

4. Homeopathy & chronic diseases

4.1. Homeopathic medical practice - Institute for Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, Charité University Medical Center, Berlin, Germany

Citation and Link:

Witt CM, Lüdtke R, Baur R, Willich SN., "Homeopathic medical practice: long-term results of a cohort study with 3981 patients", *BMC Public Health*. 2005 Nov 3;5:115.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16266440>

Aim & Method:

"We investigated homeopathic practice in an industrialized country under everyday conditions. In a prospective, multicentre cohort study with 103 primary care practices with additional specialisation in homeopathy in Germany and Switzerland, data from all patients (age > 1 year) consulting the physician for the first time were observed. The main outcome measures were: Patient and physician assessments (numeric rating scales from 0 to 10) and quality of life at baseline, and after 3, 12, and 24 months.

A total of 3,981 patients were studied including 2,851 adults (29% men, mean age 42.5 +/- 13.1 years; 71% women, 39.9 +/- 12.4 years) and 1,130 children (52% boys, 6.5 +/- 3.9 years; 48% girls, 7.0 +/- 4.3 years). Ninety-seven percent of all diagnoses were chronic with an average duration of 8.8 +/- 8 years. The most frequent diagnoses were allergic rhinitis in men, headache in women, and atopic dermatitis in children."

Results:

"Disease severity and quality of life demonstrated marked and sustained improvements following homeopathic treatment period. Our findings indicate that homeopathic medical therapy may play a beneficial role in the long-term care of patients with chronic diseases."

4.2. Outcome and costs of homoeopathic and conventional treatment strategies: A comparative cohort study in patients with chronic disorders - Institute for Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, Charité University Medical Center, Berlin, Germany

Citation and Link:

Claudia Witta, Thomas Keil, Dagmar Selima, Stephanie Roll, Will Vancea, Karl Wegscheider, Stefan N. Willich, "Outcome and costs of homoeopathic and conventional treatment strategies: A comparative cohort study in patients with chronic disorders", *Complementary Therapies in Medicine* (2005) 13, 79—86.

http://smhcv.org.mialias.net/wp-content/uploads/articulo_lancet3.pdf

Aim & Method:

"A prospective, multicentre, parallel group, comparative cohort study. "In this study adult & child patients received either conventional or homeopathic treatment. Patients were first approached at the doctors practice & had thus already made their own choice of therapy; accordingly, the study was open & non-randomised. Patients were only included after giving written informed consent. The study was compliant with good Epidemiological Practice (GEP) & relevant data protection laws".

Results:

"It is remarkable that homeopathic treatment was never shown to be inferior in this study. Significant differences between the treatment groups were observed in respect to several key factors. The study showed that the assessments by both adult & child patients (evaluated separatly) were more favourable 6 or 12 months after diagnosis & initiation of homeopathic treatment than for conventional treatment. A similar apparent superiority of homeopathic treatment was also seen in the physicians assessments for the children, although not for the adults. *The quality of life analysis of the component scales revealed statistically significant differences again in the favour of homeopathic approach.* While the study demonstrates differences in favour of homeopathic therapy, it cannot explain what actually drives these results..."

4.3. Homeopathic Treatment for Chronic Disease - University Department of Palliative Medicine,
University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom

Link:

David S. Spence, Elizabeth A. Thompson And S.J. Barron, "Homeopathic Treatment for Chronic Disease: A 6-Year", *The journal of alternative and complementary medicine*, Volume 11, Number 5, 2005, pp. 793–798.

<http://www.dcscience.net/spence-jacm-05.pdf>

Aim & Method:

"The aim of this study was to assess health changes seen in routine homeopathic care for patients with a wide range of chronic conditions who were referred to a hospital outpatient department. This was an observational study of 6544 consecutive follow-up patients during a 6-year period. Hospital outpatient unit within an acute National Health Service (NHS) Teaching Trust in the United Kingdom. All patients were referred by their general practitioners or by hospital consultants in other specialties. All patients had chronic disease and many had already been treated by one or more hospital specialists in the secondary care sector. The aims of treatment were to enhance general health and well-being, to improve symptom control and to reduce the frequency and/or severity of acute-on-chronic exacerbations of patients' conditions".

