

Introduction  
*to*  
**MATERIA  
MEDICA**

Extensive Preparatory Notes to UG and PG

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Introduction to Materia Medica  
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# Foreword

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Homoeopathic Materia Medica (HMM) is a fascinating subject as it deals with a range of manifestations from functional pathology to structural changes with study of personality as guided by the Masters. It cannot be comprehended by reading a few books and a few authors! It needs an extensive study in depth and extent to understand the logic and concept of the different Masters. This will require an early introduction to the subject as well as continuous reading. Early introduction also will help in grasping the Conceptual backgrounds with which different authors treat the subject and how this influences their writings.

For the beginner in Homoeopathy, looking at the maze of symptoms, different terminologies and dryness of expression doesn't create much interest as it lacks basic understanding of how Materia Medica has evolved and also various terminologies used which are alien at first sight. After reading a few medicines, everything appears the same in all; it takes a lot of time to understand the basics. One needs a proper orientation and training to come out of this state so that the further journey becomes fascinating and exciting in its comprehension and application.

In this book, Dr. G. Nagendra Babu has tried to bridge the gap existing as mentioned above. Over view of various therapeutic

medicinal systems creates a good platform to understand Homoeopathy and HMM as it helps to understand the basic philosophical differences and how they have evolved. Various terminologies which are new for the beginner are explained very well. Topics are arranged in a way that they take the beginner on a journey from evolution of the Materia Medica from pre homoeopathic era to basic concepts of Homoeopathy and Homoeopathic Materia Medica.

This book will be a good addition to the available literature which is focused specifically on the beginners. This definitely will serve as a companion for the beginner in Homoeopathy to get acquainted with the basics and to generate an interest in studying HMM further in-depth. I appreciate the hard work and application of Dr G. Nagendra to create student friendly publications and I am sure it will go a long way to help students all over the world. I wish him all the best and hope he will continue such efforts to help the growth of Homoeopathy.

**Dr Bipin Jain**

Principal and Academic Director,

HOD Homoeopathic Materia Medica

Dr M L Dhawale Memorial Homoeopathic Institute-Palghar.

# Foreword

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Materia Medica written by Prof. Dr G. Nagendra Babu. Many of the books on homeopathic materia medica are compilations of symptoms produced by the drugs. Many materia medicas available now are aiming at understanding the drug pictures. Readers of homeopathic materia medica complain that different views of authors' on different drug pictures create confusion in the minds of beginners of materia medica. During my 33 years of teaching in Homeopathic College I was not in a position to suggest any one book (which covers all the required portion) for the beginners and fresh teachers, now I am confident that Professor Nagendra Babu's book will fulfill this lacuna.

Author's conscious attempt in keeping the language very simple is aimed at blooming students of materia medica. On going through the book one can understand the sincere efforts taken by author in compiling the data from different sources and presenting it in his own lucid style of writing.

This book has covered almost all the topics needed to understand the philosophy and principle of homeopathic materia medica for students. Chapters like history of materia medica, relationship of remedies, applied materia medica in learning and practice, group remedies in homeopathic materia medica will be useful

to undergraduates as well as post graduate students.

This book no doubt will make an addition to the text books on homeopathic materia medica. As the title suggests this book aptly named as an introductory preparation to homeopathic materia medica for beginners. As per the authors' narrative the subject is based on the new curriculum introduced by the C.C.H standard regulations for the preliminary study.

I hope that both the profession as well as students will welcome and utilize this book and be benefitted by the labors of Prof. Dr G. Nagendra Babu.

**Prof. Shreepad Hegde**

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# Foreword

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It gives me immense pleasure to write foreword to the book Introduction to Materia Medica by Dr G. Nagendra Babu, MD (Hom.) Professor and HOD Sri Sai Ram Homoeopathic Medical College, Chennai, the author of another versatile book A comprehensive study of Organon and a recipient of Best Teacher award.

There have been so many books of Materia Medica written from the century when homeopathy was discovered to this century, the so called modern Materia Medica. We have the pure Materia Medica where symptoms are expressed as they have been produced in provers and Materia Medica where interpretations and elaboration are given for each and every symptoms. We have Materia Medica where the mental symptoms are expressed and exposed and Materia Medica where the pathological general are dealt with. Moreover we also therapeutic Materia Medica where medicines are given for each disease condition and with indications of the particular drug in each disease condition, which lead to confusion among the students of homoeopathy whether they are undergraduate or postgraduate. This confusion get expressed in practice and finally resulted in many schools of Homoeopathy, some of them jeopardizing the existence of homoeopathy itself.

