

HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES FOR INFLUENZA

WHAT IS HOMEOPATHY?

Homeopathy is the use of minute amounts of animal, plant and mineral substances to stimulate the body to heal itself. It is based on the belief that a vital force animates all living things. Sickness is an imbalance in this vital force. Homeopathic remedies are chosen that magnify the current condition within the body. The vital force responds by perceiving the imbalance and restoring the body to health. So, unlike western or allopathic medicine, it is not the medicine that reduces symptoms, but the vital force. The efficacy of homeopathy rests with matching the specific modalities of the illness or injury with those of the remedy. Generally if the remedy does not work, it is because it did not closely match the symptoms. For this reason homeopathic prescribing involves extensive questioning and observation. Constitutional treatment addresses long-term conditions and should only be undertaken by professionals. Acute treatment refers to situations that arise rapidly and generally resolve on their own in people who are basically healthy; homeopathy can speed the resolution of acute symptoms.

MY BACKGROUND:

I am certified in Classical Homeopathy by the Council for Homeopathic Certification. I am also a registered member of the North American Society of Homeopaths (RSHom NA.) Additionally, I am a graduate of the three-year program at the Pacific Academy of Homeopathy. I have a practice for humans at Back to Life Wellness Center in Alameda, and consult for animals at the Oakland Zoo and Creature Comforts Holistic Veterinary Center. My human homeopathy website is www.wholehomeopathy.com, and my animal homeopathy website is www.myanimalhomeopath.com.

CONSTITUTIONAL TREATMENT:

If the patient is under constitutional treatment with a professional homeopath, call the homeopath and ask for advice as to whether the cold or flu should be treated acutely with homeopathy, or whether you should use a naturopathic treatment or herbs. Your homeopath may choose to give the constitutional remedy in an acute situation – often this resolves the cold and keeps the patient on the deeper path of healing effected by the constitutional remedy.

POTENCY AND ADMINISTRATION:

For the majority of colds and flues, you will give a 30c potency. A general guideline is to give one pellet 2-3 times/day until they feel significantly better, and then once a day for a day or two more. When a patient is very sick, you may need to give the remedy more frequently (every hour to begin with) or use a 200c potency. You will hear in your patient's tone of voice whether they are better – trust this! If they *sound* or *feel* better after the first dose, but the symptoms are unchanged, continue the remedy, the symptoms will likely improve soon.

TAKING THE CASE:

Before you ask any questions, **just let the person talk**. The information they spontaneously give you about their condition will be far more helpful in finding the remedy than any question you ask. Especially avoid leading questions that require a yes/no answer, such as, "Is your cough deep?" Leading questions may take you closer to believing you have found the remedy you wanted to see, and further from actually listening to the state of the person before you.

Take special note of the things that don't make sense! If they are very chilly, yet better for open air, there is a contradiction here that will hold the key to the remedy.

ANY ONE OF 3,000 REMEDIES CAN CURE ANY CONDITION, HOWEVER THE FOLLOWING REMEDIES ARE OFTEN INDICATED IN INFLUENZA.

INFLUENZA:

Influenza or the "flu" is caused by a virus, and people tend to react to it more during fall and winter. Each year the virus changes as it adapts to its hosts and local area. Homeopathic remedies are a very effective method of treating influenza. However, it may take an experienced practitioner to spot the correct remedy. If you are treating yourself or a family member, and they do not improve within a few days, seek the advice of a professional, including medical attention.

CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL'S STATEMENT ON THE FLU AND HINI IN 2009-2010:**

YOU MAY HAVE THE FLU IF YOU HAVE SOME OR ALL OF THESE SYMPTOMS:

- *fever **
- *cough*
- *sore throat*
- *runny or stuffy nose*
- *body aches*
- *headache*
- *chills*
- *fatigue*
- *sometimes diarrhea and vomiting*

**It's important to note that not everyone with flu will have a fever.*

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET SICK:

*If you get sick with flu-like symptoms this flu season, you should stay home and avoid contact with other people except to get medical care. **Most people with 2009 HINI have had mild illness and have not needed medical care or antiviral drugs and the same is true of seasonal flu. [Bold my emphasis.]** However, some people are more likely to get flu complications and they should talk to a health care provider about whether they need to be examined if they get flu symptoms this season. They are:*

- *Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old*
- *People 65 and older*
- *Pregnant women*

* Reprinted from <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/sick.htm>. All the CDC's information is in italics.

