Dear Readers,

Welcome to the annual homoeopathy liftout. You will find lots of information on this (second most widely used) system of medicine, as well as case studies and a national list of registered practitioners. In line with World Homoeopathy Awareness Week, this year we feature homoeopathy for musculoskeletal wellbeing. If you have aches and pains or changes in mobility, you might just find a new avenue to help relieve discomfort and restore your health.

Most of you will have experienced musculoskeletal impairment at some time in your lives, from minor sprains and strains, sports injuries, whiplash, fractures, pain and stiffness on moving to more chronic inflammatory conditions. It is essential to have a full medical check-up to understand the extent of the problem, complications and prognosis. Get all the information you need and then explore treatment. There are many options to choose from within orthodox and complementary medicine, including homoeopathy.

With this in mind, I would like to take the opportunity to discuss an alternative approach to thinking about such complaints.

Frequently, we are conditioned to believe that any deviation from health that impairs functionality is not permissible. We go to lengths to avoid it so we can “soldier on”. In the case of musculoskeletal injuries, this may involve taking medication so you can continue to work — even if it involves lifting and possibly aggravating the complaint. Masking the pain might prevent you from realising the pain-free position your body needs to be in to relieve the cause of the problem, or keep you from taking the required rest to ensure a speedy recovery.

In some cases, there may be an emotional trigger for some musculoskeletal discomfort. Personally, when I have a stiff neck, I ask myself the question, “What is a pain in the neck in my life at the moment?” Sometimes, just acknowledging the burden will help to release the tension and assist recovery. By turning to our feelings and inner sense of what is wrong we can start to take responsibility for our own health and create the balance we want in our lives. Being in control of our health and healing increases personal strength and autonomy.

Michelle Hookham
National President AHA

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**ALL YOU WANTED TO KNOW**

**Homeopathy is a natural, effective and safe form of medicinal treatment but most people know very little about it. Here’s the perfect primer to get you started.**

**What is homoeopathy?**

Homeopathy is a holistic system of medicine. It aims to promote healing responses to diseases by administering specially prepared substances that mimic the symptoms of those diseases in healthy people. Modern homeopathy was founded in the 18th century by German physician Dr Samuel Hahnemann and is now used worldwide, with a 200-year history of effective clinical experience. It is recognised by the World Health Organization as a valid form of health care.

In Britain, for example, there are five homeopathic hospitals available under the National Health Service (NHS), including the London Homoeopathic Hospital. The English royal family has used it since Queen Victoria’s time in 1830 and it has a wide acceptance throughout Europe. In France, the most popular cold and flu remedy is a homeopathic medicine and in India more than 10,000 doctors use homeopathic medicines to treat their patients.

**How does it work?**

The word “homeopathy” (also known as homoeopathy) is derived from the Greek words *homoios* meaning “similar” and *pathos* meaning “suffering”. The cornerstone of homoeopathic philosophy is the Law of Similars. This law or principle is based on a long-held belief that dates as far back as Hippocrates, the Father of Medicine, and other ancient healers such as Paracelsus, that substances that produce symptoms in a healthy individual can be used to treat similar symptoms in a sick person. Homoeopathic treatment is believed to stimulate the body’s ability to fight infection and susceptibility to disease.

**Homoeopathic medicines**

Homoeopathic medicines are made from a variety of sources, such as plants, animals and minerals. They are prepared according to strict guidelines set out in international pharmacopoeias and under the control of the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Homoeopathic medicines are considered safe and free from serious adverse reactions since they are highly diluted. These medicines can be given in the form of liquid, granules, powder or tablets.

**Conditions commonly treated**

Homoeopathy aims to treat the whole person, taking into account personality, lifestyle and hereditary factors as well as the history of the disease. Since all patients are unique, homoeopathic medicines are prescribed to treat patients as individuals. For example, headaches in different patients would each be treated with different medicines, according to the patient’s...
individual symptoms. Homeopathy can be of benefit for all ages, at any stage, including those with mental and emotional problems.

