

Homeopathy for men



Health risks for men

When it comes to health, it's riskier to be a man than a woman, according to the experts. For example, a study carried out by Leeds Metropolitan University found that men are more prone to cancer and more likely to die from heart disease and strokes than women.¹

Despite this increased risk of health problems and the fact that men often lead stressful lives, they tend to seek medical help less often than women. Men have been shown to under utilise medical and mental health services – a cause for concern when it's a fact that many serious conditions respond best to treatment in their early stages.

Maintaining your health

As well as making the most of local GP services, visiting a professional homeopath allows minor symptoms to be addressed promptly and many patients arrange a six-monthly check-up with a homeopath to take a thorough look at the state of their health on a regular basis.

What is homeopathy?

Homeopathy is a system of medicine which involves treating the individual with highly diluted substances, given mainly in tablet or liquid form, with the aim of triggering the body's natural system of healing. Based on their specific symptoms, a homeopath will match the most appropriate medicine to each patient.

Homeopathy is based on the principle that 'like' can be treated with 'like' i.e. a substance which causes symptoms when taken in large doses, can be used in small amounts to treat those same symptoms. You may already have come across this concept in conventional medicine e.g. small doses of allergens such as pollen being used to de-sensitise allergic patients.

What is homeopathic treatment like?

When you see a homeopath, it's their job to get a thorough understanding of your health and the exact symptoms you are experiencing, so that they can find a homeopathic medicine which matches you and your

symptoms as precisely as possible. As a holistic medicine, homeopathy recognises the importance of considering the person as a whole, so during this confidential, in-depth consultation process, your homeopath will consider all aspects of your health including your past medical history, diet, lifestyle and personality type, as well as current health problems.

Why choose a holistic therapy?

The impact of diet and exercise on health is generally recognised, but equally important is the link between mind and body. This has been confirmed by research studies which have found, for example, that those who suffer frequent bouts of depression are 40 per cent more likely to develop heart disease – the main cause of premature death for men in the UK.³ Conventional medicine has tended to separate the two, treating the body more like a complex machine. But most of us are aware of direct connections between our emotions and our body, whether it's the experience of a racing heart rate and sweaty palms when we're nervous, or skin conditions such as eczema and psoriasis which appear or intensify during times of stress. Homeopaths treat the person as a whole – taking both emotional and physical symptoms into account.

Is homeopathy for me?

According to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, 10 per cent of the UK population now use homeopathy³ – that's six to nine million people. If you're not already one of these people, maybe now's the time to consider trying a new approach to your healthcare.

Homeopathic consultations are available for a wide range of conditions which commonly affect men, such as skin conditions, hay fever, rheumatic problems and depression. Whether the problem is a long-term medical condition or a simple sports injury, homeopathy may be able to help.

Homeopathy and sexual health

Fertility problems affect one in seven couples in the UK, with most male-related cases being due to low sperm counts or poor quality of sperm. A study involving 45 sub-fertile men found that homeopathic treatment improved both the number and quality of sperm.⁴ There was also a significant improvement in their general health and it did not matter whether these men were subject to stress or had been childless for a long period of time.

What scientific evidence is there that homeopathy works?

It is often said that there is 'no scientific evidence' that homeopathy works. This is not the case. More research is welcomed, but there are already high-quality randomised clinical trials demonstrating that homeopathy is clinically effective beyond placebo e.g. in the treatment of allergies and upper respiratory tract infections, hay fever and rheumatic diseases.⁵

In Germany, a health insurance company commissioned a study to help them determine whether they should continue to cover homeopathic treatment.⁶ This study, which included almost 500 patients, found that homeopathic treatment was more effective than conventional treatment for some chronic conditions commonly seen in general practice, including headache, low back pain, depression, insomnia and sinusitis in adults, and atopic dermatitis, allergic rhinitis and asthma in children.

For more information about homeopathy research please visit the Society of Homeopaths website at www.homeopathy-soh.org/whats-new/research/default.aspx.

What about seeing my doctor?

It is recommended that you maintain your relationship with your GP or specialist. When necessary, homeopathic and conventional approaches can be used alongside one another to give the most effective and appropriate medical care. Your local NHS services

will also be able to arrange any diagnostic procedures you may need and provide emergency cover.

Some people choose homeopathy because they are unhappy with side effects from their current conventional medication, and in many cases homeopathic treatment can gradually reduce or remove the need for conventional drugs.⁷ However, you should continue with any conventional medical treatment that may have already been prescribed as it may be dangerous to stop this suddenly. Any change in use of conventional medication should be discussed with both the prescribing doctor and your homeopath as treatment progresses.

How do I find a registered homeopath?

Registered members of the Society of Homeopaths (identified by the designation RSHom after their name) have met required standards of education, are fully insured and have agreed to abide by the Society's Code of Ethics and Practice.*

To find an RSHom homeopath in your area, you can access our register online at www.homeopathy-soh.org or contact the Society office on 01604 817890. For further information, please visit our website.

*This does not apply to Registered members practising overseas.

Nothing contained in this leaflet should be taken as individual medical advice or as a substitute for consulting your homeopath or healthcare practitioner.

References

- ¹ White A, Cash K. The State of Men's Health in Western Europe. *Journal of Men's Health & Gender*, 2004; 1(1): 60-66
- ² Duke University Medical Center: Paper to the American Psychosomatic Society, Vancouver, March 5, 2005
- ³ Professor Woods of the MHRA, response to Q211, House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, *Evidence Check 2: Homeopathy* (London: The Stationery Office Limited, 2010), p. Ev 70
- ⁴ Gerhar I, Wallis E. Individualized homeopathic therapy for male infertility. *Homeopathy*, 2002; 91(3): 133-44

⁵ *British Homeopathic Association*. The Research Evidence Base for Homeopathy. www.britishhomeopathic.org/export/sites/bha_site/research/evidencesummary.pdf [Dec 2010]

⁶ Witt C, Keil T, Selim D, et al. Outcome and costs of homeopathic and conventional treatment strategies: a comparative cohort study in patients with chronic disorders. *Complement Ther Med*, 2005; 13: 79-86

⁷ Sharples FM, van Haselen R, Fisher P. NHS patients' perspective on complementary medicine: a survey. *Complement Ther Med* 2003; Dec:11(4):243-8

Full references available on request.

Other leaflets available include:

- Homeopathy Simply Explained
- Homeopathy for Babies and Children
- Homeopathy in Pregnancy and Childbirth
- Homeopathy for Stress, Anxiety and Depression
- Homeopathy and the Menopause

For a copy of these leaflets, please contact the office at the address below.

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