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Homeopathic relief of common strains, sprains and bruising

INTRODUCTION

Homeopathic medicine, a commonly practiced medical discipline of the 19th and early 20th centuries, is experiencing a strong resurgence around the globe. In December 2008, the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine and the National Center for Health Statistics (part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) released new findings on Americans' use of complementary and alternative medicine. The findings are from the "2007 National Health Interview Survey." The CAM section gathered information on 23,393 adults ages 18 years or older, and 9,417 children ages 17 years and under.¹ This large study reported that almost half of all Americans have used or are using some form of complementary and alternative medicine for relief of both acute and chronic conditions. This report revealed that 15 million Americans are using homeopathic products. This amounts to between \$2.5 billion and \$3 billion being spent annually for OTC homeopathic medicines alone.

This lesson will briefly review the

origins and philosophy of homeopathic medicine. In addition, homeopathic medicines for mild trauma and injury will be reviewed, including both oral and topical OTC products.

HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINE

History of homeopathic medicine

In the early decades of the 20th century, homeopathy was near its peak in popularity within the United States. At this time, between 20% and 25% of the practicing physicians in urban areas were practicing homeopathic medicine.² There were 22 homeopathic medical schools, and at least 100 homeopathic hospitals, with reportedly more than 1,000 pharmacies carrying homeopathic medicines.² This translated to fully one-third of all American medical schools up until the 1920s and 1930s. Hahnemann Medical College in Philadelphia is named after the founder of homeopathic medicine. In fact, the first American national medical association was homeopathic. The American Institute of Homeopathy was founded in 1844.²

Homeopathic medicine first was

established as a medical discipline by its founder, Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), of Meissen, Germany, in the late 18th century. Hahnemann was a physician, chemist and toxicologist, and was reputed to have spoken at least nine languages. While he was translating information regarding the toxicity of cinchona bark, or quinine, the common herbal treatment for malaria, he came across a passage that, as a man of science, disturbed him. The book suggested that quinine was effective against malaria due to its "bitter properties." Hahnemann found this to be a poor scientific rationalization. In an effort to gain information and clarity regarding how quinine might work to fight malaria, therefore, he decided to ingest several doses of quinine himself to see if he couldn't determine a more plausible scientific explanation. Much to his surprise, he developed all of the clinical symptoms of malaria, without ever having been exposed to the host or vector of the disease. This led him to elucidate the first and most important tenet of homeopathy, the Law of Simi-

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Program Goal: To increase retail clinicians' knowledge of homeopathy and ability to recommend effective over-the-counter homeopathic products for ailments related to sprains, strains and bruising from mild injury.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this program, the clinician should be able to:

1. Discuss homeopathic medicines that are effective in treating pain and symptoms related to mild trauma.
2. Differentiate between the most commonly used homeopathic medicines for mild trauma.
3. Articulate homeopathic principles and philosophy, and apply these to the treatment of mild injuries, sprains, strains and bruising.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the existing evidence in the field of homeopathic medicine as it relates to treating sprains, strains and bruising from mild trauma.
5. Explain the rationale for recommending single-drug oral homeopathic medicines, topical homeopathic products and multi-drug combination homeopathic products.

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[eight-tenths] of an hour is accredited for pharmacology) by Partners in Healthcare Education LLC, an approved provider of nurse practitioner continuing education by the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, provider # 031206.

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lars: "Let likes be cured by likes," or *similia similibus curentur*.

Hahnemann then went on to test and develop more than 100 homeopathic medicines, which were used to cure a host of serious epidemic diseases and acute conditions. These acute epidemic diseases included cholera, influenza, diphtheria, scarlet fever, pneumonia, trauma, consumption (i.e., tuberculosis) and many more based on this first and most fundamental principle.

As stated above, many of the hospitals and medical schools in Europe and the United States were homeopathic during the early 20th century. Public health documents reporting significantly lower-than-expected mortality rates for homeopathic treatment of many epidemic diseases, including the 1918 Spanish influenza, are available and have been validated by respected epidemiologists. This law of curing likes with likes is somewhat analogous to vaccination, which, however, is technically isopathic.

