

travel & homoeopathy

Overseas travel, while very exciting and necessary, can play havoc with our bodies and our minds. Homoeopathic remedies can be extremely useful in allowing the smooth adaptation to change and helping to cope with jet lag symptoms and excitement and anxiety. There are also excellent remedies for first aid and the treatment of simple ailments and a compact travel kit takes up very little luggage space.

Homoeopathy is a medical system developed by Samuel Hahnemann 200 years ago. It is well known in the United Kingdom, America, Europe and Asia 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 and the dose varies depending upon each person's individual need. 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) that makes the remedies non-toxic and free from side effects.

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.

Preparation for the Trip

To help with adjustment to change start your jet lag remedies a few days before departure. Start your daily dose of **Arsenicum 6c** which may help with adjustment to change at this time, and continue for the course of the trip (or at least until settled at your destination).

When travelling to areas where mosquitos are a problem, a dose a day of **Ledum 6c** may help reduce the incidence of and reaction to bites. When using remedies such as Arsenicum and Ledum in this way they are understood to work best in low potency. Thinking that 30c or higher will be better can prove counter productive.

Homoeopathic remedies, and a sound knowledge of first aid and knowing what to expect in the environs is an invaluable asset when travelling, especially if camping and trekking in isolated areas. Sometimes medical attention is too far away or entirely undesirable in foreign countries. Be very familiar with the use of your remedies and other supplies.

If you are going to travel into remote areas, don't skimp on your remedy kit. Carefully read the following information and choose remedies to suit your individual needs. Many people travel with a homoeopathic kit and the customs people at airports are quite used to seeing them. However it is wise to ensure that they are well labelled and accompanied by descriptive leaflets and the Owen Home Prescribing booklet.

It is sometimes recommended when travelling to certain countries that we protect ourselves against diseases such as Malaria, Cholera etc. However, according to medical literature the effectiveness of vaccines against certain diseases is questionable. Discuss this with your homoeopath and medical carer, and read available literature, including alternatives.

Homoeopathy offers the choice of prophylactic remedies to help protect us against these infections and can be taken as a substitute or to complement the orthodox method. Should you choose orthodox immunisation, your homoeopath can make suggestions to support your immune system.

The Flight

Adjustment to change: **Kali phos 6c** is an excellent remedy for those of us who can become overstimulated with time changes, long flights and so on. It has a wonderful calming effect. **Arsenicum 6c** helps the body to adjust to change, physical, emotional and psychic. This includes adjusting to food, water and climate. **Nux vomica** is indicated when there are alterations to our usual routines, particularly affecting sleep and digestive function.

Anxiety and fear: Anxiety and fear can be common reactions before the onset of a journey. Use the chosen remedy in the 30th potency, repeated morning and night for one or two days prior to and during the journey. If you have 6c take it 4 times daily.

Acute fear and excitement – **Aconite**. Fear and apprehension with diarrhoea. Very talkative. Fears of heights, crowds, closed spaces etc - **Argent nit**. Quiet, subdued and trembling. Fear of flying and especially fear as the plane descends – **Gelsemium** (also **Borax**).

Back ache and discomfort: As well as helping to reduce jet lag symptoms Arnica helps with the associated 'bruised and beaten' feeling. **Bellis perennis** relieves the discomfort of aching buttocks and soreness in the spine from extended periods of sitting during long flights.

Ear pain: Some people suffer from earache associated with air travel. It is very important to seek professional attention on arrival if the symptoms resolve only partially or recur. Initially the indicated remedy may need to be repeated every 10 minutes until some relief is experienced. For acute pain in the ears as the plane loses height – **Pulsatilla**. Screaming and inconsolable from irritability and pain – **Chamomilla**. For sudden onset of violent pain, especially if it is right sided – **Belladonna**.

Fluid retention and circulation: **Nat mur 6c** helps balance fluid levels and reduce swollen ankles. Take 2 doses the day before travel, 3 to 4 doses during the flight and as needed for the following 2 days. Sluggish venous circulation is helped by **Hamamelis**, **Pulsatilla**, **Sepia** or **Lachesis** depending on your particular symptoms. The tissue salt **Combination I** may help improve circulation and strengthen the veins. If possible start them a week or two before your trip.

Jet Lag: Start these remedies the day before the flight, take every few hours during the flight and continue afterwards until there are no more symptoms. Physical tiredness with aching muscles and limbs, 'as if bruised and beaten' - **Arnica**. Alternate **Arnica** with **Kali phos**, which has a calming effect on the nervous system. Alternate with **Arnica**. Dizzy and stressed from loss of sleep - **Cocculus**. **Radiation Remedy** is a specific Bach Flower combination that may help jet lag and the effects of radiation. Use regularly during the flight and until the symptoms disappear. Add 10 drops to a bottle of spring water and sip it often during the flight. When finished, top it up from the drink fountain and add more Bach Flower Remedy. As well as giving you the flower remedy, this will help keep you hydrated – dehydration being a major component of jet lag. Also recommend are **Echinacea** and extra **vitamin C**.

