual act.

The overall incidence of ejaculation disorders in men stands at around 30 per cent globally; the most affected are males below age 40.

Premature ejaculation tends to be common in young males due to hyperexcitability, or excess stimulation. It generally improves with the adoption of certain corrective measures combined with the right kind of homeopathic treatment.

Causes

- Anxiety about sexual performance
- Marital discord
- Lack of attraction for the partner
- Depression
- Guilt
- Past sexual trauma
- Stress
- Fixed mindset that sex is sinful

- Damage to the spinal cord or the back.

Types

Premature ejaculation can be classified as primary or secondary:

- Primary premature ejaculation is a condition in which the male has always ejaculated prematurely ever since he became sexually active
- Secondary premature ejaculation is a condition in which the person has had control over his ejaculation in the past, but developed premature ejaculation due to any of the reasons enumerated above.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathy is ideally equipped to treat and correct sensitive, or underlying predispositions — safely and gently, without side-effects. Homeopathic treatment depends upon the manifestation of ED, along with personality or distinctive characteristics of the individual. Likewise, homeopathy can provide significant relief to patients suffering from premature ejaculation.

Homeopathic medicines target the underlying cause of the dysfunction and provide effective relief. Homeopathy works especially well in cases where the cause of premature ejaculation is psychological, such as depression, stress or anxiety regarding performance. Conventional medications for premature ejaculation, such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRI), and desensitising creams, tend to provide only temporary relief. Homeopathy, on the other hand, effectively deals with the root cause of the disorder. It provides long-term solutions.

Healing with Homeopathy

Erectile dysfunction

Difficulty in achieving an erection; low confidence levels	Lycopodium
ED from embarrassment or shyness	Staphysagria
ED following a life of intense and frequent sexual activity	Agnus Castus
ED in men who smoke, or are fond of tobacco	Caladium
Reduced sexual ability, after exhausting illness	Selenium
Premature ejaculation	

Indications	Medicine
Extreme sexual excitement, but with premature ejaculation	Conium
Premature ejaculation with sexual arousal in men who had high libido before	Agnus Castus
When the cause is stress, or work-related concerns	Zincum Met

Case study 1

Mohan (25) complained of erectile dysfunction and premature ejaculation. He had increased sexual desire, but lacked vitality. Due to depression as well as anxiety, his complaints aggravated further. He lost confidence while speaking to girls, meeting new people; his work performance also suffered due to his low self esteem. He was prescribed *Lycopodium*. After a few months, not only did his erection and ejaculation improve, he also regained his confidence.

Case study 2

Pankaj (26) was suffering from erectile dysfunction. He admitted that he had erratic sleeping habits due to changing shifts, along with extreme work-stress. He was prescribed various homeopathic remedies, but he did not respond. During one of his visits he said that he combated stress by chainsmoking and drinking alcohol. This proved to be the turning point as alcohol and smoking are major hurdles to treatment. Pankaj was advised to reduce his alcohol consumption and smoking, besides regularising his sleeping habits. He was prescribed *Tabacum* — this helped him to curb his desire for smoking. Within a few weeks, he noticed a definitive change in his vigour and vitality; his erections became normal.

Expert's View:

ED commonly occurs due to psychological stress, or side-effects of certain medications. It becomes mandatory in every case of ED to ask for certain details, like the use of alcohol, tobacco, anti-hypertensives, diuretics, antidepressants, anti-histaminics and anti-epileptics that can cause ED. It is also important to know the individual's personal habits and addictions.

Case study 3

Subrato Banerjee (33) came to us with asthenospermia, also known as hypomotile sperm syndrome. On case-analysis, we found that his wife had failed to conceive after six years of marriage. This prompted him to get his semen analysis done. The results showed hypomotile sperms. This stressed him and he went into episodes of depression, during which he used to withdraw from everyone around him. He would always think of what other people thought of him. Based on this symptom, we prescribed him *Calcareo Carbonica*. Within three months his semen analysis showed highly motile sperms. He came to us after six months with a box of sweets and a smile on his face. His wife had conceived.

Case study 4

Kishore Kamal (34) came to us with cryptozoospermia, or abnormal sperms. The Kamal couple was not able to conceive for over ten years of marriage. On case-analysis, we found that Kishore was undergoing financial problems in his business. He was always worried about one thing — how to make money. He also did not like to be overburdened with work. He never liked to take on extra pressures. He said his main concerns were financial insecurity and health-related problems. He was not able to accept how a macho man like him could have such an ailment. Based on this history, we gave him *Lycopodium*. Following six months of treatment, his wife conceived.

Self-Help

- *Stop and start method*: To obtain effective control over the ejaculatory process, the sexual stimulation is allowed to advance to a point where the man is just about to reach orgasm. At this point, the stimulation is stopped

for about 30 seconds and the process is repeated all over again. This can be continued till one wishes to ejaculate.

- *Squeeze and pause method:* In this method, the sexual stimulation is allowed to advance to a point where the man is just about to reach orgasm. Thereafter, the man or his partner must gently squeeze the end of the penis (where the glans meets the shaft) for a few seconds. The stimulation must be stopped for about 30 seconds and then resumed again. This process can be repeated till one wishes to ejaculate.

sexual

78 disorders in women

Research suggests that the prevalence of sexual dysfunction in women is 25-60 per cent, the average being 40 per cent.

The exact incidence is difficult to figure out since a large number of cases go unreported. This may be due to the prevalent social stigma attached to sexual problems.



Did You Know?

An estimated 60 per cent of women suffer from painful intercourse at various times.

The 'problem may ease as the woman gets older and more experienced.

Dyspareunia, or painful intercourse, is described as persistent or recurrent pain associated with the sexual act.

The pain may occur before, during, or after intercourse, and can lead to significant distress.

However, with changing times, more and more women are open about their sexual problems; they have begun to seek treatment to address the issue.

Any problem that prevents a woman from experiencing sexual pleasure can be included under the umbrella term, female sexual dysfunction. Thus, female sexual dysfunction may include any of the complaints ranging from lack of sexual desire to absence of orgasm, or anything in-between.

It is not unusual for women to experience painful sexual intercourse (dyspareunia), but this again is one of the problems that goes unreported.

The good news is that understanding the problem, communicating adequately with the partner and seeking prompt treatment can help such individuals — since most causes are treatable.

Dyspareunia

Common causes of dyspareunia (painful intercourse) include:

- Vaginal infections like yeast infection, trichomoniasis and genital herpes
- Vaginal irritation, from use of contraceptive foams, creams, jellies, condoms and diaphragms.

Vaginismus

This is involuntary spasm of the vaginal muscles that occurs during sexual intercourse. It is also a reflex state caused by anxiety.

Chronic Pelvic Pain

Diseases like ovarian cysts, uterine fibroids or tumours, endometriosis and pelvic inflammatory diseases can lead to pain — especially, when there is deep, thrusting penetration.

Vulvodynia

This is a chronic condition that presents as unexplained sharp, or burning, pain in the vagina and vulva.

Pain in the clitoris

The clitoris is one of the most sensitive areas; it is prone to pain at times.

Psychological causes

This accounts for anxiety due to painful intercourse or sexual abuse in the past, depression, stress, guilt, lack of attraction for, and from partner, and fear of pregnancy.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of dyspareunia is made largely from the history given by the individual. However, in addition to this, some tests may be required in intractable cases — these include pelvic examination, ultrasonography, laparoscopy and certain blood tests.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathy has helped a multitude of women to overcome their sexual distress and lead normal sexual lives again. Many women, for instance, plagued by worries of worsening marital discord, have sought homeopathic treatment for their dyspareunia and other problems; they are happy for having made the right choice of treatment.

The first thing that must be borne in mind is that dyspareunia is treatable. With the combined effort of homeopathy and a psychotherapist, most women can be helped significantly. Homeopathy treats the individual at the level of the body as well as the mind, which is primarily holistic and essential.

A large number of cases of dyspareunia show a positive response after homeopathic treatment and adequate counselling.

Dyspareunia

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Aversion to sex	Sepia
Dryness of vagina	Natrum Mur
Pain and sensitivity of vagina	Platina

Sensitivity of vagina	Lyssin
Tension, or anxiety	Cuprum Met
Vaginismus	Medicine
During coition	Platina
Painful coition	Argentum Nit
Pain in vagina/Vulvodynia	
Precipitating factors	Medicine
After menses	Argentum Met
Before menses	Berberis
Coition	Sepia
Pregnancy	Borax
Sitting	Staphysagria
Touch	Berberis
Urination	Silicea
Unable to conceive	
Precipitating factors	Medicine
Laxity of vagina	Natrum Carb
Leucorrhoea	Natrum Phos
Profuse menses	Natrum Mur
Uterine inertia	Gossypium
Abortion	
Precipitating factors	Medicine
Anger	Chamomilla
Bad news	Gelsemium
Cough	Kali Brom
Exertion	Erigeron
Fall	Arnica M
Case study	

Renu (25), a newly married woman, came to our clinic with her husband. She complained of pain and spasms in her vagina. Her marriage had not been consummated because of the intense pain and her fear of intercourse. She visited a gynaecologist, but an examination was impossible due to vaginal spasms. She was diagnosed as having vaginismus, with dyspareunia, or painful coition. On detailed case-taking, we found that she was quite a haughty and snobbish person,

not readily mixing with others. She also had dark-coloured menses. Based on her vaginal spasm, her dark menses and her ‘snooty’ nature, we gave her *Platina*. We asked her to follow-up after a month’s time. When she came back, she and her husband looked happy. She reported that she had a sense of relaxation, after taking the homeopathic medicine, and that making love was now no more a problem, but a pleasure.

Expert’s View:

One of the common roadblocks to good treatment outcomes is persistent anxiety about the results. Women who seek consultation often reach a tough point in their personal lives and relationships due to anxiety, or lose patience about sticking to treatment. If the partner can also be counselled, there is often a better, positive response to treatment. It is in the best interest of both partners to opt for treatment as soon as possible — this can provide optimum results and also prevent deterioration of the condition or relationship.

Vagismus, dyspareunia, or painful coition, are usually a result of anxiety, which, in turn, causes spasms. Homeopathy not only relieves spasm, but also allays one’s anxiety or apprehension towards sex.

Self-Help

Making certain lifestyle changes can go a long way in helping women cope with their dyspareunia and other sexual problems.

- *Enhance communication* with your partner, especially about one’s own choices, likes and dislikes
- *Exercise regularly.* Perform pelvic floor exercises — also known as Kegel exercises. These can be done at any time of the day while you are sitting at home, in office, or even while travelling. All you need to do is to tighten the muscles at your bottom, as if you are suddenly stopping the flow of your urine. Hold this until you count five, relax and then repeat again. Doing these exercises several times daily can help in dealing with vaginismus

- Get educated about normal sexual response; it's important to know how your body functions before you step out to treat the abnormality
- Avoid alcohol; quit smoking.

What

Sinusitis is inflammation, or infection, of the paranasal sinuses — the frontal, ethmoid, maxillary, and sphenoid sinuses. These are hollow air spaces within the bones surrounding the nose, which produce mucous.

One of the main functions of the sinuses is flushing mucous secretions into the nose.



Did You Know?

More than 30 million adults and children suffer from sinusitis each year.

How & Why

Sinusitis is often caused by a virus, bacteria, or fungus. It may also be the result of an allergic or autoimmune reaction — where our immune system attacks our own body. Some doctors like to refer to sinusitis as rhinosinusitis, because it occurs with inflammation of the nose, or rhinitis.

Sinusitis is classified by the sinus cavity it affects:

- *Frontal sinusitis*: Pain or pressure in the frontal sinus cavity, located behind and above the eyes, with headache
- *Ethmoid sinusitis*: Pain or pressure behind the eyes, with headache

- *Maxillary sinusitis*: Pain or pressure in the maxillary, or cheek area — e.g., toothache and headache
- *Sphenoid sinusitis*: Pain, or pressure, behind the eyes; this may be related to the crown area of the head.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Sneezing, a running nose, blockage of one or both nostrils, headache, and pressure around the head, eyes and face signify sinusitis. The face is often sensitive to touch, but may not always be swollen.

When the sinuses get blocked, it creates a moist environment. This provides the ‘fertile soil’ for infection and causes symptoms, such as headaches, which worsen when bending forwards, including mild-to-moderate fever and fatigue. Other symptoms may include a post-nasal drip, or mucous drainage, at the back of the throat.

- Sinusitis is often diagnosed clinically based on symptoms
- An X-ray of the paranasal sinuses and CT scan can confirm the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location of pain	Medicine
Cheek bones	Spigelia
Forehead	Sanguinaria Nit
Over eyebrows	Kali Bich
As per nature of discharge	
Bland	Pulsatilla
Bloody	Ammonium Carb
Greenish	Merc Sol
Hot, acrid	Kali Iod
Stringy	Kali Bich
Thin, acrid	Arsenic Alb
Yellowish	Silicea
Worse	

Air conditioned room	Sepia
Change of weather	Phosphorus
Fasting	Sulphur
Getting wet	Rhus Tox
Mental or emotional stress	Natrum Mur
Sun exposure	Glonoine
Washing head	Belladonna

Better

Eating	Sepia
Movement	Iris Versicolor
Warmth	Calcarea Carb
Wrapping head	Hepar Sulph

Case study

Melissa (24) came to us with symptoms of frequent cold and cough, which she had since age ten. She often had post-nasal drip, leading to a blocked nose, severe headache, and cough. This used to get worse at night, so she would wake up and inhale steam. She would feel a wee bit better after that, but not completely. She was frustrated with the various treatments. Not just because of their side-effects, but because she felt they'd never give her relief beyond containment.

This made her seek homeopathic treatment. A detailed case-analysis revealed that Melissa was a strong-willed, intelligent, dominating, career-oriented woman, with equally strong feministic views. She liked to perform at her best, always. We put her on *Ferrum Metallicum*, based on her symptoms. In a matter of a few weeks, her headaches and blocked nose were a thing of the past. She said she had never felt as good as she did after homeopathic treatment.

Expert's View:

Surgery for sinusitis only gives symptomatic relief. The problem often recurs post-surgery.

Self-Help

- Hydrate well, this helps remove and dilute some of the mucous causing sinus 'heaviness' and pain
- Steam inhalation helps ease the sinus distress. This should be done 2-4 times a day (for about 10 minutes each time)
- A nasal wash using warm salt water helps to cleanse the sinuses. Do not use table salt; use pure salt or sea salt
- Rest to ensure speedy recovery
- Avoid exposure to smoke and pollutants
- While sleeping, keep your head elevated — this helps drain the sinuses
- Apply a warm cloth to your face frequently, this helps to relieve congestion.

80 sleeplessness

What

Sleeplessness, or insomnia, is the individual's prolonged inability to sleep.



Did You Know?

Statistics suggests that 30-50 per cent of the general population is affected by acute sleeplessness, while 10 per cent may suffer from chronic sleeplessness.

People with sleeplessness, or insomnia, are often listless and tired during the day. The cause is usually anxiety, or depression.

An insomniac, a person who just can't sleep, or get one's 'normal' quota of sleep, may be classified as follows: 1. takes more than an hour to fall asleep, 2. sleep is disturbed, and 3. wakes up in the early hours of the morning feeling totally tired or unrefreshed.

