



Homeopathy *in* Acute Care *Medicine*

Alex Bekker, MD, ABIHM

The use of Complementary Medicine is commonplace throughout the world as the World Health Organization (WHO) attests:

"T&CM [Traditional and Complementary Medicine] is an important and often underestimated part of health care. T&CM is found in almost every country in the world and the demand for its services is increasing. T&CM, of proven quality, safety, and efficacy, contributes to the goal of ensuring that all people have access to care. Many countries now recognize the need to develop a cohesive and integrative approach to health care that allows governments, health care practitioners and, most importantly, those who use health care services, to access T&CM in a safe, respectful, cost-efficient and effective manner. A global strategy to foster its appropriate integration, regulation and supervision will be useful to countries wishing to develop a proactive policy towards this important - and often vibrant and expanding - part of health care."²⁷⁷

²⁷⁷ WHO traditional medicine strategy: 2014-2023.
https://www.who.int/medicines/publications/traditional/trm_strategy14_23/en/http://www.searo.who.int/entity/health_situation_trends/who_trm_strategy_2014-2023.pdf?ua=1

Homeopathy has a strong record of quality, safety and efficacy over a 200-plus year period.

Utilization

"Homeopathy is used by just over 2% of the U.S. population, predominantly for respiratory, otorhinolaryngology, and musculoskeletal complaints. Individual users who see a homeopathic provider for care are more likely to perceive the therapy as helpful than those who do not; however, only 19% of users in the United States see a provider."²⁷⁸

Eighty one percent of those who utilize homeopathy do so by purchasing over-the-counter (OTC) homeopathic medicines.

²⁷⁸ Dossett, ML, Davis RB, Kaptchuk TJ. Homeopathy Use by US Adults: Results of a National Survey. *Am J Public Health* 2016; 106(4): 743-5. DOI: 10.2105/ajph.2015.303025
<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/02/160218204420.htm>

Homeopathy in Acute Care Studies

Many studies demonstrate the benefits of using homeopathy over a wide range of conditions. The following are a few of the most outstanding studies demonstrating efficacy in the treatment of acute diseases. Many authors note that the use of homeopathic medicine decreases the use of conventional antibiotics, psychotropics, steroids, and other medications. A search of PubMed revealed the following studies which were published in peer-reviewed medical journals. The range of clinical conditions addressed using homeopathy included upper respiratory tract infections (URTI), sleep disorders, respiratory allergies, acute otitis media (ear infections), traumatic brain injury, severe sepsis, and perioperative use of Arnica for reduction of ecchymosis after surgery.

EPI3 Study 1- Homeopathic medical practice for URTI: cohort study

The EPI3 survey was a nationwide population-based study of a representative sample of 825 General Practitioners (GP) and their patients in France between 2007-2008. Five hundred and eighteen adults and children with URTI's were included. The results of this study over a one-, three- and twelve-month follow-up period, demonstrated that: "Patients who chose to consult GPs certified in homeopathy used less antibiotics and antipyretic/anti-inflammatory drugs for URTI than those seen by GPs prescribing conventional medications...."²⁷⁹

EPI3 Study 3- Utilization of psychotropic drugs by patients consulting for sleeping disorders in homeopathic and conventional primary care settings.

Three hundred and forty six patients consulting for sleep disorders (SD) were included in this study that determined:

"Patients with SD who chose to consult GPs certified in homeopathy consumed less psychotropic drugs and had a similar evolution of their condition to patients treated with conventional medical management. This result may translate into a net advantage with reduction of adverse events related to psychotropic drugs."²⁸⁰

²⁷⁹ Grimaldi-Bensouda L, Begaud B, Rossignol M. Management of upper respiratory tract infections by different medical practices, including homeopathy, and consumption of antibiotics in primary care: the EPI3 cohort study in Lfr© 2007-2008. *PLoS One* 2014;9(3):e89990. DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0089990. eCollection 2014. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3960096/>

²⁸⁰ Grimaldi-Bensouda L, Abenhaim L, Massol J, et al. Utilization of psychotropic drugs by patients consulting for sleeping disorders in homeopathic, and conventional primary care settings: the BPI-3 cohort study. *Homeopathy* 2015;104(3):170-5. DOI 10.1016/j.homp.2015.05.002. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26143449/>

Effectiveness, safety and tolerability of a complex homeopathic medicinal product in the prevention of recurrent acute upper respiratory tract infections in children: a multi-center, open, comparative, randomized, controlled clinical trial.

