



# Homeopathy and Allergies

Kathleen Scheible, CCH

While all contributing factors are not fully understood, people in industrialized societies, particularly in the United States, are developing more allergies, at a younger age, that are more severe than ever before.<sup>480</sup> Homeopathic medicine has demonstrated remarkable potential to lessen a person's susceptibility to developing allergies, and to lower the severity and frequency of these conditions. Conventional allergy medications, used in a growing number of long-term daily users and children, pose significant health risks.

Antihistamine use is associated with increased risk of developing dementia,<sup>487</sup> decongestants increase

blood pressure,<sup>488</sup> corticosteroids (in metered dose inhalers) weaken vocal chords,<sup>489</sup> and orally administered corticosteroids are associated with increased risk of developing diabetes, osteoporosis, cataracts and growth disturbances.<sup>490, 491</sup> Leukotriene modifiers are associated with increased risk of developing different psychological disturbances.<sup>492</sup>

<sup>486</sup> Silverberg, JI, Simpson EL, Durkin HG, et als. Prevalence of Allergic Disease in Foreign-Born American Children. *JAMA Pediatrics* 2013; 167(6): 554-60.

<sup>487</sup> Wein, AJ. Cumulative Use of Strong Anticholinergics and Incident Dementia: a Prospective Cohort Study. *J Urology* 2015; 193(6):401-407.

<sup>488</sup> Salerno, SM, Jackson JL, Berbano EP. Effect of Oral Pseudoephedrine on Blood Pressure and Heart Rate: a Meta-Analysis. *Arch Int Med New Series* 2005; 165(15):1686-1697.

<sup>489</sup> Galván CA., Guarderas JC. Practical Considerations for Dysphonia Caused by Inhaled Corticosteroids. *Mayo Clin Proced* 2012; 87(9):901-904.

<sup>490</sup> Tamez-Perez HE, Quintanilla-Flores DL, Rodriguez-Gutierrez R, et al. Steroid Hyperglycemia: Prevalence, Early Detection and Therapeutic Recommendations: a Narrative Review. *World J Diabetes* 2015; 6(8):1073-1081.

<sup>491</sup> Canalis E. Mechanisms of Glucocorticoid Induced Osteoporosis. *Arthritis Res Thar* 2004;6 (Suppl 3):37.

<sup>492</sup> Haarman MG, van Hunsel F, de Vries TW. "Adverse Drug Reactions of Montelukast in Children and Adults." *Pharm Res Perspect* 2017; 5(5).

None of these side effects have ever been associated with homeopathic treatment, since homeopathy does not cause harmful side effects. On the contrary, homeopathy has been found to increase overall health, in a holistic manner, without inducing long term complications or adverse drug reactions. Homeopathy is usually more cost effective over a person's lifetime, including those with allergies.

Conventional allergen immunotherapy or desensitization is a relatively new approach to allergy treatment and shares some commonality with the homeopathic principle of using a small amount of a substance capable of causing symptoms to treat those same symptoms. In homeopathy, this principle is known as the Law of Similars (or "like cures like.") However, there is a difference between homeopathy and conventional desensitization: homeopathic medicines are prepared differently. Not only are they more highly diluted, but they are also mechanically agitated (succussed) following precise guidelines established more than two centuries ago.

Ongoing research indicates that nanostructures, including nanoparticles from the original source material are generated by these mechanical stress forces and that they persist in all homeopathic medicinal dilutions. Data analysis suggests that these nanoparticles are biologically active via an adaptive network nanomedicine form of hormesis.<sup>493</sup> It appears that these ultra-high dilution levels of homeopathic medicines eliminate the risk of developing anaphylaxis (potentially fatal collapse) and a myriad of other common side effects seen in conventional allergy immunotherapy treatment.

Both clinical and laboratory research demonstrate that homeopathic preparations (resulting from the combined techniques of dilution and succussion- as opposed to simple dilution alone) yield biologically active medicines capable of producing significant impact in the treatment of allergies.<sup>494</sup>

## Scientific Evidence

The classical homeopathic methodology demands that the selection of medicines be based on the totality of symptoms expressed by the individual patient, rather than on the particular allergen itself (which is the method used in modern desensitization treatment methods.) The latter method, known as "isopathy" (in Greek, homeo means "similar" and iso means "same") shares some common ground with, but is significantly different from the homeopathic approach.