Travel sickness: Whether from car, boat or air travel,

travel sickness is a most unpleasant experience, especially for small children. Give the indicated remedy frequently, depending on the severity of the symptoms, starting 1-2 hours before travel. If the usual reaction is very severe give a few doses the day before travel. Gagging and retching and headache with queasiness - **Nux Vomica**. Giddy, nauseous and wants to lie down - **Cocculus**. **Tabacum** or **Petroleum** may suit you better.

The Destination

Accidents, injuries and shock: **Arnica** is very important for symptoms associated with bruising and trauma. It is great to carry with you in case of accident. Use immediately if there is an accident or injury and repeat as needed. Initially the dose may need to be much more often until the situation is under control. For symptoms of fright and shock without injury use **Aconite** and repeat as needed. To encourage healing of abscesses and infected wounds - **Hepar sulph**. Nerve damage, jammed fingers or toes, spinal injuries, splinters, puncture wounds, bites and stings - **Hypericum**. Take regularly if there are wounds which threaten infection. A daily dose of **Ledum** helps when travelling in mosquito infested areas and discourages sepsis of scratches in tropical climates.

Altitude adaptation: **Coca** may assist in acclimatising to altitude, reducing the symptoms of headaches, nausea insomnia, dehydration and breathlessness. **Cactus** taken daily helps reduce the effects of altitude and nosebleeds especially if **Coca** is unavailable. **Ferrum met** can help improve the body's oxygen carrying capacity and reduce fatigue. For sensations of numbness and tingling with icy coldness of hands and feet – **Aconite**. Fear of falling and during downward motion i.e rock-climbing – **Borax**. Altitude headaches and effects of the sun – **Glonoin**.

Bites and stings: Research the area before travelling and take the homoeopathic nosode (specific remedy made from the insect e.g. European wasp) for the local insects and animals. You can modify body scent to deter insects by increasing garlic, vitamin B1 (50mg twice daily for adults) and taking **Caladium 6c** and **Ledum 6c** each day may help. For insect and animal bites and stings take the appropriate nosode and additional **Ledum**. If there are shooting pains use **Hypericum**. Swelling and itching, especially from bee and wasp stings - **Apis**. The allergic reaction can also be modified by homoeopathic **Histamine**. For secondary infections take **Gunpowder**

and **Pyrogen** and continue for several weeks. Should a watery blister develop – **Cantharis**. Shock and collapse as the result of a bite – **Carbo veg**.

Colds and flu: **Anas barbariae 200c** fortnightly may be a benefit if you are susceptible to colds or flu. First stages of colds and chills, especially after exposure to cold wind – **Aconite**. Colds that come on from changes in weather, with a burning throat, thirst and watery discharge – **Arsenicum**. Summer colds and slow onset flu, listless, heavy, drowsy. Classic “aches and pains flu” – **Gelsemium**.

Constipation: Stool large, dry and hard. Commonly needed for ‘travellers constipation’ – **Bryonia**. Bloat-ed, windy, no desire – **Lycopodium**. Ineffectual urging, “ball-like” sensation – **Sepia**.

After over-indulgence, with ineffectual urging – **Nux vomica**. Bach **Walnut** for adjustment and sensitivity to changes. If haemorrhoids are a problem use tissue salts to improve elasticity and tone. Consider **Nux vomica**, **Pulsatilla**, **Sulphur** or **Lachesis**. If associated with back problems – **Aesculus**.

Cystitis: Drink plenty of water, eat extra vegetables, drink unsweetened cranberry juice and avoid acidic foods. Constant desire to urinate with burning and stinging, only a few drops pass – **Cantharis**. Constant desire with stinging pains and increased amount of urine – **Apis**. With high temperature – **Belladonna**. Burning between urination worse intercourse – **Staphysagria**.

Diarrhoea and stomach upset: First stages of stomach upsets and diarrhoea – **Aconite**. *Stomach upsets with burning pains that come on from changes in weather, food and water* – **Arsenicum**. The effects of excesses such as too much rich food, coffee, alcohol or when alteration to routine causes stomach upset and constipation – **Nux vomica**.

Symptoms caused by fear or a prolonged period of anticipation – **Argent nit**. Severe cramps which cause doubling up – **Colocynthis**. Symptoms from food poisoning with septic fever, especially if other remedies fail – **Pyrogen**. To aid recovery after excessive fluid loss – **China**, 2 or 3 times daily for several days. **Acidophilus** helps restore normal gut function.

Earache: see **Ear Pain in flight**.