Theory of homeopathy

Homeopathy provides a therapeutic margin of response, since the principle is based on treatment with a "similar" medicine and not the "same" substance, as is required for vaccinations to be effective. Basically, you are giving a naturally occurring substance in a highly diluted and agitated form to stimulate a response or reaction of the person ingesting the substance. It is this reaction of the person to the exogenous substance that promotes healing. This is in stark contrast to allopathic medicine, which typically gives a substance that is designed to either kill the pathogen or oppose the symptoms of the person (e.g., anti-inflammatory, antidepressant, anti-anxiolytic, antibiotic). The distinction therapeutically is that homeopathic medicine relieves the pain and symptoms by stimulating an innate healing response, while allopathic medicine palliates symptoms by opposing the innate healing response.

A second principle of homeopathy is that of serial dilution and successive agitation, or "succession," as it is referred to by the homeopathic profession. Since many therapeutic homeopathic medicines are toxic in their undiluted or crude states, Hahnemann began a process of serial dilution and concomitant agitation in an attempt to reduce toxicity, while maintaining the therapeutic properties of the medicines. He discovered, quite paradoxically and much to his own surprise, that with each successive dilution and agitation (X dilutions are tenth dilutions; C dilutions are 100-fold dilutions, etc.), the medicines became more potent therapeutically, while rendering them less and less toxic.

This probably is the most difficult aspect for nonhomeopaths to embrace and comprehend even today. There is, however, a growing body of research that has come out over the past few decades that reveals how these highly diluted and agitated solutions impact the biophysical properties of water itself, particularly the polymerized weak hydrogen bonds between water molecules.^{3,4} You often will see the term "nanodilution" used to describe this phenomenon, which is not unique to homeopathy. It actually is a highly sophisticated physiologic mechanism of action, and there is a growing body of literature to support this therapeutic mechanism.^{3,4,5,6,7}

This principle of serial dilution renders homeopathic medicines safe and free from side effects. This is a crucial piece of information for the clinician who may be wary of side effects and/or drug interactions. The usual criticism against homeopathic medicines is that they are simply placebo because their critics have not read the literature or been properly schooled in this discipline.

The issue of drug safety is one of the most compelling reasons that many practitioners turn to homeopathic medicine. Case profiles over the last two centuries, contemporary research and literature supporting its efficacy abound, and yet the safety profiles of

these medicines are unprecedented.¹⁵ There is a growing body of pediatricians, primary care practitioners, nurses and nurse practitioners, and ancillary healthcare professionals who are turning to homeopathy to treat common illnesses because it is safe and efficacious.

Herbal is not homeopathic

Herbal medicine is not homeopathic medicine, although the two disciplines often are spoken of interchangeably. Herbal formulations are not diluted, nor are they succussed as discussed above, and they are not administered according to the law of similars. Herbal medicines are administered to palliate or treat symptoms in very much the same way that pharmaceuticals are used to palliate symptoms. This distinction between herbal, pharmaceutical and homeopathic medicine is important for all healthcare practitioners to comprehend.

Homeopathic medicine is regulated

Another important consideration for practitioners to grasp regarding homeopathic medicines is that homeopathic products are regulated within the industry by the American Association of Homeopathic Pharmacists, and as such are manufactured and distributed according to strict Food and Drug Administration requirements. This is not the case for many nutritional supplements, vitamins or herbal formulations. Homeopathic medicines are regulated as drugs as established by the 1936 Food, Drug and Cosmetic act. This allows consumers and healthcare practitioners to rest assured that homeopathic products that have the approval of the AAHP are prepared in accordance with strict homeopathic and FDA standards.

While homeopathy is used all over the world to treat a wide array of both acute and chronic illnesses, this lesson will review a few of the more commonly indicated homeopathic medicines for trauma and mild injuries. For more information regarding homeopathy and its use in treating other common illnesses

es in both children and adults, refer to the additional resources provided at the end of this lesson.

HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES FOR INJURY

Arnica montana

Any discussion of homeopathic products for trauma should begin with the most common and first-line medicine, Arnica montana. Recorded use of topical Arnica herbal tincture goes back as far as the 1500s for treating traumatic injuries. Its common botanical name is Leopard's Bane or Mountain Daisy. It is endemic at high altitudes throughout Europe. Hahnemann was quite familiar with Arnica, and is credited for writing extensively about its many healing properties. He prepared Arnica homeopathically in dilutions of 10 (X) and 100 (C) in order to be able to administer it orally for trauma.