- *People who have:*
 - *Cancer*
 - *Blood disorders (including sickle cell disease)*
 - *Chronic lung disease [including asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)]*
 - *Diabetes*
 - *Heart disease*
 - *Kidney disorders*
 - *Liver disorders*
 - *Neurological disorders (including nervous system, brain or spinal cord)*
 - *Neuromuscular disorders (including muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis)*
 - *Weakened immune systems (including people with AIDS)*

Also, it's possible for healthy people to develop severe illness from the flu so anyone concerned about their illness should consult a health care provider.

WARNING SIGNS:

There are emergency warning signs. Anyone who has them should get medical care right away.

In children

- *Fast breathing or trouble breathing*
- *Bluish skin color*
- *Not drinking enough fluids*
- *Not waking up or not interacting*
- *Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held*
- *Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough*
- *Fever with a rash*

In adults

- *Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath*
- *Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen*
- *Sudden dizziness*
- *Confusion*
- *Severe or persistent vomiting*

WHEN TO GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM:

The emergency room should be used for people who are very sick. You should not go to the emergency room if you are only mildly ill. If you have the emergency warning signs of

flu sickness, you should go to the emergency room. If you get sick with flu symptoms and are at high risk of flu complications or you are concerned about your illness, call your health care provider for advice. If you go to the emergency room and you are not sick with the flu, you may catch it from people who do have it.

CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other things you have to do and no one else can do for you.

FACTS ABOUT FLU VACCINE AND ANTI-VIRAL DRUGS:

- Not everyone has an immune response to vaccines. Vaccinating when you are sick, weak or malnourished may decrease your body's ability to respond to the vaccine. Your immune system may also not respond if it has been suppressed due to genetics, previous disease or drug therapy.
- There have been no long-term studies of the effects of flu-vaccine on children.
- Flu vaccines are Pregnancy Category C for Pregnant women. Which means that the long-term effects on pregnant women are unknown.
- According the CDC, fetuses and children aged 14 and younger are most vulnerable to the effects of ethyl mercury (thimerosal.)¹The Institute of Medicine said, at its July 15, 2001 meeting that the link between autism and thimerosal was "biologically plausible."
- Flu vaccines may contribute to the rise of Alzheimers. According to Hugh Fudenberg, MD and immunogeneticist, if an individual had five or more flu shots between 1970 and 1980, his or her chances of getting Alzheimers's disease are ten times higher than a person who had one, two or no shots. He explains that the gradual buildup of mercury and aluminum in the brain causes cognitive dysfunction.²
- An article in the New England Journal of Medicine states that there has been a rise of Gullian-Barre Syndrome, an auto-immune disease affecting the nervous syndrome, in people who took the flu vaccine. ³
- People taking the anti-viral Tamiflu are more likely to experience vomiting and diarrhea.⁴
- People taking the anti-viral Relenza are more likely to experience respiratory problems.⁵

¹ Centers for Disease Control, www.cdc.gov/nip/vacsafe/concerns/thimerosal, faqs-thimerosal.htm

² Quoted in *The Flu Vaccine and You*, published by Richard Pitt, RS Hom, CCH

³ T. Lasky et al., "Guillain-Barre Syndrome and the 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 Influenza Vaccines," *New England Journal of Medicine* 339 (1998): 1797-1802.

J.S. Marks and T.J. Halpin, "Guillain-Barre Syndrome in Recipients of a New Jersey Influenza Vaccine," *JAMA* 243, no. 42 (1980): 2490-2494

⁴ Hamed Medical Corporation website: www.hmc.org.qa/H1N1/Antiviral_Treatment.htm

⁵ Hamed Medical Corporation website : www.hmc.org.qa/H1N1/Antiviral_Treatment.htm

ISSUES WITH THE FLU VACCINE:

Flu vaccines are made from the viruses that the World Health Organization determines to be prevalent during the current season. However, there are so many viruses, and they mutate quickly enough that the flu vaccines are often not made from the virus that is current to any locale. Additionally, many people have reactions to vaccines, with symptoms ranging from red, swollen, sore arms to flu-like symptoms. For those who are immune-compromised or who have autoimmune conditions, the flu shot represents another confusing message to their immune system. Additionally, the vaccine preservative Thimerosal may present health problems; many homeopaths believe that it is implicated in the rise of autism. Thimerosal has been removed from all routine vaccinations in the U.S. except for flu shots. While flu shots are available without Thimerosal, the majority of flu vaccines contain it.

TYPES OF IMMUNITY:

Vaccines stimulate *humoral immunity*, which creates antibodies that circulate in bodily fluids that react to specific antigens.

