



Homoeopathy –  
A Medical Approach and Its History

The six-part exhibition uses texts and photographs to illustrate the foundations of homoeopathy. Visitors learn about the health care system of the 18th century, about Samuel Hahnemann's life and work and the growth of homoeopathy towards its present-day worldwide significance. The scientifically founded presentation takes them on an intense journey through the history of homoeopathy.

Scientific direction:  
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Triturating bowl with the first third of lactose and a good grain of thuja  
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Eupatorium perfolatum  
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Silicea  
© Bruno Vonarberg, Brülisau



Samuel Hahnemann, Repertories. Unpublished manuscripts, Leipzig, c. 1817  
© Brigitta Ahlborn, IGM



Spanish flies  
© IGM picture library



Female anatomy model made from ivory, c. 1700  
© Medizinhistorisches Museum, Zurich



Bloodletting scene, from: Wolfgang H. von Hohberg: Calender. Das Land- und Feldleben Adeliger [Calendar. Country life of the nobility], Nuremberg 1682  
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Two-story pharmacy of Privy Councillor Virgil Mayer, Cannstatt, before 1915  
© IGM picture library



Trituration machines of the Willmar Schwabe Company, Leipzig, c. 1926  
© 60 Jahre im Dienst der Homöopathie 1866–1926

[60 years in the service of homoeopathy 1866–1926], ed. Willmar Schwabe, Leipzig 1926, p. 31

Samuel Hahnemann  
and the ‘old medicine’

When the physician Samuel Hahnemann developed homoeopathy in the late 18th century, medicine was still far away from its present-day standard of knowledge. Without much insight into the causes of disease physicians harried their patients with bloodletting, enemas and vast amounts of highly dosed and often harmful medicaments. Hahnemann and other reformers of his time set out to tackle this untenable situation.

The dissemination and  
development of homoeopathy

How was it possible that homoeopathy spread, first in Germany and later worldwide, in the face of resistance and hostility from the orthodox medical fraternity? During the cholera epidemic of the 1830s

What is homoeopathy?

In colloquial usage ‘homoeopathy’ is a generic term for various alternative approaches to healing. But what are its characteristic features? How do homoeopaths treat their patients? The exhibition introduces the therapeutic principles of homoeopathy and explains its holistic view of the disease process. It explains the similarity rule which is central to homoeopathy and the process of homoeopathic dilution that potentiates the effect of medicinal substances derived from plants, animals and minerals.

homoeopathy proved very successful and as a consequence gained much in popularity. Famous patients greatly enhanced its public image due to their prestigious social standing. From c. 1870 the citizens became important as lobbyists who, especially in Germany, joined forces by forming associations.

Since the first beginnings of homoeopathy and right up to our times lay practitioners have played a crucial part in the dissemination of this healing method. German speaking homoeopathic physicians founded early associations and campaigned for the emancipation of their medical system at universities and in hospitals.



Farmacia do Instituto  
Hahnemanniano  
do Brasil  
© Ciencia Hoje 7  
(1988), p. 59



Samuel Hahnemann,  
Organon of the Healing Art,  
Indian editions  
© IGM picture library

## Homoeopathy worldwide

The worldwide development of homoeopathy is shown for Europe up to its present-day boom which extends also to Central and Eastern Europe. The success of the North American homoeopaths was an important influence right up to the early 20th century. Today it is the renaissance of homoeopathy in South America that excites much interest. Special attention is given to Brazil where homoeopathy is increasingly recognized as part of the 'integrative national health system'. The development in Asia is demonstrated by the example of India where homoeopathy is fully included in the national health care provision and more widespread than anywhere else in the world.

## Homoeopathy today

Since the 1980s this medical approach has experienced a considerable global upsurge due to its consistent rise in patient numbers. In the course of its 200-year history various regional schools of homoeopathy have emerged. The efficacy of the high potencies has remained controversial until today. The exhibition therefore includes an account of the current research into this question. More recent findings confirm the efficacy of homoeopathy for many indication areas.

# Homoeopathy

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An exhibition by the Institute  
for the History of Medicine  
of the Robert Bosch Foundation  
in Stuttgart, Germany