Arnica reduces bruising and swelling of soft tissue following trauma. It is believed to act by facilitating transport of blood and fluid accumulations through a dilating action of subcutaneous blood capillaries through inhibition of the transcription factor NF- κ B.^{10,11} It immediately and directly increases circulation to the area of trauma. There have been a number of clinical studies that have shown the effectiveness of Arnica for soft-tissue swelling and bruising.^{8,9} The Archives of Facial Plastic Surgery in 2006⁸ concluded that patients receiving homeopathic Arnica experienced measurably less ecchymoses and tissue edema. One randomized study published in 2007 looked at 204 people with osteoarthritis in their hands and found that an Arnica gel preparation worked just as well as daily ibuprofen, and with minimal side effects.¹¹

Yet another study comparing a topical application of homeopathic Arnica versus piroxicam topical gel for osteoarthritis of the knee also showed positive results for the homeopathic gel preparation.¹⁰ Another study of 79 people with arthritis of the knee found that when patients used Arnica gel twice daily for

three to six weeks, they experienced significant reductions in pain and stiffness and had improved function.¹² There have been additional studies in the literature that show Arnica's efficacy in trauma, whether related to surgery or from other causes (e.g., falls, blows, sprains or strains). Recently, Arnica oral and topical gel formulations for trauma were added to the United Kingdom's Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency. The MHRA is the United Kingdom's version of our FDA.

PATIENT CASE 1

Mr. Boyd is a 54-year-old man who comes to you with a complaint of right elbow pain. He has gone back to playing tennis in a league the past few weeks, and his pain admittedly began about the same time. He denies any blunt trauma to the elbow. He is using ice on and off, and ice does seem to give him some relief. He is on multiple medications, including warfarin for a deep vein thrombosis he experienced two-and-a-half months prior. He has a history of peptic ulcer disease. He has been taking six Tylenol daily with only mild relief. He rates his pain as a 3- or 4-out-of-10 most days, worse with movement of the elbow. He wants to know if there is anything else that he can take over the counter to help relieve the pain.

The exam reveals moderate point tenderness at the lateral epicondyle, consistent with epicondylitis (common tennis elbow). There is only slight swelling. Pulses are normal. The skin is not pale, mottled or erythematous. The range of movement is good except for some mild discomfort with movement.

Discussion

Mr. Boyd's complaint and symptoms are typical for tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis). He admits to playing more tennis recently, and this is correlated with the onset and worsening of symptoms.

In addition to such symptomatic relief as rest, ice and bracing, he would benefit from a trial of a homeopathic formulation containing both Ruta graveolens and Hypericum perforatum. Ruta is a homeopathic medicine that heals periosteal pain and has an affinity for the elbow, knee and wrist, where tendonitis is quite common. Some of Mr. Boyd's pain also may be related to inflammation of nerve tissue, due to its location. Both topical and oral formulations may be necessary to mitigate Mr. Boyd's pain more quickly.

Dosing and route of administration will depend on the severity of the pain. An initial recommendation would be to use both oral and topical homeopathic formulations for at least two to four weeks, and then as needed to control symptoms. Oral administration three to four times a day and concomitant use of a topical cream or gel product twice a day would be recommended. Because of his history of peptic ulcer disease, this would be a good treatment alternative to NSAID's. He currently is taking multiple doses of Tylenol daily, and this should be discouraged. If his symptoms do not abate within the above time frame, referral to an orthopedist would be suggested.

Arnica is the first homeopathic medicine you should give for trauma and is available both topically and in oral preparations. Caution: Topical Arnica should never be used on open wounds, since it can cause significant irritation. Use oral Arnica instead. For the treatment and healing of open wounds, topical Calendula cream is a highly effective homeopathic agent.

Bellis perennis

Bellis perennis actually is closely

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Common homeopathic medicines for mild trauma

Arnica montana: First and premier medicine for any traumatic injury. Begins tissue healing upon administration and can be combined with other homeopathic medications.

Bellis perennis: Usually administered for deep-tissue or deeper muscle bruising. Good homeopathic medicine for healing after abdominal surgery or trauma, and after trauma or surgery to breast. Also useful for backaches and other pains from such physical activities as gardening or shoveling snow.

