

What is Homeoprophylaxis?

(adapted from an introductory article by Ralf Jeutter)

Introduction

Homeoprophylaxis is the use of homeopathically prepared remedies to protect individuals from the effects of infectious diseases. In contrast to conventional vaccination, homeoprophylaxis does not rely on antibody formation, but on changing the susceptibility of the child or adult to disease. The philosophy behind homeoprophylaxis is different from conventional vaccination in that the micro-organisms are not in themselves seen as the sole cause of disease, but rather the interplay between the micro-organisms and the individual susceptibility of the child or adult: the healthier the patient, the less susceptible he or she is to a disease.

Disease prevention in homeopathic history and today

Homeopathy is used to address the individual's experience of disease states and to prevent individuals from falling ill. The founder of homeopathy, Samuel Hahnemann, wrote in 1801 on scarlet fever: 'Who can deny that the perfect prevention of infection from this devastating scourge, and the discovery of a means whereby this divine aim may be surely attained, would offer infinite advantages over any mode of treatment, be it of the most incomparable kind soever?' The principle of homeoprophylaxis basically states that what will address the experience of a diseased state according to the law of similars will also prevent individuals from falling ill from these kinds of diseases. Famous homeopaths have practised according to this principle during the centuries: Boenninghausen, Kent, Burnett, Tyler, Blackie, Boger and others. In modern times, it has been Dr Isaac Golden from Australia, who has addressed this issue in a systematic manner.

Evidence

Historical

Homeopathic prevention of disease is 200 years old, and has always been an integral part of the practice of homeopathy. Hahnemann, the founder of homeopathy achieved a success rate of 100% in treating 183 typhus patients; at that time typhus was considered incurable.

Scarlet fever was treated and prevented by Hahnemann using the homeopathic remedy Belladonna.

During the European cholera epidemics of the mid-1800s the death rate was between 54% and 90%, while the rate amongst persons who received homeopathic treatment was between 5% and 16%.

Mortality rate in the 1918-1920 Influenza (Spanish flu) epidemic in the US was 30%; the rate among those treated homeopathically was 1%.

Large scale field studies

Study 1

In 1974, during a Meningococcal epidemic in Brazil, 18,640 children were given homeoprophylactic remedies for protection against Meningococcal infection, and 6,340 were not [1]. The following results were obtained:

- 18,640 protected homeopathically – 4 cases of Meningococcal infection.
- 6,340 not protected – 32 cases of Meningococcal infection.

Based on the infection (attack) rate in the unprotected group, 94 cases of infection would have been expected in the homeopathically protected group. Instead, there were only four cases of Meningococcal infection.

Study 2

The results of the first study led to the Brazilian government funding a larger study in 1998 [2]. It was conducted by two Professors of Medicine from the University Foundation in Blumenau, Brazil, and a Blumenau specialist physician and Health City Secretary.

A total of 65,826 people between the ages of 0-20 were given homeoprophylactic remedies for protection against Meningococcal infection while 23,532 were not. Over a 12 month period, the following results were obtained:

- 65,826 protected homeopathically – 4 cases of Meningococcal infection.
- 23,532 not protected – 20 cases of Meningococcal infection.

Based on the infection (attack) rate in the unprotected group, 58 cases of infection would have been expected in the homeopathically protected group. Instead, there were only four cases of meningococcal infection. Statistical analysis showed that a homeoprophylactic approach offered 95% protection in the first six months and 91% protection over the year against meningococcal disease.

Both of these studies used only low to medium range potencies of *Meningococcinum* for protection and only one oral dose per person was given. One would anticipate longer and possibly increased rates of protection if higher potencies and more than one dose had been given; this has certainly been clinical experience elsewhere and indicated by recent research conducted in Australia.

Study 3

During a 2007 epidemic outbreak of Leptospirosis in Cuba, a homeoprophylactic remedy (a combination nosode 'nosoLep') was given to 2.3 million people at high risk of infection, while the remaining 8.8 million population were untreated[3]. Within weeks of this intervention a dramatic decrease was seen in the number of confirmed cases, from 38 to 4-6 cases per week. The projected incidence of Leptospirosis for this period had been 111-461 cases per week, representing a decrease in incidence of between 91.8 and 65.8%. This drop occurred at the point when homeoprophylactic treatment had been received by 70% of the population.

This study represents the largest research study to date assessing a homeopathic medicine and shows a strong association between homeopathic protection of the population and a reduction in disease incidence.

Long-term scientific research on homeopathic prevention of infectious disease

Dr Isaac Golden from Australia is the world authority on homeoprophylaxis and has undertaken the world's largest long-term study of parents using such a programme. In 2004 he completed a Ph.D. research programme at the GSIM, Swinburne University, Melbourne, studying homeoprophylaxis. An executive summary of the main findings from this research work will be displayed below.

Effectiveness

No protection against targeted diseases is certain even for naturally acquired infections and immunity. Homeoprophylactic protection (HP) has a consistency of results of 90%. We have clear figures for 3 diseases:

Whooping cough: 88.3%; Measles: 91%; Mumps: 94.1%. When the disease arises, they are much less severe than they would be without the protection.

Through Dr Isaac Golden's work we have

- a) the largest study of long-term HP ever undertaken in the world, showing the effectiveness and the safety of the method.
- b) A comparison of the effectiveness and safety of vaccination, HP, constitutional prevention, and no preventive method at all.
- c) A comparison of the effectiveness and safety of different HP programmes.

