

# Homeopathy *research and trials*

Information from the Society of Homeopaths website: [www.homeopathy-soh.org](http://www.homeopathy-soh.org)

## **Swiss scientists endorse homeopathy evidence –report says homeopathic medicine is clinically effective**

A comprehensive and authoritative research study by Swiss scientists has offered an unambiguous endorsement of the evidence base for homeopathy as a clinically effective system of medicine.

Their report, part of a Swiss government evaluation of complementary and alternative medicines, gives a massive boost to the growing body of research underpinning the therapeutic effects of homeopathic medicine.

The Society's research consultant Rachel Roberts said the report also dismissed the claims of the only research study ever to conclude that homeopathy's effects are due to placebo, the controversial Shang meta-analysis, published in the Lancet in 2005 and heralded as "the end of homeopathy".

Even though that study attracted criticism from international researchers due to its poor quality, both in terms of the methodology used and how the study was reported, it has been widely quoted by anti homeopathy campaigners as "proof that homeopathy is placebo.

Rachel, who is also the chief executive of the Homeopathy Research Institute, said: "This is great news for scientists who are committed to objective and accurate reporting of homeopathy research, as well as for the six million people in the UK who choose to use homeopathy as part of their healthcare.

"For too long anti-homeopathy campaigners have got away with using this flawed paper to unjustly damage the credibility of homeopathy and put pressure on decision-makers to cut homeopathy services. Being able to draw a line under the issue of the Shang paper will allow us to return to a more open, rational debate about homeopathy and its evidence base."

The authors of the 234-page report, known as the Swiss Health Technology Assessment (HTA), exhaustively reviewed the clinical research in homeopathy (both systematic reviews and the original clinical studies). It includes a summary of 22 systematic reviews of clinical trials in specific medical conditions, 20 of which show a positive direction of evidence for homeopathy (with five of those 20 showing clear evidence of effectiveness).

The report also concluded that there was sufficient supporting evidence for the pre-clinical (experimental) effects of homeopathy and that, when compared to conventional therapies, it offers a safe and cost-effective treatment.

The report was commissioned by the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO and the methodology adopted by the authors is a cornerstone of the UK's NIHR (National

Institute of Health Research) strategy for assessing real-world effectiveness, safety and cost-effectiveness of therapeutic interventions for the NHS. It is widely used internationally by other governmental agencies and is monitored by the non-profit umbrella organisation INAHTA (International Network of Agencies for Health Technology Assessment).

The authors, Dr Gudrun Bornhöft and Prof Peter Matthiessen, say in their conclusion: “In summary, it can be said that there is sufficient evidence for the preclinical effectiveness and the clinical efficacy of homeopathy and for its safety and economy compared with conventional treatment.”

Alex Tournier, executive director of the Homeopathy Research Institute, said: “With the publication of the English translation of the HTA report, we hope that the debate will finally move from the question, ‘does homeopathy work?’ to the more pressing questions of ‘how does homeopathy work?’ and ‘what conditions can homeopathy treat effectively and cost-efficiently?’”

## **Some Other Research Studies:**

### Northern Ireland Study 2007-2008 – Get Well UK:

16 Practitioners of Complementary Therapies (Acupuncture, Aromatherapy, Chiropractic, Homeopathy, Massage & Osteopathy), treated 700 patients referred by GPs at 2 practices

80% of patients had improvement with their symptoms

64% needed less time off of work

55% were able to take less painkiller medication

98% of the GPs involved said they would recommend the service again.

### Cuban Homeo-prophylaxis test 2007:

2.3 million people living in areas of Cuba at high risk of infection with Leptospirosis were given 2 doses of the homeopathic nosode at 200c. The remainder of Cuba’s 11 million population were untreated.

The untreated group saw an increase in cases of 22% in 2008

The treated group saw a decrease in cases of 84% in 2008

### The cytotoxic effects of ultra-diluted remedies on breast cancer cells – Frenkel 2010:

The homeopathic remedies, Carcinosin, Conium, Phytolacca and Thuja were all found to cause cell cycle delay, arrest and apoptosis on breast cancer cells. The effects were similar to that of Taxol (the most commonly used chemotherapy drug for breast cancer), but without a toxic effect on normal cells.

### 1918 Flu Epidemic

Conventional doctors saw a 30% mortality rate, while Homeopathic doctors saw a 1% mortality rate.

[www.homeoinst.org](http://www.homeoinst.org) – research database of trials and new projects. The main reference point for most studies and for things that are planning to run.