- Sleep is a natural state that promotes rest
- It acts like a shock-absorber — a natural cushion against stress
- It promotes optimal health and well-being. This is achieved
- by way of chemical stimulation in the brain, the nerve centres and the muscular system
- Sleep is suggested to be partly biological in nature; it also corresponds to

behavioural and cultural factors. Put simply, any general relaxation of the body facilitates sleep.

How & Why

Sleeplessness affects all age groups. It affects women more often than men. The frequency tends to increase with age. Sleeplessness is also typically more common in people in the lower socio-economic group, chronic alcoholics, and emotionally or mentally disturbed individuals. Stress is another common cause for short-term or acute insomnia. When not adequately treated, this may develop into chronic insomnia. Most adults have experienced insomnia, or sleeplessness, at sometime in their lives.

A combination of various factors causes insomnia. These may be situational or locational factors, medical or psychiatric conditions, or primary sleep problems.

Insomnia is also classified by the duration of the symptoms — transitory, short-term and chronic insomnia. Transitory insomnia may last for less than a week, while short-term insomnia may last for about 1-3 weeks. Chronic insomnia is sleeplessness that lasts for more than three weeks.

Most of the causes may be common to the three types of sleeplessness, viz., working in shifts or change in shifts; excess noise; uncomfortable room temperature; jet lag; stress, such as exams, grief, or loss of a loved one, unemployment, job loss, divorce, or separation.

Other factors include medical or surgical illness or hospitalisation, withdrawal from drugs, alcohol, sedatives, or stimulants, and high-altitude sleeplessness.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

You can recognise sleeplessness when you take too long to go to sleep, or don't get sleep, or toss in bed, feel irritated, and get up in the wee hours of the morning feeling unrefreshed. Or, have daytime sleepiness.

Sleep is indispensable to life. Most of us feel haggard and weary when deprived

of our 'normal' quota of sleep, although psychologists say that the quantity, or quality, of sleep, though variable with individual needs, is probably associated with bodily requirements and age. Teenagers tend to sleep longer than young adults. Likewise, old people sleep less than youngsters. Most young adults sleep for six hours at night. Sleep loss has nothing to do with 'compensating' for sleep lost due to hectic work schedules. The harder one tries to recompense sleep loss this way, the worse is the resultant effect.

The time one goes to sleep and its duration vary considerably. Most people feel good with eight hours of sleep. While some feel good with just 4-5 hours of sleep, a few may need as much as 9-10 hours of 'good' sleep. It is also ironic that hospital patients spend the same amount of time sleeping as people who are on their feet all day.

- Diagnosis usually involves a history of insomnia, possible stressors, and a complete medical history
- The individual may be asked to keep a sleep diary for a few weeks
- Psychological tests, blood tests or other exams may be necessary to rule out possible triggers
- Sometimes, a sleep study, or polysomnogram, may be considered.

Healing with Homeopathy

Homeopathy aims at inducing natural sleep, gently. Homeopathic medicines are safe, non-habit-forming and effective. They endeavour to treat the individual's temperament and nature, not just sleeplessness alone — although this is a significant part of the entire treatment plan.

Conventional sleeping pills do not induce natural sleep. They actually interfere with the normal rhythms of natural sleep. They are not without side-effects. Besides, they are habit-forming.

For instance, in individuals who are nervous and thin, or subject to 'nervous chills' or wake up worried and distressed, *Ambra Grisea* is a useful homeopathic remedy. *Nux Vomica* is effective when sleeplessness is a result of mental

overwork, or intensive studying, especially in individuals who love coffee and alcohol, and are prone to tummy problems. *Coffea Cruda* is useful when sleeplessness is caused by overexcitement, as from exhilarating news. *Passiflora Incarnata*, or passion flower, is an excellent, natural sleep remedy. It works well in most individuals who complain of mental and emotional stress and anxiety, along with a disturbing inability to sleep.

Homeopathy also emphasises the need for proper recreation, exercise, and relaxation. It focuses on other parameters too, including the individual's access to a comfortable bed, a quiet, dark room with suitable ventilation, temperature, and humidity. A warm bath and/or a glass of warm milk — milk is rich in tryptophan, an essential amino acid and natural relaxant — and, listening to soulful melodies, are most useful auxiliary measures before one retires to bed. This will help create the desired relaxing effect, or mood, for a good night's sleep.

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Alcoholism	Avena Sativa
Anxiety	Arsenic Alb
Bed feels hard	Arnica
Bed feels hot	Opium
Chronic nicotinism (smoking)	Plantago
Coffee abuse	Nux Vomica
Cramps	Cuprum Met
Dentition	Belladonna
Grief, loss of a loved one	Ignatia
Late supper	Pulsatilla
Mental overactivity	Coffea
Worry	Ambra Grisea
Specific remedy	Passiflora Incarnata Q, 20 drops in half a cup of water, at bedtime.

Case study 1

29-year-old Shobhan came to us with insomnia, after trying everything from counting sheep to sleeping pills. He was on the verge of quitting his job, as he was unable to cope with his insomnia and sleepiness during daytime, which were

affecting his work. Based on his history, especially fear of failure and image consciousness, *Silicea* was prescribed. When he came to us later, he looked cheerful and informed us happily that he was also promoted at his workplace.

Case study 2

Sunita, a 35-year-old bank manager, came to us with sleeplessness that began six months ago. She was taking sleeping pills, but they could not offer her the sound, refreshing sleep she needed. She would lie awake till early morning, or sleep late, and invariably get late for work. She had to often stay at home, away from her office, due to a lingering, tired feeling. It all started after her promotion, a pleasant surprise, otherwise — something she had not expected. Following her promotion, she had developed sleeplessness. Based on this causative factor, the exciting news that caused her sleeping problems, we gave her *Coffea Cruda*. This not only re-established her normal sleep rhythm, but also kept her fresh the whole day, while helping her cope with her new tasks and responsibilities.

Expert's View:

Insomnia is dependent on a variety of extraneous, 'beyond control' factors that it is difficult to treat the problem through any one system of medicine. Sleeping pills are clearly not the answer. They are often addictive; besides, one would need to increase the dosage for them to act, after some time. If the right symptom match is found, homeopathy can be of great help to insomniacs.

Self-Help

- Go to bed at the same time, every night; get up at the same time, every morning
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, tobacco, tea, chocolate or cola in the evening; they disturb your normal sleep rhythm
- Avoid reading newspapers or watching TV in the evening, or just before going to bed

- Listen to music that is soothing, before sleeping
- Sleep on your back, as this enables your internal organs to rest
- Do not fall asleep on your front; this may lead to shallow breathing and also pressurise your internal organs.

81 sore throat

What

Most sore throats are caused by viral infections. This leads to uneasiness, ache, and discomfort in the throat.

How & Why

Most often, a mild sore throat emerges at the beginning of a cold. When the nose or sinuses become infected, the mucous discharge may slide down the back of the throat and cause irritation, especially at night. Some viruses cause specific types of sore throat. For example, coxsackievirus may cause blister-like eruptions in the throat, while mononucleosis and flu can also trigger specific viral throat infections.



Did You Know?

A sore throat lasting for more than 2-3 weeks can sometimes be a sign of a serious illness — for example, throat cancer, or even AIDS.

‘Strep throat’ is the most common bacterial form of sore throat. It includes fever ($>101^{\circ}\text{F}$), juxtaposed by white patches on the throat, with swollen or tender lymph glands in the neck, sometimes accompanied by a tummy ache or headache — especially in children. In addition, allergic rhinitis can also cause sore throats.

With a sore throat, the tonsils or surrounding parts of the throat may sometimes

get inflamed. Either way, removing the tonsils, our first line of defence against invading organisms, to prevent future sore throats is not recommended for most children.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Common symptoms include dryness and irritation of the throat, common cold, a choking feeling and discomfort.

- Your doctor will perform a physical examination
- You may be asked questions about how long the sore throat has been present; have other family members suffered recently from sore throats; is the pain increasing, or decreasing; are you able to swallow saliva, fluids and food; is there pain; or, difficulty in breathing when you sleep
- Your doctor may also order a complete blood count (CBC), monospot test to rule out mononucleosis (an infection with flu-like symptoms), throat culture, and a rapid strep test.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Right-sided sore throat	Lycopodium
Left-sided sore throat	Merc-i-r
Shifting from left to right and vice versa	Lac Caninum
Appearance	
Bluish	Lachesis
Bright red	Belladonna
Better	
Cold drinks	Lachesis
Warm drinks	Lycopodium
While swallowing solid food	Ignatia
Worse	
Empty swallowing	Hepar Sulph

Akash (10) had a sore throat for three days. He was on antibiotics, but the pain did not subside. He developed high fever — this would touch its peak at night. He also complained of excess salivation. On examination, his throat appeared dusky and his tongue was moist, showing indentation of teeth. Akash suffered from sore throat, every 3-4 months, due to which he had to often miss school. Based on his right-sided sore throat and typical indentation on the tongue, we prescribed him *Mercurius Iodo Flavum*. Two days later, his sore throat and pain were gone.

Self-Help

- Wash your hands frequently with Dr Batra's® Handwash, before eating; this will help prevent infection and recurrence
- Drink warm liquids. Take some honey with water, a time-tested natural home remedy
- Gargle 4-5 times a day with warm salt water (1/2 tsp of rock, or sea salt in 1 cup water)
- Sucking on hard candies is soothing, because it increases salivation. However, this should not be given to young children because of the possible risk of choking
- Use a cool-mist vapouriser to moisten and soothen a dry, painful throat.

82 stammering

What

Stammering, or stuttering, is a speech disorder in which the person repeats or prolongs words, syllables or phrases.



Did You Know?

Stammering often begins at an early age.

It can persist for life in about 20 per cent of people who first stammer when they are two years old.

How & Why

- Anyone can ‘trip over the tongue’, when pushed too far, or threatened with a knife, if not a gun
- Stammering is common when children are learning to speak. Most children outgrow their initial stuttering; however, for some, it may persist
- These children may require speech therapy. Parents would do well not to vitiate a child’s stress by drawing too much attention to stuttering when they are attempting to communicate verbally. The calmer a child is, the easier it is for them to get over the potential problem
- Stuttering is possible in the developmental stages, when a child, who has not yet reached the level to speak clearly, races for words, falls short of it,

and stutters awkwardly

- The exact cause is not yet known, although family genetics are blamed by some experts.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- When one stutters, stops talking suddenly, or does not make a ‘sound’ for certain syllables, this may be accompanied by stress and fatigue. The person may feel uncomfortable about public speaking, or teaching
- There is often a sense of hesitation before certain sounds are uttered, a protracted attempt at speaking such words, the words may come out in spurts, substituting certain sounds for actual words, lips may tremble, there may be nervous jerking of the feet, jaw, face, and upper body
- Some individuals may run out of breath, or interject the fill-in expression ‘uhm’ before uttering normal sounds or words.

The doctor will record the medical history — especially if the stuttering has persisted for over six months in a child who is more than five years old, or when it occurs more frequently. If the facial and upper body muscles become taut as well, and if it affects the child’s schoolwork, or abilities, then this is also considered while arriving at a diagnosis. If stammering causes emotional problems, such as apprehension about situations that are, otherwise, routine or normal, then the doctor must be informed about this.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Has to exert himself for long before he can utter a word	Stramonium
Difficult to say certain words	Lachesis
Difficult to talk quickly	Lac Caninum
First few words are difficult, then smooth speech	Spigelia
First few words are normal, then speech collapses	Cicuta

The last words of a sentence are difficult	Lycopodium
Pitch is higher with each word	Hyocyamus
Single words seem suitable	Euphrasia

Associated with

Asthma	Causticum
Dentition	Stramonium
Typhoid	Lycopodium

Case study

Ankit (18) felt awkward because he used to stammer. He was embarrassed to go to college where he was ridiculed. He was on the verge of a nervous breakdown and was contemplating dropping out of college. He had almost become a recluse. His best friend brought him to us with great hopes. On detailed case-taking, we found that Ankit, while speaking, would try for long to utter a word. It was obvious that he was making a great effort to begin a sentence. While doing so, his face would distort slightly. When we analysed his behaviour, we found that Ankit started stammering after a frightful episode, while watching a horror movie when he was 10 years old. Taking into consideration the probable cause for his stammering was this fright, we prescribed *Stramonium*. He showed quick, good progress. This was followed by speech therapy, along with counselling. In a span of eight months, we noticed a marked reduction in his stammering. It did not take long for him, thereafter, to face the world, as it were, with his new-found confidence.

Self-Help

- Don't try to rush through words. Slow down your speech; this will help you to pace your words better
- If a child stammers, don't interrupt. Be patient. Listen calmly and let him complete the sentence slowly
- Maintain eye contact with the child when he is speaking. Don't look elsewhere, or this may give the child the wrong impression that you are not interested

- Don't ask him to repeat certain words when he trips over words. Repeating words will bring his self-esteem down. The more relaxed the person is, the less the stutter
- Read a passage from a book aloud everyday; ask the child to do likewise.

What

No one is exempt from the manifold pressures and stresses of life. Some of us cope with stress well. Others allow stress to run riot and this creates serious trouble for them and also for others around them.

Stress is as common as the common cold. It is more than a by-product of the frenzied times we live in; it is also the catchphrase of our time.

The more successful, or unsuccessful, an individual is, the more alienated he, or she, is from family, friends, and also from oneself.

In simple terms, stress is a nonspecific response to the demands that life places on us. This is how it builds up. In course of time, it may lead to frustration — an indivisible component of modern, stressful living.



Did You Know?

Stress and health are closely linked.

Stress, either rapid or continuous, can induce a variety of body-mind disorders, including mood swings and substance abuse.

How & Why

Our day-to-day life too has its allocation of frustrations: marital, financial, and workplace problems, and so on. If there was no human resilience, stresses and

frustrations would have knocked us out, or made us as dead as the dodo. The fact is our human psyche is so stunningly ‘engineered’ that some stresses are managed well, while some are yielded to, or accepted. In other words, one often begins to live with them, till one breaks down in the face of a stressful storm (Note: This is where homeopathy, a mind and body, holistic system of medicine, fills in to pre-empt stressful situations from going out of hand and also achieving therapeutic triumphs).

Frustrations may be classified as: 1. environmental, 2. personal, and, 3. conflicts. The first form is related to the physical aspect, e.g., calamities, floods, drought, communal violence, terrorism, rain playing killjoy in an exciting Twenty20 cricket match, or working under an unpleasant boss. Personal frustrations often arise due to feelings of inadequacy.



In the Grip of Anxiety

Anxiety is as old as the hills. The ability to flee (fright, or flight, response), the hallmark of anxiety states, is a primeval attribute. It highlights the need for survival and is also representative of certain strategies used to defend against anxiety.

When people fail to use defence mechanisms (to beat their nervous state in the wake of a tight situation), anxiety could pervade both the person’s daily activities and even their dreams.

This is best illustrated by the ‘blow-hot-blow-cold’, or changeable type of behaviour, along with feelings of inferiority. In classical terms, this is represented by the symptom-picture of one wanting to do something that the other forbids. The homeopathic remedy, *Anacardium Orientale*, illustrates the ‘homeopathicity’ of the case in point. More so, if the similarity extends further with the individual, in question, having delineated the positive and negative facets of a given job, project or mission.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There may not be a single healthy person who is exempt from stress. All of us tend to accumulate stressful feelings, sometimes for no apparent reason.