Results:

"... total of 6544 consecutive follow-up patients were given outcome scores. Of the patients 70.7% (n 4627) reported positive health changes, with 50.7% (n 3318) recording their improvement as better (2) or much better (3)....."

4.4. Homeopathy in the public health system: a seven-year observational study at Lucca Hospital (Italy) - Homeopathic Clinic, Tuscany Regional Homeopathic Reference Centre, Italy

Citation and Link:

Rossi E, Endrizzi C, Panozzo MA, Bianchi A, Da Frè M, "Homeopathy in the public health system: a seven-year observational study at Lucca Hospital (Italy)", *Homeopathy* 2009 Jul; 98(3):142-8.

http://www.unboundmedicine.com/medline/ebm/record/19647207/full_citation/Homeopathy_in_the_public_health_system:_a_seven_year_observational_study_at_Lucca_Hospital__Italy__

Aim & Method:

"To evaluate the response to homeopathic treatment in a public homeopathic clinic of all patients attending between September 1998 until December 2005, and to analyze homeopathic practice. Longitudinal observational study in a homeopathic clinic based in a public hospital in Lucca, Italy. Data relating to patient details, clinical diagnosis, remedy prescribed, potency of dosage, prescription strategy and identification of the case as acute-chronic-recurrent were analyzed. Clinical response was assessed by the Glasgow Homeopathic Hospital Outcome Score."

Results:

"Overall 74% of patients reported at least moderate improvement. Outcomes were better with longer treatment duration and younger age of patients. Respiratory, followed by dermatological and gastrointestinal pathologies responded best..."

4.5. Observational study of homeopathic and conventional therapies in patients with diabetic polyneuropathy – Institution Belladonna Medical Association, Milan, Italy.

Citation and Link:

Pomposelli R, Piasere V, Andreoni C, Costini G, Tonini E, Spalluzzi A, Rossi D, Quarenghi C, Zanolin ME, Bellavite P, "Observational study of homeopathic and conventional therapies in patients with diabetic polyneuropathy", *Homeopathy* 2009 Jan; 98(1):17-25.

http://www.unboundmedicine.com/medline/ebm/record/19135955/full_citation/Observational_study_of_homeopathic_and_conventional_therapies_in_patients_with_diabetic_polyneuropathy_

Aim & Method:

"The feasibility and outcomes of homeopathic therapy in a group of type-2 diabetes mellitus patients with diabetic neuropathy were studied in a prospective observational study. Patients were followed from baseline (T0) for 6 months (T1) and for 12 months (T2), treatment was adjusted as necessary. Primary outcome was diabetic neuropathy symptom (DNS) score, secondary outcomes were clinical evolution and short-form-36 (SF-36)-evaluated quality of life (QOL)."

Results:

"Homeopathy was used in 45 patients, 32 of whom completed the observation study, and in parallel the conventional therapy outcomes were observed in 32 patients, 29 of whom completed the study. *DNS improved in both groups during the observation period, but the change with respect to baseline was statistically significant only in Homeopathic group at T1 (P=0.016).* Over the course of the observation there was a substantial stability of the electroneurophysiological values, blood pressure and body weight in both groups, a slight decrease of fasting blood glucose and glycated haemoglobin in Homeopathic group. QOL scores showed an improvement in Homeopathic group only. The cost of conventional drugs decreased in Homeopathic group from 114 euro/month to 94 euro/month at T1. *Complementary homeopathic therapy of diabetic neuropathy was feasible and promising effects in symptom scores and cost savings were observed.*"

4.6. Individualized homeopathic treatment of trigeminal neuralgia: an observational study -

Institution Department of Oral Medicine, Rafsanjan University of Medical Sciences, Dental School, Rafsanjan, Iran.

Citation and Link:

Mojaver YN, Mosavi F, Mazaherinezhad A, Shahrदार A, ManshaeeK, "Individualized homeopathic treatment of trigeminal neuralgia: an observational study", *Homeopathy* 2007 Apr; 96(2):82-6.

http://www.unboundmedicine.com/medline/ebm/record/17437933/full_citation/Individualized_homeopathic_treatment_of_trigeminal_neuralgia:_an_observational_study_

Aim and Method:

"To evaluate individualized classical homeopathy in the treatment of idiopathic trigeminal neuralgia (ITN).

