

Homeopathy Extreme

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Abstract: By providing an interesting array of anecdotal tales of personally treated acute and emergency conditions with homeopathy, Mr. Treuherz illustrates the profound efficacy of homeopathy in “extreme” situations. He suggests that the homeopathic profession overcomes its hesitancy to take on such challenges and seek a more prominent place in treating emergency illness in the health care system.

Keywords: extreme homeopathy, treating serious acute and emergency conditions with homeopathy.

“If I am not for myself, who is for me, but if I am for my own self only, what am I? And if not now, when?”

Rabbi Hillel in the *Mishna: Ethics of the Fathers*, ch.1, v.14, 100 BCE

Questions and Issues

How far can we go with homeopathy? Our textbooks have cases from the nineteenth century which show our medical ancestors as saving lives. They helped people who were likely to die without their homeopathy. People were saved from epidemics of the scourges of humankind like scarlet fever, cholera, tuberculosis, typhoid and yellow fever.(1) In the early twentieth century there was a Red Cross homeopathic hospital in Paris during the first world war where there were no limbs amputated from gangrene or infection.(2) In the late twentieth century a medical homeopath from Seattle, Jennifer Jacobs demonstrated the effectiveness of homeopathy in endemic potentially fatal diarrhoea in Nicaragua.(3)

Can we put our patients through the same processes? Is our alternative health service sufficiently developed for us to do likewise? Can we help with SARS? Anthrax? Ebola or West Nile Fever? Avian Flu? MRSA? Some people obviously think so.(4)

Do we need, like Peter Chappell, one of the illustrious founders of this Society of Homeopaths (UK), to break the mould and prescribe in a manner not known to Samuel Hahnemann?(5)

There was a scandal in Spain when I was still a student; thousands of people were seriously poisoned with adulterated and toxic rapeseed oil used in cooking. I was sure that homeopathy could help. I suggested that the Society offer our services and I

was turned down. My own letter to the Spanish Embassy was ignored. A while later the positive results of homeopathic treatment by a local homeopath, Richard Ancarola, were published in the *British Homeopathic Journal*.(6)

Then there was Bhopal and the Union Carbide poisoning. The late Dr. Prakash Vakil was sure that the chemical poisoning victims could be helped by *Chlorum* which he diagnosed as the toxin from the symptoms.(7)

Can we afford to make mistakes? When life is at stake, do we more than ever need a publicly accountable charter or state regulated register? Is it more important to refine the high standards of our single remedy homeopathy or muddy the homeopathic waters in order for public recognition. Will we be better at curing folk if we are regulated?

What do our patients feel when they are in danger and turn to homeopathy? Is it ethical to subject them to our treatment when their lives are in danger? Is it ethical not to offer our treatment when they are in danger? Where are the clinical studies which would justify confidence in our protocols? Have you ever watched *Casualty* (8) (television show in the UK) on a Saturday night and speculated on how you would treat the patients? Or seen fictitious cases there which baffled you?

I shall now refer to a number of smaller cases, and then three longer ones. Each appeared to be

extreme in a different way.

Small Serious Cases

When I was a homeopathy student, I was told to only treat first aid cases. I lived opposite a park with a playground and, believe me, I saw some first aid until one day a drunken man was locked inside the park and impaled himself on the railings trying to climb out. All I could do was try to offer pain relief and stop the bleeding until the ambulance arrived.

When a patient's wife called me to say her husband had eaten something (it transpired that it was an aspirin) and his throat was closing up and he could not speak and perhaps could not breathe well, and was becoming worse rapidly, what should have been done. I asked her to dial 999 and call an ambulance, and then, only then, to give him *Apis* 30C from their home remedy kit. She phoned a half hour later to thank me and say that they had cancelled the ambulance.

I was phoned recently by a patient who had been stung by a wasp while on vacation in Greece. I had given him *Apis* 30C a year-and-a-half previously, to always carry with him in case this happened as in the past he had been prone to anaphylactic shock.

He swelled up, felt himself to be in danger; the air ambulance was scrambled (he was on an island), and he took his *Apis*. The ambulance was cancelled as he recovered rapidly. He was very grateful and asked for another *Apis* to carry for the next time.