These all confusions could be sorted out if we really understand

the origin and evolution and types of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica. Till this time rarely, academician have tried to bring out a book on this do except taking a few lectures on this topic. Dr G. Nagendra Babu has made this attempt in an elaborate manner which is really the need of the time.

The salient features of the book are, a brief introduction to beginners on what is Materia Medica, and how it is different from other Materia Medica, journey on the history of Materia Medica dating from ancient to modern times, explanations to terms used in Homeopathic Literature, Schuessler 12 Tissue Remedies, methods of studying Homeopathic Materia Medica, Sources Of Materia Medica, Scope / Advantages And Limitations of Homeopathic Materia Medica, Types of Homoeopathic Materia Medica, Relationship of Homoeopathic Remedies, Applied Materia Medica in Learning & and Practice, and Group Remedies of Homeopathic Materia Medica will also be useful to both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

More over the knowledge of the above are very much essential according to the new CCH curriculum for both Under-Graduation and Post-Graduation.

Thus this book in not another Materia Medica Book where every medicine is explained so that a practitioner can use but it is a book on how the books of Materia Medica need to be understood and studied which become very essential for a new comer to the homoeopathy that is our student community. So I wish the homoeopathic fraternity to make use of this wonderful book

**Dr Winston Vargheese MD (Hom)**

Professor and P. G. Coordinator

Sarada Krishna Homoeopathic Medical College

Kulasekharam, Kanniyakumari



# Preface

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Dear Learners of Materia Medica,

Since my medical college days, as a student and now as a head of the department and professor of a medical college, I felt the need for introductory material on homoeopathic materia medica for the beginners of homoeopathy. When an enthusiast approaches homoeopathic materia medica without preliminary preparation he remains clueless. If he hails from a non-homoeopathic family his condition becomes more pathetic. For him, homoeopathy and homoeopathic materia medica become a hard nut to crack. Approaching homoeopathic materia medica without a proper introduction will be like getting lost in space away from your spaceship and oxygen cylinder. Every drug in materia medica seems to cover and treat all the symptoms and clinical diseases, which is contrary to the dominant school. Yet the homeopathic remedy cures only when it is applied according to symptom similarity. Aconite seems to cure all range of diseases from common cold to cirrhosis of the liver, but alas Zincum met too has the same. Words like constitution, diathesis, dyscrasia, temperament are with new meaning. Professor of organon says "*Hhomoeopathy treats the patient but not the disease*", "*we treat the sick but not the nosological disease conditions*" etc. On the contrary, while reading materia medica few polychrests like Nuxvomica, Sepia seems to cover the constitutional type, few drugs like Rauwolfia, Justicia, Anthracinum, and Acalypha indica seems to challenge this teaching. Few professors of materia

medica recommend Allen's Keynotes, few Kent's lectures on materia medica, and then they contradict each other's thought. A doubt remains in the student's mind; if homoeopathy treats only the sick individual, but not the disease: then why the book on therapeutics list remedies for sinusitis, anal fissures etc? Why the drug picture in materia medica lists out the "nosological clinical conditions" where the drug is applicable? Why there are somany different types of books, dealing with the same subject differently? The list goes on. I strongly believe this book is an attempt to clarify these doubts of a newcomer to homoeopathic materia medica as well as homoeopathy.

The academic authority introduced the new syllabus and made the introduction to materia medica mandatory for the new comers. In my opinion, it is a very good step to be welcomed. This motivated me to write a book on introduction to homoeopathic materia medica to answer the doubts raise in student's mind. I tried to cover and address many numbers of topics related to the introductory preparation required to understand materia medica. Deliberately I tried to keep language lucid and as simple as possible. I do not claim any originality to the subject covered. I have referred and consulted many teachers of materia medica, referred literature of pioneers to have a practical solution to the problem addressed by them on this matter. An attempt is made to present this book "Introduction to Materia Medica" as a compilation of all the above. I believe undergraduates, postgraduates, teachers, and lovers of homoeopathy welcome this move and get benefited. I do not claim perfection in this work as every subject on homoeopathy is infinite. Any further suggestions will be accepted with a motivational spirit.