It is established that our behavioural and physical patterns in stressful situations,

or our response to stressors, may be divided, as pioneering stress researcher Hans Selye suggested, into three stages:

- An initial period of alarm (physiological arousal)
- A longer phase of resistance (irritability, impatience, anger, and fatigue)
- A final stage of exhaustion (physical and emotional imbalance, maladjustment, withdrawal, illness, or disease, and, in extreme cases, death).

Most individuals, under constant stress, often become either defensive or task-oriented. This can be evaluated by your doctor in a clinic consultation, by:

- Identifying the source of stress and anxiety
- Choosing an appropriate medicinal course of action for reducing the distress
- Implementing the course of action, with counselling, stress management measures, relaxation techniques and behavioural modification
- Follow-up; evaluating the outcome of treatment.

It is evidenced that most individuals take comfort in the mind's internal 'firewall' system. This is called repression. It is the process of excluding thoughts of pain, shame, or guilt. The homeopathic remedy that comes close to treat this is *Natrum Muriaticum*. In like manner, some people under stress, fantasise or withdraw into an imaginary world (e.g., *Belladonna*), or become aloof, or at odds with oneself (e.g., *Phosphorus*). Similarly, some people may also reach a state of regression and return to a previous state of calm (e.g., *Hydrocyanic Acid*).

There are other defence mechanisms too that regulate stress.

- For instance, there may be an indirect expression of the sexual urge, leading to lewd behaviour (e.g., *Platina Metallicum* and *Hyoscyamus Niger*)

- Replacement of overt, puritanical behaviour (e.g., *Stramonium*), or sheer rationalisation, with logic holding the fort, as it were (e.g., *Veratrum Album*)
- Isolation, where persons voluntarily isolate themselves (e.g., *Natrum Carbonicum*)
- Indulge in ritualistic cleaning of hands, every now and then, a classical symptom of OCD (e.g., *Syphilinum*).

Anxiety

Anxiety is characterised by a host of symptoms, most notably, fear, trepidation, inattention, palpitation, respiratory distress, sweating, giddiness and apprehension of death. In certain instances, the cause of anxiety may be early childhood experiences, or situations, especially in school — for instance, being castigated by stern teachers, or bullied by classmates (e.g., *Staphysagria*). It is not uncommon for a troubled child to show fear, generalised anxiety, or tending to ‘hold back’ certain behaviours, due to past events. The fact is that anti-anxiety defence mechanisms (such as donning the role of a victim) evoke sympathy and affection, not to speak of social attention. It often rewards the anxious individual for playing the nervous role.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Bad news	Calcarea Carb
Broken love affair	Ignatia
Business failure	Ambra Grisea
Business worries	Nux Vomica
Death of near or dear ones	Natrum Mur
Examination	Gelsemium
Financial loss	Rhus Tox
Good news	Coffea
Homesickness	Acid Phos

In men, from domination	Lycopodium
In women, from domination	Sepia
Insult	Staphysagria
Jealousy	Lachesis
Money matters	Bryonia
Overwork	Picric Acid
Post-delivery	Pulsatilla
Stage-fright	Silicea
Associated with	
Annoyance; irritability	Nux Vomica
Anxiety	Argentum Nit
Shock	Aconite
Silence	Natrum Mur
Weeping	Pulsatilla
Specific remedy	Kali Phos 6x, 4-5 tablets, two hourly, till symptoms subside.

Case study

Nagesh (31), an extremely stressed out corporate executive, suffered from excessive sweating of palms and feet — his sweat would drip like a hydrant. Most people who suffer from stress and anxiety may be apprehensive, or restless, and more than lacking in self-confidence. Excessive sweating often creates a stigma — with one's damp hands, feet, and armpits. It makes the sweaty individual freeze before a handshake, or feel uncomfortable at the workplace, or during social interactions. Nagesh was no exception. He was prescribed *Hydrofluoric Acid*, because he felt better in cool, open air, or in an air-conditioned environment, or under the ceiling fan. He says that he had never felt better before, but now, thanks to his relatively dry, confident hands, and reduced stress levels following homeopathic treatment, he is much happier.

Self-Help

- Focus your attention fully on another activity when stressed or anxious, something you like doing

- Try relaxation techniques; find the one that suits your needs best
- Put on some music, and sing and dance along
- Meditate or pray, help others, spend time with others, speak to, or visit friends
- Physical exercise — walk, swim, go to the gym, cycle, or take the stairs instead of the lift
- Engage in a relaxing hobby; it must be a non-competitive activity and enjoyable
- Limit your responsibilities. It's all right to say no.

84 sunstroke

What

Sunstroke occurs when our body's thermostat — the mechanism that regulates our response and adaptation to temperature — cannot keep our body cool.



Did You Know?

Prolonged exposure to temperatures in excess of 90°F, or humidity in excess of 65 per cent, present the utmost risk of sunstroke.

Young children and the elderly are at amplified risk.

How & Why

Sunstroke affects people in hot areas, or the tropics, and arid regions, especially when the air does not circulate well. In most instances, the source of the problem is the scorching sun. When sweating cannot cool our body, our body temperature goes into a spin. When exposure to excessive heat intensifies, it leads to heat illness and heat collapse.

- Sunstroke is caused by a breakdown in our body's cooling system. When this occurs, our body is besieged by excess heat. This is the stage when sunstroke occurs
- Sunstroke may also be influenced by certain underlying medical conditions, medications, physical attributes and age

- Dehydration, or loss of water, can, likewise, affect the skin's ability to cool the body efficiently. This can slowly overload our system, including the heart's pumping ability and lead to heat-related illnesses.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms are generally sudden. These include an abrupt headache, vertigo, weakness, or fainting. Since your body's thermostat is faulty, you will now only sweat a little, or not at all. The skin is hot and dry. Body temperature may be around 102°F, or higher. In severe instances, there may be repeated vomiting. In extreme cases, coma may be a possibility.

- Most often, your doctor will diagnose the problem on the basis of the external symptoms alone
- Your doctor may use a rectal thermometer to get the best measure of your body's core temperature
- He/she will record your blood pressure and take a blood or urine sample for laboratory tests. These tests are performed to rule out other conditions — irregular heartbeat, a heart attack, a fever-causing infection, fluid loss related to medications, or drug (for example, cocaine) overdose. These conditions can also imitate sunstroke — with symptoms such as elevated blood pressure and increased body temperature.

Self-diagnosis and self-treatment are not recommended.

Associated with	Medicine
Cramps in legs	Cuprum Met
Dullness, dizziness, drowsiness	Gelsemium
Headache (hammering type)	Natrum Mur
Intense fear	Aconite
Nausea, vomiting, restlessness	Arsenic Alb
Throbbing headache	Belladonna
	Glonoine 30c
Specific remedy	(under medical supervision)

Case study

Dilip (35), a traffic policeman, was brought to us by his colleagues with symptoms of acute sunstroke. He was performing his regular duties at the traffic junction opposite our clinic, that sunny and humid afternoon, when he suddenly fell down. When he recovered, he was confused and dizzy. He also had a severe, throbbing headache. Based on the causation and his peculiar, confused feeling, we gave him *Glonoine*. Within a few hours after resting, Dilip was back on his feet. Since then, he does not forget to keep some *Glonoine* pills in his pocket and take them as and when required.

Self-Help

- Drink plenty of fluids; keep the body well-hydrated and refill fluids at least every 20-25 minutes, even if you are not thirsty
- Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic drinks; these act as diuretics and dehydrate the body
- Avoid exposure to excessive heat. Stay in shaded, cool, or air-conditioned areas whenever possible
- Schedule your activities to avoid being outside during the hottest times of the day (from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm)
- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, light-coloured clothing. Wear a hat that shades your face, neck, and ears, especially when you are outside in the sun
- Avoid demanding, stressful activity in warm climates. Exercise outside, if you want to, but preferably during the early morning hours, which is the coolest part of the day
- Consult your doctor the moment you sense or feel the first symptoms of sunstroke.

What

A stye is an inflammatory disorder of the oil glands of the eyelids.

How & Why

All age-groups are affected by styes. Males and females are equally affected.

Styes are caused by a bacterial infection of the oil glands that provide lubrication to the eyes and eyelashes. Poor eye hygiene, rubbing the eyes aggressively, and lack of sleep can also trigger styes.



Did You Know?

People with high lipid profiles, diabetes and seborrhea are more likely to develop styes.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- To begin with, there may be pain and tenderness of the eyelids; this may be followed by generalised swelling of the eyelids. Within a couple of days, the swelling localises to a small bump on the eyelid, which hurts when touched
- There may be a discharge from the affected eye, a gritty sensation, crusting of margins of the eyelids, excessive tears, increased sensitivity to light and

discomfort while blinking. All these symptoms last for about 7-14 days; with proper treatment, the swelling subsides completely.

A doctor can easily identify a sty; no special tests are required for diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left eyelid	Hypericum
Right eyelid	Natrum Mur
Inner canthi	Natrum Mur
Outer canthi	Lycopodium
Upper lid	Pulsatilla
Lower lid	Phosphorus
Associated with	
Induration	Staphysagria
Recurrent	Sulphur
Scaly styes	Graphites
Chalazion (hardened sty) Specific remedy	Calcarea Pic 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside

Self-Help

- Apply warm compresses 4-6 times for 15 minutes daily — this will help drain the pus
- Scrub the eyelids lightly with tap water to help with drainage. Close your eyes as you scrub
- Do not squeeze or puncture the sty; this can lead to serious infections
- Avoid eye make-up; this can cause irritation or infection
- Don't use your contact lens because the sty may cause infections that can spread to your cornea.

What

Swine flu is a respiratory illness caused by the H1N1 influenza A virus.



Did You Know?

When swine flu is not adequately treated, it can lead to complications such as respiratory distress, pneumonia and asthma. This can sometimes be fatal

How & Why

- Swine flu is a global epidemic. It often affects children under age two, and adults who are 65 years and older
- Pregnant ladies are also at risk, so are others with seizure disorders, spinal cord injuries, lung disease, asthma, heart disease, diabetes, kidney, or liver disorders, aside from people with immune-compromised conditions like AIDS.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms include fever, cough, shortness of breath, and fatigue. Less frequently, there may be chills, muscle aches, runny nose, sore throat and headache.

- Your doctor will diagnose swine flu on being informed of your medical history and a physical examination
- Further tests in the form of H1N1 swab test and chest X-ray will help establish the diagnosis. The turnaround time for the H1N1 test is 36 hours.

Healing with Homeopathy

Associated with	Medicine
Acrid nasal discharge and bland colds	Allium cepa
Dullness, dizziness, drowsiness	Gelsemium
Dreariness and depression	Sticta P
Offensive discharges	Baptisia
Pulse rate out of proportion with temperature	Pyrogen
Restively tired-out — this is out of proportion with fever	Arsenic Alb
Severe bone pains	Eupatorium Perf
Severe bouts of sneezing	Sabadilla
Severe or sore bruised feeling, ‘as if beaten’	Arnica
Thirst for water	
Likes large quantities, at large intervals	Bryonia
No thirst	Gelsemium
Sips water at short intervals	Arsenic Alb
Tongue indications	
Brown coating of tongue	Baptisia
Clean, smooth — as if varnished	Pyrogen
Dry, coated tongue	Bryonia
Red triangular tip	Rhus Tox
Specific remedies	
For early stages of swine flu	Oscillococcinum
Preventative	Influenzinum

Self-Help

- Use Dr Batra’s® Handwash to cleanse your hands. Wash for at least 25-30

seconds; rinse with running water

- Try to get at least 7-8 hours of good sleep, every night, to keep your immune system in top flu-fighting gear
- Drink 10-12 glasses of water, each day, to flush out toxins from your system
- Maintain good moisture and mucous secretion in your sinuses — this will help in drainage
- Keeping your body strong, well-nourished, and always ready-to-fight infection is important in flu prevention
- Act calmly. Don't panic
- Moderate exercise boosts your immune system by increasing circulation and also oxygenation in the body. For example, a brisk walk for 30 minutes, 4-5 times a week, will boost your immunity like no other activity
- Flu virus spreads when an affected individual coughs or sneezes. As infected particles get scattered in the air and 'disembark' on someone else's nose, the result is obvious. If you have to be around someone who is ill, try to stay a few feet away from them; steer clear of physical contact
- Consult your doctor, if you have cough and fever. Follow his/her instructions; and, take medicines as prescribed
- Avoid unnecessary visits, or trips, and crowded places, especially railway stations, shopping malls and theatre complexes.

What

Tinnitus is ringing, swishing, or any other type of noise that originates in the ear or head. In most instances, tinnitus may not be a serious problem. It is an annoyance, at best, that slowly resolves. However, in certain instances, it may be a symptom of an underlying problem.



Did You Know?

Men show a significantly higher rate of tinnitus when compared to females.

The incidence of tinnitus seems to be consistently high from age 40 onwards.

How & Why

- About 35 per cent of the global population suffers from tinnitus. In almost all cases, the problem is subjective — only the individual hears the clatter
- Tinnitus can affect the outer ear, the middle ear and the inner ear. Sometimes, the noise in the ear may be a normal phenomenon. When you go into a soundproof area or office where the normal outside noise is reduced, you may become more receptive to normal sounds
- Tinnitus may sometimes emanate due to a problem in the brain, or wax or foreign body in the external ear that may obliterate background sounds. When this happens, one becomes more aware of the sounds in their own head

- Other causes include fluid retention in the ear, or infection, or disease of the middle ear bones and the ear drum. Some medications, like aspirin, or disorders of the inner ear (Meniere's disease) can cause tinnitus. Likewise, any damage to the nerves in the inner ear, or old age, may trigger tinnitus.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Sound or noise in the ear could be constant, irregular or pulsating, or synchronous with your heartbeat. Or, there may be hearing loss, or loss of balance with vertigo.

- Your doctor will look into your medical history and conduct a series of tests to find out the cause. Your doctor may also order a hearing test (audiogram)
- Other tests, such as the auditory brain stem response (ABR), a computerised test of the hearing nerves and brain pathways, computerised tomography scan (CT scan) or, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI scan) may be ordered to rule out a tumour
- Tumours are uncommon, but tests may sometimes be necessary in the presence of unexplained tinnitus.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left ear	Berberis Vulgaris
Right ear	Hepar Sulph
According to time	
Afternoon	Antim Crud
Evening	Pulsatilla
Morning	Natrum Sulph
Night	Silicea
Worse	
Blowing nose	Calcarea Carb
Breathing in	Iodum
Chewing	Nitric Acid

Cold drinks	Kali Carb
Coughing	Kali Mur
Headache	China
Lying down	Mag Carb
Motion	Staphysagria
Noise	Phosphorus
Open air	Tabaccum
Stooping	Mang Aceticum

Better

Boring into ear	Lachesis
Covering eyes with hands	Spigelia
Lying down	Acid Phos
Music	Aurum Met
Open air	Arsenic Alb
Sitting	Natrum Carb
Standing	Belladonna

Precipitating factors

Anxiety	Actea Spic
Excitement	Sulphur
Injury	Natrum Mur
Mental exertion	Causticum
Nervous exhaustion	Kali Phos
Quinine (anti-malarials)	China Sulph

Hormonal factors

After menses	China
Before menses	Kreosote
During menses	Petroleum
Menopause	Sanguinaria Nit

Type of sounds in the ear

Bells	Ledum Pal
Bubbling	Euphrasia
Buzzing	Argentum Nit
Chirping	Rhus Tox
Cracking	Psorinum
Creeping	Lycopodium
Drumming	Drosera
Echoes	Cicuta

Flapping	Platina
Hissing	Digitalis
Horn	Kalmia
Humming	Sepia
Music	Mercurius Sol
Pulsating	Ferrum Phos
Ringing	Aconite Nap
Roaring	Borax
Whistling	Ambra Grisea
Specific remedy	Carboneum Sulph 6c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Rahul, a 25-year-old MBA graduate and job-aspirant, came to us because he had developed roaring and ringing sounds in his ears, which began over a month ago. This was accompanied by giddiness and some hearing loss. He had visited an audiologist who diagnosed it as Meniere's disease. He was asked to live with it. Rahul was quite disturbed and depressed. He also suffered from chronic headaches. He would take aspirin frequently for his pain. Based on the roaring and ringing sounds in his ears, along with giddiness and an overdose of aspirin, we prescribed him *Salicylic Acid*. This reduced the ringing and roaring in his ears drastically.

