

Centre for Integrative Medical Training
In Association with NHS Tayside Homeopathy Clinic &
The Academic Department, Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine



Foundation Course in Medical Homeopathy

A Blended Course in Homeopathic Medicine for Healthcare Professionals

Part 1.3

History of the Principle of Similars

The principle of similars has been recognised for centuries as a legitimate rationale for the treatment of illness. A practical methodology for applying the principle, and its real potential within medicine became widely recognised with the publication of Samuel Hahnemann's work in the early 19th century, but had been understood in essence by Hippocrates in the 5th century BC, and Paracelsus (1493-1541).



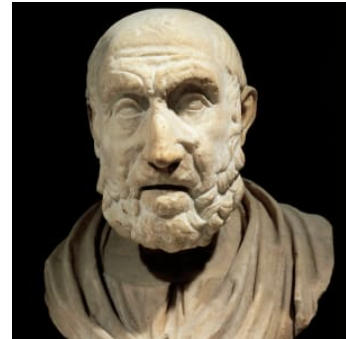
ACTIVITY:



At home watch Part 1 of **The History of Homeopathy** presented by Dr Gabriela Rieberer <https://youtu.be/uo19hWzRHcg>

Hippocrates

Hippocrates had noted that the laxative herb Aloe vera (a stimulant laxative) was paradoxically of great value in the treatment of certain parasitic dysenteries and helminthic bowel infestations. He found that this purgative agent often cured chronic diarrhoea.



Paracelsus

In the 16th century, Theophrastus von Hohenheim (Paracelsus) stated 'likes must be driven out by likes'. However, he based his principle of similars on alchemic theories like the **doctrine of signatures** (*viz* there is an association between the physical nature of a substance and its therapeutic indication: for example, plants with heart-shaped leaves may be effective in heart disease, or certain plants with yellow flowers can be used in treatment of jaundice). Paracelsus believed that there was a specific remedy for each disease, if only the remedy could be found. The one specific he is remembered for is the use of mercury in the treatment of syphilis.



Samuel Hahnemann (1755 - 1843)

Cinchona bark (containing quinine) had long been used by the Peruvian Indians as a cure for fevers. It was brought to Europe as a secret remedy by the Jesuits in 1632 and later by Juan del Vego, physician to the Count of Cinchon.

The name cinchona was given to the drug in honour of the Countess, who was 'cured' of malaria by its use. Malaria was

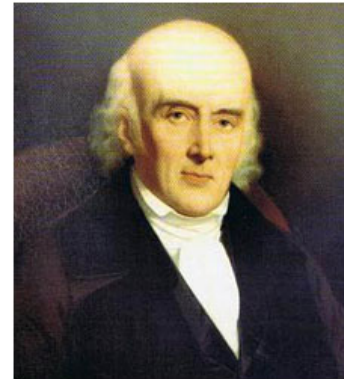
very prevalent, even before the mosquito was recognised as the agent of transmission. Quinine bark was extensively and beneficially used to treat malaria.

Most famously, Louis XIV of France contracted malaria and was 'cured' with quinine.

ACTIVITY:



At home watch Part 2 of **The History of Homeopathy** presented by Dr Mike Jenkins <https://youtu.be/WCDibJ7GSsI>



Hahnemann`s Cinchona Experiment

In 1790 Hahnemann was engaged in the translation of Cullen's *materia medica* into German. It was Cullen's contention that cinchona was effective due to a tonic effect on the stomach. However, Hahnemann knew from experience that other bitters and astringents were ineffective in the treatment of febrile illness.

Out of curiosity as to its true mode of action, he took some cinchona bark himself, only to find that he developed many of the symptoms of malaria, but without the pyrexia.

In 1796, after further proving* experiments, Hahnemann published his first exposition of the principle of similars in a medical treatise: 'Medicine of Experience'.

The principle of similars was summarised by Hahnemann: '*Similia Similibus Curentur*'.

* A proving is an experimental method of determining the 'symptom-picture' of a remedy by testing it on healthy volunteers. Proving methodology will be discussed later in the course.

ACTIVITY:



At home watch Part 3 of **The History of Homeopathy** <https://youtu.be/jhzLlmQD3e0>

Summary of Hahnemann`s Life

1755	Born at Meissen.
1779	Qualified in medicine at Erlangen.
1782	First marriage.
1782	
-1805	Travelled widely.
1790	Cinchona experiment.
1806	Published <i>Medicine of Experience</i> .
1810	Published first edition of <i>The Organon</i> .
1811	Settled in Leipzig. Carried out provings which resulted in publication of <i>Materia Medica Pura</i> .
1821	Moved to Kothen. Publication of <i>The Chronic Diseases</i> .
1830	Death of first wife.
1835	Married second wife. Moved to Paris, where he wrote the final (sixth) edition of <i>The Organon</i> .
1843	Died in Paris.

'The highest ideal of cure is the speedy, gentle and enduring restoration of health, or the removal and annihilation of disease in its entirety, by the quickest most trustworthy, and least harmful way, according to principles that can readily be understood.'

Samuel Hahnemann

Following Hahnemann

ACTIVITY:



At home watch Part 4 of **The History of Homeopathy**

<https://youtu.be/1UyxtlVHAjE>

Homeopathy in America

Constantine Hering (1800-80) was born in Saxony and went to Leipzig University in 1821 to study medicine. In his final year he researched the subject of Homeopathy, having been asked to write an essay which critically rejected Homeopathic philosophy.

Hering became convinced of the validity of Homeopathic principles, however, and refused to complete the article. He was forced to move to the University of Wurtzburg, where he obtained his Doctorate in 1826. Hering later joined a scientific expedition to South America where he conducted provings of new homeopathic medicines, including *Spigelia* (pinkroot), *Theridion* (orange spider), and *Lachesis* (bushmaster snake).



In 1833 Hering settled in the United States, where he co-founded the North American Academy of the Homeopathic Healing Art.

He was one of the founders of the American Institute of Homeopathy, of which he was the first president.

In 1836 Hering founded the Hahnemann College of Homeopathy in Philadelphia.

We would suggest that you now read Chapter 2,

The Origins of Homeopathy from:

Introduction to Homoeopathic Medicine by Dr H W Boyd, which is the recommended companion text book for this course.

NOTE: Hamish Boyd was consultant and Medical Director at the Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital (now Centre for Integrated Care). You can read about the history of homeopathy in Glasgow here: <https://www.sueyounghistories.com/2010-05-29-the-glasgow-homeopathic-hospital/>