I am indebted to those personalities who helped me in effectively completing this work. I dedicate my work to The Almighty and my respectable parents first then to my loving wife Mrs. Mayura Manikarnika and dearly son Mt. Aadyanth

Krishna.G, driving force behind every venture of mine. I wholeheartedly thank Mr. Manish Jain of B. Jain publishers for taking utmost care in bringing out this book in its original and aesthetically beautiful form. I am also indebted to Dr Jayesh V Sanghvi, senior homoeopathic practitioner for his support and guidance. I also take this opportunity to thank Dr E. Sathya Murthy, my fellow teacher, practioner, rather friend for his timely help in promoting this book. I faithfully remember the Management of Sri Sai Ram group of institutions, Late founder-chairman Sri. M. Jothiprakasham alias Leo Muthu Avargal, respectable C.E.O. Sri. Sai Prakash Leo Muthu Avargal, respectable Mr. Satish Kumar, Trustee, Prof. Dr Cheramannan, Principal, Teaching, Non-teaching Staff Members and my dearly, lovable students, every one of them were a source of encouragement to me. "I whole heartedly thank Dr Sakshi Malhotra for giving the book a beautiful, legible and presentable format"

Every attempt in life is to perfect one's self day by day. I shall be happy to receive valuable suggestions, encouragement, and constructive criticism from lovable students, respectable teachers of Materia medica, and noble medical practitioners to improve this work in the future.

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## Publisher's Note

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Many books of Materia Medica have been written from the century when homeopathy was discovered. We have the pure Materia Medica, where the mental symptoms are expressed and exposed and Materia Medica where the pathological generals are dealt with. All these different types of materia medica lead to confusion among the students of homeopathy whether they are undergraduate or postgraduate. All these confusions could be sorted out if we really understand the origin and evolution and types of the Homoeopathic Materia Medica.

Dr G. Nagendra Babu has made an attempt to bring out a book which explains the origin, evolution and types of the materia medicas which is really the need of the time.

The sincere efforts taken by the author in compiling the data from different sources and presenting it in his own lucid style of writing are highly commendable. This book has covered almost all the topics needed to understand the philosophy and principle of homeopathic materia medica for students.

This project could not have been completed without the support and guidance of our editorial team at B Jain. We would like to acknowledge our gratitude towards Dr Sakshi Malhotra for her unremitting efforts to bring out the book in its best form. We hope this would be a great contribution in the field

of homeopathic practice, especially for budding homeopaths.  
Suggestions are always welcome.

**Manish Jain**  
Director, B. Jain Publishers (P) Ltd.

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## Materia Medica – An Introduction

*“When we have to do with an art whose end is the saving of human life any neglect to make ourselves through masters of it becomes a crime”*

–Samuel Hahnemann.

*“Allopath comes and treats cholera patients and gives them his medicines. The Homoeopath comes and gives his medicines and cures perhaps more than the allopath does because the Homoeopath does not disturb the patients but allows nature to deal with them.”*

–Swami Vivekananda.

Homoeopathic materia medica is an extremely interesting subject to study. It is a tricky subject for the beginner, but with proper introductory preparation studying homeopathic materia medica can be made interesting. *“The homeopathic materia medica is a very fascinating and yet an exasperating subject. Its simplicity, its vastness, and its apparent similarity of symptoms in different drugs throw a tremendous challenge to the beginners”* says Dr. Jugal Kishore. Homoeopathy is different in its approach to cure, so as homoeopathic materia medica is also different from other materia medicas in its construction, understanding and application too. There is no royal road to perfect oneself in homoeopathic materia medica. Memorizing materia medica without understanding its practicality and philosophy is futile. Homoeopaths learn the curative powers of a drug by



studying toxicology and by their experiments of effects of drugs on healthy human beings called “drug proving.” Since the times of Master Samuel Hahnemann homoeopathic materia medica was a collection of symptoms produced by a drug on healthy human beings. Samuel Hahnemann’s original materia medica proves difficult to the beginners. But in later years the followers of Hahnemann made this subject interesting with their fruitful works. Number of books are available on this subject with different styles in which they are written and organized. Since books on materia medica are full of detailed information about a medicine, it is necessary to study each medicine in a systematic way so that you can retain as much information as possible. For example Dr. James Tyler Kent further expanded the materia medica with his “constitutional types”. These constitutional types do not simply describe various physical symptoms, but also emphasize physical and psychological general symptoms which are considered the underlying pattern of the person’s illness. Dr. Edward C. Whitmont a homoeopath, and Jungian psychiatrist expanded materia medica on symbolic, archetypal, and mythic understandings of a substance. Catherine Coulter also expanded materia medica by integrating her clinical experience and linking body mind personality types to famous people or literary figures making the subject interesting.