The effectiveness, safety and tolerability of two complex homeopathic medicines in the treatment and prevention of recurrent acute URTIs in children were compared. Authors concluded that:

"Both complex homeopathic products led to a comparable reduction of URTIs... The observation that the use of antibiotics was reduced upon treatment with the complex homeopathic medications, without the occurrence of complications, is interesting and warrants further investigations... as an antibiotic sparing option."²⁸¹

Homeopathy in acute otitis media in children: treatment effect or spontaneous resolution?

Two hundred and thirty children with acute otitis media (AOM) received individualized homeopathic medicine. If pain-reduction was insufficient after 6 hours, a different homeopathic medicine was administered. After 12 hours, children who had not reached pain control were treated with antibiotics. The authors concluded: "Pain control was achieved in 39% of the patients after 6 hours, another 33% after 12 hours. This resolution rate is 2.4 times faster than in placebo controls. There were no complications observed in the study group and compared to conventional treatment the approach was 14% cheaper."²⁸²

Homeopathy and respiratory allergies: a series of 147 cases.

The progress of 147 cases of respiratory allergy in private homeopathic practice were reported. Out of 105 cases of ear, nose and throat (ENT) allergies, only two failed to improve, and none worsened. Out of 42 cases of

²⁸¹ Jong MC, Buskin SL, Ilyenko L, et al. Effectiveness, safety and tolerability of a complex homeopath, medicinal product in the prevention of recurrent acute upper respiratory tract infections in children: a multicenter, open, comparative, randomized, controlled clinical trial. *Medicine (Baltimore)* 2016; 95(11):e011419. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4868034/>

²⁸² Frei H, Thurneysen A. Homeopathy in acute otitis media in children: treatment effect or spontaneous resolution? *Br Homeopath J* 2001;90(4):180-2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11680801/>

pulmonary allergies, only two cases worsened and three failed to improve. Authors concluded:

"The reasons for such a state have been reviewed. If all these cases were therapeutic failures, the success rate of the homeopathic treatment is 87.6%."²⁸³

Mild Traumatic Brain Injury RCT Pilot Study

Sixty patients were studied at the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital. "These results indicate a significant improvement from the homeopathic treatment versus control and translate into clinically significant outcomes."²⁸⁴

Adjunctive homeopathic treatment in patients with severe sepsis: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial in an intensive care unit

Seventy patients with severe sepsis received homeopathic treatment (n=35) or placebo (n=35). Survival after 30 and 180 days was recorded.

"Our data suggest that homeopathic treatment may be an useful additional therapeutic measure with a long-term benefit for severely septic patients admitted to the intensive care unit. A constraint to wider application of this method is the limited number of trained homeopaths."²⁸⁵

Perioperative Arnica montana for Reduction of Ecchymosis in Rhinoplasty Surgery.

Subjects scheduled for rhinoplasty surgery with nasal bone osteotomies by a single surgeon were prospectively randomized to receive either oral perioperative Arnica

montana or placebo in a double-blinded fashion. The authors concluded:

"Arnica montana seems to accelerate postoperative healing, with quicker resolution of the extent and the intensity of ecchymosis after osteotomies in rhinoplasty surgery, which may dramatically affect patient satisfaction."²⁸⁶

Conclusion

Not only is the utilization of homeopathy in many parts of the world common, but substantial evidence of its efficacy in acute and emergency conditions indicates a cost-effective model for complimenting conventional medicine, while avoiding many of the pitfalls of antibiotic and pain medication overuse. Homeopathy certainly deserves much more research dedicated toward understanding its usefulness and applications in the field of public health.

About The Author:

Alex Bekker, MD, ABIHM is a General Practice physician, diplomate of Integrative Holistic Medicine, with many years of Emergency Department experience, who regularly uses homeopathy to treat his patients. He resides in Texas.

²⁸³ Colin P. Homeopathy and respiratory allergies: a series of 147 cases. Homeopathy 2006 Apr. 95(2):68-72. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16569621>

²⁸⁴ Chapman EH, Weintraub RJ, Milburn MA, et al. Homeopathic Treatment of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury: A Randomized, Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Clinical Trial. J Head Trauma Rehabil 1999;14(6):521- 542. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/8744/ff5ec248350778d7d1455944d14f6d9e45d8.pdf>

²⁸⁵ Frass MI, Linkesch M, Banyai S, et al. Adjunctive homeopathic treatment in patients with severe sepsis: a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled trial in an intensive care unit. Homeopathy. 2005 Apr. 94(2):75-80. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15892486>

²⁸⁶ Chaiet SR, Marcus BC. Perioperative Arnica montana for Reduction of Ecchymosis w Rhinoplasty Surgery. Ann Plast Surg 2016 May 76(5):477-82. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25954844>