I was relaxing on a Greek island beach (Close your eyes and you're half way there!). A woman appeared out of the sea and collapsed face down in the sand. I was called over and administered *Arnica* while observing the blotchy rash on her buttocks. She came round and explained that she had sat on a quantity of jellyfish. I then gave *Medusa* 30c which I just happened to have in my kit. This is, of course, potentized jellyfish, the very same substance that caused the problem. I am told that the traditional Greek remedy is to rub fresh urine onto the affected area. This is unconscious homeopathy to deal with what is actually uric acid poisoning. The similar remedy from a different sphere of nature is of course *Urtica urens*.

And a look at Boericke, Clarke, and a repertory reveal that not only do the skin symptoms of *Medusa* resemble those of *Urtica urens*, but there are also similarities in lactation. Both remedies occur in the rubrics:

CHEST: MILK; absent

CHEST: MILK; disappearing

CHEST: MILK; increased, too profuse

CHEST: MILK; non-pregnant women

Urtica urens also is in:

CHEST: MILK; menses suppressed

CHEST: MILK; suppressed

CHEST: MILK; weaning

I should add that the patient recovered very quickly.

In Calcutta I have seen *Ficus religiosa*, a locally proved remedy, used in severe bleeding after road traffic accidents. An Indian homeopath observed a dog eating the leaves, after which it coughed up blood immediately. I used it once when someone came into my home through the glass front door, having omitted to open it first, and the bleeding stopped like turning off a tap.

I have seen a patient with an acute episode of thrombocytopaenia and helped the blood loss immediately with *Crotalus horridus*. I came upon a builder working in my cellar having a heart attack and brought him back to consciousness with *Latrodectus mactans*. I saw a woman who had been bleeding for three weeks, said bleeding stopping in less than one

hour with *Ustilago maydis*. You would have done the same.

A toddler was brought to see me with her hand taped inside a polythene bag filled with a bactericidal ointment at the hospital following a severe burn. She had put her hand into an electric fire. I prescribed *Arnica* for her and her mother, and then *Causticum* for the pain. I wanted her to have poultices of *Urtica* and later *Calendula*, but the mother feared to take off the bag. She had been told that this was the treatment for napalm burns in Vietnam. I saw her daily for a few days and then gave her *Pyrogenium* to hold for the weekend. Predictably the wound went septic and during a high fever the mother called me. *Pyrogen* did the trick; she took off the bag, and external and internal *Calendula* saved her from the need for skin grafts.

I prescribed *Hydrogen* for a man who had gone bonkers. He was referred to me by a rabbi. He was a Jewish man and had become a sort of born-again Jew. He grew his beard much longer than mine - side locks, black hat, all the uniform; he was praying too hard, he was fasting too hard, and he was trying to get himself at one with his maker. He was overdoing it and he had been sectioned (hospitalized). Basically he was psychotic and I gave him Hydrogen 1M. I did not know if it would make him worse or better, through lack of experience, but it seemed the right

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remedy at the time. I do not often see people in a very psychotic state. It worked very well, but the psychiatrist also went absolutely bonkers when he learned that the patient went off his normal medicine. Although the patient had actually calmed down, the psychiatrist did not look reality in the eye, and they sectioned him again.

A patient came to see me with barber's itch. This is an infected ingrown hair follicle on the face. He also suffered with terrible spinal pain, especially on the coccyx following a road traffic accident; he was on painkillers (recently withdrawn as dangerous), and he had no hope of recovery. He had not thought to tell me of this. Hypericum cured both problems to his amazement.

A male patient was referred to me with a perianal fistula which was worse following surgery; it had been sewn up at both ends and was now full of pus. The same patient had become impotent, explaining the symptoms in some detail, and which I can only describe as 'bashful semen.' Silica released him from his symptoms and the next operation was cancelled.

Within the NHS an immigrant male patient had had surgery three times for an abscess at the base of his spine, with another operation pending. He had active tuberculosis which he had brought with him from Africa. After Silica and Tuberculinum he was restored to health and the surgeon was baffled as another operation was cancelled.

