

Centre for Integrative Medical Training
In Association with the Centre for Integrative Care &
The Academic Department, Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine



Foundation Course in Medical Homeopathy

A Blended Course in Homeopathic Medicine for Healthcare Professionals

Remedy Response Patterns

Part 2.4

Section 2.

Remedy Response Patterns

Homeopathy is primarily concerned with initiating change. The homeopathic interview itself can bring insights, which themselves promote changes - in the beliefs, thoughts, feelings and lifestyle choices maintained by the patient.

It is too easy to attribute all the patterns of response merely to the placebo effects of the interview however. This is particularly evident in cases who are chronically sick, cognitively impaired, or even comatose and in high dependency units, but who yet show clear response to homeopathic prescribing.

Assessing and interpreting change is very important after any kind of medical intervention, since this guides and informs any further treatment.

Homeopaths place great emphasis on both the subjective experiences of the patient and the observable clinical phenomena. These factors are particularly important to the decision-making process and for selecting further treatments.

You should not be misled into thinking, however, that modern investigative techniques are irrelevant to homeopathic method. A successful homeopathic treatment will result in better peak flow rates in the asthmatic; or improved liver function tests in those receiving an appropriate liver 'drainage' remedy (see Unit 6 in the intermediate course). Another example of an objective response would be the resolution of the bacteriuria in an acute cystitis.

Virtually every modern investigative technique remains relevant to the clinical information used by medical homeopaths, even when there is a significant divergence in the ways in which this information is applied within the treatment processes of homeopathic vs. orthodox medicine.



Ideally, following treatment, we want to see both objective and subjective improvements in the condition of our patient. It is the assessment of change that we are going to discuss below.

In some situations, however, the subjective experience of the patient will remain the main measure for assessing response. For example, in Chronic Fatigue cases, or patients with predominantly affective disorders.

Even migraine sufferers may not display many visible signs and their verbatim report concerning the frequency and severity of the acute episodes will remain an important measure of prescribing success (or failure).

Before we look at individual response patterns, you should bear in mind that, in general:

- acute illness resolves faster than chronic or relapsing states
- young patients tend to change more quickly (in their signs and symptoms) than the elderly
- patients with 'end-organ' damage (ie pathological tissue change) respond more slowly than those in whom the problem is functional.
- it may not be possible to achieve an unconditional, or complete, resolution of symptoms in patients with significant pathology.

Follow-up Considerations

These general observations will help to inform your advice concerning follow-up.

For example:

A child with an acute fever can be reviewed within the hour

An young adult with a subacute, or post infective, problem can be reviewed within a week

A mature adult with relapsing or functional problems (eg migraine) can be reviewed in a month

An elderly adult with musculo- skeletal symptoms and osteoarthritic changes, can be reviewed in six weeks.

To summarise: you will gather that -

- (1) the age of the patient (and their vitality),
 - (2) the degree of chronicity,
 - (3) the presence or absence of end organ damage, and
 - (4) your knowledge of the natural disease process
- taken together will inform your review choices and your assessment of change.

Hering's Principle

Constantine Hering was an important figure in the homeopathy of the 19th Century.

He outlined the characteristics of the ideal pattern of response to homeopathic treatment.



Hering's Principle states that -

Symptoms resolve from:

Above downwards

Centrally to peripherally

Inside Outwards

From most recent to most longstanding

This means that a systems-based treatment like homeopathy will engage the 'systems-intelligence' of the body:

When resolving disturbances of homeostasis, the body will prioritise functional problems in the vital organs first, before resolving the reactive disturbances in the surface tissues of the body.

In systems terms: mental function and the well-being of the brain and central nervous system are the highest priority, followed by the functional integrity of the vital organs of the thorax and abdomen.

This means that in patients with multiple pathologies, they will experience change in a certain order:

1. A feeling of well-being or calmness (eg. less anxiety, improved sleep, improved mental clarity)
2. An improvement in a central somatic symptom (eg fewer palpitations, less wheeze)
3. An improvement in a secondary somatic symptom (eg. less gastric reflux, improved bowel habit)
4. An improvement in a local symptom (eg less knee or ankle stiffness)
5. An improvement in the skin or mucus membranes (eg. fewer rashes, less itching)

The effect of potency

In general **high potencies** (ultra-molecular) are given in single or split doses for one day. They are indicated in cases with purely functional or reactive illnesses and/or mental and emotional conditions.

Low potencies (micro-pharmacological) are given for their affinities to diseased organs or tissues, in cases where there are pathophysiological changes.

