

Is Homeopathy Really Effective?

The word 'homeopathic' is from the Greek words 'homeo' which means "similar" and the word 'pathos' which means "disease" or "suffering". Homoeopathy has been in popular use in the United Kingdom, Europe, the United States of America and many other countries for over 200 years and some of homoeopathy were also in use by the ancient Greeks and Egyptians (What is Homeopathy?, 2009). Homeopathy was discovered by a German physician, Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, in 1769, which he started the theory "law of similar" or what it is normally known as "like cures like" treatment or the treatment that can cure sick people by using what causes the similar illness to the healthy ones (Natural treatment (homeopathy), 2009). Thus, homeopathy is "a system of therapy based on the concept that disease can be treated with drugs (in minute doses) thought capable of producing the same symptoms in healthy people as the disease itself" (Definition of Homeopathy, 2009). It is a system of medical therapy that uses very small amounts of medicines, or remedies and most of the remedies are prepared from substances found in nature. Moreover, homeopathy is not similar to herbal medicine, so people should not be confused with them because these two systems are very different. Herbal medicine uses simple quantities of substances in the same way that allopathic medicine uses pharmaceutical drugs. On the other hand, homeopaths use micro-doses made from plants, minerals or any other substance found in nature (What is Homeopathy?, 2009). For example, when you peel an onion, you will feel burn in your eyes or feel itch and may be feeling crying and you might also have a runny nose and begin to sneeze. Therefore, if you had similar symptoms during a cold or allergy attack, such as a runny nose, watery eyes and sneezing, "a homeopathic micro-dose of the remedy red onion would help your body heal itself" (What is Homeopathy?, 2009). Basically, homeopaths

believe that symptoms are the body's way of fighting diseases or the body's healing power (INTRODUCTION: What is homoeopathy?, 2009). However, I would like to discuss some of the reasons why homeopathy is ineffective.

First of all, Homeopathy has no scientific prove that it truly works. Besides, homeopathy does not really work in state hospitals and there is a little interaction between doctors and homeopaths. Moreover, most doctors are skeptical of homeopathic medicine. The most passionate argument against homeopathy is that its action is thanks to the placebo effect which works its magic on sensitive minds. The argument against homeopathy continues by saying it only works in those who have blind faith in it and that its efficiency is proportional to belief that it will work. In addition, on August 27th 2005, the Lancet, the first-class medical Journal, published a study which they said, proves that homeopathy is nothing more than a placebo effect, but the study was ended up opposite (Proof against Homeopathy, 2009). Although, according to a discussion board from a website www.toytowngermany.com, there is a man claimed that he had met a woman once who had been injured for years by the effects of her celiac disease with very severe dietary limits. She had been to lots of numbers of experts of all type and a friend of her told her to go to a homeopathic doctor. Thus, she went but ended with no good results. Later on, the same friend told her to try another doctor because ‘the homeopathic doctors don't always match you properly’. Therefore, she went to another homeopathic doctor and following the treatments. After a few treatments she was facing with the awful side effects and had suffered for years. She had been unable to work or to leave the house for any real extent of time. Nevertheless, the lady is able to work now and she is moving to Eastern Europe to work. Furthermore, even the Boots store, the largest high street chemist stores in the UK, even claimed that “we sell homeopathic remedies because they sell, not because they work" (Boots the chemists, 2009).

Additionally, from the article by Jon Donnis about Professor Edzard Ernst, the first Professor of Complementary Medicine in the United Kingdom, who has investigated and tested different types of alternative medicines for years in which now he is willing to give £10,000 to the first person who can show homeopathy is better than a placebo in a 'scientifically controlled trial' and he has told supporters of homeopathy and the practitioners to "finally 'put up or shut up', and stated that there was still no strong evidence that homeopathy was effective in any way more than a simple placebo" (Professor Edzard Ernst, 2008). In 2008, Professor Edzard Ernst and Dr. Simon Singh had published 'Trick or Treatment? : Alternative Medicine on Trial'. And later on, they revealed that Britain had spent £500 million per year on unproved or disproved therapies. "More recently Professor Edzard Ernst and Dr.Simon Singh wrote a letter to The Times where they called on Prince Charles to recall various publications that they claimed misrepresented scientific evidence about therapies like homeopathy, one of the publications was actually produced with a £900,000 grant from The Department of Health" (Professor Edzard Ernst, 2008). Thus, now with Professor Edzard Ernst's challenge we might expect the Homeopaths to be lining up to prove a proper scientific study that their treatments and studies were true. However, instead of proving their points, the homeopaths attacked Professor Edzard Ernst saying that his challenge is nothing more than a publicity stunt. Furthermore, the homeopaths are saying out the typical believer lines of "we already have our proof" and "we don't need to prove something we already know works", but it seems to me that the homeopaths are scared because they actually do not have proofs. After the argued of the homeopaths, according to Dr Simon Singh's interview by the Daily Mail, he claimed that "If homeopathy could be proven to be effective it might earn the researcher a Nobel Prize in Medicine, He or she would also deserve Nobel prizes in chemistry and physics because the laws of science would need to be re-written". Although, it seems that homeopaths have no interest in proving their

claims, and if someone did decide to take up Professor Edzard Ernst's challenge, what all the homeopaths would really need to do is to publish their evidence through the "Cochrane Collaboration", a respected independent group in the UK, which investigates medicines and various claims. But it seems that there are no homeopaths who brave enough to do so, because they have no scientific proof for their studies.