To master Homoeopathic materia medica, understanding homoeopathic philosophy the approach of homoeopathy to health, disease, and cure, application of medicines in homoeopathy etc. is mandatory. Homoeopathic materia medica has to be understood in contrast with materia medica of other systems of medicines such as allopathy, siddha, ayurveda etc. Hence an introductory preparation becomes essential to the beginner of homoeopathic materia medica. A brief description of the history of Materia medica, its evolution, and philosophy are given herewith.

## **MATERIA MEDICA – DEFINITION: WHAT IS MATERIA MEDICA?**

Before proceeding to the study of homoeopathic materia medica one must understand what ordinary materia medica is. Materia medica is a book with the collection of symptoms that drugs are capable of producing. But technically it looks simple. Hence proper definition of materia medica is needed. Materia medica is the study of understanding the origin, source, preparation, action, and mode of administration of the drugs explained in a systematised manner. The origin of this study is as old as the origin of the medical system itself. Materia medica is considered as the instrument in the hands of the medical persons combating the diseases. Master Hahnemann gave us a detailed description of homoeopathic materia medica in aphorism 143 of 6<sup>th</sup> edition of his book “Organon of medicine”. He says “*Materia medica is a collection of real, pure, reliable, mode of action of single medicinal substances, a volume of the book of nature where is recorded a considerable array of the peculiar changes of the health and symptoms ascertained to belong to each of powerful medicines as they were revealed to the attention of the observer in which the likeness of the (homoeopathic) disease elements of many natural diseases to be hereafter cured by them are present, which in a word contain artificial morbid states that furnish for the similar natural morbid states the only true homoeopathic that is to say, a specific therapeutic instrument for effecting their certain and permanent cure*”.

Dorland dictionary defines materia medica as “*that branch of medical study which deals with drugs, their sources, preparation and uses*”.

Steadman’s dictionary calls materia medica “*the branch of medical science that treats of the origin and preparation of the drugs, their doses and their mode of administration*”.

Taber’s encyclopedic medical dictionary defines “*materia*

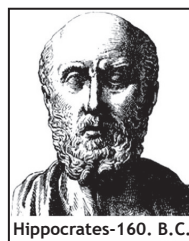
*medica as a branch of science deals with all the drugs used in the treatment of diseases, their source, preparation, dose, and cure”.*

Materia medica is a Latin medical term for the body of collected knowledge about the therapeutic properties of any substance used for healing i.e., medicines. In Latin, the term means “Medical material” or “Medical substance”.

### **MATERIA MEDICA (IN LATIN) = MEDICAL MATERIAL / MEDICAL SUBSTANCE**

The term “Materia medica” was used vaguely from the period of the Roman Empire until the twentieth century, but now it is replaced in medical education contexts by the terms pharmacology, pharmacognosy, and like. Hence scientifically “*Materia medica is the study and collection of the actions of the drugs derived out of different experimentations like clinical trials, pharmaco-dynamic effects, accidental proving, toxicological proving, etc, which includes pharmacognosy, pharmacy, pharmacology, and therapeutics.* This is an age-old definition of materia medica and other branches of medicine dealing with medicines, their preparation, and actions. A brief understanding of the emergence of materia medica as science and modern branches of materia medica is needed to initiate to study of materia medica.

**History of Materia Medica:** The term “Materia medica” is derived from the book written by the Greek physician Pedanius Dioscorides 1st century A.D. This book was originally written in Greek. The title of the book in the Latin language is *De materia medica libri quinque*. This book was released in five volumes. This book covered the study of about 500 plants, animal, and mineral products and their



therapeutic utilities. It is considered a precursor to all modern pharmacopeias, and one of the most influential herbal books in western medical history. It was used for many years and respected by many medical men of the olden times.

An important Greek physician worth mentioning is “Aesculapius”. Aesculapius or Asclepius is a remarkable medical personality of the Greek medical system and later became the Roman God of Medicine. The Romans adopted the cult of Asclepius, but changed his name to Latin; they called him Aesculapius. Homer called Aesculapius “Blameless Physician”. According to the legends he was a son of God Apollo and Cronis. His mother was beloved and impregnated by Apollo. However, she fell in love with another man and wanted to marry him. To save Apollo from complete humiliation, his sister Artemis killed Cronis by burning her to the stake. Before her execution, Apollo removed his unborn son from his mother’s womb and named him Asclepius or Aesculapius. Apollo gave him the powers to treat people and Aesculapius later became a great physician. Chiron taught Asclepius the art of healing. One of Asclepius’s healing talents was treatment through touch. His healing power was so strong that he started to raise people from the dead. Aesculapius believed that health and diseases are due to the changing patterns of tension and relaxation. His theory is called “Methodism”. Asclepius had five daughters, Aceso, Iaso, Panacea, Aglaea, and Hygieia. The word panacea means “cure-all” or “remedy all”; whereas from the word “hygieia” came the word “hygiene”. Asclepius was located in Epidaurus which is situated in the northeastern Peloponnese. Asclepius carried a staff with a snake wrapped around it. This staff symbolizes the physician’s journey to high destiny, the serpents believed to have the wisdom to detect the medicinal plants. Since then it is used as the symbol of the modern medical profession. Unhappy about losing the privilege of