15 patients with physician-confirmed trigeminal neuralgia were treated with homeopathy. Patients received individualized homeopathic medicines as oral liquid 30C once per month and were followed-up at the end of first, second, third and fourth month. Visual analogue scale (VAS) was used for the evaluation of pain intensity and descriptive criteria were used for evaluation of attack frequency."

Result:

"All 15 patients completed treatment. *The results for both the reduction of pain intensity and attack frequency were statistically significant ($P < 0.001$) during the four-month evaluation. We observed overall reductions of more than 60% in pain intensity using homeopathic treatment. The results suggest that homeopathic treatment is an effective and safe method in the treatment of ITN.*"

4.7. Outcomes from homeopathic prescribing in medical practice: A prospective, research-targeted, pilot study - Institution Faculty of Homeopathy and British Homeopathic Association, Hahnemann House, Luton, UK.

Citation and Link:

Mathie RT, Robinson TW, "Outcomes from homeopathic prescribing in medical practice: A prospective, research-targeted, pilot study", *Homeopathy* 2006Oct; 95(4):199-205.

http://www.unboundmedicine.com/medline/ebm/record/17015190/full_citation/Outcomes_from_homeopathic_prescribing_in_medical_practice:_A_prospective_research_targeted_pilot_study_

Aim & Method:

"A base for targeted research and development in homeopathy can be founded on systematic collection and analysis of relevant clinical data obtained by doctors in routine practice. With these longer-term aims in mind, we conducted a pilot data collection study, in which 14 homeopathic physicians collected clinical and outcomes data over a 6-month period in their practice setting.

METHODS: A specifically designed Excel spreadsheet enabled recording of consecutive clinical appointments under the following main headings: date, patient identity (anonymised), age and gender, medical condition/complaint treated, whether chronic or acute, new or follow-up case, patient-assessed outcome (7-point Likert scale: -3 to +3) compared with first appointment, homeopathic medicine/s prescribed, whether any other medication/s being taken for the condition. Spreadsheets were submitted monthly via email to the project co-ordinator for data synthesis and analysis".

Results:

"Practitioners typically submitted data regularly and punctually, and most data cells were completed as required, enabling substantial data analysis. The mean age of patients was 41.5 years. A total of 1783 individual patient conditions were treated overall. Outcome from two or more homeopathic appointments per patient condition was obtained in 961 cases (75.9% positive, 4.6% negative, 14.7% no change; 4.8% outcome not recorded). Strongly positive outcomes (scores of +2 or +3) were achieved most notably in the frequently treated conditions of anxiety, depression, and irritable bowel syndrome".

4.8. Homeopathic treatment of elderly patients--a prospective observational study with follow-up over a two year period - Institute for Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, Charité University Medical Center, Berlin, Germany.

Citation and Link:

Teut M, Lüdtkke R, Schnabel K, Willich SN, Witt CM, "Homeopathic treatment of elderly patients--a prospective observational study with follow-up over a two year period", *BMC Geriatr.* 2010 Feb 22;10:10.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20175887>

Background:

"Very little is known about the range of diagnoses, course of treatment and long-term outcome in elderly patients who choose to receive homeopathic medical treatment. We investigated homeopathic practice in an industrialised country under everyday conditions. The aim of the study was to determine the spectrum of diagnoses and treatments, as well as to describe the course of illness over time among older patients who chose to receive homeopathic treatment."

Method:

"In this subgroup analysis of a prospective, multicentre cohort study totally including 3981 patients treated by homeopathic physicians in primary care practices in Germany and Switzerland, data was analysed from all patients > 70 years consulting the physician for the first time. The main outcome measures were: assessment by patient of the severity of complaints (numeric rating scales) and quality of life (SF-36) and by the physician of the severity of diagnoses (numeric rating scales) at baseline, and after 3, 12, and 24 months."

Results:

"A total of 83 patients were included in the subgroup analysis (41% men, mean age 73.2 +/- (SD) 3.1 years; 59% women, 74.3 +/- 3.8 years).98.6 percent of all diagnoses were chronic with an average duration of 11.5 +/- 11.5 years. 82 percent of the patients were taking medication at baseline.The most frequent diagnoses were hypertension (20.5%, 11.1 +/- 7.5 years) and sleep disturbances (15.7%, 22.1 +/- 25.8 years).*The severity of complaints decreased significantly between baseline and 24 months in both patients* (from 6.3 (95%CI: 5.7-6.8) to 4.6 (4.0-5.1), p < 0.001) and physicians' assessments (from 6.6 (6.0-7.1) to 3.7 (3.2-4.3), p < 0.001); quality of life (SF 36) and the number of medicines taken did not significantly change".