Moreover, in the article 'Homeopathic Study Finds 32 People Dead!' by Jon Donnis, had showed that a recent study of the long-term effects of homeopathic treatment and remedies have found 32 participants have since died from the long term effects of it. About 207 of adults and 53 of children withdrew their approval to participate in the studies and another 9 adults and 3 children had simply gone missing (Homeopathic Study, 2009). To support the previous study, the study by the BMC (BioMed central) Public Health, states that "Our findings demonstrate that patients who seek homeopathic treatment are likely to improve considerably, although this effect must not be attributed to homeopathic treatment alone. These effects persisted for 8 years" (BMC Public Health, 2009). And Donnis also said that "Based on the evidence provided in the report, I've formed my own conclusion: some patients who receive homeopathic treatments are likely to die or go missing" (Homeopathic Study, 2009).

Here is another example of bad homeopathy. According to the article 'Healer Russell Jenkins Dies after Treating Simple Foot Injury with Honey!' by a health reporter, Clare Semke, a 52-year-old healing therapist, Russell Jenkins, who refused to see a doctor died after developing gangrene in his leg. He injured his left foot by accidentally stepping on an electrical plug at his home and the wound later became infected. However, the Jenkins rejected a conventional treatment and said that his 'inner being' or his body told him not to go to hospital. Instead of going to the hospital Jenkins tried treating his foot with honey which

believes to be an ancient remedy for the treatment of infected wounds. Unfortunately, the gangrene spread to his leg and then he later died. (Healer Russell Jenkins, 2008). His mother, who later went to the hospital, said that the doctors told her that if she and Russell Jenkins had sought help just a few hours before he died, he could have been saved and alive. Later on Eileen Jenkins, the mother, told a Portsmouth inquest, 'To lose my son is devastating, absolutely. But the way he died, I just can't come to terms with it, when I know all it needed was a phone call for a doctor or ambulance to be called, for antibiotics, and my son would be here today' (Healer Russell Jenkins, 2008). Moreover, the investigation also showed that neither Russell Jenkins nor his former theatre nurse partner, Cherie Cameron, had sought for medical help and the investigation also showed that Russell Jenkins, a healing therapist, who ran the Quiet Mind Centre from his home, had injured his foot since December 2006. And he developed an inch-long sore which led to gangrene and later spread to his leg. Jenkins sought advice from homeopath, Susan Finn, in April 2007, who suggested that he could treat it with Manuka honey, and she also claimed that at that time, Jenkins did not want to see a doctor and would not go to hospital. After a few days, Finn was paying a visit to Jenkins's and she said that his foot was swollen and one of his toes was discolored and two days later she said his toes had turned black. Russell Jenkins died in the early hours of April 17 from gangrene caused by a mixed bacterial infection. The doctor later claimed that if Russell Jenkins sought for help, he would have had up to a 30 per cent chance of survival just two hours before he died. And he said that "It is clear to me that had he been seen and treated along conventional medical lines, the likelihood is that his life would have been saved and that the calamitous chains of events leading to his death would have been avoided" (Healer Russell Jenkins, 2008). According to a decision Russell Jenkins had made, Portsmouth and south-east Hampshire coroner David Horsley said that "At no stage following the injury to his foot did Russell Jenkins or anyone else on his behalf seek or obtain conventional medical

advice or treatment for his condition. In consequence, Russell Jenkins's condition was inappropriately and ineffectively treated by himself and by others and led to his death” (Healer Russell Jenkins, 2008).

The other example that homeopathy is ineffective is the case of the Australian infant girl, Gloria Thomas, who died of complications due to eczema. Eczema is an easily-treatable skin condition which the treatments do not cure it but do manage it. However the treatment that was used to the girl was withheld by her parents, who rejected the advice of doctors and rejects to take her to the hospital, instead they used homeopathic treatments to her. And of course, the homeopathy treatment was not working for the girl. Therefore the baby's condition got worse. Her skins were covered in rashes and open cracks and these cracks let in germs and bacteria into her body in which her tiny body had difficulty fighting off. “She became undernourished as she used all her nutrients to fight infections instead of for growth and the other normal body functions of an infant” (Homeopathy kills, 2009). Even though Gloria had constantly sick and in pain, her parents are still stuck with the idea that homeopathy would cure her. Thus, they did not seek for help or take her to the hospital where she should have been long time ago. But then when the baby girl developed an eye infection, her parents finally took her to a hospital, but of course it was far too late. The little Gloria Thomas had suffered from the infection and even after Gloria died, her father, Thomas Sam, is still claims that his belief that homeopathy was equally valid to conventional medicine for the treatment of eczema. He also said that “Conventional medicine would have prolonged her life ... with more misery. It's not going to cure her and that's what I strongly believe.” And now Thomas and his wife have to be in jail for 25 years for letting their own daughter died in front of them (Homeopathy kills, 2009). Thus, from now on the Thomas will have a plenty of time to think about what they should had done better to save their child life.

In conclusion, homeopathy might be used for many decades and it might be effective in some points or most of the time, but still there are still no proofs of how homeopathy is actually works. Even though the number of people who survived by homeopathy might be larger than the number of people who died or get negative effects from it but that little numbers are showing how homeopathy is not working and how conventional medicines are more effective. I know the statistics of people who died or do not cure from homeopathy is a lot less than the opposite, however all the studies about homeopathy had showed that homeopathic patients are not only believe in the benefits of the remedies but also believe that their bodies can actually heal themselves. Therefore, I believe that these homeopathic treatments are not real and I believe more in science then superstitious stuff. In addition, when I am sick, I would rather drive myself to the hospital than wasting my time on something that does not even have proof or something that nobody really sure that it is real.

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