

HOMEOPATHY AND DENTISTRY

Homeopathy is an energy system of medicine developed over 200 years ago by Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician. He was a respected physician and has been honored with a statue and monument in Washington, D.C. Today, homeopathy is practiced all over the world. At the height of its popularity in the United States in the early 1900's, about 25% of the physicians practiced homeopathy. Homeopathic remedies are legally recognized preparations with its method of preparation being recorded in the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of the United States. Remedies, usually made from herbs and minerals, are extremely dilute preparations which naturally assist the body's own ability for self-healing. Unlike many conventional medicines of today, virtually none of the over 2500 homeopathic remedies create adverse side effects or react with conventional drugs, yet they have the potential of curing multiple symptoms. There are many books available in health food stores and libraries which thoroughly explain homeopathy.

Many chronic dental conditions, such as gum disease, tooth decay, mouth sores, abscessed teeth, dry mouth, pain from unknown causes, teeth grinding, thumbsucking, and tumors, can be treated or optimized by classical homeopathic treatment, thereby creating better dental health overall. However, once tooth structure is destroyed, restorative dentistry usually needs to be instituted. Actually, homeopathic treatment for chronic dental conditions is not separated from treatment for conditions elsewhere in the body, because homeopathy is holistic. Dental conditions, along with the non-dental conditions, are considered together when choosing a remedy. All existing conditions are then influenced by that single remedy, or a series of different single remedies. That influence has the potential to naturally stop, reduce, or sometimes reverse the process of dental disease with little or no physical intervention by a dentist. However, that influence could take many months or years, so patience is required.

Acute dental conditions can also be treated with homeopathic remedies, but in an allopathic or symptomatic manner. Temporary conditions linked to recent dental treatment or from trauma (i.e. pain, bleeding, or swelling) are treated much like the conventional approach, using a remedy to treat one problem or symptom. One example is to take homeopathic Arnica Montana after tooth extraction to reduce or eliminate normal post-operative pain, swelling, and bleeding, instead of a narcotic prescription drug.

You may ask, "If homeopathy is so good, why isn't everybody using it?" Frankly, most people have difficulty understanding and accepting homeopathy as a valid philosophy, but even more so, most people today are reluctant to commit the amount of time and effort needed for a homeopathic remedy to thoroughly work. Basically, most people want and expect treatment that offers quick relief, which constitutional homeopathy does not.

One perspective is that correct homeopathic treatment can counter the negative effects of mercury, thereby making replacement of amalgam fillings unnecessary. Another perspective is that the homeopathic treatment will work better, faster, and last longer if it is not required to use its energy to counter the chronic toxic effects of mercury or other heavy metals.

For *optimum* dental and general health, consider combining a nutritional and lifestyle program along with homeopathic treatment.

Now for the bad news!

Most dental treatment and constitutional homeopathic treatment is, unfortunately, incompatible. It is the drilling, trauma of surgery, ultrasonic scaling, local anesthetic ("novocaine"), electronic anesthesia, and mint flavorings (found in many dental preparations) that have the capacity to antidote homeopathic remedies. However, neither treatment need be compromised if dental treatment is timed properly. Note: Regular teeth cleanings, x-rays, and examinations do NOT usually antidote remedies. As a precaution, request cleaning paste (prophy paste), floss, and mouthwash that is NOT mint-flavored, and do NOT have your teeth ultrasonically cleaned.

Homeopathic remedies should not be antidoted intentionally because it is too disruptive to the healing process, and antidoting too many times could render homeopathic treatment less than effective. If a person is in active homeopathic treatment, most dental treatment should ideally be postponed until one of the following occurs - The energy of the active remedy is naturally used up or The current remedy has accidentally been antidoted. In both cases, the risk of antidoting from dental treatment is then of no consequence because another dose or a new remedy will be required anyway. So, if your homeopath confirms either of these two situations, have all dental treatment done as soon as possible in as short a time period as possible. Then, see your homeopath again after completion of dental treatment for re-evaluation of your homeopathic case. NOTE: An exception might be if you are in homeopathic treatment in which a daily dose of a very high potency remedy is given. Then dental treatment, although not ideal, could be done during homeopathic treatment.

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What should I do when dental problems happen?

For optimal results, tell the staff person making your dental appointment that you are in homeopathic treatment so I can talk to your homeopath **before** your appointment. These are the dental situations most likely to occur:

1. Localized pain, minor swelling, bleeding, inflammation, and sores from foreign bodies, such as popcorn hulls, pieces of bone, meat, broken floss and toothpicks, trapped food, and calculus, should simply be removed and the area allowed to heal.
2. Broken tooth structure and defective fillings or crowns that have no decay should be treated with a temporary filling or crown without drilling or anesthetic until it can be treated more thoroughly when the risk of antidoting is of no consequence.
3. Dental problems as a result of decay require special evaluation and consideration. It must be decided if, or for how long, dental treatment can safely be postponed or temporized until it can be treated more thoroughly when the risk of antidoting is of no consequence.
4. Generalized or severe pain, bleeding, and swelling that cannot be temporized or postponed should be promptly treated, even with the risk of antidoting homeopathic treatment.

Do not assume that dental treatment antidoted your homeopathic treatment. Again, it is necessary to be re-evaluated by your homeopath after dental treatment for that determination to be made.

How do I best integrate homeopathy and dentistry?

Based on my training and knowledge, utilize constitutional homeopathy **after** any necessary or expected dental treatment is completed! This includes elective dental treatment that can be done at any time you desire. In my practice, time and overhead does not allow me to take homeopathic cases, so I refer to qualified homeopaths for constitutional homeopathic care. However, I do utilize homeopathic remedies for acute dental problems whenever appropriate.

There are many fine homeopaths in Minnesota, and varying homeopathic philosophies do exist. Some homeopaths with whom I am familiar are:

1. Bette Jo Arnett, RDH, Burnsville, 952-890-6988
2. Sarah Colleran, R.N., St. Paul, 651-917-9597
3. Nancy Hone, R.N., St. Paul, 651-690-4123
4. Jerri Johnson, R.N., St. Paul, 651-917-3990
5. Pam McAllister, St. Paul, 651-647-1007
6. Jacob Mirman, M.D., Richfield, 612-836-1424
7. Valerie Ohanian, Plymouth, 763-525-9321
8. Sujata Owens, H.D., Northfield, 507-645-4329
9. Eric Sommerman, Ph.D., Plymouth, 763-525-9321

This information is provided for educational purposes only, and should not be considered a recommendation for any particular treatment, product, or philosophy. You have the sole responsibility to examine the benefits and risks of available options and decide what treatment, if any, is to be rendered. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution grants the right to discuss openly and freely all matters of public concern, and to express viewpoints no matter how controversial or unaccepted they may be.

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