

HOMEOPATHY SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

History

- The term Homoeopathy is derived from two words, 'Homoeo', meaning similar and 'Pathos' meaning suffering (system of similar suffering).
- Homoeopathy the system of medicine developed by founder Dr. Samuel Christian Friedrich Hahneman (1700-1810), an eminent Germany physician and chemist.
- He found out from his extensive studies that there exist a law in medicine which is called as 'Law of Similars' indicating the similarity in between drugs and diseases.
- He introduced his new principle 'Similia Similibus Curantur'.
- It means that like diseases are cured by like medicines.

In the year 1790, Dr Haneman checked the effect of anti-malarial drug cinchona on his own healthy body. Surprisingly he found that symptoms of malaria are developing in him which disappeared after discontinuing the drugs.

He continued his research in that direction by studying the effect of different substances on his close friends and relatives and almost published his discovery in the year 1796. His work was badly criticized by the scientific communities but Dr. Hahnemann was very much sure about this new system of medicine. He explained that he has not discovered anything new and these principles were discovered long back by Hippocrates who emphasized nature's law of cure.

Theory and Basic Concept

- The main principle of Homeopathy is *similia*. The concept of prescribing medicine having low quantity of original medicinal substances is called theory in minimum dose. This is emerging as nano-pharmacology.
- Another major contributor of Hahnemann is his teaching on using only those medicines whose therapeutic efficacy has been verified on human beings safely.
- He named this as Drug Proving. This is gaining wider acceptability in the scientific fraternity and is now called Human Pathogenitic Trial (**HPT**).

- Thus, the scientific validity of the principles postulated by Hahnemann in early century getting validated with the advancement of science.
- Therefore, it is said that Hahnemann was ahead of his time in terms of knowledge and wisdom.

Homoeopathy is based on seven principles which include:

1. *Individualization*
2. *Principle of similia,*
3. *Principle of simplex,*
4. *Principle of minimum dose,*
5. *Law of proving,*
6. *Law of dynamisation and*
7. *Vital force.*

- The concept of ***individualisation*** tells that no two individuals in the world are alike and, therefore, the diseases affecting the two individuals cannot be similar. Although common symptoms would be possessed by a number of individuals, but individual responses to the same disease would be different from person to person. Thus medicines used to cure the same disease in different individuals are different.
- The principle of ***Similia Similibus Curantur*** patronises the treatment of disease by a medicine which produces similar symptoms in the healthy individual by proving the drug.
- The ***principle of simplex*** emphasizes only single, simple medicine at one time and combination is not allowed. Though patients may have a number of complaints, only a single medicine is selected from the Materia Medica, which has a capacity to produce all these complaints in a healthy individual.
- The ***principle of minimum*** means minimum medicine at a time which is just sufficient to arouse the vital force of an individual. Dr. Hahnemann describes vital force as a dynamic power which preserves life force and its normal state indicates good health.

Diagnosis

- Homoeopaths usually collect an extremely detailed case history.
- Patients are asked to describe their medical history and current symptoms.
- The major symptoms, location, sensation, modality and concomitant are investigated.
- Particular attention is given to the modalities of presenting symptoms, that is whether they vary according to conditions or weather, time of day, change of season, etc.
- Detailed information is gathered about the patient's mood and behavior, likes and dislikes, responses to stress conditions, reactions to food and personality.
- The detailed case history helps to build up a symptom picture of patient.
- This is matched with the Drug Picture mentioned in the Homoeopathic Materia Medica and the treatment begins.

Treatment

- The practitioners always attempt to identify a single medicine which corresponds to the patient's general symptom picture.
- Two patients with identical diagnosis may receive different medicines.
- Sometimes the treatment consists of only two or more doses, while in other cases; medicine is prescribed in a regular daily dose for 2-6 weeks.
- Progress is reviewed from time to time and likewise suitable alterations are made in the medicine or dilutions.
- If the patient is doing quite well, then the medicine may be discontinued and the progress is further monitored.
- In case of recurrence, the treatment may be repeated with the same or a higher potency.
- If the symptom picture changes during the follow up, the prescription is changed, although the diagnosis remains the same.

Most of the Homoeopathic Practitioners treat chronic and recurrent conditions such as rheumatism, asthma, migraine, irritable bowel syndrome, dysmenorrhoea, upper respiratory and urinary tract infections and psychological disorders. They also treat number of patients with poorly defined illness, children are most commonly treated by them.

Homeopathic medicine: There are principally three essential processes involved in the preparation of remedies.

- These processes are serial dilution, succession and trituration.
- The *serial dilution* is the process for reducing the toxicity of the original crude drug in a sequential order.
- The *succession* and *trituration* are the methods by which the power is delivered to the preparation, whereby the curative characters of the original drug is recorded upon the molecules of the diluents.
- *Potentiaization* of the drug is basically a physical process by which the latent curative properties of drug are activated.

For the preparation of homoeopathic potencies of liquid drugs, three maior scales are used: (a) Decimal (b) Centesimal and Milesima.

- For powdered solid drugs only first two scales are used.
- In decimal scale the first potency contains 1/10 part of the original drug while,
- The first potency of the centesimal scale contains 1/100 part of the original.
- The millesimal scale contains 1/1000 part of the original drug in the 1st potency.

Potencies are denoted by letter 'c'. The potencies above 30th are supposed to be higher potencies. The greater the potentization of drugs, the more will be the curative abilities. Such high potencies prepared by the help of machines are known as high fuxion potencies.

The sources of Homoeopathic drugs are not only from plant, animal and mineral origin, but some uncommon sources are also used for the purpose. Vehicles used as a means of developing therapeutic activity of medicinal substances are inert, solid, semisolid or liquid vehicles

Conclusion

It is based on the similarity of symptoms produced by the disease and the symptoms produced by the particular drug in healthy individual which leads to its successful application in the treatment of disease. The concept is based on the law of similar, which means that like sufferings are treated by the like medicine. Many toxic drugs like belladonna or heavy metals like arsenic are

used as medicines by infinite dilutions which make them completely safe. The government of India accepted Homeopathy after the Homeopathic Inquiry Commission report in 1948.