Different people exposed to the same allergen react differently and express a wide range of allergic symptoms. The homeopathic process matches (individualizes) medicines to each individual. This selection process makes the scientific study of homeopathy more challenging, when compared to the conventional medical research process of pre-selecting the same substance that will be administered randomly to a large group of people with mhed placebo controls. To simplify the study process, many homeopathic studies have utilized isopathic mixtures of common allergens as interventions, rather than going through the process unique to homeopathy, which includes individualization.

One of the most important studies conducted on the homeopathic treatment of allergies was a double-blind placebo-controlled trial using a combination of flower pollens in the treatment of hay fever. After treatment, the placebo group had six times more symptoms than the homeopathic treatment group. The homeopathic treatment group in this study needed half as many antihistamines due to the reduction of their allergy symptoms.<sup>495</sup>

<sup>493</sup> Bell IR. "Adaptive Network Nanomedicine an Integrated Model for Homeopathic Medicine." *Frontier Bioscience* 2013; 5(2):685-708.

<sup>494</sup> Wiesenauer ML, Ludtke R. "A Meta-Analysis of the Homeopathic Treatment of Pollinosis with Galphimia Glauca." *Br Homoeopathic J* 2000; 89(S 01): \$52.

<sup>495</sup> Reilly DT, Taylor MA, McSharry C, et al. "Is Homoeopathy a Placebo Response? Controlled Trial of Homoeopathic Potency, with Pollen in Hay Fever As Model." *Lancet* 1986;18;2(8512):881-6.



Another double-blind placebo controlled study evaluated the use of homeopathic medicines prepared specifically from an isopathic formulation of the substance that individuals were most allergic to. Those receiving the homeopathic preparation demonstrated superior breathing (demonstrated by nasal inspiratory peak flow) compared with placebo. Improvements were equivalent to measurements that were typically observed in those using oral steroids. Homeopathic subjects demonstrated improvement that was 7 times better than the placebo group.<sup>496</sup>

A month-long randomized placebo controlled double-blind clinical trial utilized homeopathic preparations of common allergens during allergy season in the Southwest U.S. The study demonstrated significant improvement in the homeopathic group compared to placebo ( $p < 0.05$ ). There were no reported adverse events, indicating the potential benefits of homeopathic intervention in reducing symptoms and improving quality of life in patients with seasonal allergic rhinitis.<sup>497</sup>

A systematic review of randomized controlled trials of allergic rhinitis through 2015 found that

homeopathic medicines reduce both ocular and nasal allergy symptoms.<sup>498</sup>

## In Vitro Use of Homeopathy

High quality, controlled trials of homeopathic medicines in vitro demonstrate consistent and reproducible effects on basophil degranulation (responsible for histamine release, immune activation and allergy symptoms). Homeopathic preparations, at high dilutions, inhibit the up-regulation in anti-IgE stimulated human basophils, demonstrating a molecular model of how homeopathic medicines work at the cellular level.<sup>499</sup>

## Reduced Need for Conventional Medicines

Fifty-six percent of patients in an Israeli study reduced their use of conventional medications following homeopathic intervention for their allergies. Patients who used conventional medications for their allergic disorders reduced medication expenses by an average of 60%, with an average savings of \$24 per person in the 3-month trial period following the homeopathic intervention.<sup>500</sup>

In Switzerland, a government conducted review of clinical trials of homeopathic medicines found that homeopathy was efficacious in 29 studies of upper respiratory tract infections (URTI) and allergic reactions. In 6 out of 7 controlled trials, homeopathy was equivalent to (or better than) conventional treatment.<sup>501</sup>

<sup>496</sup> Taylor M, Reilly D, Llewellyn-Jones R, et al. "Randomised Controlled Trial of Homoeopathy versus Placebo in Perennial Allergic Rhinitis with Overview of Four Trial Series." *BMJ* 2000; 321: 471-476.

