

Instructions for Homeopathic Patients

Homeopathic medicines can have a powerful effect when properly chosen and given at the correct time. Certain environmental factors may, however, prevent or hinder their action. Please read the following instructions carefully. Please note that all of the remedies have a labeled indication on the bottle of Headaches. This labeling is a requirement of the FDA but does not indicate the condition for which you are being treated.

Taking the Medicine

After taking your case, your practitioner will select the single homeopathic medicine or remedy that best matches your symptoms. The remedy is either in liquid form or is impregnated on grains or pellets. The grains or pellets are made of either sucrose (table sugar) or lactose (milk sugar). Your practitioner will instruct you as to how often to take your remedy.

Dos and Don'ts about Taking Homeopathic Remedies

While under homeopathic treatment for chronic illness, it is best to notify your homeopath before taking any new medications or other homeopathic remedies. In a first aid or emergency situation, however, you should take the appropriate action immediately and call your practitioner afterwards.

Avoid Touching the Medicine

Make sure that your hands are free of strong odors. Shake directly into your mouth, or use a disposable plastic spoon. Let it dissolve on or under your tongue for a minute or so before swallowing.

The Mouth should be Substance Free

When taking the medicine, the mouth should be free from food, liquid, gum, toothpaste, mouthwash, etc. for thirty minutes before and ten minutes after. In acute situations, rinse your mouth very well with water. If it is not possible to adhere to this.

Protect the Medicine

Direct sunlight, heat over 120 degrees (such as a car in summer) and strong odors will often destroy a medicine before you even take it. Avoid wearing perfume when you take a medicine.

Discard Spilled or Transferred Medicine

If, by accident, some medicine should spill from its container, do not return it to the container. Discard it. Do not transfer the medicine to other containers or bottles that have contained other substances. Do not reuse the containers when they are empty as they may still carry medicinal properties.

Ways by Which Medicines May be Antidoted

1. Coffee

Coffee frequently antidotes homeopathic medicines, occasionally after only one cup. Coffee has a drug effect which can bring back the old state even many months or years after successful homeopathic treatment. Please avoid it. Decaffeinated coffee will also, antidote.

Please also avoid coffee flavored foods and drink (kahlua, coffee, Ice cream, coffee yogurt etc.) Black tea, herb teas, Coca Cola and other caffeine containing substances generally will not antidote unless you are taking them in large quantities or are specially sensitive to them.

2. *Camphor*

Skin or mucous membrane application of camphor may antidote medicines. Avoid anything that has significant amounts of camphor, such as deep heat rubs, liniments, Vicks, Ben Gay, Tiger Balm, Carmex, nail polish, Noxema products, some massage compounds, some cosmetics, many lip balms (Chapstick, Blistex etc.), some Chinese candies, most cough lozenges and others. Even though ingredients don't specifically list camphor (i.e. lip balm) they often have camphor substances such as Mentholatum. Generally, the mere smelling of camphor is not enough to cause a medicine to be antidoted. Also avoid eucalyptus and moth balls.

3. *Anything to Which You Are Particularly Sensitive*

Avoid any food, chemical, or substance which you know causes severe reactions in your particular system, i.e., hives or skin eruptions after certain food, odors which make you faint, things which specifically cause asthma, etc.

4. *Electric Blankets*

Waterbed warmers and heating pads are OK and will not cause a problem.

5. *Routine Dental Work*

Cleaning of the teeth is OK and does not cause problems. However, the actual drilling, and perhaps the chemicals, used in dental work often will antidote homeopathic medicines.

6. *Traditional Medicine*

Traditional medicines are designed to remove specific symptoms without much regard to the person as a whole. This approach often leads to suppression of the symptoms and antidoting of the homeopathic medicine. Please tell your practitioner about all drugs, strong herbs, diet pills, birth control pills, etc. that you are taking. Under no circumstances should you stop strong traditional medicines without first consulting your homeopathic practitioner. An occasional Tylenol or aspirin will not cause a problem.

7. *Skin Medicines*

It is not uncommon for homeopathic medicines to bring back old skin symptoms. Please do not use locally applied medicine of any kind without first talking to your practitioner. This is especially true of topical steroids.

8. *Solvents*

Avoid heavy, prolonged exposure to solvents or fumes especially if working in an enclosed space. Also avoid hair permanents.

9. *Tea Tree Oil*

Tea tree oil will antidote.

10. Immunizations

Immunizations may antidote remedies and disrupt the immune system. Please talk to your homeopath before having an immunization.

11. Diagnostic Tests

Blood work will not antidote. Routine X rays are also not a problem. Mammograms or ultrasounds can antidote and MRI's almost always antidote.

12. Other Treatments

The balance of symptoms on all levels is a delicate one, and it can be easily upset. It is best not to mix acupuncture, chiropractic, polarity therapy, psychic healing and other energy plane manipulations with homeopathy. Magnets can antidote.

Acupuncture and therapeutic ultrasound have been known to disturb homeopathic treatment in some case, although both have significant therapeutic value. Please discuss these therapies with your practitioner.

13. Recreational drugs

Avoid all recreational drugs. Alcohol in moderation is not a problem. Moderate use of alcohol and tobacco does not generally interfere. However marijuana will usually antidote and cocaine will always antidote and should be avoided.

