

surgery & homoeopathy

When dental, surgical and medical procedures are necessary, homoeopathic medicine comes to the fore in supporting the healing process. Starting with the anxiety and anticipatory stress before the procedure, right through until the mind and body have fully recovered. If you are uncertain then seek help from your homoeopath or health care provider in selecting appropriate remedies.

Homoeopathy is a medical system developed by Samuel Hahnemann 200 years ago. It is well known in the UK, America, Europe and India and to a lesser extent Australia. Homoeopathy follows definite scientific laws of preparation, prescription and cure that are as true today as they were in Dr Hahnemann's time.

Homoeopathic medicines are provided in either pilules or drops. The dose varies depending upon the patient's individual need and the patient is usually the best judge of this. These medicines have been prepared in a specific way by a process called potentisation. This is an activating process involving dilution and succussion (shaking hard) which makes the remedies non-toxic and free from side effects. This means that the Homoeopathic medicine will not affect or influence the medicines prescribed for you by your doctor or while in hospital.

The information and remedy pictures that follow are available in traditional homoeopathic texts. If a homoeopathic remedy picture matches your individual symptom picture the remedy may offer symptomatic relief. Homoeopathic principles should be applied when using any homoeopathic remedy. Always read the product label. If symptoms persist consult your health care practitioner promptly.

Anticipatory Anxiety

Choose from the following remedies and take a few times on the day prior to and again immediately before treatment. Or every at short intervals until feeling calm.

Acute anxiety, great fear and dread - **Aconite**. Trepidation, hurried, incessant speech, diarrhoea - **Argent Nit**. Children who are disagreeable, capricious and throw things. Adults who are nervous, sensitive and angry when in pain - **Chamomilla**. Silent, motionless, trembling and weak - **Gelsemium**. Fear and anxiety in sensitive children - **Phosphorus**.

Anaesthetic Effects

Local anaesthetic: If the bone feels injured by the needle - **Ruta Grav**. Shooting pains - **Hypericum**. Swelling with burning, stinging pains - **Apis**. Stiff and cold at the puncture site - **Ledum**.

General anaesthetic: The most useful remedy for those prone to adverse effects after a general anaesthetic is **Phosphorus** – a few doses prior to, or even after the anaesthetic, can be very helpful.

To help support those with a weak chest take **Antimonium Tart**, for a few days before the surgery. For nausea with excess salivation - **Ipecac**. To protect and support the immune system against bacterial influences, especially if antibiotics are undesirable, take **Pyrogen** daily starting before the procedure and continuing for several days.

Antibiotics & Drug Toxicity

All effects of antibiotics can be reduced by taking extra garlic or garlic capsules, plain organic or bio-dynamic yoghurt and acidophilus. When antibiotics produce diarrhoea - **Nitric Acid**. When antibiotics produce thrush - **Borax**. **Sulphur** a few regular doses for a short time following antibiotics may help rebalance the system.

Drug reactions and toxicity: The main remedies for reactions to and toxicity from medications are **Nux Vomica**, **Arsenicum** and **Sulphur**. Continued problems relating back to courses of antibiotics or other drugs may be treated very successfully by your homoeopath.

Diet & Nutrition

Prior to surgery prepare and strengthen the body using nutrients such as **zinc**, **vitamin C**, **bioflavonoids**, **vitamin E**, **beta-carotene**, and **selenium**. These nutrients are very important as they promote tissue repair and help improve immunity. While convalescing, eat a simple diet containing lots of fruit and vegetables, soups or broths, whole grains, nuts and seeds, and fresh fish. Avoid fried foods, sugar, alcohol, and junk foods.

Dental Surgery & Oral Health

Follow the same principles and remedies as for other surgery. Repeat **Arnica** routinely to reduce pain, bruising and damage and **Hypericum** routinely to promote regeneration of nerve tissue.

To assist in repair of bone and periodontal tissue after difficult extractions, oral surgery or even after orthodontic adjustments, use **Ruta Grav** routinely.

