

Chapter 52

Dynamic and Chronic Diseases: Homeopathic Perspectives

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ABSTRACT

Homeopathy, a significant element of healthcare in the 19th century, has recently experienced a worldwide resurgence. Following a period of gradual decrease, homeopathy is now gaining popularity worldwide, highlighting the pressing necessity for scientific validation of its mode of operation and efficacy. Homeopathy utilizes formulations of medicines that produce similar effects in healthy individuals as the symptoms, clinical signs, and pathological states observed in the sick. Homeopathic medications are manufactured by successive dilutions and shaking and are often administered in potentized forms. Currently, the practical use of homeopathic research in the field of high-altitude medicine for various dynamic and chronic diseases is still in its early stages. With increasing attention to alternative therapeutic approaches, several clinical investigations have been carried out in the field of homeopathy. This chapter provides a concise overview of scientific discoveries and identifies areas that require additional research to develop homeopathic treatments for dynamic and chronic diseases, as well as their underlying physiological circumstances. This chapter provides an evaluation of important homeopathic treatments, such as homeopathic coca, *Aloe vera*, and other possible options for treating several ailments.

KEYWORDS

Homeopathy, Homeopathic perspectives, Chronic diseases, Natural medicine, History of homeopathy

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INTRODUCTION

Homeopathy is a widely practiced form of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) that is highly prevalent in Europe. In the 18th century, the German doctor Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann did systematic clinical tests that led to the idea. Hahnemann made various observations and changed the treatment theory known in medicine as "the rule of similars." After a slow decline, homeopathy is now becoming more famous around the world. The efficacy of this therapeutic method and the exact way in which ultramolecular or high dilutions (HDs) work are, however, still up for debate. Further research is essential in this area. The subject of how homeopathy could be integrated with traditional medicine emerges in light of its all-encompassing approach and the scant proof of its efficacy (Ling, 2019).

This is particularly relevant in clinical areas where the therapeutic effectiveness of conventional medicine is uncertain or to expedite the treatment of conditions where a wait-and-see approach is typically followed. To achieve successful integration, it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter (Ling, 2021).

Homeopathy: Person-centered Therapy

Homeopathy is a clinical-therapeutic approach that seeks to restore health in all organisms, including humans, plants, and animals. Its originator, Samuel Hahnemann, first articulated the concepts that underpin it in his seminal work 'Organon'. The concept of similarity also referred to as the 'law of similars', asserts that a homeopathic treatment can effectively cure a patient who displays symptoms that are like those caused by the same medicine in experiments conducted on a healthy person (Huang, 2019). Traditional homeopathy requires selecting a single treatment that has a distinct set of effects and can address all of the patient's energy, bodily, and mental symptoms. Hahnemann's therapeutic concept focused on treating the patient holistically, considering not only their illness but also their entire being, including the physical body and the disturbances in the vital force that animate it with sensitivity. In modern terms, this approach can be described as a comprehensive and intricate therapeutic approach that considers the complete and complex nature of the individual (Huang, 2021).