Self-Help

- Avoid the use of cotton swabs to clean your ear. This can lead to wax impaction against your eardrum and trigger tinnitus
- Protect your hearing at work. Wear ear plugs or ear-muffs, if necessary
- Avoid exposure to loud sounds and noises, which may bring on a fresh bout of tinnitus
- Avoid nerve stimulants such as coffee and colas (caffeine) and tobacco (nicotine). Caffeine and nicotine can trigger the problem.

What

Tonsillitis is the inflammation of the tonsils, which are protective glands. The tonsils are actually a pair of sacs, made of lymphatic tissue, located at the back of the throat.



Did You Know?

Tonsillitis affects as many as 1 out of every 10 children worldwide. It affects people of all ages too, but it tends to be more common among children between ages 5 and 10, without any gender preference.

They form one of the first lines of defence in the body's immune system. They are prone to infection, especially during childhood.

When our immunity levels drop, the tonsils fall prey to infective organisms. This results in the swelling of the tonsils.

On account of tonsillitis, the affected individual experiences pain in the throat, difficulty in swallowing and fever.

How & Why

In a majority of cases, tonsillitis is caused by a virus, or bacteria. Tonsillitis can rarely be caused by a fungus or parasite.

A number of food substances can lead to tonsillitis in susceptible individuals —

e.g., allergens, such as artificial colours, flavours and preservatives, peanuts, cold foods, cold drinks, ice-cream, and sour food. Episodes of tonsillitis can also be activated by environmental changes, though the exact mechanism has not been understood yet.

Changes of weather, extremely cold climate, damp weather, and exposure to pollutants, can trigger episodes of tonsillitis, too.

There are three types of tonsillitis:

- *Acute tonsillitis*: An episode of tonsillitis of recent origin, this can last anywhere between 4-10 days. It is commonly caused by a virus or bacteria.
- *Sub-acute tonsillitis*. This type of tonsillitis is commonly caused by the bacterium *Actinomyces*; it lasts for two weeks, or more.
- *Chronic, recurrent tonsillitis*. In this, the individual may have episodes of tonsillitis repeatedly and while remaining symptom-free between episodes.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms are a sore, or painful, throat, fever, and general malaise. The tonsils may appear bright red at first; they may later be covered with a slimy, whitish coating. The glands in the neck may subsequently get enlarged. The symptoms of tonsillitis, however, vary from case to case; they may be gradual, or the onset may be sudden.

Most people feel a soreness of the throat, difficulty or pain on swallowing, fever with or without chills, headache, malaise and earache. A runny nose, cough, and hoarseness may also be seen in certain cases.

- Diagnosis of tonsillitis is easily made by the doctor based on the medical history and findings on examination, such as enlarged or swollen tonsils and pus pockets on the tonsils
- Blood tests may be done to confirm the diagnosis, though this may not be always required.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left-side	Mercurius i-r
Right-side	Lycopodium
Alternating sides	Lac Caninum
Type	
Bright red tonsils	Phytolacca
Painful	Hepar Sulph
Painless	Baptisia
Recurrent	Tuberculinum
Tonsils with pus	Silicea
Tonsils with small ulcers	Mercurius Sol
Better/worse	
Better, hot drinks	Lycopodium
Worse, empty swallowing	Belladonna
Worse, liquids	Lachesis
Worse, solids	Baryta Carb

Case study

8-year-old Shreya, the daughter of a leading physician, was suggested tonsils removal by an ENT surgeon and family friend. The child had recurring episodes of tonsils infection, every 6-7 weeks, requiring a course of antibiotics. Every cold drink or change of weather would trigger throat congestion leading to severely inflamed tonsils. The tonsils were enlarged as a result of frequent infections. The peculiarity of Shreya's tonsillitis was that the right tonsil would get affected first and then the left. Shreya was an obstinate and dominating child. She was also possessive of her toys and parents. She was often rude to her parents, but to the outside world she was meek, timid and amiable. We put her on *Lycopodium*. In a span of six months, the frequency of infections reduced significantly. Within a year's time, Shreya was free of tonsillitis.

Expert's View:

Tonsillectomy, or surgical removal of tonsils, often leads to bronchitis in

children with a family history of asthma. It can also lead to stunted growth, reticence in the classroom, and repeated absenteeism.

Self-Help

- Rest in a quiet, warm place; try to sleep
- Ensure the child drinks enough fluids, as dehydration can make them feel worse
- Gargle with warm salt water; this helps to ease the pain in throat.

What

This is tooth pain. It occurs in the teeth or surrounding areas — the gums and jaws.



Did You Know?

Nearly 1 crore people visit their dentist for toothache every year.

How & Why

There would be no one in the world who has not suffered from toothache at least once in their lifetime.

The causes may include dental cavities, worn-out enamels, exposed tooth root, cracked tooth, gum disease, dental abscess, impacted tooth and ‘wisdom tooth’. Other not-so-common causes are ear infection, sinusitis, or even heart disorders, such as angina.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- There may be a mild, manageable pain, or severe unbearable pain driving the person to despair. Different people report different sensations such as a dull ache, throbbing, or shooting pain

- The pain may radiate to other areas of the face or ears. Toothache may be continuous in nature, or may come and go, sporadically. In many cases, the pain typically worsens at night
- There is increased sensitivity to heat and cold. The gums may be swollen, red, and exude a foul-smelling discharge.

A proper oral examination by your dentist is sufficient to evaluate the cause of toothache. In addition, a dental X-ray may sometimes be required to confirm the cause of the toothache.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Bleeding gums	Carbo Veg
Coffee and alcohol	Nux Vomica
Dental caries	Kreosote
Dental filling	Arnica
Pregnancy	Chamomilla
Pus in gums	Mercurius Sol
Sour food	Antim Tart
Worse	
Chewing	Staphysagria
Cold and cold water	Silicea
Hot food or drinks	Kali Carb
Better	
Eating	Plantago
Holding ice-cold water in the mouth	Coffea
Warm food and beverages	Mag Phos
Specific remedy	Plantago Q, dip in cotton swab and apply to affected tooth, thrice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Russel (34) came to us with severe pain in his molars. When he visited his dentist, he was prescribed painkillers. The throbbing pain persisted. Six weeks later, his mother, who is one of our patients, referred Russel to us. On

examination, Russel's teeth were healthy. He attributed this pain to regular cleaning — once every six months. When we probed further, he said that the pain was shooting in nature. Based on the character of pain, we felt it was neuralgic in origin. We gave Russel *Hypericum*. His charming smile was quickly back on his face.

Self-Help

- Rinse your affected tooth with warm salt water frequently
- Use dental floss to remove any food particles wedged between your teeth
- When in pain, avoid chewing; this can stimulate and hurt your tooth more. Eat soft foods and chew on the side of your mouth opposite to the tooth that hurts
- Spicy or extremely hot or cold food is a big no-no; it will irritate and worsen your pain.

What

A tremor is an unintentional, rhythmical, quivering movement. It usually affects the hands, lower arms and head.

A tremor is often a symptom of some neurological illness, e.g., Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis, or disorders of the cerebellum. Some people inherit this condition from a parent who has tremors, or it may emerge as a result of side-effects of certain drugs, or underlying disease.



Did You Know?

Tremors increase with advancing age — from 18-20 per cent in 50-60 year olds to 50-52 per cent in people aged 80-90.

Tremors affect men and women equally.

Why & How

A tremor emerges when the muscles relax and contract repetitively. Most of us experience a tremor at some time, because of fear or excitement. However, if the cause is a neurological illness or disease, there can be uncontrollable tremors.

Other causes may include stroke, or head injury, hereditary disorders in which excess copper accumulates in the tissues, an over-active thyroid gland and liver disease.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

You may notice a tremor when you write or eat. Or, when you are under stress or pressure.

Tremors are defined according to the type of shaking, how it occurs, and how severe it is.

A tremor that gets worse when the person is moving is called an *intentional tremor*. Intentional tremors denote a problem in the cerebellum, the part of the brain responsible for movement, balance and co-ordination. This may be an outcome of multiple sclerosis, stroke, or alcoholism.

Essential tremors begin in early adulthood; they have no known cause or underlying disease. When these tremors affect the elderly, they are called senile tremors. Studies have shown that essential tremors are inherited in over 50 per cent of cases. Children of parents with essential tremors have a 50 per cent chance of having this condition.

Tremors that occur when the muscles are at rest may occur in Parkinson's disease. They are called *resting tremors*.

Intentional tremors are slower types of tremors; they usually increase with activity. Essential tremors are quick, small movements, affecting the head and hands, and other muscles — the hands and arms do not shake when they are at rest. Essential tremors are mild; they can cause discomfiture because they impinge on the person's ability to write, eat, and carry out finer skills. Essential tremors tend to affect most when one is stressed, tired, or anxious. Caffeine and other stimulants don't reduce, but heighten the tremor.

Essential tremors can also cause the voice to tremble when the vocal cords are affected.

- Your doctor will first look into your medical history and perform a physical examination
- There is no specific test for essential tremor — it is easily diagnosed by examination and medical history

- When tremors are suspected to be an outcome of an underlying condition, your doctor may order certain blood tests, including diagnostic tests like computed tomography (CT scan), or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), to analyse brain function.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Eyelids	Veratrum Alb
Feet	Zincum Met
Hands	Mercurius Sol
Knees	Ruta
Legs	Argentum Nit
Tongue	Belladonna
Worse by	
Alcohol	Nux Vomica
Before menses	Natrum Mur
During menses	Hyocyamus
Emotions	Zincum Met
Holding objects	Mercurius Sol
Motion	Rhus Tox
Threading a needle	Silicea
Touch	Agaricus M
Walking	Ledum Pal
Writing	Causticum
Precipitating factors	
Anger	Staphysagria
Anxiety	Arsenic Alb
Bad news	Plumbum Met
Caressing	Capsicum
Menopause	Kali Brom

Case study

R. Krishnan (60), a retired banker, was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. What marked his illness was the classical rigidity of muscles and also trembling of his hands and legs. He suffered from a shuffling gait too, due to which he was

always afraid of falling. He was on conventional medications, but they provided him little relief. On detailed case-taking, we found that Krishnan was a disciplinarian, a dominating type of person, who strongly believed in tradition. We gave him *Aurum Metallicum*. Within a few weeks following treatment, he was able to notice improvement in his gait and rigidity. We told him that his trembling would not ease totally, but he was happy with the tangible progress he made with homeopathic treatment.

Self-Help

- Avoid caffeine or other stimulants like alcohol, because it increases your adrenaline levels and heightens your tremors
- Stress tends to make tremors worse; a relaxed state often improves them
- Spare some time for walking, jogging, swimming or biking — they are great stress relievers
- Fatigue can intensify tremors. Try to get at least 7-8 hours of good, relaxed sleep, every night.

91 ulcerative colitis

What

Ulcerative colitis is an inflammatory bowel disease. It causes your colon, a part of your large intestine, to become inflamed and swollen.

This state can persist for a few weeks to several months.



Did You Know?

The incidence of ulcerative colitis is higher in people aged 15-25 years and 55-65 years.

The prevalence rate, as statistics suggests, is 35-100 per 1,00,000 people.

Why & How

Ulcerative colitis can affect any age group; however, the illness seems to affect 30 per cent more females than males. The exact cause is not known.

Some researchers suggest that ulcerative colitis is an outcome of our body's over-stated response to normal bacteria in the gut. The condition, however, seems to suggest a familial inheritance.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Ulcerative colitis occurs in the form of flare-ups. This is often sudden and severe, accompanied by vicious, bloody diarrhoea, high fever, abdominal pain

and peritonitis, or inflammation of the lining of the abdominal cavity — a very serious condition requiring immediate hospitalisation.

There may also be some pressure to have a bowel movement, aside from mild cramps in the lower abdomen, showing blood and mucous in stools. These flare-ups are sometimes notorious; they can last for days, or weeks on end, and also recur at any time.

There may be a strong ‘never-get-done’ feeling that you need to have a bowel movement too, but cannot. This is called tenesmus, or an ineffectual urge for stools.

The individual’s symptoms and a stool examination often lead the doctor to suspect ulcerative colitis.

- A sigmoidoscopy, an examination of the sigmoid colon using a flexible viewing tube, confirms the disorder
- Blood tests may not be useful, although they may reveal that the person has anaemia, excess white blood cells, low protein and increased erythrocyte sedimentation rate (ESR) — this may be indicative of major inflammation
- X-ray of the abdomen may show the extent of the disorder. Barium enema X-ray studies and colonoscopy are not usually considered during the active stages of the disorder
- When it comes to evaluation of the extent of the disorder, the entire large intestine is usually analysed by colonoscopy.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Cramps, not relieved by stools	Merc Cor
Cramps, relieved by stools	Nux Vomica
‘Never get done feeling’ after passing stools	Mercurius Sol
Pain, better by bending backwards	Dioscorea
Pain, better by bending forwards	Colocynth

Case study 1

Lakshmi (45) was suffering from ulcerative colitis for three years. She had frequent, semi-solid stools, mixed with blood, about 10-15 times a day. She complained of intense fatigue, and did not feel active, because of her prolonged illness. She also experienced a ‘cutting type’ of pain in her abdomen, while passing stools. This did not subside even after passing stools. She had lost 20 kg during this time. Following an in-depth case-analysis, she was given *Mercurius Corrosivus*, based on her bloody stools and cutting pain. Slowly and steadily, her pains and bleeding during stools reduced, as also her frequency of passing stools. A few weeks later, her stools were well formed, her weakness and appetite improved; she felt more energetic. She could now taper down and also give up her allopathic medications — something she never thought of doing earlier, without risking a relapse of her symptoms.

Case study 2

Padmakar (32) complained of bloody stools and pain in the abdomen. He would pass stools 8-10 times daily, with mucous and blood. His complaints would worsen when he would have spicy or fried food, especially in the morning. Colonoscopy had confirmed the diagnosis. During case-analysis, Padmakar revealed that he was under extreme stress at his workplace and his boss was anything but sensitive. Padmakar had suppressed his anger and not expressed his emotions out of fear of losing his job. He was put on *Staphysagria*, based on his symptoms of hurt and its subsequent suppression. He reported a month later saying that the frequency of stools had reduced; and, the stools were better formed than before. Slowly, the mucous in his stools reduced, as did the bleeding.