Ledum palustre: Useful for "puncture wounds," including insect bites and stings, such foreign bodies as nails (don't forget tetanus vaccination), etc. Also helpful for acute fractures and ankle sprains characterized by edema and immediate relief from ice/cold applications. Helps speed healing of traumatic periorbital ecchymoses. The first homeopathic medicine to think of for a black eye.

Ruta graveolens: Excellent homeopathic agent for relief of pain related to periosteal trauma and overuse injuries to tendons and ligaments. Helps pain and stiffness from injuries to the knee, elbow and ankle, particularly. Also helps relieve eye strain from overuse after work or reading.

Hypericum perforatum: Homeopathic preparations relieve traumatic pain in areas rich in nerve endings, such as fingers, toes, lips, genitalia, coccyx/sacrum. Also can be applied topically as a diluted tincture to wounds to prevent infection and relieve pain.

Rhus toxicodendron: This homeopathic medicine has a reputation for relieving more chronic joint, back or muscle pain. The symptoms guiding recommendation of Rhus tox (as it is typically referred to by homeopathic practitioners) is relief from heat (as opposed to Ledum, above, which is relieved by cold applications), and stiffness with first motion, relieved by subsequent motion ("rusty gate" syndrome).

Symphytum officinale: As a single agent, stimulates healing of fractures.

related to Arnica, both botanically and therapeutically. Bellis is useful for traumatic injuries and deep-tissue bruising. It is helpful after abdominal surgery, breast surgery and in deep-muscle bruises. In folklore, it was commonly referred to as the "old gardener's remedy," since it helps with the soreness after the digging, planting and lifting involved in those first few weeks of springtime gardening. It also is useful for the back pain and soreness experienced after shoveling snow. Many OTC homeopathic combination products contain both Arnica and Bellis, since they are so closely related and act

synergistically for both soft and deep-tissue bruising.

Ruta graveolens

Ruta, or Common Rue, is a homeopathic medicine that is more specific for bone bruises. It has a particular affinity for the tibia, ankle, elbow and knee. Bone bruises to the tibia respond very well to homeopathic Ruta. It also is useful for tendons, where they attach to bone, and so commonly is used in relieving the pain of such repetitive stress injuries as tennis elbow (lateral epicondylitis) or carpal tunnel syndrome.

Since Ruta has an affinity for bone,

its use in treating pain after dental procedures also is well documented. All remedies have multiple organ affinities, and another documented use of Ruta is for eye strain and vision problems related to strain or overuse. Ankle sprains that fail to heal satisfactorily also may call for Ruta. Ankles that remain weak and stiff after a sprain may benefit from taking Ruta. Knee pain, if the symptom is weakness or the knee giving way as going down stairs, often calls for Ruta.

Ledum palustre

Ledum is from the same genus as the rhododendron plant. It often is called Marsh Tea or Wild Rosemary. Ledum most commonly is used as a homeopathic treatment for stab and puncture wounds from bites, stings or foreign bodies. In the days before tetanus vaccines, it was touted as preventing tetanus in dirty wounds, such as those caused by pitchforks or rusty nails. It can be used topically in tincture or orally if prepared homeopathically to prevent festering.

Another common use of homeopathic Ledum is to reduce the pain and swelling from an acute ankle sprain (Remember, Ruta often is indicated for chronic ankle pain and weakness.) The symptoms that call for Ledum are cool, pale edema following an acute injury, which is relieved by cold applications. Ledum can offer substantial pain relief from fractures, especially if the patient says that he or she gets immediate relief from ice or cool compresses. The other common use of Ledum is periorbital ecchymosis due to blows or blunt trauma. Often, Arnica is given first, followed a day or so later by Ledum to reduce the pain, swelling and ecchymosis.

Hypericum perforatum

Most people recognize Hypericum as the flowering shrub, St. John's wort. Again, there is a significant difference between homeopathic Hypericum and oral, herbal St. John's wort. Herbal St. John's wort, if ingested in capsule form,

must be taken with caution, as it interacts with a number of medications (HIV medications, Coumadin or warfarin, beta blockers, oral contraceptives, etc.) Homeopathically prepared Hypericum, however, does not warrant this caution, and is used for different purposes than herbal St. John's wort.