14. Other homeopathic remedies

Except in a first aid situation, do not use other homeopathic remedies without discussing them with your homeopath first.

15. Herbs

Herb teas are fine, as are culinary herbs. If you have been give Natrum muriaticum, you will usually be advised to avoid menthol and peppermint, in all forms, including tea. For other patients, peppermint is generally not a problem. There may be other specific substances your homeopath will ask you to avoid when taking a particular remedy.

16. Permanent waves

These may interfere with remedies because of the harsh and aromatic chemicals used.

Factors That Do Not Interfere with Homeopathic Treatment

1. Medications

Aspirin, acetaminophen, ibuprofen and other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications do not interfere with homeopathic treatment.

2. Heating pads and water bed heaters

3. Therapies

Massage (using non-aromatic oils), chiropractic adjustments and other forms of bodywork are generally compatible with homeopathy.

What Do I Need to Know About Homeopathic Treatment?

How Soon Will I Notice a Response to My Remedy?

You may notice an immediate response from your homeopathic remedy. In other cases, it may take several weeks or several months after taking your remedy before you notice a change in your symptoms.

The length of your treatment depends on many factors, including the severity of your illness, the clarity of your symptoms, your past medical and family health history, the type of treatments you have had in the past and the overall strength of your body's defenses. Acute diseases, such as colds, flues, pneumonia and bladder infections respond very quickly to homeopathy and will usually be cured in a few hours or one or two days. In chronic illness, such as arthritis, allergies, asthma, uterine fibroids and colitis, it will take longer to respond to the remedy.

After you take your remedy, you **may experience** a brief worsening of your symptoms. This is called an ***aggravation***. Most aggravations last from a few hours up to several days. If an aggravation occurs, it is probably a normal part of treatment and usually means that the correct remedy has been given.

Symptoms that you have had in the past may recur during the course of homeopathic treatment. This is called the ***return of old symptoms***. Usually they will last for a few days, then recede. It is as though the body were remembering, then repairing, an old illness. Often these symptoms will not return again.

Homeopathic treatment is analogous to both peeling an onion and digging up weeds by the root. As symptoms from the past appear, your homeopath will recognize a layer of illness as it comes to the surface to be healed, or a predisposition that needs to be eliminated. She/he will prescribe a remedy that matches the symptoms of the layer. This process continues until all the layers, even back to your childhood and your hereditary predispositions, have been removed. During this process, you may continue to need the same homeopathic medicine or you may need different medicines, depending on your state of health.

What If My Progress Seems Too Slow?

It is useful to remember how long it took to develop the illness and to understand that the healing of chronic illness may take time. Homeopathic healing is cumulative. A patient who continues with treatment for more than a year generally finds that her overall level of health improves considerably.

Will I Have to Take a Homeopathic Remedy Forever?

Yes and no. As long as you are well, or in the process of changing for the better, you may not need a remedy for months or even years. Homeopathy makes you more resistant to disease, but life is stressful and you may not stay well forever, even if your homeopathic treatment has been effective. If you develop new symptoms or your old symptoms return, it is important to check with your homeopath to see if you need to be treated again. Many patients who are treated homeopathically are so satisfied that they continue to use homeopathy for the rest of their lives.

When Should I Contact My Homeopath?

When you develop an acute illness that needs treatment. Call your homeopath *before* seeking other forms of treatment for acute illnesses. If you have a medical emergency, get medical treatment immediately, then call your homeopath as soon as possible. If you have rapidly progressing acute symptoms such as an earache, call your homeopath immediately. If you cannot reach your homeopath, seek conventional medical care for severe acute illnesses.

If you think you have been exposed to one of the substances that interfere with homeopathic treatment.

If you think nothing has happened from the remedy and you want to use another form of treatment to alleviate your symptoms.

You may not have waited long enough to feel the full effect of the remedy or another remedy may be needed. In either case, using another treatment before the action of the remedy has been evaluated may confuse your case. Your practitioner may be able to recommend something that will alleviate your discomfort yet will not interfere with your homeopathic treatment.

If you experience a severe aggravation after you take a remedy. This is unusual, but can happen. Your practitioner should know about it immediately.

If you experience significant symptoms you have never had before. These need to be promptly evaluated by your homeopath.

If old symptoms return severely for more than two weeks. A return of old symptoms is usually mild and short lasting, but occasionally the situation needs evaluation and treatment.

If you want to use prescription medications that you have not already discussed with your homeopath. This includes antibiotics, steroids, anti-inflammatories, hormones and other strong prescription drugs that may disturb your treatment.

If you need to have dental work or surgery. If it is an emergency, have the work done. If the dental care can wait, your homeopath may have a preference as to *when* the work is less likely to interfere with your treatment.

If you need extensive diagnostic procedures. Invasive diagnostic interventions such as exploratory surgery or other procedures may affect your treatment. Use these diagnostic techniques when necessary, but let your homeopath know.

If you do not know when to come in for your next follow-up appointment or you are unsure whether to continue homeopathic treatment. Your homeopath can guide you to the most appropriate next step in your healing process. If homeopathy has not worked well for you, which is occasionally the case, your homeopath may refer you to another homeopath or to a different type of practitioner.