Expert's View:

It is rightly said that the stomach is the ‘sounding board of human emotions’. There is often a hidden emotional problem behind most tummy disorders. When such emotional problems are suppressed, they often present symptoms. In

Padmakar's case, suppressed anger was treated with *Staphysagria*, which helped him get rid of his chronic ulcerative colitis problem too.

Self-Help

- Avoid foods or beverages that trigger symptoms of indigestion
- Wash vessels, vegetables and fruits with filtered water — especially if you have diarrhoea. Good food hygiene is important to prevent a relapse
- Hydrate well; drink 10-12 glasses of water every day. This will help prevent dehydration
- Get plenty of rest; follow-up with your doctor on a regular basis.

What

Urticaria, also known as hives, is an allergic reaction on the skin.



Did You Know?

About 15 per cent of the world population would have experienced urticaria at some point in their lives.

In most cases, the allergic reaction goes away within a few weeks or less; sometimes, it may turn chronic.

A whopping 80 per cent of chronic cases are idiopathic, which means their cause is not apparent or known.

Why & How

There are many triggers for urticaria — various foods (e.g., fish, crab, oyster, shell fish, prawn, milk, cheese, egg, and nuts), pollen, pet dander, fungi, house-dust and certain drugs, like aspirin.

Insect stings, pressure, certain infections, exposure to the sun, or extremely cold climate and physical exertion can also cause urticaria.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Urticaria rashes can occur anywhere on the body — the trunk, arms, legs, and

face. They may have a tendency to change locations — disappearing from one place and reappearing in another in a matter of hours. Urticaria may be acute or chronic. In either case, the earlier the treatment is instituted, the better is the outcome.

The rashes may also come and go with no apparent trigger at times. The itching may be accompanied by burning and stinging; it may also be so intense that it disturbs work and sleep.

- Your medical history and a thorough examination by the doctor are usually sufficient to diagnose urticaria — no special tests are usually required
- However, to detect the cause of urticaria, your doctor may ask you to get certain allergy tests done to find out what you are allergic to.

Healing with Homeopathy

In a study conducted on 60 Japanese patients with chronic skin diseases, including urticaria as well as psoriasis, atopic dermatitis, and severe acne, the holistic approach used in homeopathy was found to be a useful strategy. A total of 88.03 per cent of patients reported over 50 per cent improvement in this study. The results were based on patient-reported and clinically-observed effects of individualised homeopathic treatment. It was concluded that individualised homeopathic treatment can provoke a good response in patients with chronic skin disease.

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Emotions	Kali Brom
Excessive exertion	Natrum Mur
Gastric derangements	Pulsatilla
Shell fish	Camphor
Suppressed malaria	Elaterium
Associated with	
Constipation	Copaiva
Diarrhoea	Bovista
Oedema	Vespa
Rheumatism	Urtica Urens

Worse	
Bathing	Bovista
Cold	Rhus Tox
During periods	Dulcamara
Fruits	Pulsatilla
Menopause	Ustilago
Night	Arsenic Alb
Open air	Sepia
Better	
Cold water	Apis
Hot drinks	Chloral
Open air	Calcarea Carb
Warm drinks	Arsenic Alb

Case study

Aditi Aryan, a 24-year-old electronic engineer and music buff, got no relief from her chronic urticaria with every treatment she tried. She was prone to urticaria, now and then, since she was 10 — it had disappeared on its own for some time in between only to return with a vengeance. For over a year now, she would develop rashes every single day. Large, swollen, raised wheals with intense redness, itching, and burning would erupt all over her body. Her condition would worsen when she ate sour food and cheese. She had a lot of stress at home. Her parents did not get along well; frequent fights between them disturbed her immensely. Ever since we put her on *Apis Mellifica*, she stopped getting urticarial rashes and itching.

Self-Help

- For relief from burning and itching, apply cool compresses or wet cloth over the affected area
- As far as possible, stay in a cool environment
- Wear cotton garments and preferably loose-fitting clothes

- Avoid known triggers such as food additives, alcohol, medications, temperature extremes and stress — they can trigger an attack
- Keep a diary of your activities to help your doctor identify triggers
- Avoid foods that contain high levels of natural histamine such as eggplant and spinach. Food additives such as azo dyes and preservatives may lead to the release of histamine, a substance in the body that is released during an allergic reaction.

uterine fibroids

What

Fibroids are benign, or non-cancerous, tumours that grow within or outside the wall of the uterus, or the womb. Fibroids are common in women in the child-bearing age group.



Did You Know?

20-40 per cent of women have fibroids, but not everyone presents with symptoms.

Why & How

- Heredity is one of the commonest causes. The genesis is the female hormones, oestrogen and progesterone, that manipulate the development of fibroids
- It is also surmised that this is one major reason why fibroids shrink after menopause, as the body stops manufacturing these hormones
- Uterine fibroids are commonly seen in overweight, dark-skinned women. Besides, they are common in women, who have difficulty in conceiving.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Symptoms may include heavy menstrual bleeding and heaviness in the pelvic

region or pain during sex. There may also be increased urine output with constipation. This may be accompanied by pain in legs and back. Uterine fibroids may also be associated with infertility, or miscarriage.

If any of the above classical symptoms are present, it is best to speak to your gynaecologist.

- Large fibroids are often detected during a medical examination; however, small fibroids may be missed
- The best thing to do is an ultrasonography of the pelvis — this can help your doctor confirm the diagnosis. Imaging tests are seldom required.

Self-diagnosis is not recommended.

Healing with Homeopathy

Indications	Medicine
Bleeding with aching in the back	Thlaspi
Uterine bleeding with a sensation as though the hips and back were falling to pieces	Trillium P
Fibroids with intense burning pains and profuse bleeding	Lapis Alba
Uterine fibroids with a bearing down sensation	Fraxinus Americana
Specific remedy	Aurum Mur
Does away with surgery in small fibroids	Natronatum 6c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, for a few months.

Self-Help

- To slow down heavy menstrual bleeding caused by fibroids, lie down, and elevate your feet above the level of your heart
- Put hot compresses on your lower abdomen for 15-20 minutes, 3-4 times a day; this will help ease the pain.

urinary tract infection

What

Urinary tract infection (UTI) is a collective group of inflammatory disorders involving the urethra, bladder, or kidneys.

Urine is generally germ-free, which means it doesn't contain any bacteria or infectious organisms. However, infectious organisms can sometimes get into the urinary tract and cause infections.



Did You Know?

Most women — especially girls — develop at least one or two UTIs during their lifetime.

Some men tend to get UTIs after age 50, because of an enlarged prostate gland.

Why & How

- Bacteria, viruses, fungi, or some types of parasites are to blame for UTI
- Cystitis (bladder infection) is the most common form of UTI. Likewise, kidney infections are called pyelonephritis; those of the urethra are called urethritis
- Urinary tract infections are usually not contagious. However, when bacteria in the vagina get pushed into the urethra during sexual intercourse, infections are a possibility

- In addition, infections may also be a result of some annoyance in your genital area — from contraceptives, wearing tight clothing and cosmetics. More than 90 per cent of cystitis is caused by *E. coli* bacteria.

Women who are sexually active tend to have more UTIs because during sexual intercourse the bacteria can be pushed into the urethra. Following menopause, UTIs may be more common because the tissues of the vagina, urethra and the base of the bladder become thin and fragile due to loss of oestrogen.

Other hazards include anything that blocks the flow of urine, such as an enlarged prostate or kidney stones. Diabetes, or the prolonged use of bladder catheters, may cause recurrent UTIs. When ignored, UTIs may become more than serious and damage your kidneys permanently.

Children and the elderly are at the greatest risk of kidney damage, because their symptoms are often disregarded, or mistaken, for other conditions. Pregnant women, with UTI, may have an increased risk of delivering low birth weight or premature babies.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Not everyone exhibits symptoms, but some do
- Symptoms include a strong, constant urge to urinate, although small quantities are passed each time, a burning sensation while urinating, pain in abdomen, or lower back, sometimes with blood in the urine
- The urine may have a cloudy appearance with a strong smell. Other symptoms may include fever, chills, nausea, a frequent need to urinate, or bloody urine
- Self-diagnosis is not recommended. If you have any symptoms of urinary infection, speak to your doctor as soon as possible. When suitably treated, UTIs seldom lead to complications.

Your doctor will look at your medical history, ask about your symptoms, and perform a physical exam that includes pressing on your abdomen to check for

tenderness or sensitivity. A urine sample is sent to the laboratory to determine if bacteria are present in your urine.

When there is a history of repeated infections, your doctor may ask for an ultrasound study of your abdomen, intravenous pyelography (IVP), which is an X-ray of the urinary tract, or cystoscopy, which involves inserting a tube into the urethra for a close view of the urethra and bladder.

In men, a prostate exam to check for any tenderness or enlargement is performed. Your doctor will also check for and take a sample of any discharge from the penis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type of pain	Medicine
Burning	Apis Mel
Cutting	Terebinth
Smarting	Borax
Precipitating factors	
After use of catheter	Mag Phos
Honeymoon cystitis	Staphysagria
Sexually transmitted disease	Clematis
Nature of urine	
Highly coloured	Apis Mel
Jelly-like, shreddy	Cantharis
Red sediment	Sepia
Thick mucous with bright red sediment	Berberis Vulgaris
Turbid, offensive	Chimaphila Umbellata
Specific remedy	Cantharis 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily till symptoms disappear

Case study

Nandini (35), a bank employee, approached us with recurrent episodes of urinary tract infection. Since her job involved long, continuous hours at the cash counter, she was unable to relieve herself — this led to recurrent infections. We put her on *Cantharis*, which is almost a specific for urinary tract infections. Nandini was

comfortably back in her cashier's chair, within a few days.

Expert's View:

UTI has become a professional woman's woe, where one who is busy cannot allocate a few minutes from her busy schedule to answer nature's call. It is important to educate women about the possible hazards of postponing urination — this can range from recurrent UTIs to renal failure (in rare instances). Homeopathy comes to the working woman's rescue by providing an armamentarium of natural remedies that not only takes care of acute and long-standing UTIs, but also prevents recurrences.

Self-Help

- Drink plenty of liquids, especially water to flush out the bacteria
- Urinate frequently and avoid retaining urine for a long time after you feel the urge to void
- Wipe from front to back after a bowel movement to prevent bacteria in the anal region from spreading to the vagina and urethra
- Wash the skin around the vagina and anus daily; empty your bladder as soon as possible after intercourse, and drink a full glass of water to help flush out bacteria
- Avoid using deodorant sprays or feminine products such as douches in the genital area — this can irritate the urethra
- Wear cotton undergarments.

95 varicose veins

What

When veins become unusually thick, full of ‘twists and turns’, or engorged, they are called varicose veins.

In general, the veins in the legs and thighs have a tendency to become varicosed. The thickened, twisting, or dilated parts of the vein are called varicosities.



Did You Know?

20 per cent of men and 35 per cent of women may have varicose veins.

Varicose veins appear to be hereditary; they also become more obvious as the person ages.

Why & How

- Many experts say damaged valves within the veins are the likely cause
- Factors that precipitate varicose veins are pregnancy, because of the extra pressure on the veins in the legs caused by the weight of the growing uterus. In addition, the relaxation effects of the female hormones, oestrogen and progesterone, on the vein walls may also lead to the development of varicose veins during confinement
- Other causes include prolonged standing, overweight or distended belly, straining at stools due to constipation, retention of urine and enlarged prostate. These may sometimes lead to the formation of piles, or

haemorrhoids, which are actually varicosities located in the rectal and anal area

- Some conditions that interrupt the normal blood flow, such as surgery or trauma, may also lead to varicosities.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There may be an appearance of ‘spider veins’ in the affected leg, accompanied by ankle swelling, along with a brownish-blue shiny, skin discoloration near the affected veins.

A simple physical examination would be adequate for your doctor to establish the diagnosis.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Ankle	Sulphur
Feet	Ferrum Acet
Knee	Thuja
Legs	Lycopodium
Upper limbs	Ferrum Phos
Indications	
Bleeding	Hamamelis
During pregnancy	Ferrum met
Itching	Graphites
Painful	Pulsatilla
Painless	Calcarea Carb

Case study

Shankar (41) came to us with painful varicose veins in both legs. His surgeon advised him stripping of the veins, but he did not want to go undergo the procedure. He wanted to try homeopathy instead. During case-analysis, we found that Shankar was an extrovert who would mix with everyone, but was quite curt and staid when it came to his family. He also felt a peculiar sensation

“as if hot vapours were coming out from the pores of his legs.” Based on this peculiar symptom and his animated, extroverted disposition outside of his home, we gave him *Fluoric Acid*. This relieved him of his painful varicose veins.

Self-Help

- Maintain a healthy weight; this will help reduce the pressure on the veins in your legs
- If you have to stand for long periods, shift your weight from one leg to the other, every now and then
- Rest with your feet raised (above the level of your heart)
- Consider wearing support stockings. These help to relieve aching and swelling
- Avoid wearing tight clothes around your waist
- Quit smoking. Smoking causes the blood vessels to shrink; it also affects blood circulation.

What

Vertigo, or dizziness, is a sensation of revolving or spinning. It is often associated with a loss of balance or a nauseated feeling.



Did You Know?

Vertigo is essentially caused by a disturbance in the balancing system of the brain.

It may sometimes be suggestive of an underlying disease.

Why & How

- Most of us feel giddy at some point, or the other. Vertigo is more common in children during adolescence
- Dizziness occurs when the body's equilibrium is disturbed
- Most often, the cause is unknown
- Dizziness may be a symptom of an infection, or underlying illness. Examples are viral infections in the inner ear, vertigo caused by a change in the head position, Meniere's disease, which affects the inner ear, fever, low blood sugar, or certain brain disorders, such as tumours, infections, or brain injury
- Other causes may include multiple sclerosis, arteriosclerosis, travel, or motion sickness, heart disease, stroke, and food allergies.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

There is a sense or feeling of spinning, loss of balance, or an about-to-fall sensation. There may sometimes be fainting spells, or a temporary loss of consciousness.

In a condition called positional vertigo, individuals may experience mild dizziness when they change the position of their head too quickly. In severe cases, one may have loss of hearing, vision problems, nausea, vomiting and ringing in the ears. For those of us who have motion sickness, one may feel dizzy when travelling in a vehicle or aircraft.

- Your doctor will conduct a complete medical examination and elicit your symptoms, when they occur, and how long they last
- He will order some diagnostic tests to determine the cause of your dizziness, examine your eyes, look for abnormal movements that may suggest problems in the inner ear, or nerve links to the brain
- You may be asked to recall probable activities that result in dizziness
- A tilt table test may be done to find out what is causing a brief decline in blood flow to the brain — one of the causes of vertigo
- Tests like electronystagmogram (ENG), to test the balance mechanism of the inner ear, computed tomography (CT scan), or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) of the brain may also be used to rule out, or confirm tumours, or signs of stroke
- Hearing and blood tests may also be done, along with an angiogram, to detect blockages in the blood vessels. When infection is suspected, a sample of fluid from the ear or the sinuses may be sent for laboratory tests.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Left-side	Sulphur
Right-side	Natrum Mur
Precipitating factors	

Fragrance
Gas
Loss of fluids
Nervousness
Noise
Shock
Smoking
Sneezing
Writing

Hyoscyamus
Nux Vomica
China
Gelsemium
Theridion
Hepar Sulph
Tabacum
Senega
Kali Bich

When looking...