Homeopathic Hypericum is used for injuries that affect areas rich in nerve endings (fingers, toes, coccyx, sacrum, lips and genitalia). Pain due to crush injuries to the fingers or toes calls for oral Hypericum. Hypericum also is available as a topical tincture for open and lacerated wounds. The tincture is diluted in water (usually one part Hypericum to 10 parts water) and can be applied directly to wounds to prevent infection and pain in nerve-rich areas as described above. Hypericum tincture, like Ledum, widely was used by homeopathic physicians in war time to prevent wound infections, and by surgeons in the 19th and early 20th centuries to prevent surgical-site infections prior to the advent of antibiotic therapy.¹⁶

Symphytum officinale

Homeopathic Symphytum (common comfrey) is a friend to the orthopedic surgeon. Symphytum is used to mend bone fractures and has an extensive history. Its common name in Native American folklore is "bone-knit." It has a solid reputation historically for its ability to mend broken bones.¹⁷ It is given orally and pulsed every few days during the first few weeks after a fracture to stimulate bone union and callus formation.¹⁷ Another important use of Symphytum historically and homeopathically is the healing of blows to the orbit of the eye.¹⁸

Rhus toxicodendron

Homeopathic Rhus toxicodendron (or Rhus tox, to which it is commonly referred) is a very popular homeopathic medicine and traditionally is used for muscle and joint pain of a more sub-acute or chronic nature. While many of the homeopathic medicines discussed

PATIENT CASE 2

Mrs. McGuire is a 36-year-old woman who is concerned about her 13-year-old daredevil son, Jessie. He particularly enjoys rollerblading and has had several injuries and trips to the emergency department as a consequence. This past week, he fell while at a roller park and bruised and scraped almost his entire right side from the ankle to his shoulder. Mrs. McGuire took her son to the ED for X-rays and a physical exam. His X-rays were all negative, and his provider suggested he take children's ibuprofen for the pain. He did suffer a more significant abrasion to the right hip area, which was cleaned and dressed. The other wounds were cleaned, but they did not require dressing. Since beginning the liquid ibuprofen, Jessie has been complaining of stomach upset and he won't swallow pills. Children's ibuprofen is not helping much with the pain. Mrs. McGuire has heard from a neighbor about homeopathic medicines and wonders if there is something she can give Jessie to speed up the healing of his multiple bruises and abrasions, and help with the pain he is experiencing.

Discussion

Clearly this is a trauma with multiple sites of injury and tissues affected. This is a perfect case for a combination product that contains at least Arnica, Bellis, Ruta and Ledum. You counsel Mrs. McGuire to keep Arnica on hand in the future, given Jessie's propensity for trauma. The sooner Arnica is administered after an injury, the sooner the healing begins.

Either Arnicaid or Muscle Therapy with Arnica oral gel strips would be indicated in this case. Jessie will not be bothered by the taste or side effects of either product. Given the extent of his trauma, three to five times a day dosing would be necessary for at least a few days. No dose adjustments are needed for children when using homeopathic products, and this is important for both parents and practitioners to know. As his pain and bruising subside, the repetitions can be cut back. His symptom management will guide his mom's dosing regimen after the first few days.

Mrs. McGuire has some topical Arnica gel on hand and wants to know if this is OK to apply to Jessie's multiple abrasions. You quickly tell her NOT to apply Arnica to any open wound; it is strictly for closed wounds and blunt trauma. You recommend instead homeopathic Calendula cream. This is an excellent topical agent for quickly healing open wounds and also has antimicrobial properties. Wish Mrs. McGuire luck — she certainly has her hands full!

above deal with acute treatment of soft tissue, bone, tendons or ligaments, Rhus tox typically is thought of as a medicine for more chronic muscle pain and joint stiffness. Symptoms calling for Rhus tox include pain and restlessness at night in bed, pain relieved by warm or even hot applications, pain and stiffness upon first getting up or upon first movement, but better with continued walking (often referred to as the "rusty gate" syndrome). Symptoms calling for Ruta or

Rhus tox often are confused, since Ruta has many of these same symptoms. Ruta, however, seems to be indicated for more acute rheumatic ailments, while Rhus tox often is indicated for more chronic "rheumatism."