Where there is a bleeding tendency and for people who have adverse reactions to anesthetics use **Phosphorus**, starting with a few doses prior to the procedure. If there is threatened infection at the site take **Hepar Sulph** followed by **Silica**.

Abscess and toothache: Firstly ascertain whether the condition is acute or chronic.

Acute: Repeat the indicated remedy often. Sudden onset, swelling, redness, intense heat and throbbing, especially right sided - **Belladonna**. Swelling and oedema, rose coloured like a bee sting - **Apis**. Tooth pain, without obvious cause during pregnancy - **Sepia**. Marked intolerance to pain - **Chamomilla**.

Chronic: Repeat a 6c potency of the indicated remedy regularly on a daily basis to resolve. To encourage drainage and resolution of pus - **Hepar Sulph**. After pus has discharged - **Silica**. When the abscess involves an infected wisdom tooth, extraction is often the best solution. Treat the acute phase with **Belladonna** and then follow with **Hepar Sulph** until extraction is possible.

Accidents and injuries to the mouth and teeth: Seek immediate emergency dental treatment and use **Arnica** plus **Ferrum Phos** regularly. Add **Hypericum** if the nerve is exposed or damaged and **Ruta Grav** three times daily to aid ligament repair if the tooth is loose. **Hepar Sulph** may help prevent infection. If a tooth is knocked out it needs to be replaced in the tooth socket or stored in milk to prevent dehydration and other cellular changes until dental treatment is available.

Gingival (Gum) health: There is no substitute for regular check ups, scaling, efficient cleaning and flossing in the maintenance of healthy gums and teeth. However some people, despite good oral hygiene have a disproportionate degree of gum disease and/or tooth decay. These people are often helped by a Constitutional prescription from their Homoeopath and may need to assess their nutritional status especially **Vitamin A, C, E** and **Zinc**.

Bleeding gums usually result from gum disease associated with inefficient oral hygiene technique however at times this can be an indication of generalised ill health or the use medication. It is important to gently brush the areas of inflammation to remove plaque and encourage healing. Plaque forms daily even in a healthy mouth and if not effectively removed it hardens when in contact with

minerals in the saliva and will eventually affect the gums. **Arnica** given before and a few doses after scaling can help reduce discomfort.

The main remedy for bleeding gums is – **Phosphorus**. Bad breath with peculiar taste and excess saliva. Active infection with redness and loose teeth - **Mercurius**. For open wounds – **Calendula**. With pain – **Hypericum**. For susceptibility to repeated infections – **Silica**. Stained teeth, bone loss, bleeding gums and a high rate of decay – **Staphysagria**.

Mouth ulcers and cracked lips: Thrush and ulcers that are hot, tender and bleed easily – **Borax**. Foul breath, ulcers, tongue large and imprinted by the teeth - **Mercurius**. Base of the ulcer bleeds, stinging pain. Cracks at the corners of the mouth – **Nitric Acid**. Lips chapped and dry, crack middle of the lower lip, cold sores – **Nat Mur**.

Mouth washes and tinctures: Care needs to be taken when using commercial mouthwashes as they can be quite astringent and toxic. They can also neutralize homoeopathic medicines. **Calendula** and **Hypericum** tinctures are very effective and can be diluted, 30 drops in 500ml warm water 3-4 times daily, as a wash, or gauze may be soaked in the solution. For mouth ulcers, gingivitis and ulcerative conditions try **Myrrh**, 5ml in 45ml water or an infusion of dried or fresh **Sage** leaves.

Oral surgery: Use **Arnica** and **Hypericum** for 1-2 days prior to surgery and continue for at least 5-7 days. For pain at the incision site and to promote repair after any incised wound - **Staphysagria**. Bone pain and damage - **Ruta Grav**. **Pyrogen** supports the body's resistance to post operative infection and complications. Useful where antibiotics are undesirable or refused. **Silica** helps the expulsion of any retained bone or tooth fragments.

