



## Homeopathic treatment

### [Video](#)

Homeopathic treatment derives from the principle of similarity, like heals like.

Samuel Hahnemann is the founder of homeopathy: he had good powers of observation, and noticed that many illnesses have very few symptoms: the patient is ill without realizing it. According to his teachings, it is not only the patient who does not notice, but the immune system. The animation shows this using athlete's foot, the patient walked around a pool area barefoot and contracted athlete's foot. This fungus likes being in the skin, and the patient does not even notice it is there.

Hahnemann's teachings are based on symptom-oriented observation, in his opinion if there were no symptoms - for example pain or itching, then there simply was no immune response and the person could not recover completely. So he believed that if the stimulus were reinforced using the same illness-causing agent, then the immune system would be alerted and the disease could heal. In our example he would give the swimmer the same type of fungus and hope that the swimmer recovers. Some of these teachings do contain an element of truth, but reality is somewhat more complex.

These theories gave this type of treatment the name homeopathy, stemming from the Greek *hómoios*, meaning "the same, similar" and *páthos* meaning "suffering, sickness". The sickness is treated using the cause. It is true that many illnesses do not provoke symptoms, as you can see in the diagram, but this does not mean that our immune system does not fight against them. Generally, you hardly tend to feel things which progress slowly, take for example bed-ridden patients, who lie on the same spot for so long until wounds form, and acute motion causes pain.

The original principles of homeopathy have been forgotten: nowadays this term is used as a counterpart to academic medicine, and a lot of money is made from it. Many people think that homeopathy is something natural and biological while scientific medicine is a chemical invasion. These beliefs are wrong, for example penicillin, an antibiotic, is produced from a fungus. Nature is a continual theater of war, plants fight against germs, bacteria and microbes just as we do. Over the course of evolution, many of these plants have developed agents allowing them to protect themselves effectively against micro-organisms, many of these forming the basis for medications used nowadays.

Medicine has progressed a lot over the years, the trend going more towards empirically-based medicine. Serious clinics base their treatments on well-founded data, and there are unfortunately very few of these, but empirical medicine is gaining in importance. Homeopathy tends to take a backseat to this type of medicine, many forms of therapy are based on word of mouth and personal experience. The demand that a particular form of treatment has to repeatedly prove effective is not fulfilled in homeopathy, even though similar types of substances are used in each case.

It is pointless to distinguish between scientific medicine, alternative medicine and homeopathy: medicine is medicine and the same norms should hold for all types of therapy and medicines used. The effectiveness of treatment, medicines and therapeutic aids should be documented in studies, but many university clinics and pharmaceuticals companies do not observe these norms. This is probably one of the reasons why "scientific medicine" has such a bad name and why alternative forms of treatment - and alternative medicine, have become more popular. This is neither smart nor effective, as it is usually you the patient who ends up between the mill-stones of scientific and alternative medicine .