"*The severity of disease showed marked and sustained improvements under homeopathic treatment, but this did not lead to an improvement of quality of life. Our findings might indicate that homeopathic medical therapy may play a beneficial role in the long-term care of older adults with chronic diseases and studies on comparative effectiveness are needed to evaluate this hypothesis.*"

4.9. How healthy are chronically ill patients after eight years of homeopathic treatment?--Results from a long term observational study - Institute for Social Medicine, Epidemiology and Health Economics, Charité University Medical Center, Berlin, Germany.

Citation and Link:

Witt CM, Lüdtke R, Mengler N, Willich SN., "How healthy are chronically ill patients after eight years of homeopathic treatment?--Results from a long term observational study.", *BMC Public Health*. 2008 Dec 17;8:413.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19091085>

Background:

"Homeopathy is a highly debated but often used medical treatment. With this cohort study we aimed to evaluate health status changes under homeopathic treatment in routine care. Here we extend former results, now presenting data of an 8-year follow-up."

Methods:

"In a prospective, multicentre cohort study with 103 homeopathic primary care practices in Germany and Switzerland, data from all patients (age >1 year) consulting the physician for the first time were observed. The main outcome measures were: The patients' perceived change in complaint severity (numeric rating scales from 0 = no complaint to 10 = maximal severity) and quality of life as measured by the SF-36 at baseline, and after 2 and 8 years."

RESULTS:

"A total of 3,709 patients were studied, 73% (2,722 adults, 72.8% female, age at baseline 41.0 +/- 12.3; 819 children, 48.4% female, age 6.5 +/- 4.0) contributed data to the 8-year follow-up. The most frequent diagnoses were allergic rhinitis and headache in adults, and atopic dermatitis and multiple recurrent infections in children. *Disease severity decreased significantly* ($p < 0.001$) between baseline, 2 and 8 years (adults from 6.2 +/- 1.7 to 2.9 +/- 2.2 and 2.7 +/- 2.1; children from 6.1 +/- 1.8 to 2.1 +/- 2.0 and 1.7 +/- 1.9). *Physical and mental quality of life scores also increased considerably. Younger age, female gender and more severe disease at baseline were factors predictive of better therapeutic success.*"

"Patients who seek homeopathic treatment are likely to improve considerably. These effects persist for as long as 8 years."

4.10. Effects of homeopathic treatment on salivary flow rate and subjective symptoms in patients with oral dryness: a randomized trial - Porin Hammaspiste, Pori, Finland

Citation and Link:

Haila S, Koskinen A, Tenovu J., "Effects of homeopathic treatment on salivary flow rate and subjective symptoms in patients with oral dryness: a randomized trial", *Homeopathy*. 2005 Jul;94(3):175-81.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed?term=16060203>

Abstract:

"Twenty-eight patients with xerostomia participated in a blind, placebo-controlled longitudinal study of the possible effects of homeopathic medicines on oral discomfort. All patients were first divided in two groups according to their medication. After that the two groups were randomly assigned according to a coin-toss to the experimental or control group. Most patients had systemic diseases, such as rheumatoid arthritis and/or Sjögren's syndrome, and frequent daily medications. The randomly selected experimental group (n=15) got an individually prescribed homeopathic medicine and the control group (n=13) a placebo substance (sugar granules), both for 6 weeks. Neither group knew of the nature of the medicine. Oral dryness was evaluated by measurement of unstimulated and wax-stimulated salivary flow rates and visual analogue scale."

"With only two exceptions, the *experimental group experienced a significant relief of xerostomia whereas no such effect was found in the placebo group. Stimulated salivary flow rate was slightly higher with homeopathy than placebo* but no consistent changes occurred in salivary immunoglobulin (IgA, IgG) levels. In an open follow-up period those receiving homeopathic medicine continued treatment and the placebo group patients were treated with individually prescribed homeopathic medicines. The symptoms of xerostomia improved in both groups. Our results suggest that individually prescribed homeopathic medicine could be a valuable adjunct to the treatment of oral discomfort and xerostomic symptoms."