Cell mediated immunity is another important form of immunity, by which CD4 cells and T-cells destroy invading cells. Cell mediated immunity is most effective for viruses, but also protects against fungi, protozoans and cancers. Increasing your immunity by natural methods such as homeopathy, decreasing stress, eating well, and exercising are likely to increase Cell Mediated Immunity.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE FLU VACCINE:

Vaccines are controversial, and homeopaths often suggest individual, constitutional treatment to strengthen a person's overall immune system, and thus decrease the chance that an individual will get sick when exposed to a virus. If a person does get the flu, and they have a homeopath, they should call him/her and she/he will likely either suggest his/her constitutional remedy, or an acute remedy. In my experience, acute remedies help a person recover much more quickly and easily than they otherwise might.

THE REMEDY INFLUENZINUM AS PROPHYLAXIS:

Another approach is to take the nosode of the current influenza virus, or Influenzinum, at the beginning of flu season. This approach has the same problem as the flu shot: that the viruses included in that year's Influenzinum may not be what is current in one's area. However, this approach does not cause the side effects many people experience from the flu shot, and does not cause a person to be exposed to Thimerosal. Influenzinum is made from exactly the same virus strains as the flu shot for North America for that year. Influenzinum for 2009-2010 contains the H1N1 virus, among others. However, because it is potentized (a combination of diluting and shaking), it does not contain even a molecule of the virus, so it is just *the energy* of the virus, not the virus itself. One protocol for the use of Influenzinum is to take it in the 9c potency once/week for four weeks, then wait a month and take it one more time. Additionally, it can be used in conjunction with other acute remedies to treat flu symptoms, but then it is usually used in the 30c potency.

Please note: Taking Influenzinum at the beginning of the flu season does not guarantee that you will not get the flu, just as taking the flu vaccine does not guarantee you will not get the flu.

INFLUENZA REMEDIES:

ACONITE: AFTER FEAR OR A COLD WIND

(Monkshood flower)

Try this remedy when the flu symptoms are just coming on and are not yet distinct. This flu may also come on after traumatic experiences or from exposure to cold weather, especially cold winds. They may begin to feel symptoms within a few hours after exposure to cold winds. After being exposed to the cold, they will feel chilly, but may have a hot, burning face. They will be restless and have great fear. When they sit up they will feel faint. Their nose will feel dry, and will not be running much; if it is, it will be watery. They may sneeze a lot. They will have a thirst for cold water. They may vomit and sweat profusely, and experience increased urination. They may have a hoarse, dry, croupy or barking cough that is worse at night, especially after midnight. They may feel dryness in the chest that initiates the cough. You may start with this remedy and move to another when the flu symptoms become more distinct.

Worse: violent emotions, fright, shock, fear, cold, dry winds, noise, light, night, during menses

Better: open air, rest, warm sweat, sitting still

ARSENICUM: RESTLESS WORRY AND FEAR FOR THEIR HEALTH

(Arsenic)

Someone in an Arsenicum state will be fearful and restless. They will also be conscientious about little details, including cleanliness. They will be thirsty, taking frequent, small sips. They may experience burning pains. Their head may feel warm and the rest of their body may seem cold to them. Their eyes may be reddened. They may be both vomiting and diarrhea. They may crave ice-water, but may vomit it as soon as it hits their stomach. They may shudder with the cold, but experience burning heat at 3 a.m. They may wake at 1 a.m. or later. Their sweat may be cold and clammy. This is also a good remedy for food poisoning, which may initially look like a flu. They may have a thin, watery discharge from the nose that may redden the skin it passes over. They may be sneezing.

Worse: after midnight, cold or icy things, milk, cold air, exertion, symptoms may reoccur at regular intervals,

Better: hot applications, eating, drinking, warm wraps, motion, lying with head elevated, open air

BAPTISA: "DRUNKEN" STATE

(Wild Indigo Plant)

This is a very septic state, with rapid onset, utter tiredness, dark red, mottled face, bleeding and putrid mouth. They may look drunk or delirious. They may toss and turn and even feel that they are two persons or have two limbs on each side. There will be great muscle soreness and all secretions will be putrid. Thinking will be difficult. They may have pressure at the root of the nose, and the skin of the forehead may feel tight. The head may feel too large or heavy, or may feel numb. The eyeballs and brain feels sore. They may only be able to swallow liquids, and may gag on solids. They will be drowsy and their mind may wander

Worse: humid heat, fog, indoors, pressure, waking up, cold wind, autumn

Better: drinking liquids, open air, motion

BRYONIA: PAIN WITH MOTION, DRY

(Hops bush)

Any kind of motion will not feel good to them. They will be grumpy and not want to be disturbed. They will feel very dry. They may sleep deeply, and feel lethargic with a flushed face. Their tongue may have a thick coat of mucous on it. They may be thirsty for large

drinks of water to quench the dry feeling. They may have a backache, headache, eye ache (especially behind the eyes), or limb ache. They may have a headache that feels like bursting or splitting and may have pains elsewhere that feel like needles. The nose may bleed or may run with mucous with a frontal headache. Any amount of movement or touch will be unbearable to them. They will dread coughing because of the pain it causes in their whole body. They may be hoarse and have a dry cough at night, that causes them to have to sit up. The cough will be worse after eating, drinking, or coming into a warm room. Their joints may be swollen and painful, and feel hot. They may feel hotter inside and more cold externally. Their stools may be dry, hard or large.