Sometimes I give the wrong potency. Can we afford to admit such a thing in public? I had a patient who came on a GP referral for coughing blood.⁽⁹⁾ On taking the case, he was male and gay and HIV positive and he had chronic liver disease on which the allopaths had given up. He was indeed coughing, and it was not a question of 'organ support;' it was a question of selecting the correct remedy, and I went through the case and decided on *Carduus marianus*, because it has pain in the left lobe of the liver which is near the centre of the abdomen, which is where his pain was, and because it has liver and lung symptoms. *Chelidonium* affects the other lobe of the liver and has pain in the shoulder. So it was a careful choice. I gave him a 6C potency to take three times a day and nothing happened. I wanted a phone call from him very quickly for results. So then I gave him mother tincture and it worked. I went to Clarke's *Materia Medica* and thought hard about what was needed in this case and I gave him mother tincture. It was a chronic illness, but the prescription had to work quickly.

A small boy was referred to me by a GP friend. I was told that the child would be taken into care due to parental neglect if the parents did not follow my instructions and that the child would need

hospital if recovery was not rapid. Some little time earlier they had brought the child to the GP with whooping cough and announced that they would prefer homeopathic treatment with which he had agreed. But he did not realize they were working from a book only, and the child deteriorated. They thought he looked a little sleepy. I decided he was in a coma. He clutched at his parents, yet rejected their affection. I prescribed *Antimonium tartaricum*, which produced a fast recovery. Perhaps we are all at risk of accusations of neglect if our patients do not recover.

A Longer Serious Case

One day this patient felt unwell 'in his tummy.' It went on for a week, apparently well-indicated remedies failed to help, and his lower abdomen carried on becoming more painful. He attended a committee meeting at which there happened to be present a medical doctor who was also a homeopath. "It is as if I have a left ovary and it is *very* inflamed," he said. "I feel I am going to collapse. Please look after me."

The doctor cleared the room, laid out the patient on the committee table and examined him. He diagnosed a burst lower bowel, septicaemia, peritonitis, probably of diverticular origin. He did not wait for an ambulance; he asked someone to call the hospital to warn them, put the patient in his car and took him to the hospital. The diagnosis was confirmed, the medication prescribed was intravenous Metronidazole – which is an anaerobic bactericide (Flagyl) – and surgery.

The patient refused surgery and medication. The hospital doctors' reaction was to invoke the mental health legislation, to claim that the patient would be a danger to himself and others, and had to be detained in the hospital against his will and forcibly subjected to the conventional treatment, notwithstanding the known side effects of the drug and his aversion to surgery.

Once the phlebotomist had taken a blood sample (which later was shown to confirm a raised ESR) and while the psychiatrist was on his way to sign the detention order, the patient got dressed and escaped, staggering out of the hospital and going home in a taxi.

His wife said he looked grey and green by turns. He called his homeopath who said take the Flagyl. He called a medical friend who provided a prescription for a Flagyl suppository in case the homeopathy did not work.

So which remedy was going to help an inflamed abdomen, with sepsis and rebound tenderness and guarding, pain, fever and collapse? The answer was *Pyrogenium*. *Pyrogen* was an unusual remedy in

its creation; it was not lying around waiting to be proved. Drysdale of Liverpool took a half pound of lean beef and put it in a jar and left it for a week. It was boiled, strained and filtered, diluted and potentized. The patient needed only a few doses of a high potency before he looked merely pale. The toxicity was draining away.

Recovery was helped by careful eating. *China* 200 was prescribed and recovery was rapid. Flagyl was not required. A month later he returned to the hospital for a check up and they said the diagnosis must have been incorrect.

Is this how we can realistically care for our patients or are we putting their lives at risk? Are they scared of our treatment? Can we ask them without frightening them?

That patient was me and I was very scared, but the homeopathic remedies did the trick. Is it realistic to scare our patients? Is it the illness that was scary or the need to trust homeopathy? I knew I had the right remedy. I think my wife, who is not a homeopath, must have been very worried.

Getting stoned was not fun - kidney stones and other lumps (10)

One day in March 2002, I was at home with my two sons, aged 3 and 8. Suddenly, I was in extreme agony with pain in my back ... or my side ... or my backside. I couldn't quite work out where the pain was coming from or what it was, and I hurt too much to be able to think.

Screaming my head off - I was literally writhing on the floor screaming my head off. I also happened to be clutching my cordless phone. A friend called, but I was in too much pain to speak. She hung up after listening to my screams for a few seconds and called an ambulance. The printer from the Society of Homeopaths called. I couldn't speak to him either. He hung up and called the Society of Homeopaths' office, and they called for an ambulance. A colleague heard about my plight and called to tell me to take *Calcarea carbonica* 30C every fifteen minutes. He hung up and called an ambulance because I couldn't speak and was still screaming my head off. My older son pressed the emergency button by the front door which alerts the local fire, police, and ambulance services. Luckily, the ambulance service was coordinated; so only one ambulance came. A neighbor came to take care of the boys, and I ended up at the hospital still screaming and taking *Calcarea carbonica* 30C every fifteen minutes.

About two or three hours after this all began, the pain left me as suddenly as it had come. No hospital staff had paid me any attention until I stopped screaming. Then a doctor came by and asked me to pass urine into a glass bottle and we examined

the results. With a naked eye we could see the pieces of stone. I was exhausted and shaken, and I rested for a few days. During that time, I read up on kidney stones and their homeopathic treatment. In *New, Old and Forgotten Remedies* (published in 1900), E.P. Anshutz wrote about his own spectacular, long-term cure of horrible kidney stones. "It is true, the most suitable homeopathic remedies afforded me relief," he wrote. "The incarceration of calculi in the ureter especially was relieved by *Nux*; but they were unable to put a stop to the formation of calculi; this result was only attained by the preparation of *Calculus renalis*." *Calculus renalis* is a homeopathic preparation of one of Anshutz's own kidney stones.

I decided to take *Calculus renalis* 30C once daily for three months, beginning in March.

A Sudden Blow-up

At the end of June 2002, I went to the annual Irish Homeopathic Conference in Galway, looking as if someone had just thumped me in the eye. A cyst in my eyelid had become inflamed just twenty-four hours before I was due to travel. I'd had this cyst for twenty-five years; every year or so it would gradually fill up with pus, and after a remedy like *Staphysagria*, it would burst and drain, but there was always a small, hard lump remaining. This time, my eyelid had blown up suddenly. It was swollen, painful, and red. I took *Apis* 30C every three or four hours for a number of doses, but it only palliated, relieving the swelling a little. Something was still there inside the underside of the lid. I took a few doses of *Staphysagria* 30C and it did nothing. So I visited an ophthalmic surgeon at the local hospital who slit the underside of the eyelid, and out popped some fragments of stone. I avoided her prescription of antibiotics, and it healed rapidly with dilute *Euphrasia* tincture and one dose of *Staphysagria* 200C.

Stone-free

I believe that as a result of taking *Calculus renalis* for three months, the calcified cyst in my eyelid cracked. There was no outlet for it though until the surgeon made a slit, and out it popped. Some months after this, I noticed that a couple of calcified lumps or arthritic nodules on my knuckles had become smaller. For years, I had not been able to wear my wedding ring because of them. Now I can wear the ring, and my knuckles are no longer painful. I also have not suffered another attack of kidney stones. This is not a huge length of time to believe I am free of kidney stones, but it is now a year and six months with not a hint of a problem in this area. I believe that there must be a similarity between calcifications wherever they may occur, and *Calculus renalis* has the potential to address them. Previous

to my personal use of this remedy, I had prescribed it occasionally for patients with stones in the salivary glands. There was never a crisis or problem; the stones just got smaller and were reabsorbed.

Reminder

If you have stones, nodules, or calcifications, I suggest that you do not use this remedy at home. Instead, please consult a qualified homeopath to find the right constitutional remedy for you, one that will address the totality of your symptoms. I must not forget the effect of this on my older son, Eliezer, who turned ten this past October. His response at the time was heroic, but he was very upset afterwards to see his father in such pain. He needed his constitutional remedy, and he still remembers the incident with a frisson of fear. His recent spectacular speedy recovery from mumps with a few doses of *Jaborandi* 30C has confirmed his confidence in homeopathy. My younger son Isaac, now just six and a half, seems not to have grasped the significance in the same way.

Prescribing for family members; hospital borne infections

My Son the Homeopath! (11)

There are many pitfalls and ethical issues in prescribing for close members of one's family and yet there are occasions when it is very necessary to do so. And it is a temptation to do so for one has a belief that one is doing one's best for one's child or parent, which of course can become a source of moral blackmail whether the prescription is successful or not. When is an emergency not an emergency? I have had occasion to prescribe for both of my elderly parents in recent years and I am now all too aware of the risks. One of these was for a hospital borne infection, something to which we must now all look forward?

My mother in her late seventies had two major operations in quick succession, just one month apart. Six years previously, following a fall and a fractured femur, she had a steel pin inserted and made a good recovery with the help of homeopathy. Six years later she required a hip replacement as her hip joints had worn differently from that time. She made such a good recovery from surgery with the assistance of *Arnica montana* that a month later she dislocated her new hip through over-activity! The second operation was too much for her and she declined rapidly with complications in the form of a urinary infection which did not respond to Septrin. On the contrary the Septrin seemed to weaken her and she could not eat.

Her homeopath was on vacation and I was called

in to advise. I found her at home looking thin and weak and I was at first unable to distinguish any unusual feature of her case or see the important core of what was to be cured. I was in despair and she was in despair. That was the issue and I quickly turned to Kent's *Repertory* to the familiar rubric in the Mind chapter, "Despair of recovery," and my eye alighted on a sub-rubric "during convalescence." There was only one remedy listed, in the second grade of importance (of three grades), and that was *Psorinum*, a nosode of the scabies vesicle first proved by Hahnemann. This seemed at first to be unlikely, ... what other rubrics could I possibly find? ... and then I mused on her life. She had been young during the depression in Germany and had to take a wheelbarrow load of money to buy a loaf of bread. We had always to eat up all our food as children because of this, not to waste a scrap; and in her old age she was still as thrifty as ever though well enough provided for. She had a lifetime culture of poverty consciousness even now and this is part of the essence of *Psorinum*. It is listed as having a fear of poverty and a lack of reactivity. This was the remedy that I chose and administered in a 1M potency. "Oh, I do feel better and I am so glad that you are a homeopath" she said. Her recovery was sustained.

What a reaction! I was thrilled and on reflection chastened. Had she not recovered what could I have done? And since she did recover, was it the remedy or was it the 'my son the homeopath' factor as I now call this variant of the placebo effect? Had the recovery not been sustained this may have been the case. We shall never know, but she nevertheless goes from strength to strength.

A couple of winters ago my father, in his early eighties, had an intractable troublesome cough which responded well to the ministrations of his homeopath and then relapsed. This happened a few times. He had done particularly well on *Causticum* I recall, but it no longer held and yes, you guessed it, his homeopath was on holiday and this coincided with my visit. Prescribing was complicated by the need to discuss even intimate personal feelings in a loud voice as his hearing aid was only partially successful; he also has selective deafness, hearing what he wants and switching off what he does not want to hear. He is an active pipe smoker, which, of course, colors everything. He seemed not only weak and weary, but withdrawn and actually did not want company, which made him definitely anxious and even exacerbated his cough. He was in his study most of the time and asleep a good deal. The cough chapter of Kent is full of the most common modalities which all coughs seem to have, and I could not see what was troubling him.

I joined him in his study after a siesta. I opened

Phatak's alphabetical *Concise Repertory* and looked at "Company aggravates" and "Cough" and there I found it: "Cough aggravated from company" - *Ambra grisea*. This unusual substance is made from the digestive fluid of the sperm whale (and, not as is erroneously thought, from its sperm, nor from amber which is *Succinum*). It is known as being good for the elderly and for those who are shy of public appearances; they cannot do anything in the presence of others. This is very true of my father at times. (It was thought that King George VI was given *Ambra* to help him with his anxiety at important public appearances). And the *Ambra* cough is hollow, spasmodic and barking, and comes from deep in the chest. The remedy not only rapidly dealt with his cough, but restored much energy and confidence. Here it was a different aspect of the 'my son the homeopath' problem. This was a wonderful prescription for my father which he richly merited for years, and I had never before seen the need for it and I should have seen it. I was too close to him to perceive that which had to be cured.

I am happy to have helped them celebrate their golden wedding in September 1990! I must mention that they died in their 90's a few years ago.

On the Phone

Among the most extreme prescribing which I undertake is working on the "Homeopathic Helpline." This telephone helpline service has been open continuously since 1 April 1996 – ten years at the time of writing – and has received hundreds of thousands of calls. "09065 343404. All calls cost \$1.50 per minute." It is licensed by the UK telephone service regulator as a professional premium rate line. It was started by a pharmacist who has trained as a homeopath, and I am his first resource when he needs time off. I talk with distant patients (or their parents or family members) whom I may never see two or three days each week, and occasionally for much longer turns of duty. By no means have all of the patients called because their homeopath is not available; many callers have never tried homeopathy before, and many are in serious trouble. It might be an accident, it might be childbirth gone wrong, it might be pneumonia, it might be suicidal depression or a psychotic state. They might have stopped taking allopathic medicines with no support. They might think they have flu, but be in an advanced stage of whooping cough. On duty days I am on call from 9 a.m. through midnight. There are slack periods, but I must remain alert. I must know when to send them to their general practitioner or accident and emergency department.

Among recent calls was one which I recognized as a child with torsion of the testicles. I told the father

to go to hospital now, to not wait for an ambulance, and to use *Arnica* afterwards if possible. He called a few days later to say thank you because I had been correct. We homeopaths offer a complementary service even if we have an alternative philosophy of health.

I sent a woman to her GP to have her chest examined. When she called back and could tell me which lobe of her lungs were affected I could prescribe a remedy from her kit. Every home must have a kit. She also had an allopathic prescription in case the homeopathy did not work.

Most calls are about children, and most of them are about upper respiratory tract infections, digestive problems and dentition. But it might also be an infestation, a behavior problem, an accident, or an unknown diagnosis. We may prescribe or we may refer to a registered homeopath.

Conclusion

You will, of course, have helped your own patients in acute illness. What I am suggesting is that we must be prepared to work with more than just acute states, but the serious and life threatening extreme states of the twenty-first century at home and abroad. We need to be on the infectious diseases wards and in A & E departments. We must banish fear and hesitancy and get on with it.


About the author: Francis Treuherz, MA, RSHom, FSHom, practices in London and Letchworth, England. He was Hon Secretary of the Society of Homeopaths from 1999-2006, on the board from 1986-1996, and a former editor of The Homeopath. He used to work in the NHS for thirteen years, and supervise undergraduate research students at the University of Westminster BSc in homeopathy. He has a vast library of over 7,000 volumes and a collection of homeopathic artefacts, and a great store of anecdotal evidence. He can be reached at fran@gn.apc.org or www.homeopathyhelpline.com.

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<http://www.homeopathy-soh.org/forhomeopaths/Journal.aspx>

Footnotes

- (1) Thomas Lindsley Bradford, *The Logic of Figures or Comparative Results of Homœopathic and Other Treatments*. Philadelphia 1900
- (2) Caird R Henryson, *The Anglo French American War Hospital at Neuilly, An Account of the Work Carried on under Homœopathic auspices during*

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- (3) Jennifer Jacobs Homoeopathic treatment of acute childhood diarrhoea, *British Homeopathic Journal*, 1993, 82:2, p.83
- (4) Thomas A. Kruzel, *The Homeopathic Emergency Guide*. Berkeley CA, 1992.
- (5) Peter Chappell, *The Second Simillimum A disease-specific complement to individual treatment*, Haren NL, 2005
- (6) Richard Ancarola, Toxic oil syndrome, rapeseed oil adulteration, *British Homeopathic Journal* 1983, 72:235.
- (7) Prakash Vakil, Recent developments concerning homeopathic materia medica, Bhopal, *British Homeopathic Journal*. 1986, 75:46. And Homeopathy helps Bhopal methyl isocyanate victims; *ibid* 1987, 76:55.
- (8) *Casualty* is the British equivalent of *ER*, a weakly television medical soap.
- (9) Previously published as Small Remedies: The Struggle to Escape in *The Homeopath* 1994; 55:312
- (10) Previously published as "Getting stoned was not fun. Kidney stones and other lumps" in *Homeopathy Today* (USA) December 2003
- (11) Previously published as "My son the homeopath!" in *The Homeopath*, 1992; 12:3, p216. 



HAHNEMANN MONUMENT AT WASHINGTON.