Medical Procedures

If you are booked for a medical procedure use the appropriate remedies listed under surgical procedures plus those specific to your treatment. Take care to address feelings of anxiety, worry, shock and distress as they arise. Paying attention to these feelings will facilitate a rapid return to health and a sense of emotional well being.

Damage from biopsies and other puncture wounds, including injections, responds well to **Ledum** and/or **Hypericum**. For shock and bruised tissues – **Arnica**.

Treatments to the lower abdominal area include pap smears, biopsies, cervical treatments and catheterisation and can damage the fragile tissues

of the urethra and vaginal mucosa: **Staphysagria** helps with the physical healing and also the sense of violation and humiliation that can ensue. Laser treatment or cautery – **Causticum** or **Cantharis**. **Arnica** and **Hypericum** are also important for generalised bruising and healing. If abnormal cells are diagnosed increase **Folic Acid**, **B6** and **Magnesium** supplements.

Homoeopathy is a tremendous support for people going through chemotherapy and radiotherapy treatments. The nausea and gastric upset can be helped with **Arsenicum**, **Ipecac** or **Nux Vomica**. Exhaustion and debility – **China** or **Kali Phos**. For emotional exhaustion and worries see remedies under convalescence.

If you are sensitive to the effects of scans or radiographs take **Arnica** and **Phosphorus** or ask your homoeopath for a specific remedy.

Surgical Procedures

Pre operative preparation: If possible prepare in advance for the surgery and recovery process with appropriate remedies, tissue salts, vitamins and mineral supplements. Exercise caution with herbal medicine and tinctures that can cause complications such as bleeding. Due to their high dilution homoeopathics do not affect the body in this way as they only work by stimulating the healing process.

Arnica is recommended to prepare the body for the effects of surgery. It is the most important remedy for the symptoms of bruising, haematoma and haemorrhage, it has a mild central analgesic effect and is recommended routinely for people affected by accidental or surgically induced physical trauma.

Hypericum is indicated for its effects on damaged nerves, controlling pain and promoting regeneration. These two remedies facilitate healing and support the body through the process; take a dose of each regularly on the day before and a dose on the morning of surgery. To help protect against infection take a dose of **Pyrogen** on the day prior to surgery and continue for several days.

Post operative recovery: The following remedies can be taken as pilules, combined in one bottle to be taken as a few drops under the tongue, or added to the water jug so it can be sipped frequently for the first 24 hours and then every few hours for several days.

Arnica is an excellent remedy for surgical shock, and for the bruised sore feeling following surgery. **Hypericum** helps repair damaged nerves and is especially indicated if surgery involves the spine.

Digestive function: After fasting there can be difficulty and discomfort in re-establishing digestive function.

Where there is bloating, which is better from burping – **Carbo Veg**. If the bloating is better from passing wind – **Lycopodium**. Repeat the indicated remedy as needed.

Haemorrhage: Be sure to follow the post operative Instructions. Persistent bleeding that you cannot control needs attention or advice from your surgeon. If necessary use **Phosphorus** for bright red bleeding. **Lachesis** – persistent dark bleeding. Once arrested, continue with **Arnica**. For recovery after a haemorrhage or any loss of body fluids take **Ferrum Phos** or **China** until fully recovered.

Healing involving bone and cartilage: If the surgery involves damage to the bone, cartilage and periosteum such as joints, dental surgery and open heart surgery (where the rib cage is opened) there can be deep bruises and a marked stiff feeling. **Ruta Grav**, regularly, assists repair.

Healing involving soft tissue: **Bellis Perennis** is indicated after abdominal surgery if deep pain remains despite using **Arnica**.

Painful incision: **Staphysagria** helps the body to recover, on a physical and emotional level, from incised wounds especially in the genital or lower abdominal area. Examples are hysterectomy, caesarean, prolapse repair, haemorrhoids, circumcision, vasectomy, etc. Repeat 4 hourly or as necessary.