Around
At a distance
At moving objects
At revolving objects
At water
Downward
Out of the window
Sideways
Upward

Conium
Cuprum Met
Agaricus
Lycopodium
Ferrum Met
Kalmia
Carbo Veg
Thuja
Phosphorus

Menses

After
Before
During

Antim Tart
Lachesis
Pulsatilla

Better

Mental exertion
Lying down
Meditation
Motion
Rest
Sitting
Sleep
Standing
Stooping
Walking

Phosphorus
Lycopodium
Sepia
Coffea C
Conium
Silicea
Belladonna
Phosphorus
Arnica
Staphysagria

Worse

Ascending
Cold weather

Calcarea Carb
Sanguinaria

Descending	Borax
Hot weather	Glonoine
Lying down	Spigelia
Meditation	Acid Phos
Mental exertion	Nux Vomica
Motion	Bryonia
Rest	Lachesis
Sitting	Kali Carb
Sleep	Sepia
Standing	Sulphur
Stooping	Alumina
Walking	Natrum Mur
Wet weather	Sarsaparilla
Windy weather	Calcarea Phos
Associated with	
Deafness	Mercurius Cor
Tinnitus	China Sulph
Vomiting	Veratrum Alb

Case study

Welma (54) had never missed a day at the church since she could remember. She approached us one day with a dejected look on her face. When we elicited her case, she said that she could not go to the church nowadays, because every time she knelt down for her prayers, she would feel extremely giddy. She reported that she had had a few falls, because of her giddy spells. We investigated her case, but the tests were normal. We picked up her peculiar symptom, ‘vertigo while kneeling’, and gave her *Sepia Officinalis*. This quickly relieved her of her vertigo problem.

Self-Help

- Sleep with your head slightly elevated on two or more pillows
- While getting out of bed, get up slowly and sit on the edge of the bed for a

minute before standing

- Avoid bending down to pick up items
- Avoid extending or craning your neck, especially while reaching up to a high-shelf, or attic
- Move your head carefully and slowly during daily activities, when your neck is extended, or when your head is positioned horizontally, such as when you are lying flat
- Try to avoid lying on the affected side on bed; remember that lying on your back may bring on vertigo symptoms too
- As far as possible, avoid moving your head quickly
- Avoid sports, or similar activities based on quick changes of movement and posture
- Take care, because any activity that requires you to tip your head back could bring on vertigo — for instance, sitting on the dentist's chair, or at the hair salon.

What

Vitiligo, also called leucoderma, or white patches, is a pigmentation disorder.

In this condition, the cells that make the pigment, melanin, which gives our skin its colour, are destroyed. The outcome is white patches on the skin — and, in different parts of the body — including the mucous membranes in the inside of the mouth and nose and also the inner layer of the eyeball or retina. Vitiligo can affect the hair too, turning it white.

Did You Know?

Vitiligo affects approximately 1 in every 200 of the global population, and about 40 per cent people have an 'affected' family member.

Why & How

- Statistics suggests that vitiligo affects two per cent of the Indian population. For the most part, vitiligo develops early in life, between ages 10-30
- Most people with the disorder, about 90 per cent, develop the problem before age 40
- Vitiligo affects men and women equally. It may also run in families
- Research suggests that individuals with a family history of vitiligo, or premature greying of hair, are at increased risk. Other triggers that may

increase the threat of vitiligo are extreme stress and autoimmune disorders, such as disorders of the thyroid gland.



Hidden Dangers

Malignant melanoma (a form of cancer) may sometimes develop simultaneously with vitiligo.

Some vitiligo patients may, at times, have an increased risk of developing certain autoimmune diseases — eg, kidney disease, hyperthyroidism, hypothyroidism, diabetes and alopecia areata.

Vitiligo is caused by the loss of pigmentation in the skin, due to destruction of the pigment-forming cells known as melanocytes. Although the exact cause of vitiligo is not known, researchers suggest that people with vitiligo inherit a group of genes that make them vulnerable to loss of pigmentation. The most widely accepted view today is that depigmentation occurs because vitiligo is an autoimmune disorder — a disease in which the immune system attacks the affected individual's own body, organs and tissues.

Vitiligo may not be a life-threatening problem, but it can be extremely stressful. It is not uncommon for women with vitiligo to be discriminated against in matrimony. If vitiligo affects one after marriage, it is often a strong ground for separation.

Vitiligo affects not only one's emotional state, but also one's psychological well-being, familial or social life, career and also self-esteem. More so, when white patches appear on certain areas of the body — face, hands, arms, and feet, or genitals. Adolescents can be shattered by vitiligo; others may feel just as much humiliated, miserable, or apprehensive about how others react or look at them. People with vitiligo are more susceptible to sunburn and also skin cancer.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

The first symptom is white patches on skin. These are generally found on sun-exposed areas of the body — hands, feet, arms, face and lips. Other areas for the patches may be the armpits, groin, the mouth, eye, nostril, navel, genitals and the rectum.

The presentation may feature the following patterns.

- *Focal pattern*: This refers to depigmentation limited to one or just a few areas
- *Segmental pattern*: Depigmented patches on one side of the body
- *Generalised pattern*: Depigmentation occurs evenly on both sides of the body. This is the most common form.

A rapid or slow appearance of flat areas of normal-looking skin with complete loss of pigmentation is a classical sign. Or, there may be flat areas with no pigmentation, along with dark borders. The edges may be clearly defined, but unequal.

- Your doctor will be able to diagnose vitiligo on seeing white patches on the body — especially on sun-exposed areas — the hands, feet, arms, face and lips
- During the consultation, the doctor will ask about the patient's medical and family history; or, a history of rash, sunburn, or any other skin problem/s at the site of vitiligo, a few weeks or months before depigmentation began
- Questions that may also be asked include one's stress levels, physical illness and premature greying of hair
- Other factors that may also be looked into are autoimmune diseases and sensitivity to sunlight
- Your doctor may also take a small sample, called biopsy, of the affected skin to examine under a microscope
- If the sample shows absence of pigment-producing melanocytes, vitiligo is most likely.

Healing with Homeopathy

First choice of medicine in vitiligo

An alternative specific remedy

Predominantly left-sided patches in children who are prone to recurrent cold and cough

Local application

Hydrocotyle 6c, twice daily

Phosphorus 200, once a month.
Should not be repeated frequently.

Psoralen Con Q, 10 drops in 1 cup diluted water

Tip: Expose skin to early morning sunrays

Caution: Prolonged exposure may cause skin burn in sensitive patients

Case study 1

Although Pooja (14) had tried conventional treatments for many years, her problem persisted. Homeopathy, her parents informed us, was their only hope; their last port of call.

Pooja was suffering from extensive white patches for many years. Over a period of time, the patches had not only increased on her face and legs, but also spread to other parts of the body. Every treatment she took provided only temporary relief; in due course, her white patches would reappear again. Her physical condition embarrassed her; she became extremely reluctant to mix with her classmates; she started lagging behind in her studies too, even though she was a good student. Most importantly, she had mood swings. Sometimes sad, sometimes 'marginally' better. She would also sob and blame her past *karma* for her skin condition.

Following her case-analysis, we gave her *Pulsatilla*. Within a few months of treatment, the patches stopped spreading. With continued treatment, they receded completely. She regained her confidence, and her grades started to improve.

Expert's View:

White patches are a result of abnormal immunity and a source of depression and hopelessness for those who suffer from it. The intensity and frequency of white patches are directly proportional to the stress the person is undergoing because of them. It is a vicious cycle — stress causing the white patches, and white patches causing the stress. *Pulsatilla* is windflower. It lives up to its name, swaying in the wind, while changing its direction frequently. This characteristic is mirrored in *Pulsatilla*, the homeopathic remedy, made from windflower. In its homeopathic form, it best suits moody types who weep one moment and show comfort, even if little, the next time, whatever the nature, or type, of illness. It worked well for Pooja for her white patches, when prescribed on the basis of her characteristic mood swings.

Case study 2

45-year-old Kanchan came to us with white patches affecting her forearms and legs. She was on homeopathic treatment for a long time, but was not responding to treatment. When she visited our clinic, she complained of unusual weight gain and lethargy, which made us suspect a thyroid problem. She was advised to get her thyroid tests done — she was found to suffer from hypothyroidism. She was given the homeopathic medicine *Thyroidinum* for a period of six weeks, following which her patches started repigmenting. She not only started feeling better, but she also lost her excess weight and regained her self-confidence.

Expert's View:



Patients' Questions Answered

1. Can vitiligo be cured?

Yes, certainly. A complete cure depends on the extent of the spread. Lips and tips (of fingers, toes) take much longer to respond.

2. Can it spread?

Yes, it can, in spite of any form of treatment; on withdrawal of steroids, it may spread rapidly.

3. Will it recur?

Yes, under extreme stress; but, by and large, this is unlikely once the disorder is treated with

Almost 30 per cent of people suffering from vitiligo may have an underlying disorder like hypothyroidism and diabetes, lurking deep within. This is sometimes a barrier to treatment. So much so, the most appropriately chosen homeopathic remedies may fail to act; instead the vitiligo may progress, or expand. It is, therefore, imperative that in all cases of vitiligo — which are not responding to treatment — one should look out for clinical symptoms of thyroid illnesses, or diabetes. In Kanchan's case, low thyroid levels proved to be an obstacle to treatment. When it was corrected, she responded favourably to the prescribed medicine.

Self-Help

- *Protect your skin:* Use Dr Batra's® sunscreen (SPF 30), enriched with echinacea, a natural moisturiser, which protects the skin from the sun's harmful rays. Sunscreen helps guard the skin from sunburn and long-term damage. Sunscreen also minimises tanning — this makes the contrast between normal and depigmented skin less apparent
- *Conceal imperfections:* Cosmetics that cover the white patches on skin may improve appearance and help one feel better about oneself. These cosmetic products may be particularly effective if one has vitiligo that's limited to the exposed areas of the body. Speak to a dermatologist about cosmetics that are safe and also suit the affected individual's skin best
- *Fish and milk myths:* There is no need for dietetic restrictions in vitiligo.

98 voice disorders

What

Voice disorders, most often hoarseness, are common in professional singers, actors, radio and television personalities, politicians, salespersons, teachers and public speakers. Experts say that voice disorders may directly affect an individual's ability to hold steady employment, or even reduce the ability to perform day-to-day activities.



Did You Know?

To speak a phrase, about 100 muscles in our chest, neck, jaw, tongue and lips must work in unison.

Why & How

Voice disorders, such as hoarseness, are the bugbear of certain professionals; they are also more common in the elderly, especially people in their 80s.

Voice disorders often occur as a result of infection, overuse, or misuse of voice. Hoarseness may also be caused by irritation of, or injury to, the vocal cords. The larynx, or the voice box, is the portion of the respiratory tract containing the vocal cords. When you speak or sing, the vocal cords vibrate and produce sound. The most common cause of hoarseness is acute laryngitis, or inflammation of the vocal cords, caused by upper respiratory tract infections.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- Hoarseness characteristically gives the voice a harsh quality, while causing a change in pitch, tonal quality, or volume of the voice. The rapidity of its onset and symptoms depend on the cause of hoarseness
- In extreme cases, symptoms include breathlessness, fatigue, and vertigo
- The problem can sometimes become serious, when there is a gross inability of the affected vocal cord to open and close properly. This may allow the food we eat to get wedged in the trachea, or in the airway to the lungs.

Your doctor will ask questions about your hoarseness and other associated symptoms. This is enough for diagnosis to be made. If required, your doctor will use a fibre optic scope, or long-lighted flexible tube, to directly view the vocal cords.

When hoarseness lasts for more than 3-4 weeks, your doctor may refer you to an otolaryngologist, a specialist in the field.

Healing with Homeopathy

Precipitating factors	Medicine
Frenzy	Ignatia
Overheating	Antim Crud
Overuse of voice	Argentum Met
Worse	
Crying	Belladonna
Worse	
Medicine	
Damp weather	Carbo Veg
Evening	Rumex
Morning	Nux Vomica
Talking	Spongia T
Walking against the wind	Euphrasia
Better	
Coughing	Stannum Met
With sips of cold water	Causticum

Case study

Janhavi (19) started her singing lessons when she was seven years old. She

became proficient, thanks to her regular *riyáz*. But, she was shell-shocked when she found during one of her sessions that when she reached a high note, her voice failed her and she became hoarse. This went on for two years. She became depressed and helpless. An ENT surgeon gave her the shocking news that she had a vocal cord nodule and that she would do well not to overstrain her voice; otherwise, it could become malignant. She soon stopped speaking to her family members and friends. One of her friends suggested that she try homeopathy. When she came to us, we gave her *Arum Triphyllum* and called her for follow-up after a month. When she came, we saw an exuberant Janhavi. Not only had she regained her original voice, but straining her voice had no ‘hoarse’ effect on her melodious singing. She was enthralled when the ENT surgeon said that the vocal cord nodule had disappeared and she could pursue her passion without any problems.

Expert’s View:

Most cases of hoarseness of voice result from overuse of the vocal cords. It often originates as a politician’s disease and is one of the few things that leaves them speechless. Homeopathy can treat hoarseness successfully. However, one should bear in mind that persistent hoarseness is often an early sign of throat cancer. Medical supervision in cases of persistent hoarseness is strongly recommended.

Self-Help

- Avoid smoking. Tobacco is bad for your vocal cords
- Avoid long hours in dry, air-conditioned areas; it won’t do your throat any good
- Avoid eating late at night — your stomach acid may roll back on your vocal cords
- Use your voice with as little effort — this is a healthy practice
- Take vocal ‘naps’, avoid lengthy telephone conversations and use natural

pauses during conversation

- Always do ‘vocal warm-ups’ before singing
- Avoid shouting, screaming, loud laughter, or clearing the throat aggressively
- Move close to those with whom you are speaking, so you may avoid speaking loudly
- Take advantage of technology and amplification devices, such as a microphone while speaking
- Don’t compete with external noise, for example, at parties or social gatherings, or in the bus, train, car, or airplane
- Don’t whisper. Whispering strains your throat muscles more than you do while speaking normally.

vomiting

What

Vomiting is the vigorous expulsion of the stomach contents through the mouth. It is often preceded by nausea, or a feeling of sickness in the stomach, and marked by the urge to vomit.



Did You Know?

Vomiting can be dangerous, when the gastric or stomach contents get into the respiratory tract.

In uncommon instances, the individual may choke or suffer from aspiration pneumonia.

Why & How

- Anybody can, at any time, experience nausea and vomiting
- Nausea and vomiting arise when the vomiting centre in the brain is aroused by the following triggers — overeating, contaminated food, too much alcohol, food allergies, medication, or illness
- Some people also complain of what is called ‘motion sickness’, with nausea and vomiting, while travelling in a bus, car, ship, or airplane
- Besides this, nausea and vomiting are common in the early stages of pregnancy (morning sickness)
- Migraine headaches too cause nausea and vomiting

- Other causes include gallstones, intestinal obstruction, gastroenteritis, and inflammation of the stomach
- Nausea and vomiting may also be a result of psychological triggers as well — examples include stress and fear, or bulimia (deliberate, or induced vomiting to lose weight).