**Homeopathic Treatment of Musculoskeletal Problems**

A study has shown that homeopathic treatments can decrease the severity of long-term chronic conditions.

**Problems**

Relating to our muscles, bones and joints are quite prevalent among older patients. Chronic musculoskeletal and rheumatic diseases are associated with inflammation and pain and might be accompanied by depression, anxiety, physical disability and sleep disturbances. Any of these factors can have a major impact on an individual’s general wellbeing and quality of life.

A recently published study of older patients in Germany and Switzerland found that homeopathic treatment can play a beneficial role in the long-term care of patients with chronic conditions such as osteoarthritis, sciatica and lower back pain. The study followed 83 individuals, aged between 70 and 84 years, who were suffering from a chronic condition for an average of at least 11.5 years. Most were taking conventional treatment in addition to the homeopathic treatment offered. The most frequent diagnoses were for high blood pressure and sleep disturbances, in addition to sciatica, lower back pain and osteoarthritis.

According to outcome assessments by both the patient and their doctor, there was a substantial decrease in the severity of their complaints following homeopathic treatment. The strongest clinical improvements were described by the patients in the first three months. On average, the severity of the chronic disease was reduced by 30 per cent over this time.

In addition, this level of improvement was found to be sustained over the course of the full 24-month follow-up period. These findings indicate that homeopathic treatment can be of positive benefit to older patients in reducing the severity of the symptoms of some chronic conditions of long standing. In practice, I have witnessed how any significant reduction in pain and inflammation can have a profound effect on other aspects of health and wellbeing, such as sleep, mood, energy levels, independence, less reliance on conventional pain medications and improved mental and emotional wellbeing.

Jessica arrived at the clinic nursing her right knee. She had recently started a new job in an advertising agency and was keen to make a good impression. She had been experiencing some anxiety at work, especially when presenting, and was unsure whether she was really up to the job. She was especially nervous around her new boss. On those days when she felt under pressure, her mind would involuntarily get a throbbing headache by the end of the day. The main feature of these “nervous headaches” was a hot feeling in the head and blushing of the face. In considering both the physical and emotional aspects of Jessica’s story, homeopathic medicine was prescribed on a “holistic” basis. The medicine is known to address treating rheumatic pain in the joints and conjunctive tension headaches, in addition to feelings of “uneasiness” and anxiety. After the first dose, Jessica reported that she had not experienced any headaches over the past month and she felt more confident settling into the new job. She was sleeping well and had decided to rejig a work assignment and perform better. She was continuing to do well with very occasional doses of the medicine.

**Reference:**

Homeopathy can address both the emotional and physical effects of pain.

Jimmie, who had recently retired, was accompanied by his wife when he came to visit me. His back pain was brought on by lying in the garden hours on end. He had received a diagnosis of degenerative disc disease, with a five-hour plane ride and could barely move because the pain was so bad. The doctor had given him painkillers to take as required, but he had not taken any. He had been on one dose when he came to see me. He wanted a massage to help his back and kept telling his wife she was “not to fuss.” He contradicted himself and said it was an old injury.

Jimmie frequently commented, “I can’t even walk,” and (to his wife) “Don’t touch me.” He had difficulty moving, due to give birth. She had severe back pain and was nervous about coping with the birth if I can’t even walk?” she thought.

During her homoeopathic consultation, eight-year-old Ellie started suffering nightmares or night terrors in children can be distressing for both the child and the parents, and the subsequent loss of sleep can be impoverishing. Homeopathic treatment for the family to overcome the burden may be considered a valuable tool in the management of frequent night terrors.

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During her homoeopathic consultation, Ellie confided that she often delayed bedtime because she knew she would be able to listen to her parents. Her parents confirmed this and joked that Ellie knew more about what was going on in the world than they did. Further discussion revealed that she thought her family was not frighten, she was a sensitive little girl who reacted so strongly to sad stories and had a deep fear of any harm coming to her family. A detailed consultation that Ellie’s nightmares were based on her fear of being left alone and of her family coming to harm. These fears were being fuelled daily by the TV news coverage of deaths and tragedies.

Ellie was prescribed a well-known homeopathic medicine, which helped her to set aside her fears, and as a result, she was able to talk more openly about her fears. Over the course of several weeks, the frequency of the nightmares lessened and the quality of her sleep improved. In addition to giving her the medicines, Ellie’s parents stopped allowing her to watch the TV news and spent more time reading stories with her, all of which helped to overcome a very difficult time for a sensitive little girl.

Maryanne Logan
AHA Professional Member, Mona Vale, NSW

BACK IN PAIN IN PREGNANCY

Homeopathy solved one woman’s problem just in time.

Margaret was 39 weeks pregnant and due to give birth. She had severe back pain and was nervous about coping with the pain of labour. “How am I going to cope with the birth if I can’t even walk?” she thought.

“Jim is fine, I can manage,” and (to his wife) “Don’t touch me.” He had difficulty moving, due to giving birth. She had severe back pain and was nervous about coping with the birth if I can’t even walk?” she thought.

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Arthritis and Homoeopathy

Homeopathy can be used in conjunction with conventional medicine (when appropriate) to treat arthritides.

Surprisingly, there are more than 100 different types of arthritides. Some are due to wear and tear, such as osteoarthritis, and others are due to autoimmune and inflammatory conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis. Even people with the same arthritis often experience their symptoms in very different ways.

Homoeopathy is prescribed by understanding the symptoms each person is experiencing. For example, is the pain better or worse with heat? Is it worse at night or during the day? Is it accompanied by flu-like symptoms? Is it worse after a particularly hard or exhausting day, she may still have a flare-up, but it is rare and far between and nowhere near as severe as it used to be.

Julie embarked on intensive homoeopathic treatment. Along with nutritional supplements prescribed by a naturopath, she continued with homoeopathic treatment, in consultation with her specialist. She was consuming herbal tea for the first time in her life. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain, that pain was somewhat reduced. She felt that the pain was “like a toothache” and that it was accompanied by a feeling of weakness in the leg 20 years previously, which had been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain.

On further questioning, Mrs A became more upset speaking terms since the dispute. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain. She complained that the pain was “like a toothache” and that she had desired coffee much more than usual since the condition had flared up. She said coffee seemed to make her feel better.

Concern about Mrs A’s condition was considered an argument about where she should live. Mrs A and her son had not been on speaking terms since the dispute. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain. She complained that the pain was “like a toothache” and that she had desired coffee much more than usual since the condition had flared up. She said coffee seemed to make her feel better.

Her concerned son was adamant about making more “suitable” living arrangements. She was very angry with him. He had been recently had a dispute with her son and Speake terms since the dispute. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain. She complained that the pain was “like a toothache” and that she had desired coffee much more than usual since the condition had flared up. She said coffee seemed to make her feel better.

Mrs A was a tea drinker, but she reported feeling better.

The senior citizen with sciatica had recently been diagnosed with palindromic arthritis, a relatively new form of arthritis. It is characterized by periodic attacks of acute joint inflammation that resolve completely between attacks.

The symptoms of palindromic arthritis can vary widely from person to person and even within the same individual. It is important to note that these symptoms may change over time, making it difficult to predict the course of the disease.

In the case of Mrs A, the symptoms included:

- Pain in the left knee
- Inability to sleep due to pain
- Swelling in the left knee
- Difficulty walking

The treatment for palindromic arthritis typically involves a combination of medication and lifestyle changes. Medications may be prescribed to manage pain and inflammation. It is crucial to avoid overexertion, as this can trigger flares.

Mrs A’s condition was also considered an argument about where she should live. Mrs A and her son had not been on speaking terms since the dispute. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain. She complained that the pain was “like a toothache” and that she had desired coffee much more than usual since the condition had flared up. She said coffee seemed to make her feel better.

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For Mrs A, the treatment involved recognizing the importance of her son’s role in her life. Mrs A had recently had a dispute with her son and Speake terms since the dispute. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain. She complained that the pain was “like a toothache” and that she had desired coffee much more than usual since the condition had flared up. She said coffee seemed to make her feel better.

By addressing the root cause of the conflict (e.g., a disagreement about living arrangements), the treatment approach could focus on improving the patient’s overall well-being. This might involve mediation, counseling, or simply encouraging open communication between Mrs A and her son.

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It is essential to support patients in making decisions that align with their values and preferences. Mrs A’s treatment plan should include discussions about future living arrangements, as well as strategies to help her cope with the challenges of living with arthritis.

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In conclusion, Mrs A’s condition was an argument about where she should live. Mrs A and her son had not been on speaking terms since the dispute. Because of her long-term history of rheumatoid arthritis, Julie had previously been poorly set, resulting in left knee pain. She complained that the pain was “like a toothache” and that she had desired coffee much more than usual since the condition had flared up. She said coffee seemed to make her feel better.

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It is critical to provide comprehensive support that addresses not only the medical aspects but also the emotional and social dimensions of arthritis care.
Every homoeopathic treatment is tailor-made for each patient and their specific needs.

With homoeopaths, you are an individual, not a number or a disease. This is not just a platitude or a feel-good statement — it is the way homoeopathy works. Homoeopathy views many symptoms in order to treat the underlying causes of ill-health, taking into account not only the condition itself but the whole person. This includes your lifestyle, medical history, likes and dislikes and mental and emotional health as well. It is often the small idiosyncrasies that are “the real you” that help the homoeopath to select the remedy that best fits your needs. You may have noticed no specific medicines have been mentioned in these articles. This omission has been deliberate because we do not wish to give the impression that there is a “one medicine fits all” approach with homoeopathy. If you have a skin condition or a stomach complaint, the homoeopathic medicine that has been given to someone else who seems to have the same complaint will not necessarily work for you, too. This is because their condition, although it sounds the same, is unique to them and their makeup. Your specific condition is a result of your own physical, mental and emotional nature. This is also why homoeopathic consultations generally take longer than those you are probably used to with other types of practitioners. Getting to know the “real you” takes longer than 10–15 minutes. Barbara Armstrong, former AHA National Administrator

Hastings, Vic

AN INJURY ON THE SOCCER FIELD

A sports fan is able to return to the field thanks to the assistance of a homoeopathic medicine.

Janelle complained of pain in the chest around the breastbone and ribs. She had taken a heavy blow, full in the chest, from a soccer ball during a game about 10 days before. The pain had subsided somewhat over the period since the incident, but was still troubling her. She had pain while breathing and with movements such as getting dressed, showering and turning over in bed. Getting to sleep and staying asleep was difficult as she was restless and found it difficult to get into a comfortable position. Janelle would wake up with pain and need to move or turn over, which increased the pain. Lying still helped for a while, but after a day at work she felt tired and sore and even breathing caused pain. Janelle would wake up with pain and need to move or turn over, which increased the pain. Lying still helped for a while, but after a day at work she felt tired and sore and even breathing caused pain. Janelle remarked that directing the hot shower on her chest seemed to ease the pain for a while and applying heat packs also helped. The pain was much worse in the cold weather, especially at night. In particular, the recent cold, rainy weather had increased her discomfort significantly. She had tried an anti-inflammatory medication with limited success. Janelle also remarked that she loved playing sport and was able to become irritable if she did not get her regular “activity fix”. The injury she sustained had curtailed her usual participation in sport and she was feeling a bit down because of this.

The indicated homoeopathic medicine was prescribed to be taken daily for seven days or until relief was felt. If she felt relief she was to then use the medicine as needed (for pain) and report back in a week. Janelle came in for a follow-up four weeks later. She apologised for not returning after the first week, but was feeling so well and was so busy at work that she had forgotten to check in. She told me that after three doses of the medicine the pain and stiffness had almost completely gone and she did not need to take any more. She was back playing soccer without pain and her sleep patterns had returned to normal. Dennis Ryan
AHA Professional Member, West End, Qld