<sup>497</sup> Kim LS, Riedlinger JE, Baldwin CM, et al. "Research Reports - Allergy - Treatment of Seasonal Allergic Rhinitis Using Homeopathic Preparation of Common Allergens in the Southwest Region of the US: a Randomized, Controlled Clinical Trial." *Annals Pharmacotherapy* 2005; 39(4): 61

<sup>498</sup> Banerjee K, Kushal, Costelloe C, Mathie RT, et al. "Homeopathy for Allergic Rhinitis: Protocol for a Systematic Review." *Systematic Rev* 2014; 3(1):59.

<sup>499</sup> Chirumbolo S, Brizzi M, Ortolani R, et al. "Inhibition of Cd203c Membrane Up-Regulation in Human Basophils by High Dilutions of Histamine: a Controlled Replication Study." *Inflamm Res* 2009; 58(11):755-764.

<sup>500</sup> Mathie RT. "Effects of Homeopathic Intervention on Medication Consumption in Atopic and Allergic Disorders." *Homeopathy* 2002; 91(4): 264.

<sup>501</sup> Bornhöft G, Matthiessen PF. *Homeopathy in Healthcare -- Effectiveness, Appropriateness, Safety, Costs: An Hta Report on Homeopathy As Part of the Swiss Complementary Medicine Evaluation Programme*. Berlin: Springer, 2011.

# Homeopathy and Pediatric Allergies

An observational longitudinal study of more than 850 children over 16 years demonstrated major overall improvement in more than 75% of participants. Complete remission was noted in 70% of those with atopy, 84% with dermatitis, 48% with allergic rhinitis, and 71% with asthma. Forty percent of children with two or three atopic diseases at the first visit had complete remission.<sup>502</sup>

A prospective multicenter observational study of 40 children with allergic conjunctivitis, allergic rhinitis, bronchial asthma and neurodermatitis demonstrated substantial improvement ( $p < 0.001$ ) after homeopathic treatment. Most patients (68%) utilizing conventional medicines at the outset of the study were able to discontinue at least one conventional drug, while the remainder (32%) were able to significantly reduce dosages after using homeopathy. No side effects were reported during treatment.<sup>503</sup>

A multi-centric open clinical trial of more than 630 children suffering from acute rhinitis were treated with individually selected homeopathic medicines. All subjects noted a significant change in their symptom score from the baseline ( $p < 0.05$ ) over one week of treatment. No complications were observed during the treatment, and adverse events included hyperpyrexia in 2 children only. The authors concluded that homeopathic medicines are both safe and useful in the management of acute rhinitis of children.<sup>504</sup>

## Conclusion

The U.S. population is demanding less harmful and more effective treatment interventions for non-emergency chronic health conditions, particularly for children and those suffering from allergies. Clinical trials of homeopathic treatment demonstrate impressive "real world" efficacy in many types of allergies, without the common side effects or other long-term negative health outcomes associated with conventional medicines. Laboratory evaluations confirm that homeopathic medicines differ from placebo, while research demonstrates that biologically active material is present in high dilutions of these medicines. Further research, funding of education and infrastructure and utilization of homeopathy at all levels of public health should be encouraged for this two-century-old form of safe, natural, and effective medicine for allergy reduction.

## About the Author

*Kathleen Scheible, Certified Classical Homeopath (CCH), has a homeopathy general practice in San Francisco, California. Kathleen got interested in homeopathy because of how much it benefited her kids, and transitioned to practicing homeopathy after an engineering career in Silicon Valley. Kathleen is the founder of the Bay Area Homeopathy Association and is the current president of the California Homeopathic Medical Society.*

<sup>502</sup> Rossi E, Picchi M, Bartoli P, et al. "Homeopathic Therapy in Pediatric Atopic Diseases: Short and Long-Term Results." *Homeopathy* 2016; 105(3):217–224.

<sup>503</sup> Gründling C, Schimetta W, Frass M. "Real-life Effect of Classical Homeopathy in the Treatment of Allergies: a Multicenter Prospective Observational Study." *Wiener Klinische Wochenschrift* 2012; 124: 1–2.

<sup>504</sup> Nayak C, Singh V, Singh K, et al. A multi-centric open clinical trial to evaluate the usefulness of 13 predefined homeopathic medicines in the management of acute rhinitis in children. *Int J High Dilution Res* 2010; 9(30): 30–42.