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- There are spells or bouts of vomiting. Or, nausea, including the urge to vomit. There may often be a general feeling of sickness in the stomach and a dizzy feeling
- Before vomiting actually occurs, there may be profuse salivation, along with retching. People generally feel better after vomiting.

Your doctor will conduct a physical examination and ask questions to help identify the cause of nausea and vomiting (such as overeating and contaminated food). When vomiting is frequent and severe, blood tests and urinalysis are done.

Your doctor may also ask you to undergo X-ray and ultrasound studies of the stomach, intestine, pancreas and gallbladder to ascertain the underlying cause.

Healing with Homeopathy

Colour of vomitus	Medicine
Black	Arsenic Alb
Bloody	Ipecac
Brownish	Natrum Sulph
Chocolate	Conium
Coffee ground-like	Cadmium Sulph
Grey	Aconite
Green	Chelidonium
Type	
Ineffectual	Ipecac
Painful	Veratrum Alb
Painless	Secale Cor

Taste	
Bitter	Bryonia
Salty	Iodum
Sour	Robinia
Sweetish	Kreosote
Tasteless	Antim Crud
Character	
Bad smell	Kreosote
Bile	Colchicum
Fluid	Bismuth
Food	Ferrum Met
Frothy	Mercurius Cor
Greasy	Mezereum
Mucous	Argentum Nit
Precipitating factors	
Carsickness/seasickness	Cocculus
Headache	Iris Versicolor
Joyfulness	Kali Carb
Mental exertion	Natrum Mur
Milk	Aethusa
Operation (surgery)	Nux Vomica
Panic	Sticta P
Pregnancy	Symphoricarpus Racemosus
Smoking	Tabacum
Sunstroke	Glonoine
Water	Phosphorus
Hormonal factors	
After menses	Borax
Before menses	Pulsatilla
During menses	Apocyanum

Case study

Krishna (22) came to us with chronic regurgitation and vomiting. Every time she ate her meals, she would bring them up as they were — undigested. The most unusual symptom we found was she never had even a hint of nausea before vomiting, although the food eaten would come out as it is. She was treated by a

gastroenterologist. Her reports were normal. There was no improvement, following treatment. She was referred to a psychiatrist who labelled her 'hysterical'. She had, by now, lost a good 20 kg in a span of six months. Based on her unusual symptom of vomiting without nausea, we prescribed her *Ferrum Metallicum*. In a little over five months, her problem of vomiting stopped. She was able to relish her food again; she also regained her lost weight.

Self-Help

- Take a few sips of water at a time, till you feel better
- Avoid milk and dairy products; they can make your nausea and vomiting worse
- Work your way up to soft foods, oatmeal, yogurt, and other soft foods; go back to liquids if vomiting restarts
- Children should be given oral rehydration solutions, because dehydration can set in quickly.

What

Warts, or verruca, are small growths on the skin. They are generally painless.

Why & How

Warts are common blemishes. Children and young adults are more prone to develop warts. Warts are contagious by nature; they can spread easily from one person to another. They also tend to spread easily from one part of the body to another in the same individual.



Did You Know?

Warts can spread easily when one tries to get rid of them by shaving, or using other means where only a part of the wart is removed.

A half-removed wart is likely to spread the virus to other parts of the body and also to other people.

Warts are caused by a virus called the human papillomavirus (HPV). Though largely harmless, warts can be quite disfiguring at times — a source of cosmetic and social embarrassment.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Some warts present as small, flat, and smooth lesions, whereas some may appear as rough and hard growths on the skin. The surface may be smooth or rough. The shapes may also vary significantly, with some of the warts being flat, others large and fleshy; and, yet others being thin, long and cylindrical.

Warts are generally skin-coloured, though they can be darker or lighter than one's skin tone. Warts may occur one at a time, or in clusters. They are usually painless, though in case of soles (plantar warts), pain may be obvious. Although warts can occur on any part of the body, the most frequently affected areas include the hands, feet, especially soles, genitals, the face and neck.

There are several types of warts; some of the common variants are *flat warts* (small and only slightly raised above the skin), *filiform warts* (long, narrow, filamentous), *plantar warts* (painful variety that occur on the soles), *genital warts* or condyloma (highly contagious; sexually transmitted variety of warts).

- Your doctor will be able to easily recognise a wart
- He/she will conduct a physical examination to ascertain the type of warts
- He/she will also elicit your medical and family history
- In some instances, routine tests may be ordered.

Self-treatment is not recommended, nor is fiddling, or trying to remove a wart.

Genital Warts

Genital warts are growths on, or around, the genital area — the vagina, penis or rectum. They usually affect sexually active people (between ages 19 and 30). People who have multiple sexual partners and a history of sexually-transmitted disease (STD) are most vulnerable. Genital warts, caused by human papillomavirus (HPV), are small, benign (non-cancerous) growths. They can spread through any type of sexual contact, including oral sex. They can also spread from a woman to her foetus, if she becomes pregnant, or gives birth while infected by the virus.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type	Medicine
Cauliflower-like	Thuja
Flat	Dulcamara
Horny	Antim Crud
Pedunculated	Medorrhinum

Character	
Dry	Staphysagria
Moist	Rhus Tox
Associated with	
Bleeding	Nitric Acid
Burning	Sabina
Itching	Sulphur
Pain	Calcarea Carb
Location	
Around mouth	Psorinum
Back	Silicea
Location	Medicine
Chin	Lycopodium
Face	Dulcamara
Nose	Causticum
Palms	Natrum Mur
Soles	Sepia

Case study 1

Manu (20), a college student, came to us with warts all over his face. It all started three years ago when he saw one wart — which he cauterised. But, instead of one wart going, his face and also neck got covered with over 25 warts. He was dejected and stopped going to college for fear of being ridiculed. He approached us with an embarrassed look. After studying his case, we prescribed him *Dulcamara*. To his great astonishment and joy, all his warts fell off within 15 days.

Case study 2

With numerous small, fleshy, skin-coloured growths on either palms, fingers, and toes, 32-year-old Kartik was suffering from multiple warts since the last two years. The warts were gradually increasing in size and number. For the past few weeks, these warts had also become tender. Kartik had been using ointments prescribed by his dermatologist, but these did not help him at all. He had also undergone cauterisation once with recurrence of the warts. Of late, Kartik was also going through a lot of work-related stress. The workload, deadlines and pressure were just too much, he said. Embarrassment was becoming an issue for

him too on account of his warts. He had noticed that people avoided shaking hands with him. Based on his complaints and history, we put him on *Causticum*. In just six weeks, all warts on his fingers, palms, and toes disappeared completely. He could now work without any discomfort, or embarrassment.

Expert's View:

The maximum success stories one hears of in homeopathy are related to the treatment of warts. Almost every homeopath will recall success stories to draw attention to his triumphs in the treatment of warts. Removing warts gently are a homeopath's joy, but sometimes it can lead to great frustration as they can be extremely stubborn and difficult to treat.

Self-Help

- Avoid picking at warts, since they spread more rapidly due to scratching
- Avoid shaving areas that have warts; this will keep the virus from spreading
- In case of children, cover the warts with an adhesive bandage; this will keep them from picking the warts
- Children must be encouraged to wash hands properly after they finish playing
- Keep the affected area dry since warts prosper in a moist environment
- If you have accidentally touched someone else's warts (or, even your own), wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water
- If you or your partner has genital warts, abstain from sexual activity since genital warts are highly contagious.

What

Different kinds of worms infest us. The common intruders include roundworm, hookworm, tapeworm and pinworm.



Did You Know?

Worms affect up to 25 per cent of the global population, at some point in life.

School-children and people living in crowded areas, with poor hygiene, are highly prone to getting infected with worms.

Once they gain entry into the human body, they multiply; some are passed out in the faeces, or are transmitted to another person via the contamination of food and, thus, continue their life-cycle.

Why & How

- Contamination of food with the faecal matter of an infected person is the key method of transmission
- Places with poor hygiene see a high incidence of such cases
- People with a weakened immune system are more prone to develop severe infestations
- Untreated worm infestations can continue to deprive the person of nutrients. This may lead to weight loss, muscle wasting, anaemia and allergies

- Malnourishment, stunted growth, and delayed intellectual development are some serious problems that can occur in children, when worm infestations are ignored.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

Some of the common symptoms of worm infestation include pain in the abdomen, diarrhoea, nausea, vomiting, skin rashes and itching in the anus. There may be weight loss and fatigue, in spite of having increased appetite. In some cases, the worms passed out in stools can be easily seen with the naked eye.

- The history provided by the individual, followed by a physical examination, gives the doctor enough reason to suspect worm infestation
- Thereafter, the doctor may advise a routine stool test to identify the type of worm
- More than one stool test may be required sometimes to detect the parasite, or the causative organism.

Healing with Homeopathy

Type of worm	Medicine
Ascaris (roundworm)	Chelone Glabra
Hookworm	Thymol
Pinworm	Natrum Phos
Tapeworm	Filix Mas
Specific remedy for threadworms in children	Cina 30c, 5-6 pills, twice daily, till symptoms subside

Case study

Aniruddh (6) had pain in his stomach with decreased appetite. He also complained of itching in his anus and nose; he would often scratch his nose till it became sore. He had a protruding abdomen. His mother said that he was irritable and would beat and bite at the slightest provocation. He would also throw things when angry. She also said, “He has a habit of sleeping on his stomach.” Based on his symptoms, we gave Aniruddh *Cina Maritima*. A few days later,

Aniruddh's mother called saying that he had passed live roundworms in his stools and he was feeling much better. In a week's time, his appetite was back to normal, his stomach pain was gone; the itching in his anus and nose also reduced. His tantrums were now a thing of the past.

Expert's View:

Homeopathy does not believe in killing the worms. Instead, it believes in rendering the gut an inappropriate environment for worms to live, thrive, or return to.

Self-Help

- Worms lay their eggs at night, so washing the anal area in the morning can help reduce the number of worm eggs
- Wash bed sheets, night clothes, underwear, and towels in hot water to help kill worm eggs
- Avoid scratching the anal area; this can lead to re-infection
- Keep your nails short, neat and trim — worms love your nail bed
- Wash your hands thoroughly after a bowel movement and before eating; this will reduce re-infection
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly, because they may be contaminated
- When travelling, drink bottled water and avoid raw vegetables, unless you can peel and wash them yourself. It is best to eat foods that are hot and cooked.

102 zoster herpes

What

Herpes zoster, or shingles, is an infective skin disorder.

Why & How



Did You Know?

Herpes has a tendency to occur in people who have had a tryst with the chickenpox virus.

The disorder tends to be more common after age 50.

There are two types of herpes.

Herpes simplex type I (HSV-I) can affect anyone. Herpes simplex type II (HSV-II) tends to often affect sexually active individuals.

Herpes zoster is caused by the varicella zoster virus, which also causes chickenpox. Once infected with a form of the herpes virus, the virus continues to live in the nerve cells of the skin, or the central nervous system. It may not cause any symptoms. However, illness, stress, sunburn, or injury, can activate the virus to become active again. This leads to symptoms of HSV-I, or HSV-II.

Herpes can affect people who are taking immunosuppressive medications, such as steroids.

HSV-I is generally not contagious; it can, however, spread when there is direct contact with the fluid in the herpes blister. HSV-II is often spread through any type of sexual contact.

Herpes can also spread from an infected, pregnant woman to the foetus.

Symptoms & Diagnosis

- There may often be a feverish state, with chills, headache, tiredness, nausea and diarrhoea
- Symptoms often occur on one side of the face, back or upper abdomen — these areas are also most commonly affected by chickenpox
- The most noticeable early symptom is a tingling, burning, or numb sensation. This is often followed by clusters of small, painful, fluid-filled blisters. The blisters follow a nerve path. They typically appear in a row, most often on one side of the back and spread towards the abdomen. This area may be extremely sensitive to touch
- HSV-I blisters usually appear around the lips and surrounding skin
- HSV-II blisters appear on the genitals, around the anus and on the buttocks
- In either form, the blisters are covered with a thin, yellow crust in a matter of days
- When they begin to dry, the pain recedes. The blisters usually disappear in 1-2 weeks. In some cases, but not in all, symptoms go into remission within 3-5 weeks.

Your doctor will study your history and conduct a physical examination. Certain laboratory tests, like a viral culture and blood test, are ordered to establish the type of virus involved.

Healing with Homeopathy

Location	Medicine
Abdomen	Rhus Tox
Axilla	Dolichos Pruriens
Back	Cistus Canadensis
Cheeks and around chin	Borax
Chest	Bovista
Face	Aconite
Legs	Comocladia
Lips	Arsenic Alb

Indications	
Burning pains before and after vesicles are formed	Mezereum
Haemorrhagic appearance	Lachesis
Large blisters	Ranunculus Scleratus
Post-herpetic neuralgia	Ranunculus Bulbosus
Tendency to suppuration	Mercurius Sol

Case study

Anukant (43), a sales manager with an MNC, came to us with skin eruptions on the right side of his rib cage. The eruptions were sore to touch, itchy, bluish in colour and looked as if they were ‘full of water’. The eruptions were preceded by burning in the area for 3-4 days. The pain was worse from contact with clothing, or any kind of touch. The diagnosis was herpes zoster, or shingles. On detailed case-taking, we found that it was a recurrent problem for Anukant — these eruptions erupted most often during cold, rainy weather, and after drinking alcohol. Based on this fact and his bluish, itchy vesicles and their peculiar location on the rib cage, we gave Anukant *Ranunculus Bulbosus*. Within a few days, the burning pain and itching disappeared, following which the vesicles too disappeared. We followed-up with Anukant for over two years — there was no recurrence of his old, annual problem.

Self-Help

- Avoid scratching — this can lead to secondary bacterial infection and scarring
- Avoid contact with susceptible individuals until sores have crusted over; herpes is highly infectious
- Use wet compresses for 15-20 minutes several times a day to aid healing
- Apply cold compresses or ice-packs to lesions; they are soothing
- Avoid regular soap and antiseptics during an active infection; they can cause irritation
- Wear loose, cotton clothing — it is non-irritating and soothing to the skin.

Epilogue

HOW TO STORE AND TAKE HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES

Homeopathic medicines are available in the form of pills, tablets, pellets, dilutions (potencies), mother tinctures ('Q') and so on.

In India, there is no need for a prescription to buy homeopathic medicines from a homeopathic pharmacy, or chemist.

Homeopathic medicines can be preserved for long periods of time (up to three years, or more) — they don't lose their medicinal strength, provided they are kept away from direct sunlight, strong odours (see box), perfumes and liniments.

Homeopathic medicinal bottles and containers should be closed securely and kept in a cool, dark place — in a cupboard, or drawer.

Homeopathic medicines do not need refrigeration. However, make sure to keep them away from microwave ovens, electronic gadgets and computers.

It is suggested that certain aromatic, or chemical, substances, and conventional medications, or drugs, may interfere with homeopathic medicines and their efficacy. So, keep your homeopathic medicines away from them.

Rules when taking Pills

When taking homeopathic pills, or tablets, handle them carefully.

Take them directly (from the inside of the blister pack, cap, or lid), without touching them with your hands. If the pills fall on the ground, or any surface, discard them.

The best way to take homeopathic pills is by placing them under your tongue and allowing them to dissolve. You could chew, or suck, them; but, don't

swallow them whole, at one gulp.