OTC PRODUCTS AND ROUTES OF ADMINISTRATION

There are many over-the-counter homeopathic formulations available today. Homeopathic medicines can be

TABLE 1

List of OTC single and combination homeopathic products for mild trauma

<i>Product name</i>	<i>Manufacturer</i>	<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>Route of administration</i>	<i>Indication</i>	<i>Ingredients</i>
Arnica 30X	Hyland's	Arnica montana 30X	Oral	Tissue trauma	Arnica montana 30X
Arnica 30C	Boiron	Arnica montana 30C	Oral	Tissue trauma	Arnica montana 30C
Arnicare Topicals	Boiron	Arnica gel, cream or ointment 1X	Topical	Tissue trauma	Arnica gel, cream or ointment 1X
Arnicaid	Hyland's	Arnica montana 30X, Bellis 6X, Ledum 6X, Ruta 6X, Hypericum 6X	Oral	Multiple tissue trauma (tendon, soft tissue, muscle, ligament)	Arnica montana 30X, Bellis 6X, Ledum 6X, Ruta 6X, Hypericum 6X
Muscle Therapy strips with Arnica	Hyland's	Same as in Arnicaid above, but as a fast dissolving oral gel strip	Oral gel strips	Multiple tissue trauma, as above	Same as in Arnicaid above, but as a fast dissolving oral gel strip
Muscle Therapy gel with Arnica	Hyland's	Arnica montana 2X, Hypericum 3X, Ruta graveolens 3X, Ledum pal 3X, Bellis perennis 3X	Topical	Multiple tissue trauma	Arnica montana 2X, Hypericum 3X, Ruta graveolens 3X, Ledum pal 3X, Bellis perennis 3X
Traumeel ointment	Heel/BHI	Arnica 3X, Hypericum 6X, Symphytum 4X and many other medications not discussed in this lesson	Topical	Multiple tissue trauma	Arnica 3X, Hypericum 6X, Symphytum 4X and many other medications not discussed in this lesson
Traumeel	Heel/BHI	Same as above, but as oral tablets	Oral	Multiple tissue trauma	Same as above, but as oral tablets

purchased in vials or tubes that contain small lactose globules or fast-dissolving tablets. These quickly dissolve in the oral cavity and should not be chewed or swallowed. Instructions often call for ingesting multiple globules or tablets at once several times a day, depending on the acuity of the condition being treated.

Homeopathic medicines are available as either single medicines or as "combination" formulas, which contain several homeopathic medicines in one vial. Doses or "potencies" of OTC homeopathic products vary. These OTC potencies vary from tenth dilutions

(X's) to hundredth dilutions (C's). Typically, the more severe the condition, the higher the potency you will want to recommend. C's are stronger or more powerful than X's, since the higher the dilution, the more agitated the medicines, as described in the introduction. Table 1 contains information on examples of available OTC single and combination homeopathic products for mild trauma.

For mild bumps, bruises, sprains and strains, it is best to recommend combination products that contain a variety of the homeopathic medicines discussed in this lesson, since these are

the more commonly indicated homeopathic drugs for mild trauma. Acute trauma usually involves more than one type of tissue — e.g., soft tissue (Arnica), muscle or deep-tissue bruising (Bellis), nerve tissue (Hypericum) and ligaments/tendons (Ruta and Ledum) — so a good combination formula will treat more of the case than attempting to prescribe any one single homeopathic medicine. The successful treatment of most chronic ailments is more difficult and typically requires extensive homeopathic training and experience. It is best to refer patients with chronic conditions

to experienced homeopathic providers (see www.nationalcenterforhomeopathy.org to find a trained homeopathic provider in your area).

Many homeopathic medicines are available over the counter in displays in natural food stores and many traditional pharmacies. However, you also may purchase homeopathic medicines that are not commonly found over the counter at any of the many homeopathic pharmacies across the United States. Homeopathic pharmacies sell a multitude of single homeopathic medicines in doses from low to very high potencies. It is wise to consult a homeopathic practitioner for advice on the purchase and dosing of homeopathic medicines for more serious or chronic illnesses.

CONCLUSION

Homeopathy offers a safe and effective treatment option for patients with

mild traumatic injuries. This more-than-200-year-old medical discipline is experiencing a global resurgence, and has a long track record for treating a host of acute and chronic conditions. The first and most basic fundamental tenet of homeopathy is the Law of Similars. There are many highly effective OTC homeopathic formulations to choose from when recommending products for sprains, strains, bumps and bruises. Homeopathic medicines are classified as drugs, and their manufacture is FDA regulated. There are a number of contemporary high-quality studies establishing the efficacy of homeopathic products, as well as papers elucidating a plausible mechanism of action. Homeopathic products come in a variety of forms, including lactose pillules or globules, fast-dissolving tablets, oral gel strips, topical creams, gels, tinctures and ointments.