Worse: motion, deep breathing, dry heat, cold, becoming hot, hot room, eating, touch, early a.m.

Better: stillness, rest, pressure, lying on painful part, cool, open air, quiet, cloudy, damp days

EUPATORIUM PERFOLIATUM: MOANING WITH PAIN

(Boneset plant)

This flu state may be more likely to happen during warm, mild weather. They will feel extreme aching deep in the bones that may be accompanied by moaning, the back and legs may feel as if they will break. Even their skin may be sore. They may be restless and feel the bed is uncomfortable. They may be hot but not perspiring. They may have throbbing pain in the head and sore eyeballs. The back of their head may hurt and feel heavy when they lay on it. Their nose may be running with sneezing, and they may be hoarse. The cough will cause their chest to be sore, and may sound loose and be worse at night. They may hold their chest with the pain of the cough (like Bryonia.) They may vomit, especially after drinking. Even smelling food will make them nauseas. Once they start to perspire, they may feel much better. They may experience a chill between 7-9 a.m.; prior to this chill they may be very thirsty, but will not be thirsty when they are hot. They may feel a chill running up from the back.

Worse: cold air, motion, 7-9 a.m., lying on painful part, smell or sight of food

Better: vomiting, lying on face, conversation, getting on hands and knees, moaning

FERRUM PHOSPHORICUM: NOTHING ELSE FITS YET

(Iron and Phosphorus)

In the early stages of flu, especially with fevers, before symptoms are distinct, this is a good remedy to use. The face may be pale or flushed, and they will be tired; they may even faint. There may be bright hemorrhages from any orifice. The main characteristic of this remedy is lack of characteristics! They may be angry or indifferent, but may be anxious at night. The parotid glands may be painfully swollen. On waking, the throat may feel swollen and stiff. The tonsils may be red and swollen. They may vomit undigested food and desire sour things and have sour burps. They may also be thirsty. The cough may be hard and dry and come from a tickling feeling. It will be worse at night or when sleeping during day, and may rattle with mucous at night. They may have a chill at 1 p.m. and a desire to stretch then. At night, there may be copious perspiration.

Worse: Night, 4-6 a.m, motion, noise, touch, cold drinks and sour food, meat, right side

Better: open air improves the cough

GELSEMIUM: DROWSY AND DIZZY

(Yellow Jasmine)

This flu may happen during warm weather or mild winter weather, or may come after a shock or nervous fright, or before anticipating an event. They will be extremely tired, dizzy, dull, droopy and drowsy. Even turning in bed is too much work for them. They may be trembling, and their muscles will feel weak. They may feel apathy about being sick. Their head may feel heavy, or like a band is pressing around it. Their eyelids may feel

heavy, and it may be hard to keep them open or their vision may be blurred. They may feel pain from their temples to their ears, which will feel better when they elevate their head. One pupil may be contracted, the other dilated. Their nose may feel dry, and they may be sneezing. They will feel hot and heavy. Their mouth may taste putrid and their tongue may be thickly coated with a yellow layer, and may tremble when they extend it. Their respiration may be slowed, and they may have a dry cough with a sore chest and runny nose. They will likely lack thirst, and need to urinate frequently, which makes them feel better. They may experience vertigo and fear of falling; holding then will comfort them.

Worse: emotions, shock, dread, spring, humid, foggy, muggy weather, heat of summer

Better: profuse urination, perspiration, shaking, open air, bending forward

IPECACUANA: VIOLENT VOMITING

(Ipecac root)

This flu may include persistent nausea and uncontrollable vomiting. They may vomit so hard that they hemorrhage blood, or may hemorrhage anywhere. The blood will be bright red. The stool and mucous discharge may be foamy. They may be irritable, haughty and scornful of everything. They may be intolerant of noise, or just about anything anyone does. During the fever they will experience great anxiety. During sleep they may moan or start, and during heat they may be very restless. They will not be thirsty. They may feel a sinking sensation in the stomach. Their face may be pale. They may have an incessant, violent cough, almost with every breath. The cough may end in vomiting. Vomiting will not make them feel better. They may feel a tickling in the upper part of the throat with the cough. They may have profuse perspiration on the forehead. The nose may itch, and they may sneeze many times in a row. The tongue may be clean with no coat.