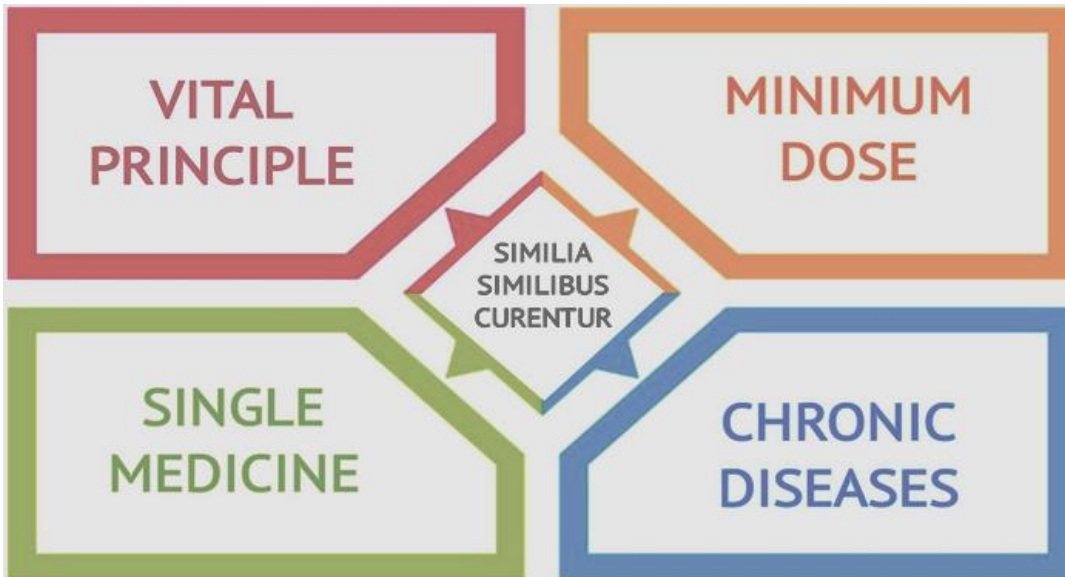


Fig. 1: How Law of Similar work in Practice

It is important to highlight the degree to which traditional homeopathic treatment, dating back to Hahnemann's era, has consistently focused on treating the entire individual. A famous American homeopath in the 1800s, James Tyler Kent (1849–1916), anticipated how important it was to treat the whole person, including their emotions, thoughts, and spirit, as well as their actual body. It consistently appears as a unified and natural occurrence, yet it has various components (Ling, 2021). Alexis Carrel, the Nobel Prize laureate in medicine, asserted that the sick individual has been categorized into several areas, each requiring its specialized practitioner (Pagliosa and Ros, 2008). A specialist of this nature dedicates their efforts to the examination of a minuscule portion of the human anatomy. However, their intense focus on one specific area results in a lack of knowledge regarding the remainder of the body, to the extent that they cannot be considered to possess complete expertise in even this particular aspect. Both medicine and society need to treat the patient as a whole, with both their mental and physical parts (Zulfugarova et al., 2023).

Historical Background

The concept of resemblance, which forms the basis of homeopathy, has its origins in ancient times and may be found across centuries of medical history. One of the first advocates of what is now known as rational medicine in the Western Hemisphere was Hippocrates, who lived between 460 and 367 B.C. (Daukes et al., 2005). He conducted empirical research and discovered that the sickness develops as a result of similarity, and it may be effectively treated by utilizing similarity (Huang, 2020). The substance that induces urinary tenesmus in healthy individuals is the same substance that alleviates it in those who are ill. Coughing and urine tenesmus are both triggered and resolved by the same substance in an identical manner. German naturalist physician and philosopher Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim, better known by his pen name Paracelsus, presided over this school of thought from 1493 to 1542 (Wiegant, 1994). The person created the theory of signatures, or "signa naturae," which holds that particular characteristics of plants or minerals, including their forms or colors, can be used to deduce a plant's or mineral's medical properties (Marian et al., 2008). For instance, plants with pointed leaves are believed to be effective for alleviating stabbing pains, while Euphrasia flowers, resembling irises, are thought to be beneficial for treating eye ailments. Similarly, topaz, due to its yellow hue, is believed to be a suitable remedy for jaundice. These are just a few examples of the doctrine's principles (Du and Knopf, 2009).

The inaugural comprehensive textbook on homeopathy, titled "Organon of Rational Art of Healing," was published in 1810. In 1819, a second version of the book was published under the title "Organon of Healing Art". Subsequent editions were released until the sixth edition was published after the author's death in 1921. Two additional essential works on homeopathy are "Materia Medica Pura" and "Chronic Diseases". *Materia Medica Pura* is a collection of reports on "homeopathic proving" that was published in six volumes. The first book was published in 1811 and the last volume, book VI, was released in 1827 (Mastrangelo, 2006). The revised editions of volumes I and II were released in 1830 and 1833, respectively (Poitevin et al., 1988). These volumes contain a total of 61 medications (Steinsbekk et al., 2006; Viksveen et al., 2017). There was a total of 37 individuals who provided evidence or proof. In Hahnemann's work titled "Chronic Diseases," he provides a detailed and revised explanation of the therapeutic approach to patients based on the hypothesis of "miasms" (Hariharan et al., 2021).

Traditional Methodology

Lots of people still think that Hahnemann's first book, *The Organon of Healing Art*, is the most important thing to know about how to use the homeopathic method. This may be the only book that has been around for two hundred years and is still useful in current medicine. This remarkable phenomenon could be attributed to either the neglect of updating this particular medical field or the inclusion of timeless principles in its theoretical framework. In the world of medicine, this

work represents the first attempt to organize the laws and regulations dictating what is considered healthy and harmful (Ling, 2020). The ideas in the Organon are what Hahnemann mostly bases his support for using homeopathy to help both short-term and long-term illnesses. During a clinical examination, a homeopathic physician focuses on finding a remedy whose etiology matches the patient's symptoms at the time of the disease (Guajardo et al., 1999).