You can find homeopathic medicines in combination formulas or as single medicines. For mild trauma, it is best to recommend combination formulas that contain multiple homeopathic medicines. These include, for example, the medicines discussed in this lesson: *Arnica montana*, *Bellis perennis*, *Ruta graveolens*, *Ledum palustre* and *Hypericum perforatum*. Other homeopathic medicines used for trauma that were discussed are *Symphytum officinale* following fracture and *Rhus tox* for muscle pain, stiffness and soreness. Doses available over the counter vary from X potencies or strengths, to C's. X potencies are 10th dilutions, while C potencies are 100th dilutions. The methodical process of serial dilution and agitation of these medicines renders them highly efficacious and yet non-toxic as compared with pharmaceutical or herbal formulations.

ADDITIONAL HOMEOPATHY RESOURCES

Web sites:

- www.nationalcenterforhomeopathy.org
- www.homeopathicpharmacy.org
- www.homeopathy.ca
- www.homeopathic.com

To enroll in an online training program designed to help you integrate homeopathy into your practice: www.academyofclassicalhomeopathy.com (click on "Integrate a practice")

Books: There are a host of books on this subject. Here are a few excellent books to get you started:

- "Easy Homeopathy" by Edward Shalts, MD
- "Homeopathy Beyond Flat Earth Medicine" by Tim Dooley, MD, ND
- "Homeopathy: An Impossible Cure" by Amy Lansky, PhD
- Homeopathy e-book available from Homeopathic Educational Services at www.homeopathic.com

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Learning Assessment

Successful completion of "Homeopathic relief of common strains, sprains and bruising" is accredited for 1.0 (one) hour of continuing education credit of which 0.8 (eight-tenths) of an hour is considered pharmacology credit. To obtain credit, answer the following questions and complete the evaluation online at www.retailclinician.com.

- The manufacture of homeopathic medicines is regulated by the FDA as drugs.**
 - True
 - False
- The following homeopathic medicines are useful for treating bumps, bruises, swelling and pain due to trauma:**
 - Ledum palustre
 - Belladonna
 - Bellis perennis
 - A and C
- Which homeopathic medicine is most helpful for the pain and healing of areas rich in nervous tissue?**
 - Arnica montana
 - Symphytum officinale
 - Hypericum perforatum
 - Rhus tox
- Which remedy is considered the first and foremost premier homeopathic medicine for trauma?**
 - Ledum palustre
 - Bellis perennis
 - Hypericum perforatum
 - Arnica montana
- Combination homeopathic products for bruising, sprains and strains are frequently used when the trauma involves more than one type of tissue.**
 - True
 - False
- A mom brings her daughter in for relief of finger pain sustained after her hand was partially closed in a car door by her younger sibling that morning. X-rays revealed no broken bones, but she is obviously distressed and there is a moderate degree of bruising and swelling of the third, fourth, and fifth digits. What homeopathic medicine would be most indicated for this type of injury for healing and pain relief?**
 - Ledum palustre
 - Hypericum perforatum
 - Arnica montana
 - Bellis perennis
- A middle-aged male client comes in and complains of pain after a fall on the ice in his driveway over the weekend. He is familiar with homeopathic medicine and knew to take Arnica first and frequently for a couple of days after the injury. He is feeling better, but a large bruise remains in the right gluteal region. He complains of pain at the base of his spine, especially when sitting down. What homeopathic medicines would you next recommend for this client?**
 - Arnica montana in higher and more frequent doses
 - Ledum palustre
 - Hypericum perforatum
 - Ruta graveolens
- A friend of yours comes to the clinic after a breast biopsy. She is surprised by how much pain she is still experiencing in the breast where the biopsy was done. Do you have anything homeopathic you can recommend for her to take for the pain and swelling in the breast?**
 - No; she should take Advil or Tylenol for relief.
 - Yes; a homeopathic product that contains *Bellis perennis* would help with the pain and facilitate healing of the traumatized breast.
- X potencies or dilutions are stronger than C dilutions because the X's are herbal strengths.**
 - True
 - False
- Homeopathic medicines interact with a number of medications. It is important to become familiar with these potential interactions.**
 - True
 - False