Keep Homeopathic Medicines Away From...

- *Direct sunlight*
- *Coffee powder, tea, and drugs having a high content of caffeine*
- *Camphor (mothballs, balms, ointments with cooling or heat effects)*
- *Mint in toothpaste; chewing gum*
- *Ethereal oils (clove, eucalyptus, peppermint, menthol)*
- *Daily or prolonged exposure to strong-smelling substances — paint, glue and varnish*
- *Cigarettes, tobacco, alcohol, spicy food (spices contain ethereal oils)*
- *Garlic and onion*
- *Agarbatis*

Avoid eating or drinking, or brushing your teeth, for 30 minutes, before or after taking a homeopathic remedy.

Children love homeopathic pills, but they sometimes find the proposition (30-minute gap) difficult to follow; however, avoid giving them homeopathic medicines with food.

For children (especially, autistic kids) who don't take, or spit pills, crush pills on a dry, clean spoon, dissolve them in water and administer.



Fact File

Homeopathic medicines act through the sentient nerves, or nerve fibres — not the stomach (gastric route) as with conventional medications.

The same procedure can be followed for giving homeopathic pills to plants, animals, or your pets.

Dosage

Homeopathic medicines are most often given in the form of pills. These pills are small and round. They have specific sizes (20, 30, and so on). They are ergonomically friendly. They can be packed in small glass bottles; they last for long periods, when stored properly, and when kept away from direct sunlight, odours, and so on.

The standard dose is 5-6 pills for an adult and child alike.

Likewise, the usual dose of any liquid (mother tincture) is about 10-20 drops, in half cupful of water.

The medicinal liquid can also be sometimes rubbed onto the chest, when the individual, or patient, cannot open the mouth, or is unconscious.

In extremely acute cases, you can put half a capful, or about 15-20 drops, in some water in a glass, stir well and take your fill — a few teaspoonfuls at a time, at half-hour intervals. This may be continued at night, if one is awake.

Tablets are also available. They should be placed under the tongue and allowed to dissolve, or they can be chewed.

The usual dose is 4-5 tablets for adults; 3-4 tablets for children.

Dosages and repetitions depend on the potency used, the type of illness, and the age of the patient.

As a general rule of thumb, low potencies — 6x, 3c, to 12c — are used in acute conditions, such as colds, headaches, vomiting, injuries, wounds and so on.

Medium potencies such as 30c, or 200c, are used in more established, chronic conditions — these may be recurring headaches, or menstrual problems.

Higher potencies — 1M and above, or LM — are best used in deeper constitutional illnesses and treatment, under the guidance of a professional homeopathic doctor.

It may be borne in mind that 6c and 6x are basically fast-acting potencies. They

are also best suited in a majority of common health disorders. They are available in a variety of dose forms, including liquids, pills, tablets, and so on, as referred to earlier.

Repetition

One dose of 3x-6c may be given until the patient improves, or till a change occurs.

If there is no change after one or two days, in acute illnesses, it may be deduced that the remedy has probably failed. It's time to move on to a new remedy, or consult your doctor.

Most professional homeopathic doctors repeat medium potencies — 30c and 200c — 3 or 4 times, a day, for adults and in children for several days, if they have acute illnesses.

Professional homeopaths often use them in long-standing disorders, such as arthritis or constipation, once a day, or for several weeks. For chronic conditions, the 200c potency is given once a week. Higher potencies, such as IM, or LM, are given once a month for constitutional illnesses.

It is suggested that infants and children respond more quickly to homeopathic remedies than adults. This, despite the fact that their symptom-picture is often subject to change quickly. It is also recommended that they should be monitored closely.

This holds good particularly in infants, where results from a single dose can appear within a few minutes to an hour.

Other Modes

Oral spray is a new introduction in homeopathic practice. It has proved to be convenient for use in children and older adults. The usual dose is 4-5 sprays for an adult; 2-3 sprays for a child.

There are some homeopathic injections available — their use is restricted to a select few practising doctors. For example, Iscador therapy for cancer.

You may also think of webbing, with the medicine placed in-between the thumb and index finger and smelled.

Douches containing the appropriate homeopathic medicine may be placed in the vagina (in women), or the medicine can be applied and rubbed on the chest, when the patient is unconscious.

Wait. Watch. Act

It is always good to wait for some time after giving a well-chosen remedy and eliciting a response.

You may encounter the following triad of situations after giving the medicine and after waiting for results to emerge.

When Symptoms Improve

Continue the medication till the symptoms disappear completely. In case the improvement stops after a certain stage, you may need to increase the potency of the remedy or switch to another suitable remedy.

When Symptoms Persist

You may rest assured that your prescription of a well-chosen remedy has failed when there is no improvement, after 6-8 hours, or after 2-3 days' time in acute conditions.

You will have to select a new remedy.

When Symptoms Worsen

Probably the remedy you've been given is well-chosen, but it may have over-stimulated a response. Just stop the medicine.

You may have to repeat a dose, or two, provided there is no worsening later. Not otherwise.

When the disease has progressed, consult a professional homeopath.

It should also be borne in mind that any illness that fails to improve after the administration of well-chosen remedies should be reviewed and managed by a professional homeopath.

HOMEOPATHIC FIRST AID

For fever with...	Medicine
Intense muscular pain	Gelsemium
Intense bone pain	Eupatorium Perf
Prostration out of proportion with fever or temperature	Arsenic Alb
For injuries	
Blunt injuries, with trauma	Arnica Montana
Bone injuries	Ruta Graveolans
Burns	Cantharis
Burns, to reduce pain and promote healing	Urtica Urens
Fractures	Symphytum
Insect bites	Apis Mel
Lacerated wounds	Calendula
Nerve injury, crushed or mashed fingers and toes	Hypericum
Pointed instruments, insect stings	Ledum Pal
Sprains and strains	Rhus Tox
For gastrointestinal complaints	
Constipation	Senna
Food poisoning	Arsenic Alb
Indigestion, nausea and constipation	Nux Vomica
Nausea and vomiting	Ipecac
Overeating leading to gastric upset	Antim Crud
Pastries and rich-food leading to gastric symptoms	Pulsatilla
General	

Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	Euphrasia
Excess menstrual bleeding	Millefolium
Fainting spells	Carbo veg
For instant improvement, after loss of voice	Populus
Migraine headaches	Iris versicolor
Nosebleed, after injury	Arnica
Sunstroke	Glonoine
Sleeplessness	Coffea Cruda

HOMEOPATHY FAMILY MEDICINE CHEST

Indications	Medicine
For cough, cold, fever, anxiety that starts suddenly, accompanied by extreme fear	Aconitum Napellus
A first remedy for colds. Discharge from eyes is bland; while from nose it is acrid	Allium Cepa
Anticipatory anxiety before examination, or event, in students and professionals, leading to diarrhoea and gas	Argentum Nitricum
Complaints after mechanical injuries, blunt trauma. Sore, bruised feeling, as if beaten.	Arnica Montana
Complaints start after eating stale food or getting drenched in the rain; mid day or midnight aggravation of complaints, followed by extreme fatigue	Arsenic Album
Exposure to sun causes throbbing headache; better by bandaging the head	Belladonna
Constipation; stools hard and dry, as if burnt; worse, slightest motion; better by rest and pressure	Bryonia Alba
Suits symptoms of fat, fair and flabby people, who are always perspiring around the neck and head; constipated	Calcarea Carbonica
A biochemic tonic; excellent for muscular and bone growth of children	Calcarea Phosphorica
A useful remedy for urinary tract infections, with intense urging and burning urination. Best for burns and scalds.	Cantharis
Indications	Medicine
A remedy <i>par excellence</i> for gas and hyperacidity.	

Or if people say, “Everything he eats turns into gas.” Carbo Vegetabilis

An infant’s best friend during dentition and colic, with greenish hot diarrhoea; child is extremely irritable; better when carried around by the mother, or elders Chamomilla

A useful remedy for cough with a ‘whoop’; symptoms worse after midnight Drosera

A specific remedy for conjunctivitis with watery eyes Euphrasia

A useful remedy for muscular prostration, dullness, dizziness and drowsiness, with no thirst. Complaints come gradually; a useful remedy for influenza, chikungunya and malaria. Anticipation (e.g., before exam) brings on bouts of diarrhoea Gelsemium

A remedy *par excellence* for injury to parts rich in sentient nerves — fingers, toes, and nails Hypericum

Depression or bad effects of recent grief; loss of near and dear ones Ignatia Amara

Intense nausea with or without vomiting; does not feel better even after vomiting Ipecacuanha

Injuries caused by sharp, pointed instruments or bee sting or mosquitoes. Better with icy cold applications, especially for gouty pains. Ledum Palustre

Indications	Medicine
Is useful for sensitive individuals who have a habit of getting emotionally hurt and brooding over it for days together. Useful in migraines, allergies, colds and urticaria. Symptoms, worse in the sun. Craves for extra salt in food	Natrum Muriaticum
Poor and irregular eating habits; alcohol and smoking cause sleeplessness. Useful for irritability and constipation, with frequent ineffectual urge for stools.	Nux Vomica
For people with changeable and tearful disposition, want to be consoled and cuddled; thirstless with most complaints; ripe colds with bland yellow, or greenish discharge. An efficacious remedy for menstrual disorders	Pulsatilla
A useful remedy for sprains and strains, arthritis;	

worse by initial motion; better by continued movement Rhus Toxicodendron

A useful remedy for injury to bone; eye strain from overuse of eyes as in computer or stitching work; carpal tunnel syndrome; tennis elbow Ruta Graveolans

Menstrual disturbances, vomiting of pregnancy, hot flushes; indifferent and irritable moods Sepia Officinalis

An excellent remedy for non-union of fractures, or pain after fracture Symphytum

My Vision Building a Corporate

At a time when my practice had just begun to flourish, I was treating around 300 patients a day. I would not know what happened to most of them — unless I bumped into them and they told me that their health concern was long gone. It was redeeming to hear such testimonies, but there was no job satisfaction. The reason — once you reach the top, there are no more summits to climb. I'd have appointments 'in-waiting' for a year, or two, or even more, and I'd not know whether or not an ailing patient would live till then.

This ignited the first spark for my Big Idea, or Vision — a paradigm shift from mass general practice at a single location, to specialised practice at multiple locations. This led to the founding of Dr Batra's Positive Health Clinic Pvt. Ltd., — the first-ever homeopathic healthcare corporate in the world.

I'd long known and seen that homeopathy could treat certain illnesses and diseases most effectively. So, by moving from a single clinic practice to specialised clinics, I knew we'd reach out to thousands of patients. At the same time, a healthy doctor-patient ratio also had to be a priority. The coming-of-age of our speciality clinics transformed our competence. Today, our patient base is 300 times bigger — from 3,000 patients to a million satisfied patients.

It is rightly said that what you dream you do. But, just dreams are not enough — one has to drive them to fruition. I follow a simple mantra — there is no shortcut to hard work. Also, luck comes to people who work hard, especially when you are an entrepreneur treading a new, uncharted path. I learned from my mistakes. I paid a price for them, but I made sure not to repeat them.

Since ours is a service industry, I am committed to hire the best people through stringent selection processes and motivate them to fulfil a common vision, or goal. I firmly believe that success evolves through word-of-mouth (WoM) — the oldest of marketing practices. When our patients talk of 'cures', they perform the role of happy ambassadors by sharing their experiences. This may not be easy in certain chronic illnesses we treat. For instance, in skin disorders such as psoriasis, it takes five years for a cure to emerge. This leads to a long waiting period for the practice to grow. I told myself to just hang-in there till things

improved. It's WoM that also brings in trust. However, as we all know, it takes a lifetime to build trust, and just a second to squander it. This is also one major reason why we've inculcated in our staff the important role trust plays in day-to-day life.

We've, over a period of time, built processes and systems and invested in IT and technology. We follow international protocols. Our systems do not allow doctors to bypass mandatory fields — this ensures standardisation of treatment. It also helps us to know, or monitor, whether or not a doctor is giving enough time to each patient.

I was fortunate to interact with top industrialists and leaders, from my early days in private practice. I imbibed their insights and began to learn how the best companies were managed and run. I could perceive their vision and was inspired, no less, by their example. This gave me a ringside view of the rudiments and essence of entrepreneurship. That I did not possess a management degree was no stumbling block. I learned hands-on and implemented common sense management practices, not rocket science techniques. It is, indeed, heartening that I am now called to address management graduates in some of the top business schools and share my experiences.

Since I was brought up with the ability to feel the pulse, as it were, in private practice, at the grassroots level, I knew what patients really wanted instinctively. This provided me with the strong belief to hold the reins of management, and also ownership without much ado. It also gave me perceptive ideas about various operations — lending the technological edge to a moribund, fragmented science. This was augmented by modernising homeopathy through our 24x7 clinics, mobile health services, and video-conferencing among our 250 doctors for bettering patients' prescriptions. We have also incorporated electronic data management of patient medical histories, aside from business, Management Information Services (MIS), and process reports. This has, in more ways than one, inspired us to introduce Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the first time in homeopathic practice.

We believe in consistency vis-à-vis our infrastructure, because, this is what gives us our corporate identity. All of our 70+ clinics look alike. They have the same facilities and uniformity in terms of aesthetics and even stationery (such as paper quality and thickness). In addition to this, we have standardised medicines,

stocking them from one, single source with Swiss collaboration. Medicines are stored in sealed bottles — there's no question of tampering.

Our work culture is integrated with ownership, and all clinic heads and doctors manage their clinics on standard formats and systems — the benefits accrued percolate to the entire clinic. These serve as engines of growth.

We believe in an honest, transparent work culture; we just do not tolerate indiscipline and dishonesty. We have built a strong value system based on sound ethics. Minds, it is said, are like parachutes; they work best when they are open.

Though change is a constant, one is often resistant to change. This has been our biggest challenge — to change perceptions.

We want to touch everything in homeopathic healthcare. We plan to set up over 50 more new clinics at multiple locations in India, and establish ourselves internationally. As a first step, we have launched clinics in Muscat, Healthcare City, Dubai, and in the prestigious medical district of Harley Street, London — the first-ever homeopathic healthcare corporate to set up base in the UK. Our plans for clinics in France, Singapore, and Malaysia are also on the anvil. Keeping up with the demand for modern technology in the medical and cosmetic fields, one of our group companies, B Perfect, now offers Botox and Fillers, besides hair transplantation procedures. Our next mission and vision — to make Dr Batra's brand and product range a part of every home's experience... across the globe.

Dr. Batra's Clinics

(Toll Free Number: 1800 209 6767)

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Special non-sticky formulation enriched with Jojoba and nature's treasure — *Brahmi*, for healthy, strong and well-nourished hair.

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Enriched with the beneficial effects of Henna, this shampoo with the ideal pH cleanses your scalp and improves hair texture.

Hand Wash

Unique formulation with the natural goodness of Aloe vera, Tea tree oil and Olive oil — for soft, smooth and supple hands.

Face Wash

The rich antioxidant and anti-bacterial properties of Tea tree oil deep cleanse

your face gently and naturally. Also enriched with Vitamin B3 and Vitamin E for a glowing skin.

Moisturising Lotion

Non-greasy moisturising lotion, enriched with natural moisturising extracts of the wonder herb Echinacea and Aloe vera for soft, supple skin.

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ISBN-13: 978-81-7912-094-3



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