The *Materia Medica* and the *Repertory* are two tools that the doctor uses to reach this goal. The first is a list of physical, mental, and sensory effects that happen to a lot of healthy people when they try a certain drug. The second, on the other hand, is essentially a catalog of symptoms and the corresponding homeopathic treatments linked to those symptoms. Indeed, two individuals can have comparable yet not identical symptoms in response to the same pathogenic agent (Rutten et al., 2013).

By correlating the pathophysiology of homeopathic remedies to the patient's symptoms, the test helps the physician tailor the treatment as much as possible. Not only should one be aware of the symptoms and indicators that are present, but also of the circumstances in which they worsen or improve ("modality"), the feelings they arouse, the time of day they occur, and other related elements. This phenomenon explains why different people with the same disease may need different homeopathic treatments (Ernst, 2008). The doctor carefully records the patient's medical history and looks at the patient as a whole, considering each person's unique traits, and is not primarily motivated by a strong moral stance. Instead, it is because of the practical implications of finding the right treatment based on the principle of similarity. As has been seen in other areas of health, the homeopathic approach fits with the ideas of modern complexity sciences. It is different from molecular medicine, which tends to be reductionist (Miles, 2009; Stub et al., 2022).

Dynamic Approach to Acutely Ill Patients

Acute diseases typically manifest with a restricted range of symptoms that exhibit minimal variation across different individuals. Therefore, the application of the concept of similarity is more straightforward and the available options for cures are decreased. Undoubtedly, the patient's particular responses such as the type of perspiration, fluctuations in temperature, thirst, and weakness are consistently observed, aiding the homeopath in selecting the most appropriate medicine. Hahnemann posited that acute diseases arise from abrupt changes in the expression of the vital principle. These pathologies typically have a variable but generally short-term progression (Milgrom, 2008). The user's text is enclosed in tags. He divides acute manifestations into two groups: (a) unique diseases, like injuries, illnesses brought on by sporadic factors (like heat, cold, or overeating), or the exacerbation of long-term conditions; and (b) prevalent diseases, which impact many people at once and can happen sporadically or as an epidemic. To treat acute disorders efficiently, a doctor must first identify the most likely underlying cause of the illness before choosing a drug that uses the concept of similars to address the patient's symptoms holistically (Oberbaum et al., 2005; Hart-Davies et al., 2024).

The Approach to Chronically Ill Patients

In homeopathy, giving each patient a personalized treatment needs a deep understanding of the *Materia Medica* and the use of the *Repertory*. When dealing with situations like these, it is necessary to apply the law of similars (Schmidt, 2009). As part of the medical exam, it is important to look at the patient's current clinical appearance as well as any changes in symptoms that have happened over time, as well as the patient's family history and any other signs of disease (Bell et al., 2012). In the past, Hahnemann had outlined that the systematic approach to treating patients who suffer from chronic illnesses should take into consideration a variety of factors. Some of these factors are the patient's age, sexual activity, family bonds, lifestyle, habits, social life, and moral and intellectual character. However, because this method of treating chronic illness is so complicated, the choice of a successful cure can be made by looking at certain traits that have become clear over time. Some of these are miasmas, temperament, and sensitive types (Mezzich and Salloum, 2008; Kettler, 2024).

Miasms

Hahnemann, after two decades of practicing homeopathy, started addressing the underlying issue of chronic illnesses that did not show improvement or only showed partial improvement despite the use of seemingly appropriate remedies. He documented his findings in the publication called "Chronic Diseases" (Bowker et al., 2006). Hahnemann, upon making this observation, proceeded to modify his hypothesis and propose the presence of unidentified exogenous agents (referred to as 'miasms') that, upon infecting the organism, initiate the manifestation of a range of symptoms. Currently, this concept appears to have significant limitations. Nevertheless, it is crucial to bear in mind that the knowledge about bacteria as agents of disease was virtually non-existent before 1860 when Pasteur made his groundbreaking discovery. Thus, the main topic of the debate centered on miasmatic ailments, which are caused by miasms or 'effluvia'. These miasms are organic particles present in the air that are emitted from marshes (Farzaei et al., 2014). Only a few of individuals speculated that these infectious agents could be living organisms. Hahnemann belonged to this exclusive group of individuals: In 1831, 35 years before Pasteur, he defined miasm as follows during a study on the treatment of Asian cholera: "The cholera miasm finds a suitable environment for its reproduction and multiplies into a much larger generation of extremely small, imperceptible, living organisms that are highly harmful to human life, which is likely the contagious substance of cholera". According to Hahnemann, a miasm has such a strong impact on the body that it makes the body unresponsive to homeopathic medicines that are chosen based on the symptoms observed during a medical