These potencies are repeated, several times daily for weeks or months.

High potencies are also given in acute states, when they can be repeated every 30 minutes if necessary, or perhaps every 2-3 hours in less acute cases.

The reaction patterns, for high and low potency prescribing, will be described in the following section.

We will show you clinical examples of different response patterns, to illustrate how the patient's (1) age, (2) chronicity, (3) illness type and (4) potency choice, combine to determine their response to treatment.

Activity 2.1.1



First read the materials on Remedy Response Patterns by Russell Malcolm. This provides an analysis of the Primary and Secondary effects of high and low potency remedies. All the links and illustrations in this presentation are provided in the *Supplementary Materials A for Unit 5*.

Activity 2.1.2



Next, view the lecture on Remedy Response Patterns by Gabriela Rieberer.

<https://youtu.be/n4H24NHbrDw>

This provides you with additional clinical advice. This will help you in your interpretation of all of the common treatment outcomes that may present to you. This guidance will help greatly in your ongoing clinical decisions for each patient that you prescribe homeopathically for.

Primary and Secondary Reactions

The similimum is a catalyst for a series of events:

Events after administration:

- Latent phase
- Reaction
- Counter-reaction
- Special phenomena

The latent phase lasts anything from a few seconds to 2 weeks, depending on the acuteness of the patient's condition, their "vital force", the potency used, and the accuracy of the prescription.

The Reaction may manifest clinically as an aggravation, or occur subclinically without the patient being aware that anything is happening. Higher potencies are more likely to produce an initial aggravation in a sensitive patient.

The counter reaction may be swift and dramatic with a marked change in one or more visible signs, or it may occur insidiously with a gradual resolution of symptoms over several weeks. Intermittent conditions may recur less frequently, and with diminishing severity.

Special phenomena are discussed throughout the course, and will be illustrated with clinical cases.

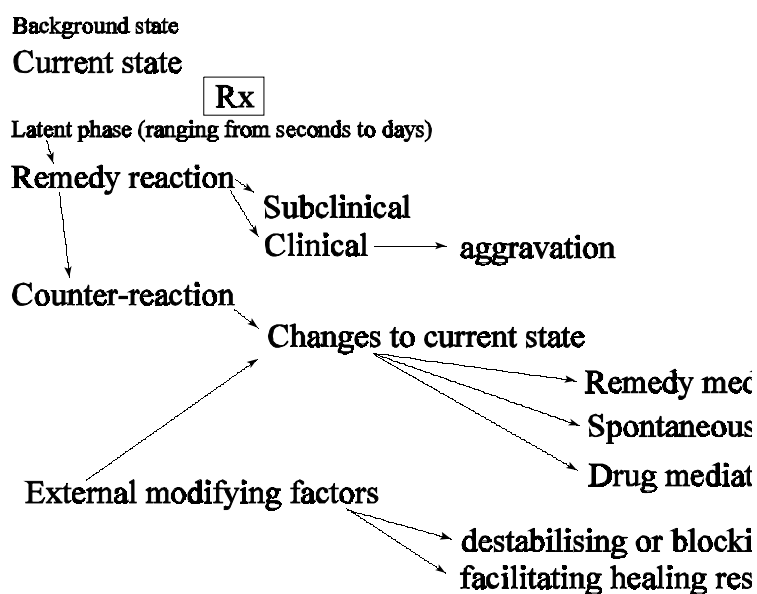
Typically they can include:

Replay symptoms; exteriorising signs; resolution in the direction of cure; unprecedented manifestations of the remedy picture.

SAQ2.1



Now open *Part 2, Supplemental Materials B* and work through the examples of the Remedy Reactions provided there. Use the grids provided to record your answers.



Safety of Homeopathy

Clearly any discussion of Response Patterns and Aggravations must also engage with the issue of safety.

Expanding on what we discussed in Unit 4c we recommend that you read some of the papers below to form a deeper understanding.

Effectiveness, Safety and Cost-Effectiveness of Homeopathy in General Practice - Summarized Health Technology Assessment



Article- Literature Review (PDF Available) in *Forschende Komplementärmedizin / Research in Complementary Medicine* 13 Suppl 2(2):19-29 · February 2006

DOI: 10.1159/000093586 · Source: PubMed

Is It Possible to Distinguish Homeopathic Aggravation from Adverse Effects? A Qualitative Study



Article (PDF Available) in *Forschende Komplementärmedizin / Research in Complementary Medicine* 19(1):13-9 · February 2012 with 1,319 Reads

DOI: 10.1159/000335827 · Source: PubMed