Vomiting and nausea: Post-operative vomiting often responds well to **Phosphorus**. If the vomiting is caused by eating and only occurs afterwards – **Ferrum Met**. Nauseous, thirstless, chilly but worse from warm air – **Ipecac**.

Convalescence

If recovery is slow or complicated despite using the indicated remedies then consult your homoeopath to treat the underlying problem.

Bed sores and ulcers: Respond well to homoeopathy but you may need help in choosing a remedy. Consider **Arnica**, **Sulphur**, **Lachesis** and **Arsenicum**.

Constipation: Stool large, dry and hard – **Bryonia**. Bloating, windy, no desire – **Lycopodium**. Ineffectual urging, “ball” sensation – **Sepia**. Over-indulgence, ineffectual urging – **Nux Vomica**.

Emotional symptoms: Anger and frustration at the system, family and yourself is common. For suppressed anger from rudeness and a sense of violation – **Staphysagria**. Irritable and impatient – **Nux vomica**. Sometimes the situation and also medications can contribute to feelings of hopelessness and depression. Gloomy and depressed – **Aurum**. Fear and depression in fussy anxious people – **Arsenicum**. Exhausted, hopeless and lacking in energy – **Phosphoric Acid**.

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Convalescence [contd]

Lonely and feeling abandoned – **Pulsatilla**. Overwhelmed and lacking confidence – **Lycopodium**. Bad news and setbacks can cause shock, disappointment and grief. Shock, trembling and withdrawal – **Gelsemium**. Emotional strain, hysterical reactions and grief – **Ignatia**. Silent grief, closed and reserved, wants to be alone – **Nat Mur**. Exhausted by treatments, grief and disappointment – **Phosphoric Acid**.

Exhaustion, weakness and debility: Afraid to be alone with a great fear of death. Fussy despite the weakness – **Arsenicum**. Weakness and debility, with lack of appetite. Abdominal wind and eructations. Cold and clammy – **Carbo Veg**. Exhausted and weak after severe diarrhoea, vomiting, dehydration or fluid loss – **China**. Indifferent to loved ones from lack of energy – **Phosphoric Acid**. Dizzy and exhausted from worry and loss of sleep – **Cocculus**.

Fractures: Use **Arnica** routinely. Once the bone is set use **Symphytum** to encourage union and start taking a quality nutritional supplement. For the pain and stiffness alternate **Rhus Tox** and **Bryonia**. For contused pain – **Ruta Grav**. Nerve damage, numbness or tingling – **Hypericum**. To aid calcium metabolism **Calc Phos** twice daily.

Haemorrhoids: Consider **Ferrum Phos**, **Nux**

Vomica, **Pulsatilla** or **Sulphur**. If associated with back problems – **Aesculus**. For chronic problems use the tissue salt **Calc Fluor** to improve elasticity and tone.

Thrush, oral and/or systemic: Candida can thrive when resistance is low after illness, antibiotics or medications. Take **Borax** at earliest sign and include acidopholus or plain yoghurt daily. Excess saliva, trembling tongue – **Mercurius**. With cold sores – **Nat Mur**. With mouth ulcers and fatigue – **Arsenicum**.

Scar tissue and healing: Tissue salts **Silica** and **Calcium Fluoride** encourage repair and strength of structure. Start before surgery if possible and continue for 2 weeks after. Once the wound has closed massage the area with the contents of a **Vitamin E** capsule.

If scar tissue is still a problem consult your homoeopath. Difficult healing and pain with a sensitive, angry, red wound – **Staphysagria**. Suppurative symptoms – **Calendula** or **Hepar Sulph**.

Sleeplessness: Sleepless with fear and excitement, anxious, restless and worried – **Aconite**. Sleepless from joy or over stimulation. Crowding of thoughts, full of ideas and quick to act – **Coffea**.

From mental strain, the effects of medication or over-indulgence in food, coffee etc. – **Nux Vomica**. Consider Bach Remedies and safe essential oils to help relaxation.