Worse: warmth, damp, overeating, rich foods, motion, lying, vomiting *Better:* open air

NUX VOMICA: OVERWORKED, OVERWROUGHT, OVERINDULGED

(Fruit of the Nux vomica tree)

This flu may come after exposure to a cold wind. They may feel cold, and shiver on motion. They will be irritable and snappy and want to be alone. They will be sensitive to noise, light, touch and odors. From 3 a.m. until morning they will not be able to sleep, but they will feel better after a nap during the day. They will get a headache in the sun and their eyes will hurt and water, but feel dry in the inner aspect. Their nose will be stuffed up, especially at night, and they will feel worse in warm rooms. During the day the nose will run, or run alternately from one nostril or the other, and the discharge may irritate the skin. The throat may feel rough, scraped or tickling, or constricted and tight, or have pain shooting to the ear. They may be hoarse from the post-nasal drip. They may have asthma, especially with a feeling of fullness in the stomach. Their cough may be dry, and the expectoration may be blood-streaked. Their arms and hands may get no sleep. In order to turn over in bed they must sit up. Their body may be burning hot, especially their face, but if they uncover, they will feel chilled. Their perspiration may smell sour. They may also vomit violently. This is another remedy to consider in food poisoning.

Worse: early a.m., uncovering, cold, open air, drafts, coffee, stimulants, overeating, overworking, mental exertion, anger, noise, odor, touch, light, pressure

Better: free discharges, naps wrapping head, hot drinks, milk, strong pressure, damp or moist air

OSCILLOCOCCINUM: WHEN YOU FEEL IT COMING ON OR WHEN YOU'VE BEEN EXPOSED

(Duck liver and heart)

This homeopathic remedy is available at most health-food stores; when sold as "Oscillococcinum" it is the 200c potency. It generally treats "flu-like symptoms." There

may be anxiety, paleness, shivering, obstinacy, fixed obsessions such as washing hands, nasal obstruction and sneezing, thin or thick nasal discharge, pain in frontal sinuses, a dry irritating cough, and piercing pain in both ears with decreased hearing. You can use Oscillocoquinum in combination with other single flu remedies. It is best to take at the onset of flu, or prophylactically when you've been exposed to the flu.

RHUS TOX: RUSTY GATE

(Poison oak)

This flu may come after exposure to wet, damp weather. They will feel aching in all the limbs that is worse when they first start to move, and better when they get moving. The aching in the bones is like Eupatorium. They will be restless and need to keep moving. They may feel vertigo that is worse when they first get up. The brain may feel loose or heavy, and their head may be painful to touch and pressure. They will be chilly, and the chill may be worse in the evenings, or alternate with heat. Fresh, cold air will make their skin feel painful or their limbs stiff. They may have swollen glands that hurt on swallowing. They will be thirsty and they may have a dry, tickling sensation behind their sternum that causes the cough, which is worse from midnight to morning. They may be sneezing, and the tip of their nose may be red. Their tongue may be mucous coated with a red tip and red edges.

Worse: during sleep, cold, wet weather, during rest

Better: warm, dry, motion, changing positions, rubbing, stretching

WHERE TO BUY REMEDIES:

Local health food store

Online

Homeopathic Education Services, 2036 Blake (at Shattuck), Berkeley, CA 94704, (510) 649-0294, <http://www.homeopathic.com>

Hahnemann Labs, www.hahnemannlabs.com, (888) 427-6422

FURTHER READING:

[The Homeopathic Emergency Guide](#), Thomas Kruzel, ND, North Atlantic Good, basic guide for a variety of conditions_

[Desktop Companion to Physical Pathology](#), Roger Morrison, M.D., (A more complex book, often used by professional homeopaths; not recommended unless you want to further your study.)

[Homeopathic Medicine for Children and Infants](#), Dana Ullman, M.P.H.

[Simple Colds, Flus and Coughs](#), Stephen MESSER, ND, DHANP, (Not a book, plastic laminates, with flow charts and diagrams, \$3, available Minimum Price books.)

WHERE TO BUY HOMEOPATHIC BOOKS:

Homeopathic Education Services, 2036 Blake (at Shattuck), Berkeley, CA 94704, (510) 649-0294, <http://www.homeopathic.com/>

Minimum Price Homeopathic Books, <http://www.minimum.com>