immortality God Zeus killed Aesculapius with a thunderbolt. Realizing the good Asclepius had brought to men; the great Zeus made him into a god, placing him among the stars, transforming Aesculapius into the constellation Ophiuchus (the serpentbearer). The cult of Aesculapius became very popular during the 300s B.C. The cult centers by name Asclepieion were used by priests to cure the sick. It is also said that Hippocrates was a descendant of Aesculapius. The father of Medicine Hippocrates [460 B.C.-370 B.C.] belongs to the Greek system of medicine.

**Hippocratic Era:** Ancient Greek Civilization was at its peak during the 400's BC. During this period, sick people went to the temples dedicated to Aesculapius, the Greek god of healing. At this time, a man named Hippocrates began teaching that every disease had only natural causes. He was born and trained at the Dream temple of Island of Coas and was a pupil of Herodicus. Hippocrates is the first person to state that diseases can be treated with medicines. Hippocrates rejected the superstition and "magic" of primitive medicine and laid the foundations of medicine as a branch of science and not a religion.

Hippocrates attempted to classify diseases as deviations from normal healthy states. He did not encourage the fanciful theories to explain diseases. Hence Hippocrates is considered as "the father of Medicine" by the western group. To administer medicines, he recommends both dissimilar and similar laws. He advised using "law of similaris" incurable diseases and "law of dissimilaris" for incurable and palliative purposes. Hippocrates enjoyed a great honor and respect by the then medical persons. Even today doctors all over the world take their professional "Hippocratic oath" which is believed to be advocated by Hippocrates. The Hippocratic Oath is an oath traditionally taken by physicians, in which certain ethical guidelines to physicians are laid out. It is disputed

to be written by either Hippocrates or by some scholars under the name of Hippocrates. Hippocrates also believed in the theory of humors. He believed that the imbalance in the blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile is the cause of diseases. His works and therapeutic recommendations were purely based on his observations. He advocated diet, remedial management, and regimen as a curative process. By his works, it can be understood that he believed in an integral approach. His followers have written many books on medical subjects under his name. "On sacred diseases" a book written by him is considered as his original writing on Epilepsy. The entire collection of Hippocrates are compiled into a book called "Corpus Hippocraticum". It is a collection of about sixty treatises, written between 430 BC and 200 AD. They are a group of texts written by several different people holding several different viewpoints probably grouped under the name of Hippocrates. A famous, time-honored medical rule ascribed to Hippocrates is *Primum non nocere* ("first, do no harm"); another one is *Ars longa, vita brevis* ("art is long and life short"). The "Hippocratic face" is so-called because it was first described by Hippocrates. The Hippocratic face is the change produced in the countenance by death, or long sickness, excessive evacuations, excessive hunger, etc. The nose is pinched, the eyes are sunk, the temples hollow, the ears cold and retracted, the skin of the forehead tense and dry, the complexion livid, the lips pendent, relaxed, and cold. Hippocrates was probably the first person to document clubbing as a sign of diseases of heart and lungs, and the phenomenon is therefore occasionally called Hippocratic fingers. The Hippocratic bench or scamnum was a device invented by Hippocrates (460 BC - 380 BC) which used tension to aid in setting bones. Hippocrates recommended that physicians record their findings and their medicinal methods, so that these records may be passed down and employed by other physicians (Pythagoreans).TheGreek

physicians Herophilus, Pedanius, and Paulus, Aegineta were pioneers in the study of anatomy. "Dioscorides" [54-68 A.D.], is also one of the pioneers worth mentioning in Greek medical system. Dioscorides wrote an extensive treatise on the practice of pharmacology.