Detailed findings by Dr Isaac Golden:

We are only presenting two relevant tables here. For a detailed discussion on statistics and related issues, please consult:

- Isaac Golden: The Complete Practitioner’s Manual of Homeoprophylaxis. 2012
- Isaac Golden: Homeoprophylaxis – A Fifteen Year Clinical Study, Isaac Golden Publications, Daylesford, Australia.
- Isaac Golden: Vaccination & Homeoprophylaxis. A Review of Risks and Alternatives (6th edition), Isaac Golden Publications 2005, pp. 159-181.

Table 1. Copyright: Dr. Isaac Golden

Table 1: Summary of Results – Long-Term Homeoprophylaxis				
Measures of Reactions & Efficacy Data after Follow-Up surveys	Data Series Series 1-5	Data Series Series 6-10	Data Series Series 11-15	Totals
Total Responses	708	817	817	2342
1. Previously vaccinated	73	102	110	285
	10.3%	12.5%	13.5%	12.2%
2. Definite reactions to remedies	51	81	81	213
Reactions per person	7.2%	9.9%	9.9%	9.1%
Reactions per dose (est.)	1.2%	1.7%	1.7%	1.5%
3. Definitely suffered from diseases covered by main programme (a measure of failure)	18 – 2.5%	11 – 1.3%	11 – 1.4%	40 – 1.7%
4. Definitely exposed to diseases covered by main programme	177 – 25.0%	11 – 1.3%	113 – 13.8%	417 – 17.8%
5. Definitely suffering diseases, after definite exposure and after taking the appropriate remedy (a measure of failure)	18/177 – 10.2%	11/127 – 8.7%	11/113 – 9.7%	40/417 – 9.6%
6. Definitely not suffering diseases, after definite exposure and after taking appropriate remedy (a measure of success)	159/177 – 89.8%	116/127 – 91.3%	102/113 – 90.3%	377/417 – 90.4%

Table 2. Copyright Dr Isaac Golden

Table 2: National Attack rates and the Efficacy of homeoprophylaxis			
Disease	Attack rate, Unimmunised %	Attack Rate, Homeoprophylaxis %	Efficacy of Homeoprophylaxis %
Whooping cough	85.0	11.7	86.2
Measles	90.0	9.0	90.0
Mumps	70.0	5.9	91.6

Safety of Homeoprophylactic Protection

As part of Dr Golden's doctoral studies at Swinburne University between 2001 and 2004 he collected a two page questionnaire from parents of 781 children aged between 4 and 12 years of age. This retrospective study used measures of the child's health experience such as the incidence of asthma, eczema, ear and hearing problems, allergies and behavioural problems, as well as the parents' evaluation of their child's general health. Cases of whooping cough, measles and mumps were recorded, as well as the child's hospitalisation experience.

Four types of immunisation history were questioned. They were:

1. Homeoprophylactically protected with disease-specific remedies
2. Vaccine protected
3. 'Constitutionally' protected, (i.e. any general health measures intended to improve overall health, and thus improve overall immunity against all infectious diseases)
4. No specific or general protection against infectious diseases.

Golden summarises the statistically significant findings ($P < 0.05$) for each condition as follows:

Asthma – we can say with 99% confidence that HP-only is 15 times safer than vaccination and 6 times safer than no method of protection.

Eczema – we can say with 98% confidence that HP-only is 1.8 times safer than no method of protection.

Allergies – we can say with 94% confidence that HP-only is 5 times safer than vaccination, and with 99% confidence that HP is 2 times safer than no method of protection.

Behavioural problems – we are not able to draw conclusions about the safety of HP-only with a greater than 95% confidence that the conclusion is correct. However, we

can say with 95% confidence that doing nothing is twice as safe as general protection. We can say with 94% confidence that HP-only is the safest option.

Ear/Hearing problems – we are not able to draw conclusions about the safety of HP-only with a greater than 95% confidence that the conclusion is correct. However, we can say with 95% confidence that vaccination is 3.9 times less safe than doing nothing.

Children show mild adverse reactions to 2% of doses given within Golden's homeoprophylaxis programme.

Requirements for Golden's Homeoprophylaxis Programme

Assessment

The first step is to assess the health of the child in order to see whether the child needs homeopathic treatment first, or whether the programme can be started immediately. The assessment also includes a discussion on what diseases should be covered by Homeoprophylaxis.

Prevention

At this stage a list is drawn up of the planned homeoprophylactic remedies agreed upon between homeopathic practitioner and parents. These remedies are sent out with the appropriate documentation.

Documentation:

- Consent forms (2)
- Covering letter
- Copy of complete programme (main and supplementary)
- Research forms
- Homeoprophylaxis Status sheet
- Support options and contacts

References

[1] Castro, D. & Nogueira, G. G. (1975). Use of the nosode Meningococcinum as a preventive against meningitis. *Journal of the American Institute of Homœopathy*, 68(4): 211-219.

[2] C. R. L. Mroninski, E. J. Adriano, G. Mattos (2001). Meningococcinum: Its protective effect against Meningococcal disease. *Homoeopathic Links*, 14(4): 230-234

[3] Bracho G, Varela E, Fernández R, Ordaz B, Marzoa N, Menéndez J, García L, Gilling E, Leyva R, Rufin R, de la Torre R, Solis RL, Batista N, Borrero R, Campa C., (2010). Large-scale application of highly-diluted bacteria for Leptospirosis epidemic control. *Homeopathy*, 99(3):156-66.