examination (Belcaro et al., 2014). These symptoms are merely a component of a multifaceted condition that necessitates a comprehensive understanding to provide appropriate treatment to the patient. From this perspective, the many symptoms observed throughout the patient's life are considered as a progression of an initial "infection". It is important to examine this progression to achieve a comprehensive and long-lasting cure. Throughout the history of homeopathy, numerous iterations of the miasms idea have emerged, and it continues to be a topic of extensive debate. Although it is obsolete in terms of current pathology, it is still employed in certain educational institutions as an instructive standard that can aid in the selection of a therapy (Eftekhar Sadat et al., 2013; Mathie et al., 2016).

Constitutions

The origins of this concept may be traced back to the ideas put forth by Dr. Nebel in the early 20th century. These ideas were later embraced by other doctors, particularly Leon Vannier. They noted that specific patients who were sensitive to the impacts of calcium carbonate displayed identical physical and psychological characteristics, as well as comparable inclinations towards sickness. An analogous finding can be drawn regarding individuals who exhibit sensitivity to other calcium salts, such as calcium phosphate and calcium fluoride (Farzaei et al., 2014). This concept originated during the 1920s and garnered both widespread acclaim and condemnation. At now, there are three main constitutional types that are widely recognized: sulfuric, carbonic, and phosphoric. In addition, there is a secondary variant (fluoric) that some experts contend is not a distinct category and can therefore be combined with the others. With the progress made in genetic research, it is crucial to recognise that the concept of constitutional types should not be regarded as a rigid categorization of patient groups. However, the homeopath's capacity to evaluate a patient's overall health allows them to choose an appropriate treatment for long-lasting illnesses, even in the absence of additional corroborating information (Bartlett et al., 2013; Frass et al., 2015).

Research Breakthrough

Extremely dilute pharmaceuticals, sometimes referred to as "ultramolecular" or "high dilutions" (HDs), are utilized in homeopathy. This word is used to describe medicines where the source material is very unlikely to be present. The amount of water used is more than Avogadro's number, which is 6.02×10^{23} . To be precise, it exceeds 23 DH or 12 CH. Due to this paradox, there has consistently been intense controversy among critics and proponents of homeopathy over its efficacy (Fuggle et al., 2020). 25 years have passed since Poitevin and Benveniste published their respective works on the subject of the "memory of water," and their dispute remains unresolved. In the past few years, this area has seen big steps forward in both basic research and clinical efficacy studies (Brown et al., 2006). The exact way that homeopathic dilutions work is still not fully known, but we have learned enough about them that it seems likely that they work in the therapeutic setting. Also, homeopathic medicines are still very popular in Europe, even though there is a lot of question about them in the academic world. People in Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Norway often use homeopathy to help children. When standard treatments don't work very well or at all, general practitioners often suggest homeopathic remedies. Because of this, it is clear that the subject needs more research, such as an analysis of the benefits that can come from both basic and applied science studies (Ge et al., 2017).

Conclusions and Future Prospective

Homeopathy and other types of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) can contribute to the restoration of the holistic well-being of a patient, as they focus on treating the individual as a whole rather than solely addressing their sickness. This approach aims to bring back the essential and intangible aspect of medicine, often referred to as the "soul," which is of utmost importance but difficult to define. Hormesis is a very interesting subject to study because it includes looking at the chemical and physical properties of water that support the effects of homeopathic treatments that are very diluted. In addition, we strongly advocate for the expansion of clinical research through the production of rigorous randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and the support of often overlooked observational studies of the epidemiological kind.

Additionally, this research method has the benefit of being carried out in settings that are very similar to the ones healthcare workers actually use and the settings where these methods are used. Observational studies allow for a more accurate adherence to homeopathic methodology, and a specific type of study known as "clinical verification of homeopathic symptoms" has the potential to enhance homeopathic prescription in the future. Each therapy strategy necessitates evaluation techniques that consider its potential mechanisms of action and the treatment situation. RCTs may not always be sufficient for effectively assessing medical procedures that require specific skills, such as surgery and acupuncture. It is important to consider that identifying the appropriate homeopathic remedy relies on conducting a comprehensive medical history and establishing a trusting environment, which is not possible in a double-blind setting. Assessments regarding the effectiveness of homeopathic therapy, and therefore its potential integration with conventional medicine, should be based on a range of research approaches, including blind and open studies, randomized trials, and observational investigations. Each method yields results that enable evaluations from different perspectives.

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