**Roman Medical System:** [100 B.C.] Roman medical system is considered as the extension of the Greek medical system. The important medical personalities of this system are "Celsus" and "Claudius Galen". Aulus Cornelius Celsus (25-50 BC) was considered by most of the historians as a Roman physician. Very little is known about this personality. He was a critic of early Christianity. He was actively involved in the political matters of his times. He probably lived in Gallia Narbonensis. His work, the *De Medicina* has an explanatory note on the diet, pharmacy and surgery, and related fields. *De Medicina* is one of the best sources of Alexandrian medical knowledge. In the introduction to "De Medicina," there is an early discussion of the pros and cons of both animal experimentation and human experimentation. In the later years of medical history, Hahnemann emerged as the physician to prove medicines on healthy humans successfully. Thus Samuel Hahnemann became the father of human experimental functional pathology (homoeopathic materia medica). History is the witness that Hahnemann was the first person to prove every remedy in homoeopathic materia medica on healthy human beings. We can thus say what Celsus dreamt; Samuel Hahnemann made it practically applicable. Celsus is considered to be explained the cardinal signs of inflammation: *calor* (warmth), *dolor* (pain), *tumor* (swelling), and *rubor* (redness and hyperaemia). He describes 1st-century Roman surgical procedures like removal of a cataract, treatment for bladder stones, and the setting of fractures. He described the preparation of numerous ancient medicinal remedies including the preparation of opioids.

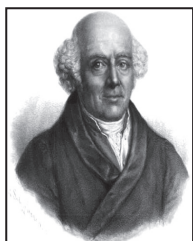
were encouraged in the Arabian countries. In the medieval Islamic world, Muslim botanists and Muslim physicians contributed tremendously to the knowledge of materia medica in the olden days. Al-Dinawari described more than 637 plant drugs in the 9th century. In the 13th century, Ibn al-Baitar described more than 1,400 different plants, foods, and drugs, over 300 of which were his original discoveries. The experimental scientific method was introduced into the field of materia medica in the 13th century by the Andalusian-Arab botanist Abu al-Abbas al-Nabati, the teacher of Ibn al-Baitar. Al-Nabati introduced empirical techniques in the testing, description, and identification of numerous materia medicas. His works on separating unverified reports from those supported by actual tests and observations are laudable. These types of studies allowed the study of materia medica to evolve into the science of pharmacology.

Avicenna's *The Canon of Medicine* (1025) is another early example listing 800 drugs, plants, and minerals. Books which are written by Abu-Rayhan Biruni in the 11th century, Ibn Zuhr (Avenzoar) in the 12th century (and printed in 1491), and Ibn Baytar in the 14th century are considered as the monumental works on materia medica. The origins of clinical pharmacology also date back to the Middle Ages: Avicenna's *The Canon of Medicine*, containing clinical trials, randomized controlled trials, and efficacy tests, Peter of Spain's *Commentary on Isaac*, and John of St Amand's *Commentary on the Antedotary of Nicholas* were few books on these topics worth mentioning.

**European Materia Medica:** In medieval Europe and in 8th-century medicinal herbs and plants were cultivated in monastery and nunnery gardens. "Charlemagne" (742-814), also known as Karl and Charles the Great, was a medieval emperor who gave



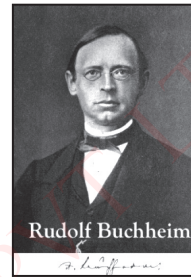




system with the aim of curing the sufferings of a person by the administration of drugs which have been experimentally proved on healthy human beings that possess the power of producing similar sufferings. It is based on the law “**Similia Similibus Curentur**” that means “let likes be cured by likes. Stuart close, the author of the book “The Genius Of Homoeopathy” defines “Homoeopathy or Homoeotherapy is, the department of science in general medicine which has for its principal objects the observation and the study of the action of remedial agents in health and disease and treatment and cure of the disease by medication, according to a fixed law or a general principle”. Homoeopathy considers a patient as a sick person in the first instance. “Treat the patient not the disease,” says Master Hahnemann. This leaves the beginner in a confused state, as all of us are conditioned by the dominant medical school. But the study of “Organon of medicine” in its whole extent will guide him in understanding this explanation. To a Homoeopathic doctor the signs and symptoms reveal not only the name of the disease but also the medicine suitable to the patient. The homoeopathic doctor tries to find out the uniqueness in the suffering of that particular individual in comparison with the other individuals. Based on the symptoms of the patient he can even detect the earliest manifestations of a disease process before it can damage the anatomy of the patient. It is believed that homoeopathic treatment removes the infection by stimulating the natural defense mechanism of the body. