

A **MY HOMEOPATHY** GUIDE

# HOW TO TREAT THE COMMON COLD WITH HOMEOPATHY

Treat your family with safe, natural  
homeopathic remedies



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# **How to Use Homeopathy for the Common Cold**

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## Introduction

Much like death and taxes, there's no escaping the common cold. We're all too familiar with the sore throats, blocked noses and other inconveniences that are part of this infection.

Colds are nothing new; their symptoms were first documented 3,500 years ago in Egyptian papyrus scrolls. The name "cold" is fairly recent, though – it developed in the 16th century due to how its symptoms often developed during cold weather.

Throughout history, people have come up with various treatments for the cold – some of them worked and are still used today, while others were... well, not so helpful. In medieval times, a common treatment for the sore throat that accompanies colds was frog soup. Another even less appealing treatment was to swallow drops of skunk oil.

Even though our treatments have come a long way since then, the common cold is still prevalent. The average adult will be infected between two and five times each year and the cost of these infections adds up quickly. The US economy loses 40 billion dollars annually because of the common cold, while children miss over 189 million school days per year and parents lose 126 million workdays taking care of their sick children.

In Western cultures, most people think of antibiotics first when wanting to treat an infection. Unfortunately, while antibiotics may be helpful for bacterial infections, they are completely useless against the viruses responsible for colds.

What other options are there? While there is no fool-proof way of avoiding all colds, there are a number of natural treatments that reduce the severity and duration of the symptoms – and one of the most effective is homeopathy.

Each year, homeopaths help hundreds of thousands of people, from infants to the elderly, overcome their colds – but did you know it's easy to learn how to treat yourself?

In this book I'll explain what homeopathy is, why homeopathic remedies should be in every family medicine cabinet, and how to use them to treat the common cold.

Eighteen 'cold remedies' will be explored with step-by-step instructions on how to use them. I have also included natural and simple self-help tips to reduce the severity of cold symptoms and boost your immune system.

For the brave and adventurous, there is cutting-edge information on treating colds with wet socks and hydrogen peroxide. Read down to 'Strange but True' for these tricks.

I hope this book helps you feel more confident in using homeopathy to overcome your own colds and those of your friends and family.

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## **Chapter One: The Common Cold – A Common Problem**

Billions of colds are contracted every year, especially during the cooler autumn and winter months. They are caused by a virus that enters the body through the mucus membranes of the nose or eyes. Symptoms normally appear two to three days later, at which time the carrier becomes infectious to others. An average cold lasts between seven and ten days, though it can linger much longer - sometimes for weeks - if the patient is weak or has a sluggish immune system.

Although the common cold is mostly regarded as a nuisance disease, it sometimes leads to complications such as sinusitis, bronchitis, and pneumonia. Occasionally, these other superimposed infections result in death.

### **Symptoms of the Common Cold**

Cold symptoms include:

- Sore throat
- Runny nose
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Fever

Even though these symptoms are unpleasant, they're actually your body's way of overcoming the disease. Coughing expels mucus to prevent lung infections; runny noses and sneezing are your body's way of washing the virus out of nasal passages, and fevers stimulate a healing reaction in the body that combats the virus.

Suppressing these symptoms with conventional cold medicines and fever reducers leads to a longer recovery time and a greater risk of complications. For this reason, they should only be used as a last resort. Fortunately, there are several safer ways to overcome a cold.

As your body is already trying to heal itself, supporting rather than suppressing its efforts with natural treatments makes good sense. They reduce the intensity of the symptoms and speed recovery – and with fewer complications and better overall health. One of the fastest ways of doing this is with homeopathy.

We'll be looking at homeopathic and other natural treatment options a bit later in this book, plus we'll explore why the conventional approach may not be the best choice for treating your cold. Before we get to those, though, let's first look at how to avoid a cold.

### **Simple Ways to Avoid a Cold**

The best ways to avoid the common cold is to maintain your health so your immune system operates at peak capacity, to wash your hands regularly and to avoid touching your eyes and nose when around someone with an infection.

As prevention is still the best form of medicine, it is important to make healthy lifestyle choices such as getting enough sleep, drinking clean water and eating fresh, healthy food to support your immune system and build up resistance to coughs, colds and flu.

Vitamin D also helps the immune system respond to viruses and bacteria. It's naturally produced when your uncovered skin is exposed to the sun, so make sure to get at least thirty minutes of sunlight each day. Natural sun exposure is more beneficial and less expensive than vitamin D supplements with no risk of over-dosing as the body only makes as much of the vitamin as it needs.

Washing your hands is also important. Surprisingly, air-borne viruses aren't the main way colds are spread. They usually travel by skin to skin contact – such as shaking hands with an unwell person or

touching an object they have recently used. Washing your hands frequently when around someone sick with a cold reduces your risk of catching it.

Avoid rubbing your eyes and nose, especially if you haven't been able to wash your hands, as these are the two main points at which the virus enters your body.

Finally, be happy and don't stress. Research has shown that a cheerful, optimistic outlook strengthens immunity. Optimistic people who catch colds describe fewer symptoms than others. Laughter also releases endorphins, which promote happiness and reduce the discomfort of a cold.



## **Chapter Two: Opposites or Similar?**

When treating your cold you want the best and fastest result for the least risk. Let's briefly look at the two treatment options - conventional medicine and homeopathy - to compare their mode of action.

### **Conventional Approach – It's All About Opposites**

The conventional (orthodox) approach treats by "opposites". Its medicines produce the opposite effect to your body's symptoms. Some examples are antispasmodics, antidiarrhoeals, antipyretics and antihypertensives.

This opposition palliates or suppresses symptoms, but never really removes them; as soon as the effect of the drug wears off, the symptom returns. Side effects are common with this approach and long periods of suppression weaken rather than strengthen health. Extra care has to be taken when even routine doses are prescribed for the very young, the elderly and the debilitated. Specific concerns with the conventional medicines are looked at in Part Three.

### **Homeopathic Approach – "Like Cures Likes"**

Homeopathy supports your body's healing efforts with "similiars" – remedies that closely match and mimic your symptoms. Diarrhoea, for example, is treated by something that would cause diarrhoea in the healthy; fevers by fever-producing remedies, and cramping by remedies that produce spasms.

This approach to treatment works with - rather than against - your body's efforts to heal. Permanent recovery is more likely and improvement is more rapid than what is seen with natural or conventionally-assisted recovery. Homeopathic remedies are prepared by a special 'potentisation' process so they won't interact with other drugs, don't create toxic side-effects and are non-addictive. For more than 200 years they have been used safely for all ages and in any state of health.

## **Chapter Three: Conventional Medicines for the Common Cold**

Most people now know that manufactured chemicals in our foods, cleaning aids and personal products have the capacity to damage our health, yet that same awareness is not evident with the medication we frequently take. Conventional drugs are a mixed and dangerous blessing - even when correctly prescribed, they kill many, many more people than illegal drugs or traffic accidents.

But what about medications for the common cold? Let's take a look.

### **Children's Cough and Cold Products – Ineffective and Dangerous**

Not so long ago, children's cold medicines were marketed as the perfect solution for a worried parent – they promised to relieve sinus congestion, blocked and runny noses, sneezing, coughing and watery eyes - and all in just a few doses. They gave parents hope there would be no more disturbed nights, no more days home from school, and no more coughs and sniffles.

The truth was that the medicines were dangerous.

When it first became apparent that children were being admitted to hospital and dying from over-the-counter cold and cough medicines, health department enquiries revealed that these products were useless for their intended purpose and contained strong ingredients that were dangerous to children.

The drug regulating authorities in most countries now prohibit the manufacture and sale of over-the-counter cough and cold medicines for children younger than two years of age. In some countries such as Canada, the advice is that they should not be given to children younger than six.

Instructions issued for older children now include the following:

- Do not exceed the recommended dose, frequency of dosing or duration of use.
- Only use the medicine measures supplied with the medicine - rather than a kitchen spoon - so that the right amount is given
- Do not give other medicines containing similar ingredients at the same time.

These instructions sound like what you would expect to find on the labels of strong or dangerous drugs for serious conditions – not those intended to treat a simple cold, something a child would recover from naturally. Are they really worth the risk?

### **What about Conventional Medicines for Adults?**

It's not just children who are affected by cough and cold drugs. Pharmaceutical companies acknowledge that adults experience side-effects too, and that there is no way of knowing how severe a side-effect will be until several doses have been taken.

A typical list of cold and cough medication side-effects include: dizziness; excitability; headaches; nausea; nervousness or anxiety; insomnia; weakness; allergic reactions (rashes, hives, difficulty breathing, tightness in the chest and swelling of the mouth, face, lips, or tongue); difficulty in urinating; fast or irregular heartbeat; hallucinations; seizures; dizziness; light-headedness or headaches; stomach pain; tremors, and yellowing of the skin or eyes.

As you can see, treating a cold with conventional medicine isn't as trouble-free as the advertisements would have us believe; antibiotics won't work against the cold virus and over-the-counter products come with unwanted risks.

The good news is that there is an alternative – homeopathy.

## **Chapter Four: Homeopathy for the Common Cold**

Homeopathy has successfully treated the common cold, and numerous other diseases and disorders, for more than 200 years. It is a safe and simple approach to health care, and is highly effective when the right remedy is prescribed for the symptoms.

### **Seven Reasons to Use Homeopathy**

Homeopathy is:

1. Safe for all ages – from newborn babies to the elderly, as well as during pregnancy.
2. Non-toxic and non-addictive.
3. Safe to use with other medicines or treatments – there are no interactive effects.
4. Deep-acting yet gentle, even for those who are weak or debilitated.
5. Easy to use - just take one sugar pill or a few drops of liquid; no needles, large tablets or unpleasant-tasting concoctions.
6. Ideal for home use – anyone can be a competent home prescriber with a little study and practice.
7. Inexpensive - remedies usually cost less and last longer than related over-the-counter or prescription drugs.

Perhaps best of all, though, homeopathy supports your body's self-healing efforts so that vitality is strengthened rather than weakened during treatment; not only are health problems resolved, but resilience is improved so you are less susceptible to future illness.

### **What Does the Research Show?**

Homeopathy's ability to effectively treat a broad range of health problems has led to a steady increase in popularity over the last 200 years. The practice of homeopathy was, and still is, supported by extensive clinical records and patient accounts of treatment. More recently, randomised clinical trials - in vivo and in vitro - with people, animals and plants are adding to that database of evidence.

Recent trials on respiratory tract infections show that those treated homeopathically have milder symptoms, fewer sick days, a reduced need for antibiotics and fewer complications. Parents of sick children take significantly fewer sick-leave days thanks to their child's faster rate of recovery. (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.)

Homeopathy now used in a US intensive care unit (ICU) after research showed homeopathy reduced excessive mucus in seriously ill patients, lessened their time on ventilators, reduced respiratory complications and shortened their stay in the ICU. Patients in the control group who had not received the remedy took considerably longer to recover, and some had to return to the ventilator after extubation because they struggled to breathe – something that had not been a problem for the homeopathic group. The hospital subsequently added the remedy to its pharmacy stock. (7.)

The clinical and research evidence supports experience - homeopathy is wonderfully effective in treating the common cold. The sufferer can either see a qualified homeopath or treat themselves – colds offer a perfect opportunity to practice and gain experience in using homeopathy in the comfort of your home.

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## **Five People with Five Colds – But Which Remedy?**

Here are five stories from real people with real colds. Reading and examining these sorts of cases will make a big difference to how you recognise symptoms when you come to choose a remedy for your own cold.

Each story is headed with the main symptoms - these symptoms must be a part of the chosen if it is going to work. I have included information at the end of each story on how long it took for the patient to recover, so that you know what to expect.

You can also practice your prescription skills by skipping ahead to the remedy list in Chapter Nine, and then see if you can identify the correct remedy before it is revealed in each story.

### **India: Sudden Intense Symptoms, Anxiety and Panic**

On a cold and windy day, six-year-old India spent the late afternoon playing with autumn leaves in the garden. When her mother put her to bed that evening, she noticed India's face was a little flushed. By midnight, India was awake, agitated and screaming. Her nose was running and one cheek was bright red. Her skin felt hot and dry and she was anxious and restless. India downed a glass of water, but screamed in panic when her mother left the room to get the family's homeopathy kit. Her mother gave her *Aconitum napellus*. Within minutes, India stopped crying and asked for another drink. Fifteen minutes later, she was snuggled under her blanket and ready to go back to sleep. By morning, it was as if nothing had happened.

### **Natalie: Burning, Anxious, Restless and Chilly**

Natalie, age thirty-eight, came to see me complaining of sore throat which only felt better for sips of cold water, and a runny nose with burning discharge. The watery mucus had scalded her nose and upper lip, leaving them red and sore. Natalie had not slept well the previous night and had gotten up several times, worrying that the cold could turn into something worse. When she saw me, she was tired, edgy and still restless. She complained of feeling very chilly and, even though the room was comfortably warm, wore a warm coat and scarf. While explaining her symptoms, Natalie appeared to be anxious and irritable. I prescribed *Arsenicum album*. By the next morning, Natalie's sore throat was much better and she was feeling calm. All symptoms of the cold were gone by that evening.

### **Brad: Weakness, Headaches and Apathy**

Brad, forty-two years old, caught a cold five days previously and was exhausted. Since he'd caught the cold, chills had been running up his spine and a headache, which had started in the back of his head, was now lodged behind his eyes. When he came to see me he sat slumped in the chair with his head bent forward and eyes half closed. He answered my questions slowly, and said it had been hard to come to the appointment as his legs trembled when he walked, but he had made the effort as the cold seemed to be turning into bronchitis. I gave David a remedy called *Gelsemium sempervirens*. Within two hours his headache and chill had settled and his strength was returning. Three days later he was back at work with no trace of the cold.

### **Jordan: Swollen Glands, Flabby Tongue, Bad Breath, Green Mucus**

Jordan, four years of age, was brought to see me by his mother. He had caught a cold three days earlier and his symptoms were now becoming severe. His throat was very sore, making it almost impossible for him to swallow. As a result, he had stopped eating and would only sip drinks. I examined his neck and felt swollen, enlarged glands. Looking at the back of his mouth, I could see white ulcerated patches on his tonsils. Jordan also had bad breath and a swollen tongue. His mother said he had been dribbling since the infection. I gave Jordan *Mercurius solubilis*. By that evening he was able to eat a small meal. He continued to improve over the following day and, by the next day, his mother reported that all was well.

### **Emily: Lots of Yellow-Green Mucus, Emotional, Needy, Worsened by Warmth**

Eight-year-old Emily was brought to see me for conjunctivitis that had started with a cold. Her eyes were red and swollen and had a yellow-green discharge. Her mother described how upset and clingy she had been since the cold. She wanted to be cuddled and carried, and if she didn't have her mother's constant attention, would weep as if she felt unloved. During the consultation, Emily sat on her mother's lap and regularly asked her to wipe her nose. Her mother said the yellow-green mucus was always worse in warm, enclosed rooms but seemed to lessen in fresh air. She was also worried about how little Emily wanted to drink. The remedy I gave for both the conjunctivitis and the cold was *Pulsatilla pratensis*. By that afternoon, Emily's eyes were looking much better, her nose seemed to be drying and she was less needy and emotional. Symptoms continued to improve during the following day and, by the day after, were gone altogether.

## **Chapter Five: Recognising Symptoms - Look, Listen and Ask**

When treating someone's cold it's important to discover the unique way they are experiencing their sickness, as this reveals their body's efforts to overcome the infection; you will be supporting this effort with the remedy you choose, which is why it's so important to find one that matches. By adopting a "look, listen and ask" approach, you will uncover as much information as possible and make your job easier.

Start by sitting with the patient, with a pen and notebook in hand. Write down everything you see and hear, and ask lots of questions as you go. The information you uncover will help you in two ways: first, it will let you choose a matching remedy, and second, will reveal what changes take place once that remedy has been given.

### **A Checklist of Questions**

The following is a guide on what to look for. As you collect information, highlight symptoms that are especially intense, unusual or peculiar, as these will be the most helpful for choosing a remedy.

- How long ago did the cold begin?
- Was it triggered by something, such as a cold wind or a sudden change of weather?
- Was the onset sudden or slow?
- Has the person already taken medication for the cold? (Remember, medications will change the symptoms and you may need to wait until a medication has worn off before you can see them clearly again.)
- How does the person look? Are they pale, flushed, restless or lethargic?
- How does the person feel? Hot? Cold? Clammy?
- Is there any unusual odour? (For example, a cheesy smell to their mucus, bad breath, smelly sweat?)
- Where are the symptoms located? (Be specific. For example, is the sore throat on the right side, left side or is it central? Is the headache in the top of the head, back of the head, behind the eyes, or somewhere else?)
- What is the type of pain or sensation experienced? (For example, is the throat pain stabbing, throbbing, aching, burning, or some other type of pain?)
- Does the pain or sensation extend to somewhere else, and if so, when? (For example, a sore throat that sends stabbing pain into the ears on swallowing.)
- Is there fever or chill? (If so, describe the pattern of the fever and chill, the time it peaks and breaks, and the nature of any perspiration – non-existent, only on the back, over the whole body, etc.)
- What are the modalities – ie, things that make the symptoms better or worse? Modalities can include the time of day, changes in temperature or weather, bathing, light or dark, noise, being covered or uncovered, having company or being alone, the person's position, rest or motion, pressure, and anything else that ameliorates (helps) or aggravates (worsens).
- Have there been changes to appetite or thirst? (Cravings and aversions may include foods and flavours such as: sour, sweet, salty, spicy, fatty, rich, comforting, cold or hot food. Thirst is also important – does the person have an increased thirst or are they thirstless? Do they drink in sips or

gulps? Do they want hot or cold drinks or any particular flavour?)

- Did any other symptoms start at the same time as the cold? (For example, diarrhoea, headache, or itchiness?)

- Has there been a discharge and, if so, where from and what has it been like? (For example, streaming eyes or nose, mucus that is thick, green, yellow, stringy or burning?)

- What is the quality and quantity of sleep? Have there been distinctive dreams or nightmares? Has the person's sleep position changed?

- What is the person's mental and emotional state, and has that changed since the onset of the cold? How are they coping with the cold? (For example, is the person active, alert, weak, irritable, dependent, cuddly?)

- Have there been changes in sensitivity to environmental stimuli? (For example, noise, light, motion, touch?)

- What is the person's energy? Tired, restless, weak?

## Chapter Six: How to Choose the Right Remedy and How to Dose

If you are already familiar with homeopathy, choosing a remedy to match the symptoms may almost be second nature to you. If not, don't panic - it's an easy process to learn. Just follow the step-by-step guide below.

### Choosing the Remedy, Step by Step

**Step 1:** Use the guide from Chapter Five to help you uncover the symptoms through a process of looking, listening and asking. Write down everything to create a list of the symptoms.

**Step 2:** Highlight or underline symptoms that are intense and overwhelming, or unusual and unique. For example, a streaming nose that has to be constantly blown is an intense symptom, anxiety or panic during a cold is an unusual symptom, and as not all sufferers want hugs and cuddles during a cold this symptom would be unique to that person.

**Step 3:** Scan the remedies listed in Chapter Nine, and look for ones with Key Symptoms that match your highlighted symptoms.

**Step 4:** From this "short list", check the Other Symptoms of each remedy, looking for confirming symptoms.

**Step 5:** Choose the remedy which seems to best match your highlighted list of symptoms and give a dose. Over the next hour, check your list for any change in symptoms.

**Step 6:** If there has been a good, strong improvement in the symptoms, congratulations! You have found the right remedy! Only give another dose of the remedy when improvement slows or symptoms start to return.

If there is no improvement (or only sluggish improvement) give two more doses of the remedy, each dose two hours apart.

If there has been no improvement by three doses in total, go back to Step 1. Check the symptoms again, check the remedies, and give the next best remedy.

**Step 7:** If there is no change after three different remedies, it is time to stop and consult a homeopath. The remedies listed in this book will manage the majority of colds, but there are more than two thousand remedies in the homeopathic materia medica, so not all of them could be included here. Help from a qualified homeopath may be needed to pick a less common remedy.

### How to Give the Remedy

Once you have chosen a remedy that matches the symptoms, it's time to give the dose and watch for any changes.

### Using Liquid Remedies

If you are using a liquid remedy, hit the base of the bottle five times on the palm of your hand and place approximately 5 drops into the patient's mouth. This striking action, called succussion, alters the potency of the remedy slightly so that each dose works more deeply than the previous one.

It's not essential to give the exact number of drops - an approximate "squirt" from the dropper top will do just as well. Infants, children and adults can safely have the same amount, but it is often easier to give babies a smaller dose of just two or three drops. Because homeopathy relies on a transfer of



energetic information, you just need some of the liquid to make contact with the mucous membranes of the mouth for it to work. Don't worry if your baby spits the remedy out; the energetic transfer will have already taken place, so there is no need to repeat the dose.

### **Using Globules, Pills or Tablets**

If you are using sugar pills, tablets or globules, just place one of the pills into the patient's mouth to be sucked and dissolved. Again, children and infants can be given the same dose as an adult. Sugar pills can be tucked between the cheek and gum of an infant, where it will dissolve slowly – or the pill can be dissolved in a little water before being given.

### **Dosage Guidelines**

Give the remedy according to the severity of the symptoms: the more severe the symptoms, the more frequent the dose. Once symptoms start to improve, wait until improvement either stalls or symptoms start to return before giving another dose. Dosing when not needed – ie, when there is already strong and steady improvement - may intensify (aggravate) the symptoms for a short period.

**Mild Symptoms** - such as a nuisance-value sore throat.

**Dose:** Every 4 hours until symptoms start to improve. With improvement, space the doses further apart, taking a dose only when symptoms start to return. If there is no improvement at all by 3 doses (after 12 hours) choose a more suitable remedy or contact your homeopath.

**Moderate Symptoms** - such as a normal cold with a runny nose, mild fever and sore throat.

**Dose:** Every 2 hours until symptoms start to improve. With improvement, space the doses further apart, taking a dose only when symptoms return. If there is no improvement at all by 3 doses (after 6 hours) choose a more suitable remedy or contact your homeopath.

**Strong Symptoms** - such as a bad cold with a high fever and a painful throat that makes eating and drinking difficult.

**Dose:** Every ½ hour until symptoms start to improve. With improvement, space the doses further apart, taking a dose only when symptoms return. If there is no improvement at all by 3 doses (after 1½ hours) choose a more suitable remedy or contact your homeopath.

## **Chapter Seven: What to Expect with Treatment**

Homeopathic treatment can be divided into two parts – what has to be done before the remedy is chosen and then what happens after. This chapter deals with that second half - what to expect once the remedy has been given. We will look at the different responses to a remedy, what they mean, and why it can be hard to prescribe the correct remedy on the first try.

### **Different Remedy Responses**

Once you've given a remedy, watch for changes in your patient's symptoms over the following one to two hours. Ideally, symptoms will improve quickly, but sometimes other changes take place that can be confusing if you're not expecting them or don't know what they mean. Let's take a look at these responses, what they show, and what to do next.

#### **Symptoms Improve**

If the remedy is correct, symptoms will improve in the hours following the dose. If this happens, just give another dose of the remedy when the improvement stalls or when symptoms start to return. Occasionally, improvement will be so rapid that just the one dose will complete the cure. More often, several doses will be needed.

#### **The Same Symptoms Worsen**

If your patient's symptoms intensify before improving, the remedy was correct but the dose was too strong for their sensitivity to it. Homeopaths call this short-lived effect a homeopathic or similar aggravation and, paradoxically, it is a good sign – it means the correct remedy has been chosen. The aggravation won't last for long and is followed by an improvement. Similar aggravations usually only occur with the first dose but, should it happen again, future doses can be mixed with a little water to make them gentler.

To do this, dissolve one pill, globule or tablet into a quarter of a cup of water. If you are using a liquid remedy, place five drops into the quarter cup of water. Give teaspoon doses from the cup as needed, making sure to stir well before each dose. Cover the cup between dosing to keep light out.

Similar aggravations also occur when the remedy is given too frequently. To avoid this, only give doses when improvement stalls or symptoms start to return.

#### **New Symptoms Appear but Old Symptoms Remain**

If your patient experiences new and different symptoms after the dose, but no improvement in previous symptoms, it is a sure sign that the wrong remedy was chosen. While it may have been close enough to trigger some temporary side symptoms, it wasn't enough to reverse the symptoms of the cold. Homeopaths call this response a dissimilar or unhomeopathic aggravation. Unlike a similar aggravation, it will not lead to an improvement in the cold's symptoms as the aggravation settles. The best thing to do is check the patient's symptoms and pick a better remedy.

#### **New Symptoms Appear while Cold Symptoms Improve**

Sometimes, as symptoms of the cold improve with each dose, new and more minor symptoms appear. These are called "accessory symptoms". Their presence means the remedy was close enough to reverse the cold's symptoms, but not a perfect match; the person is now experiencing some of the other symptoms the remedy also treats. These symptoms are usually unrelated to the cold. They don't cause any harm and will disappear once the remedy is no longer needed.

## **Right Remedy, First Time, Everytime – Not Always Possible**

The symptoms of some colds are so clear and striking that it is almost impossible to prescribe the wrong remedy. For example, a Pulsatilla patient will always crave affection and feel better for open air, a Mercurius patient will always have swollen glands, increased salivation and bad breath, and an Aconite patient will always be restless and alarmed by their sudden, intense symptoms. At other times, the symptoms may not be so clear and prescribing becomes a little more difficult, sometimes requiring one or two attempts – even for seasoned practitioners. Let's look at why.

### **Too Soon or Vague Symptoms**

If a cold is in its early stages, symptoms may be too vague to choose a remedy. In this situation it is best to wait until symptoms have developed a little and are clearer. Ferrum phosphoricum and Vincetoxicum have a tendency to vague symptoms, so some prescribers use them as default remedies for early colds or when symptoms are unclear. Sometimes this approach proves successful, other times not.

### **Overlapping Remedies**

Between the obvious and the unclear remedies, there are many where the symptoms overlap. For example, Allium cepa and Euphrasia both have profuse watery discharges; Arsenicum and Phosphorus both feel a little anxious, and Calcarea carbonica and Dulcamara frequently catch colds with a change in weather. Remedies that share symptoms need a little more thought for their prescription; check for the presence of other confirming symptoms and perhaps ask the patient a few more questions that will help clarify the needed remedy.

### **Obscure Remedies**

Obscure colds require obscure remedies. While the remedies listed in this book are key ones for the common cold, the homeopathic materia medica consists of thousands of general remedies, any one of which may be needed if the cold is a little unusual. If you have not been able to match a remedy to your cold by three different prescriptions, it is time to stop and consult a qualified homeopath who will be able to look into these remedies for you.

### **Chronic Not Acute**

Sometimes a cold is like the tip of an iceberg. Rather than being an acute problem that needs a simple acute remedy, it is really the visible part of an underlying imbalance that will only be corrected by a “constitutional” prescription. This may be the case if the patient always catches colds, takes a long time to recover, or repeatedly catches the same type of cold. In these instances, an acute cold remedy struggles to get deep enough; a constitutional appointment with a qualified homeopath will produce the best results. They will prescribe a remedy to treat the underlying imbalance; overall health and resilience will be strengthened and other complaints will become much less of a problem.

### **Test and See**

As mentioned, obvious remedies are easy – their colds are quick and simple to treat. Less obvious colds, however, may require a “test and see” approach.

If you're unsure of which remedy to use for your patient, choose the one that seems the closest to their symptoms. Give three doses as a test, according to the guidelines in Chapter Six. If there is no improvement, move on to the next best matching remedy and repeat the process. Giving the wrong remedy does no harm. Once you have seen a patient and their symptoms improve from a remedy, it is then much easier to recognise and prescribe that remedy in the future.

## Chapter Eight: 18 Key Homeopathic Remedies for the Common Cold

To pick a remedy, look through the list below to see which one matches your symptoms. Instructions on how to dose, and how often, can be found in Chapter Six. If there is no improvement by three doses, reassess your symptoms and choose another remedy.

If you're having trouble matching your symptoms to a remedy, you can make an appointment with a homeopath for a more precise prescription.

Many of the following remedies are found in homeopathic home-use kits or can be easily obtained from health food stores or a local homeopath. It is a good idea to invest in a homeopathic kit so you will always have commonly-needed remedies on hand to treat acute problems.

### **Aconite napellus (Acon.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Colds with rapidly developing symptoms, especially following a chill or exposure to a cold, dry wind.

**Other Symptoms:** Aconite is a remedy for the first 24 hours of a cold where there are intense symptoms that come on quickly. The person may have been exposed to a cold, dry wind or chilled in air-conditioning earlier that day; both can trigger an Aconite state. They are restless, anxious and thirsty for cold water. There may be a high fever with reddened, dry, hot skin. Both cheeks may be red or one red and the other pale. Severe croup may follow the cold. Symptoms are worse between 12pm and 4am. Aconite symptoms appear rapidly and respond to treatment quickly.

### **Allium cepa (All-c.)**

**Key Symptoms:** The nose constantly drips or runs, as if an onion is being peeled. Nasal secretions excoriate and burn, but tears are bland.

**Other Symptoms:** The watery discharge from the nose burns and excoriates but tears from the eyes are non-irritating (the opposite of Euphr.). The symptoms worsen in the evening or in warm rooms, but improve on going outdoors (the same as Euphr.). The patient may sneeze when entering a warm room.

### **Arsenicum album (Ars.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Thin or watery nasal discharge that irritates and burns. Restless, chilly and anxious.

**Other Symptoms:** The thin discharge of an Arsenicum cold burns the eyes and nose. The throat, if affected, is raw or burning and the patient wants frequent sips of cold water. They feel restless, have trouble keeping warm and may also be anxious, irritable and want company. The nose runs even though blocked, and is not relieved by sneezing. The right nostril may run more than the left and the cold often moves down to the chest. Symptoms, especially the anxiety, are worse between 12pm and 2am.

### **Belladonna (Bell.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Colds come on rapidly with intense symptoms and a high fever. Cheeks are flushed or bright red. Symptoms are often right-sided.

**Other Symptoms:** Belladonna is best for a cold in its early stages when symptoms are intense or sudden. The fever is high – sometimes to the point of delirium - the cheeks will be flushed and the head hot, but hands and feet are cold. The headache is usually right-sided and may throb; the sore throat is also worse on the right side and bright red. Light hurts the eyes which have a glassy appearance or are bloodshot; the pupils are often dilated. The headache feels better for sitting (or standing) in a dark room, and is worse for light, noise, lying down, being bumped or jarred, and around 3pm. The skin is hot and dry and cold drinks and sour flavours such as lemons or lemonade are craved. There is either a strong thirst or no thirst at all. Belladonna symptoms look a lot like Aconite symptoms, and Belladonna may be needed after Aconite.

### **Calcarea carbonica (Calc-c.)**

**Key Symptoms:** People who find it hard to lose weight and who catch colds with every change of weather. Stuffy colds with thick mucus.

**Other Symptoms:** Calc-carb is best for those who easily catch colds that progress to thick yellow mucus with a sour or cheesy odour. They sweat easily, especially about the head and neck during sleep, and often feel clammy. Colds may cause earaches and infections or glue ear, especially in infants and children. Nostrils may be sore, dry and ulcerated. Milky drinks are often loved, and worsen the symptoms of the cold.

### **Dulcamara (Dulc.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Colds from cold, damp weather or change of weather.

**Other Symptoms:** Dulcamara colds develop during cold, damp weather or during a change from hot to cold weather. The patient will have a post-nasal drip, their saliva is thick and the voice may be hoarse. They are prone to earaches and watery diarrhoea with their colds and may have back pain or lumbago. Symptoms improve with warm dry air and motion but worsen at night and in cold damp.

### **Euphrasia officinalis (Euphr.)**

**Key Symptoms:** The nasal discharge is bland, but streaming tears sting the eyes.

**Other Symptoms:** The symptoms of this remedy are the opposites of Allium cepa. The eyes constantly stream with tears that burn, but the nasal discharge is bland and does not excoriate the nose or upper lip. Even though their eyes are sensitive to light, the patient feels better in the open air and worse inside.

### **Ferrum phosphoricum (Ferr-p.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Early stages of a cold with no clear symptoms. A slowly progressing cold that starts on the right side of nose or throat.

**Other Symptoms:** The Ferrum-phos cold starts slowly, usually on the right side of the nose or throat, and often with no clear symptoms. As it develops it may cause deafness, or descend to the chest. At times the face may alternate between being pale or red, and may have round red spots on the cheeks. The patient can feel irritable, worse at night, or have a mild fever or nosebleeds with the cold.

### **Gelsemium sempervirens (Gels.)**

**Key Symptoms:** A cold where the patient looks drowsy or dozey and the muscles feel weak, heavy or paralysed.

**Other Symptoms:** Gelsemium treats colds where the person is apathetic, has a dull head and weak muscles. They find it difficult to stand without support, their head and eyelids droop, and they tremble

if they have to exert themselves. Chills run up their back and headaches start in the back of the head and spread forward. They are thirstless and feel better for sweating or passing a large amount of urine. Bronchitis may develop with the cold.

### **Hepar sulphuris (Hep.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Late stage colds with yellow mucus that smells sour, like old cheese. Chilliness and irritability.

**Other Symptoms:** Hepar sulph suits the advanced stage of slowly progressing colds. The nasal discharge is thick, yellow to yellow-green, and smells sour or like old cheese. The patient is extremely sensitive to cold temperatures and prefers to wrap up warmly. They often complain of splinter-like pains in the nose, ears or throat, crave acid or sour things, and can be extremely irritable. Loss of voice may follow the cold.

### **Kali bichromicum (Kali-bi.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Thick, stringy or ropy, yellow to yellow-green mucus. Colds that develop into sinus infections. Tough stringy catarrh is the guiding symptom. Good for snuffles in children, especially large, chubby babies. All symptoms are better for heat.

**Other Symptoms:** Kali-bi colds have tough, stringy and stubborn mucus that leads to sinus infections with pain in small, precise spots over the sinuses, or at the root of the nose. Violent sneezing may accompany stubborn congestion. The eyelids may swell or the eyes burn. All symptoms feel worse for cold and are better for warmth. A patient who needs Kali-bi usually describes his or her symptoms in great detail.

### **Mercurius solubilis (Merc.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Colds with swollen glands and tonsils, a flabby tongue that shows the imprint of the teeth, increased salivation and bad breath.

**Other Symptoms:** Mercurius suits colds where the glands are swollen and the person sweats easily. Salivation is increased, the tongue flabby and indented at the edges, and the breath offensive. The cold starts with clear mucus but progresses to a greenish colour. The discharge excoriates the nose, often to the point of ulceration, and tears burn the eyes. Symptoms are worse at night. People who need Mercurius are both easily chilled and easily over-heated, and only feel comfortable in moderate, stable temperatures.

### **Natrum muriaticum (Nat-m.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Colds that start with sneezing. Nasal discharge that resembles egg white. Eyes that water in the open air, sun or wind.

**Other Symptoms:** Nat-mur treat colds that start with sneezing and a heavy nasal discharge like egg white. As the cold progresses the discharge thickens and the person may lose their sense of taste and smell. Lips are dry and sometimes cracked and cold sores may develop. The person will be tired, dislike being fussed over and prefer to be left alone. Warmth worsens the symptoms and the cold is much better in fresh air, though breezes or wind make the eyes water with burning tears. The patient may crave salt or salty foods.

### **Nux vomica (Nux-v.)**

**Key symptoms:** Irritable, angry, and easily upset. Feels chilly and is bothered by drafts. Wakes during the night, especially between 3:00am and 5:00am.

**Other Symptoms:** People with a Nux vomica cold are impatient, intolerant and easily irritated. Everything bothers them – noise, light, drafts, odours and people trying to talk to them. They feel chilly and sensitive to cold, such as when undressing or moving under the bedclothes, but improve with warmth. Their nose blocks when in open air or at night, but runs when indoors. They may crave spicy food.

### **Phosphorus (Phos.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Want company and affection. Anxious about their health but easily reassured (Arsenicum is reassured with difficulty).

**Other Symptoms:** The person who needs Phosphorus will want company and be happy to chat. They may be anxious about their symptoms but are easily reassured. Colds can trigger a nosebleed and laryngitis may follow. Their blocked nose clears when in open air and they usually have a strong thirst for cold drinks, and sometimes soft drinks. Sleeping on the left side may be impossible.

### **Pulsatilla pratensis (Puls.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Lots of thick, bland, yellow-green mucus. Symptoms are much worse in warm stuffy rooms and better in open air. The patient is emotional and craves company, attention and sympathy.

**Other Symptoms:** The patient who does well with Pulsatilla is affectionate, emotional and loves attention or sympathy. If this is not provided, they become irritable and difficult. Often, only one nostril is blocked, and though their mouth is dry they are thirstless. Conjunctivitis where the eyes itch or burn and stick together with discharge can follow the cold. All symptoms are much worse in a warm room and relieved by fresh air. The face flushes easily in warmth and the hands may be raised above the head during sleep.

### **Rhus toxicodendron (Rhus-t.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Restlessness with the cold. Watery discharge with a red-tipped nose. Symptoms improve with warmth but worsen with exposure to cold air.

**Other Symptoms:** The person needing this remedy will feel restless and better for moving about. The early discharge is watery, often with episodes of sneezing, and the tip of the nose becomes red. The tongue is often coated in white and has a red triangular tip. The person desires cold drinks, especially milk, which worsens symptoms. Colds usually develop in cold, damp weather and symptoms feel better for warmth and in warm rooms. Cold sores or joint pains are not uncommon.

### **Vincetoxicum officinale (Vinc.)**

**Key Symptoms:** Colds with a rapid onset and weakness or heaviness of limbs. Pressing headache in the forehead or top of the head that makes it difficult for the person to think.

**Other Symptoms:** Vincetoxicum treats colds where symptoms appear rapidly and there is weakness, heaviness or leaden tiredness. The bones may ache and the person shivers. There is a pressing-down headache on either the top of the head or on the forehead that improves when the person lies down.

## **Chapter Nine: Frequently Asked Questions (and Answers) About Homeopathy**

The following list of commonly asked questions provides an overview of homeopathy. Read them from beginning to end for all of the information, or just dip into the questions that interest you the most.

### **What is homeopathy?**

Homeopathy is a safe and gentle system medicine first developed more than 200 years ago by German doctor and scientist, Samuel Hahnemann. It can be used to both treat and prevent disease. Homeopathy is based on a natural law, the Law of Similars, and its name means “similar suffering”. Homeopathy relieves symptoms in the unwell with remedies (medicines) that produce similar symptoms when tested on the healthy. A simple example of this “like treats like” effect is *Allium cepa*, a homeopathic remedy made from red onion. *Allium cepa* treats hayfever symptoms such as profusely streaming eyes and nose – the same symptoms caused in a healthy person by the vapors of a sliced onion.

### **How does homeopathy work?**

Homeopathic remedies carry the energetic imprint of the original substance the remedy was prepared from. When this imprint matches an unwell person’s symptoms, reflecting the body’s own efforts to heal, its efforts are strengthened and healing takes place far more rapidly than normal.

### **Who uses homeopathy?**

From humble beginnings in Germany, the popularity of homeopathy has spread worldwide. The World Health Organization now estimates that more than 500 million people use homeopathy, making it the second most widely-used medicine, and the most popular alternative treatment in the world. It is practiced by professionally trained homeopaths and a growing number of people who self-prescribe for themselves and their families.

### **What will homeopathy treat?**

The correct remedy resolves deep-seated complaints such as arthritic, digestive and respiratory disorders just as easily as minor ones like headaches, hay fever and the discomfort of teething. It’s especially useful for trauma and sporting injuries such bruising, sprains, strains and fractures, as well as other acute problems like colds and coughs. Mental and emotional problems like jealousy, lack of confidence, depression, panic-attacks and children’s behavioural disorders also respond well to homeopathy.

### **What is the difference between an acute and chronic complaint?**

An acute problem is one where symptoms are temporary and will go away on their own. Acute problems include things such as colds, flus, coughs, sprains and headaches.

A chronic problem is not temporary. Instead, its symptoms persist and worsen over time. Examples of chronic problems are arthritis, multiple sclerosis, ulcerative colitis and dementia.

### **How quickly does homeopathy work?**

Homeopathy may work within seconds or over several weeks or months, depending on the type of problem and the person being treated. Acute complaints improve more rapidly than chronic problems,



and younger people with a high vitality respond more quickly than older people with a lower vitality. For example, it is not unusual to see a child with an acute cold respond within minutes and recover fully within an hour or two from just one dose of a remedy. In contrast, an elderly person with the same type of cold is not likely to respond until an hour or more and will need several doses of the remedy for complete recovery. Improvement in chronic problems will also be slower, with changes taking place over days to weeks.

### **Does homeopathy only treat humans?**

Homeopathy effects the life force of all living things. Depending on the culture, this life force may also be known as "vital force", "chi", or "prana". People, animals and plants all possess this life force - it is the unseen substance that maintains life - and so homeopathy works equally well for all three.

Does homeopathy prevent as well as treat?

Historically, homeopathy has been used to prevent and control contagious and epidemic diseases. It is still used for that purpose by several countries today.

Homeopathy exploits the relationship between "similars" to either treat or prevent disease. For treatment, the remedy has to match the unique or idiosyncratic symptoms of the person with the disease; for prevention, it only has to match the common symptoms (those that all sufferers will experience) of the infectious disease. As a result, prevention is often simpler than treatment as fewer symptoms and remedies have to be taken into account. Remedies used for prevention are given ahead of time to those who are still well.

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### **Can homeopathy prevent the common cold?**

Preventative homeopathy is highly effective for diseases where the symptoms are the same for all sufferers. For example, everyone who catches chickenpox will have the same type of rash and anyone who catches cholera will have the same sort of diarrhoea. This is not true of the common cold, where different sufferers experience completely different symptoms. Some have a bland, watery nasal discharge; for others it's thick and green, or tacky and yellow, or burning, or has an offensive smell. The same is true for sore throats, headaches, fevers and other cold symptoms – they all present in different ways depending on how a person's body is attempting to overcome the infection.

Because of this lack of consistent "common" symptoms, preventive homeopathy for the common cold is often not possible.

### **How safe is homeopathy?**

Homeopathic remedies are non-toxic, non-addictive, do not interact with other medications and are safe for all ages. They are prepared by a special potentisation process in which all trace of the original

substances are removed but their dynamic (energetic) effects are retained and even enhanced. In over 200 years of use, no reports of harm have been received about fully potentised remedies.

### **Are there restrictions on who can use homeopathy?**

Anybody and everybody can use homeopathy. It is safe for babies, children, adults, the elderly and even expectant mothers. Its gentleness and ability to stimulate vitality makes it an ideal treatment choice for those who are weakened or devitalised by prolonged illness.

### **What is a homeopathic aggravation?**

An aggravation is the temporary appearance of new symptoms, or a temporary intensification of existing symptoms, following a dose of a homeopathic remedy. Aggravations are harmless, usually mild, and short-lived. They sometimes occur following the first dose of a remedy as part of the initial rebalancing effect, or when the remedy has been taken more often than needed, or if the person is unusually sensitive to that particular remedy.

If person's existing symptoms intensify it is called a similar aggravation and means the remedy selection is correct and improvement will follow – but don't redose until improvement stalls or symptoms return. If the aggravation involves new and different symptoms while original symptoms remain unchanged, it is known as a dissimilar aggravation and indicates that the remedy choice is wrong - a new remedy should be selected.

If the person is unusually sensitive and experiences an aggravation on each dose of the remedy, the dose should be adjusted to suit their sensitivity. See "What can I do if I am over-sensitive to homeopathic remedies?"

### **What can I do if I am sensitive to homeopathic remedies?**

If an aggravation occurs with each dose of the remedy it indicates you are more sensitive than most to that particular remedy. Aggravations can be easily avoided by mixing future doses with a little water to make them more gentle.

If pills, globules, or tablets are being used, dissolve one of them into a quarter of a cup of water. If you are using a liquid remedy, place five drops into the quarter cup of water. Once this is done, give teaspoon doses from the cup as needed, making sure to stir well before each dose. Cover the cup between each dose to exclude the light.

### **How is homeopathy different to conventional medicine?**

Homeopathy looks at the person's "symptom totality", which may include mental, emotional and physical symptoms. Homeopaths are especially interested in symptoms that are unique to the sufferer, rather than those that are common to the disease. In contrast, conventional medicine separates the sufferer's symptoms under different disease names and treats each disease separately according to its common symptoms – the sufferer's unique symptoms have little relevance for conventional treatment. Homeopathic remedies mimic the body's symptoms to support its self-healing efforts, while conventional medicine opposes and suppresses them. Homeopathic remedies are non-toxic and non-addictive, but conventional medicines can produce side-effects and addictions.

### **How are the remedies made?**

Each remedy is serially diluted and shaken in a process called potentisation. The dilution stages remove the molecules of the original substance (along with any toxicity), while the accompanying vigorous shakes (succussions) imprint the healing effect of that substance onto the liquid. Exactly how this happens is still unclear; it is a newly emerging area of physics that is being researched.

### **What is in the remedies?**

Homeopathic remedies are mostly prepared from animal, plant and mineral substances, although a few of the more unusual ones use ‘imponderables’ such as sunlight and radiation. Remedies are prepared from the base substances through a process called “potentisation” so that the end product has an energetic, rather than chemical, effect. Depending on whether the remedy is being dispensed as a liquid, pill, spray or tablet, ingredients such as water, alcohol, sucrose, lactose or binding agents may be used as carriers. More than four thousand remedies are now available, and this number grows yearly.

### **What do the remedies look and taste like?**

Remedies are sold as round pills, tablets, liquids, sprays, and creams. Pills and tablets have a sucrose or lactose base and taste sweet, while liquid remedies and sprays have a mild water and alcohol taste (alcohol is added as a preservative). Because of their sweet taste, pills and tablets are loved by children.

### **When can I treat myself (or my family) and when should I see a trained homeopath?**

Homeopathy can be easily used to treat simple acute problems yourself– ‘acute’ means any complaint that will resolve itself within a few days or weeks, such as sunburn, coughs, colds, stings, headaches, ear aches and teething pain. Using homeopathy for your acute complaints is a good way to learn more about it and improve your prescribing.

Chronic conditions, though, are beyond the scope of self-help kits and home-prescribing, and should be treated by a qualified practitioner for best results. Chronic problems are long-term complaints and include things such as asthma, arthritis, heart and neurological problems.

If at any stage you think a “simple acute” may be a chronic problem or something more serious, please see a trained healthcare professional so an accurate diagnosis can be made and appropriate treatment given.

### **How do I buy homeopathic remedies?**

It is a good idea to invest in a few key remedies or a homeopathic kit so you will always have commonly-needed remedies on hand to treat acute problems. Remedies are easily obtained without a script from either local or overseas homeopathic pharmacies. They can be ordered in person, online or by phone and are readily delivered by mail or other services.

When ordering, choose a reputable pharmacy that prepares the remedies according to the traditional method – if you’re unfamiliar with the pharmacy you may need to phone and enquire or seek guidance from a local homeopathic association.

(NB: remedies aren’t affected when passing through airport x-rays during transport.)

### **Can I use more than one remedy at a time?**

When multiple remedies are combined in a single bottle, they are then called a complex or combination remedy. While often useful for those unfamiliar with homeopathy, complexes only help if the needed remedy is in the mix. The better approach for treatment is to keep the symptom picture as clear as possible by using just one remedy at a time, and moving to the next best indicated remedy if the previous one hasn’t helped by three to four doses. Chronic problems should not be treated by complexes.

### **Can I overdose on homeopathy?**

Yes and no. It is not possible to overdose with homeopathy to the point where there is harm or injury, but if the remedy is taken too often or for longer than needed, an aggravation will be experienced where new symptoms appear, or existing symptoms are intensified. Aggravations arise from the energetic effects of the remedy and subside without harm as soon as the remedy is stopped.

### **Can I antidote the remedy?**

For some sensitive people, strong tastes and odours such as essential oils, coffee, mint (or mint toothpaste) and camphor interfere with the action of the remedy. If you know you are sensitive to substances, it's best to avoid them completely during treatment.

## Chapter Ten: Other Natural Ways to Treat the Common Cold

The right homeopathic remedy will make short work of a cold, but other natural treatments also provide relief. To assist your body in its fight against the infection, here are 22 of the top kitchen-cupboard treatments for colds.

### 1. Practical Advice

**Drink plenty of fluids.** Good hydration thins the mucus so that it is easier for your body to expel. Try drinking water with lemon juice, or making a herbal tea for additional benefits (see below).

**Go slow on the milk.** Reduce, or stop, your consumption of dairy products. Dairy products stimulate the production of mucus - especially in those who are sensitive to it - which in turn supports the growth of viruses and bacteria.

**Rest.** Taking time out is one of the most important things you can do when you're sick. Illness is your body's cry for more rest so listen to it and take the time to let it recover.

**Add humidity.** Moisture in the air helps loosen congestion and eases painful coughs. A humidifier in the bedroom often leads to better sleep.

**Avoid sugar.** Even small amounts of sugar suppress immune function and increase the longevity of a cold. The exception to this is raw honey, which has antibacterial properties and can soothe a sore throat.

### 2. Stimulate that Immune System

**Oysters** are high in zinc, a mineral vital for immune function. It assists the helper T-cells of the immune system to recognise foreign invaders so indulge in them as much as you like when you have a cold.

**Yogurt and kefir** contain micro-organisms called probiotics that increase the infection fighting cells of the blood stream. These white blood cells protect against infections and harmful bacteria. Eat one to three serves of yoghurt or kefir a day.

**Oregano** is one of the best herbs for a cold. It is an excellent anti-inflammatory and contains phenolic acids, flavonoids and colour compounds that increase resistance and boost immunity. Add it liberally to your cooking or steep in hot water to drink as a tea.

**Carrot poultices** stimulate the lymphatic system that is responsible for, among other things, producing immune cells. Blend a carrot into a pulp and put in a cotton cloth; wrap it into a parcel shape and place over swollen glands in the throat for fifteen minutes.

### 3. Control Infection

**Lemons** make a big difference. Infections take hold easily when our bodies are too acidic. To counter this, drink the juice of a lemon squeezed into a cup of water or tea every few hours. Even though lemons taste acidic, their juice helps to alkalise the body.

**Garlic** is a natural antibiotic and fantastic at treating sore throats and infections. Crush five cloves and mix with half a cup of honey. Let the mixture sit for a couple of hours until runny and thin and take teaspoons of the syrup as needed (it tastes much better than it sounds!). The same can be done with sliced onion and honey.

**Cinnamon** is another natural antibiotic, rich in compounds that inhibit bacterial growth and strengthen resistance. Add it to your food or drinks to boost your immune system.

**Turmeric** contains an anti-inflammatory compound called curcumin, which also has strong cold and flu fighting properties. Stir a teaspoon into a glass of water or use it in your cooking.

**Cayenne pepper** is another important spice. It has a strong stimulatory effect and drinking a teaspoon of it in a glass of water as soon as you feel a sore throat coming on is often enough to stop a cold in its early stages.

**Salt water**, used as a gargle, controls bacteria in the throat. Use one teaspoon of salt per glass of water; gargle but don't swallow.

#### **4. Break up Mucus**

**Chicken soup**, homemade from scratch, contains a natural amino acid called cysteine which thins the mucus, allowing it to be expelled more easily. Make a big pot and sip throughout the day.

**Spices**, especially the hotter ones used in curries, also thin mucus. Ground fenugreek seed causes your nose to run, as does chilli, black pepper, and other 'hot' seasonings. Use in cooking or add to food before eating.

**Vinegar** also eases congestion. Place heated vinegar in a small bowl and gently inhale its vapour.

#### **5. Soothe those Symptoms**

**Honey and lemon** have an antibacterial effect and soothe the mucus membranes of the throat – raw honey is best. Research shows that children who take a spoonful of honey before bed cough less and sleep better than those who take over-the-counter products for coughs and colds. Adding a little lemon to the honey increases its anti-microbial effect. Honey and lemon combined with hot water make a soothing tea. If you feel up to it, add some cayenne pepper to further break up mucus.

**Ginger** is a stimulant that also warms you if you're feeling chilled. It's best used fresh rather than powdered. Peel and grate a small piece of ginger root into a cup of boiling water, steep for five minutes, sweeten with honey if desired and sip when needed.

**Herbal teas** such as oregano, sage and thyme also relieve the symptoms of a cold. Add a teaspoon of dried herb to a cup of boiling water and steep for 10 to 15 minutes. Strain and sweeten the liquid with honey if desired, then cool and store in the fridge. Take a teaspoon every hour as needed for a day or two.

**Peppermint** clears blocked noses and sinuses. Enjoy it as a tea or add peppermint teabags to a warming bath.

## **Chapter Eleven: “Strange but True” Treatments**

History is littered with bizarre and inventive attempts to put an end to the common cold. While we no longer prepare frog soup or swallow drops of skunk oil, the search for new treatments continues. Two recent suggestions involve wet socks and drops of peroxide. They're not quite as bad as the mediaeval advice of smearing cow dung onto the chest, and there is evidence that they may actually work. Try them and see.

### **1. The Wet Sock Approach**

Believe it or not, wet socks have been shown to trigger a reflex response from your body that relieves nasal congestion for a better night's sleep.

Warm your feet in a tub of hot water before going to bed so they are hot and pink. At the same time, soak a pair of cotton socks in iced water. Wring them out and immediately place them on your hot feet. Cover the socks with another thick pair of woollen socks and then climb into bed as quickly as you can, making sure you are covered and warm.

This simple hydrotherapy approach triggers a reflex in which your startled body immediately increases its circulation. This clears blocked nasal passages and speeds up the activity of your immune system.

### **2. Tickle your Ears with Hydrogen Peroxide**

Several researchers claim that the cold virus actually prefers to enter the body through the ear canal rather than the nose and eyes, and that a cold can be stopped in its tracks in the early stages if drops of 3% hydrogen peroxide are placed in each ear to disrupt the replication process of the virus.

To do this, tip your head onto one side and have somebody gently place some drops within your ear. The liquid will fizz, producing a harmless tickling sensation that sometimes mildly stings. Leave the drops in place for two to three minutes, until the bubbling stops, then tip your head over and drain the fluid onto a tissue. Do the same with the other ear.

This process may need repeating every one to two hours until no more bubbling occurs. If done early enough in the onset of a cold, the virus is destroyed leaving you cold-free. You will also have very clean ears!

## **Chapter Twelve: When To Seek Professional Help**

The common cold is a minor illness that, without treatment, normally clears by fourteen days.

If symptoms seem worse than what should be expected, or if they persist beyond 14 days, an allergy, sinusitis, or secondary infection may be responsible. At this point you should seek the advice of a trusted health professional so that more serious complaints such as a middle ear infection, sinus infection, bronchitis or pneumonia do not go undiagnosed.

Symptoms of concern for both children and adults are:

- High fever or a fever that last for more than a few days
- Shortness of breath, rapid breathing or wheezing
- Bluish skin colour
- Flu-like symptoms that improve, but return with a fever or worsening cough
- A cough with coloured sputum (mucus coughed up from the lower airways)
- Pain or pressure in the chest
- Severe pain in the face or forehead
- Earache or drainage from the ear
- Changes in mental state (such as confusion, irritability or seizures)
- A worsening chronic medical condition (such as diabetes or heart disease)
- Symptoms that last for more than 14 day

As mentioned, most colds resolve uneventfully, but if your symptoms are not improving as they should, seek the help of a qualified healthcare professional.



## **A Final Word**

While the common cold is a minor infection and still untreatable by conventional medicines, homeopathy provides a safe and simple way of overcoming it so that discomfort is eased, recovery is accelerated, and missed school or work days are avoided.

The same is true for other complaints. While the homeopathic treatment of serious and chronic conditions need the expertise of a qualified homeopath, annoying acute problems such as coughs, colds, flus, food poisoning, headaches, cuts, bruises and stings are easily treated by a home prescriber – all it takes is a little study and practice, and the addition of some of homeopathy's key remedies to the home medicine cabinet.

We hope this book has started you on that journey. It is the first in a series to introduce you to the fascinating world of using homeopathy to improve your health. Thank you for reading it.

For other books, manuals, and information on using homeopathy for yourself, your family, your pets and your garden, visit us at My Homeopathy at the links below. We wish you a healthy, happy and rewarding future using homeopathy.

-Staff at *My Homeopathy*.

More eBooks, webinars and information on homeopathy are found at My Homeopathy at: [www.myhomeopathy.net](http://www.myhomeopathy.net).

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## **About Fran Sheffield**

Fran Sheffield is a specialist homeopath with 20 years' experience in clinical practice and homeopathic education. She has a background in nursing, midwifery and health science education. Her particular interests include family homeopathy, treatment of autism spectrum disorders and the process and practice of homeopathic immunotherapy. She has been engaged at state and national levels in homeopathic curriculum design and delivery and is involved with mentoring both students and practitioners. Fran has presented at national and international conferences as keynote and invited speaker.

# Homeopathic Glossary

**Accessory symptoms:** additional symptoms that arise during treatment from an imperfectly matching remedy.

**Acute illness:** a condition which is self-limiting and short-lived, usually only lasting a few days or weeks.

**Aggravation:** temporary appearance of new symptoms or the temporary intensification of existing symptoms after taking a homeopathic remedy. May be a similar or dissimilar aggravation.

**Allopathy:** treatment of disease by medicines that produce symptoms different to those of the disease.

**Case-taking:** the process of recording the patient's symptoms.

**Centesimal:** potency in which the ratio of each dilution stage is 1 to 99, designated by the Roman numeral "C".

**Chronic illness:** a prolonged condition which usually worsens over time.

**Classical homeopathy:** foundational or Hahnemannian treatment in which a single remedy is given in a minimum dose and the response to that dose assessed before changes to treatment are made.

**Combination remedy:** a mixture containing more than one remedy, also known as a complex remedy.

**Common symptoms:** symptoms that most would experience from a particular disease.

**Complex remedy:** mixture containing more than one remedy, also known as a combination remedy.

**Concomitant symptoms:** symptoms that occur in conjunction with the symptoms of the main complaint yet appear to have no obvious relationship to it.

**Constitutional treatment:** treatment based on symptom-totality of the whole person rather than just an isolated problem.

**Contraria:** a state in which the symptom is opposed.

**Conventional medicine:** practice in which medicines and treatments that have no consistent relationship to the symptoms being treated are prescribed, sometimes known as orthodox medicine or allopathy.

**Decimal:** potency in which the ratio of each dilution stage is 1 to 9, designated by the Roman numeral "X".

**Disease:** "dis-ease" or a lack of ease produced by illness or sickness.

**Dissimilar aggravation:** appearance of temporary symptoms after taking a homeopathic remedy that are new or different to those of the original complaint; sometimes known as an unhomeopathic aggravation.

**Emotional symptoms:** those involving the emotions such as grief, jealousy, anger.

**General symptoms:** symptoms that affect the whole body.

**Grade:** evaluation of, usually by number or underline, the intensity or importance of the symptom.

**Hering's direction of cure:** postulate stating that cure takes place from: above down, from within out, from the most important organ to least important organ, the first symptom to appear being the last to disappear.

**High-potency remedies:** remedies of a 200C or higher.

**Homeopathic medicine:** medicine that acts according to the Law of Similars.

**Homeopathy:** treatment of disease symptoms by substances (remedies) that produce similar symptoms in the healthy.

**Homeopathic aggravation:** see Similar Aggravation.

**Homeopathic medicine:** another name for a homeopathic remedy.

**Homeopathic remedy:** a medicine that matches the symptoms of the disease by similia

**Homeoprophylaxis:** prevention of disease symptoms by substances (remedies) that produce symptoms in the healthy similar to the disease.

**Hypersensitive:** overreaction to normal stimuli, including homeopathic remedies.

**Idiosyncratic symptoms:** symptoms that are unique to that sufferer of the disease; also called unique or individualising symptoms.

**Indication:** a specific symptom that points to a specific remedy.

**Individualising symptoms:** symptoms that are unique to that sufferer of the disease; also called unique or idiosyncratic symptoms.

**Law of Similars:** the natural law of 'like treats like'.

**Low-potency remedies:** most decimal remedies or remedies below 30C potency.

**Materia medica:** a compilation of homeopathic remedies and their indications.

**Miasm:** a persistent influence acquired by infection or inheritance that predisposes to a syndrome of symptoms

**Mental symptoms:** symptoms affecting the mind or brain, such as confusion or forgetfulness.

**Minimum dose:** the smallest quantity of remedy necessary to produce a change in the patient.

**Modality:** factors which worsen or improve symptoms.

**Mother tincture:** initial preparation, preserved with alcohol, from which homeopathic remedies are made.

**Natural law:** a law of nature which is pre-existing, unchanging and which underpins natural phenomena.

**Oversensitive:** see hypersensitive.

**Palliation:** to lessen or reduce rather than cure.

**Particular symptoms:** symptom relating to a part rather than the whole of the body.

**Physical symptoms:** symptoms relating to the physical body.

**Polycrest:** a frequently used homeopathic remedy with an extensive symptom picture.

**Potency:** the strength a homeopathic remedy, determined by the number of serial dilutions and succussions.

**Potentisation:** preparation of homeopathic remedy via serial dilution and succussion.

**Prophylaxis:** prevention of disease.

**Prover:** participant in a trial designed to test a homeopathic remedy and the symptoms it produces.

**Proving:** a trial designed to test a homeopathic remedy and the symptoms it produces.

**Relapse:** return of symptoms when the body is no longer responding to the homeopathic remedy.

**Remedy:** homeopathic medicine.

**Repertory:** book of symptoms and the remedies related to those symptoms.

**Repertorisation:** using a repertory to create a list of remedies that correspond to the symptoms of an individual.

**Return of old symptoms:** return of symptoms from past health problems following a remedy, indicating the remedy is well matched and working deeply.

**Rubric:** a symptom listed in a repertory.

**Sensitive:** see hypersensitive.

**Similar aggravation:** temporary intensifying of existing symptoms after taking a homeopathic remedy. Sometimes called a homeopathic aggravation.

**Similars:** things that are alike; substances that produce similar symptoms.

**Similia:** a state in which the symptom is copied or closely replicated.

**Similimum:** the remedy which most closely copies or replicates the symptom picture.

**Single remedy:** one homeopathic remedy given at a time.

**Succussion:** the vigorous shaking of a homeopathic remedy, with each shake ending with a blow against a resilient but resistant surface.

**Suppression:** prevention of the body expressing a symptom, which eventually weakens health.

**Surrogate discharge:** bodily discharge (such as diarrhoea or post nasal drip) that acts as a release while deeper health problems improve following a remedy.

**Symptom matching:** matching the symptoms of a remedy to the symptoms of the disease.

**Symptom picture:** the picture created by the combination of all the individual's symptoms– mental, physical and emotional.

**Symptom totality:** the combination of all the individual's symptoms – mental, physical and emotional.

**Unhomeopathic Aggravation:** see Dissimilar Aggravation

**Vital force:** the invisible energy in all living things that maintains harmony and health.

**Vitalism:** the philosophy that all living things contain an energy that regulates life and health.