Essential oils: **Rosemary** and **Geranium** are wonderful in a bath after a long journey and have a revitalising effect. Inhaling a drop of **Marjoram** on a tissue encourages a deep restful sleep after a long trip. **Juniper** for swollen ankles.

Exhausted and overextended: Exhaustion can be precipitated by over-exertion, diarrhoea, or over-

exposure and it should be treated accordingly. Over-exertion, overtired, the bed feels too hard, or you feel as if bruised and beaten – **Arnica**. Unfamiliar exercise and exposure, back pain – **Bellis perennis**.

Muscular sprains and strains, chills – **Rhus tox**. Ligaments and tendon strain or damage – **Ruta grav**. Exhausted from dehydration or loss of fluids from sweating or diarrhoea – **China**, **Phos acid** or **Ferrum phos**.

Eye problems: Use an eyewash of **Euphrasia** tincture diluted in boiled water for irritations, conjunctivitis and infections. Calendula tincture can be added. **Euphrasia** or **Argent nit** internally.

Add **Allium** or **Sabadilla** for allergic conjunctivitis. Ailments from the glare off snow, sand, sun or off the water – **Aconite**. Protect with suitable sunglasses.

Foot trauma: Bruised, painful and tired – **Arnica**. Swollen feet and ankles – **Pulsatilla**. Cracked heels – **Ant crud**. Blisters – **Hypericum** or **Cantharis** and **Calendula** tincture or cream applied on a clean dressing and changed regularly. Tinea – **Graphites** or **Thuja** and apply **Tea Tree** oil or cream. Put a few drops of **Tea Tree** oil in your shoes or boots.

Frostbite, hypothermia and exposure: For frostbite use **Agaricus** alternated with **Rhus tox** and apply **Hyperica** cream. **Rhus tox** helps prevent chilblains. Frostbite with excessive thirst – **Secale**. Conscious and coherent – **Camphor**. Ice cold, clammy and blue – **Carbo veg**.

Sleeplessness: Sleepless with fear and excitement, anxious, restless and worried – **Aconite**. Sleepless from crowding of thoughts, full of ideas and quick to act. Sleepless from joy and excitement – **Coffea**. From mental strain or over-indulgence in food, coffee etc – **Nux vomica**. Bach Remedies and soothing essential oils help relaxation.

Sunburn and sunstroke, heat cramps and heat exhaustion: For burns use **Cantharis**, **Causticum** or **Urtica**, apply **Hyperica** or homoeopathic burn cream or **Hypericum** tincture if the skin is broken. **Lavender** oil, **aloe vera** gel or the contents of a **vitamin E** capsule promotes healing.

Sunstroke is serious and may need urgent medical attention. As if collapsed – **Carbo veg**. Cramps, **Cuprum met** or **Mag phos** and gently massage muscles. Cramps, headaches and exhaustion often result from exertion in hot climate – give electrolyte replacement or a little salt and Rescue Remedy in clean water to help restore the fluid balance. Severe heat headaches – **Glonoine** or **Belladonna**.

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The Destination (cont'd)

Thrush: This can be a problem in humid climates. Reduce sugar & yeast-based foods, wear cotton underwear & avoid using scented soap & other commercial products in the vaginal area. Creamy, bland or yellow/yellow-green discharge, often before period - **Pulsatilla**. Very offensive discharge with marked vaginal & vulval itching - **Sepia**. Clear, thick discharge, like the white of an egg. Worse mid cycle - **Borax**. Acidity with sour creamy discharge - **Nat phos**.

Trekking first aid: In addition to your homoeopathic remedy kit add the following supplies. Plasters, bandages, dressings etc. Sterile needles and syringes. One or two 10ml glass bottles and droppers. **Euphrasia** and **Hypericum** tinctures, **Calendula** cream, burn cream and **Rescue Remedy**. **Citronella** oil or cream to repel insects. **Lavender**, **Hypericum** and **Tea Tree** oil or cream. Pack any aromatic substances separately to homoeopaths. Include **acidophilus**, electrolyte replacement, **vitamin C** and **vitamin E** capsules.

Don't forget your home prescribing booklet and this leaflet. If travelling to remote areas we highly recommend The World Travelers Guide to Homoeopathy by Colin Lessell. You can email us or phone us for advice if you are unable to resolve a situation.

General tips:

1. Don't drink local water or use ice cubes. Treat water with iodine tablets if necessary.
2. Take care to eat food hygienically prepared.
3. Be careful in the sun.
4. Protect against bites – with suitable clothing, mosquito netting and avoid infested areas.
5. Take mosquito coils and repellents.
6. Prepare adequately for the climate.
7. Know your first aid and the local hazards.
8. Advise consulates and local authorities if trekking or travelling into remote or war torn areas.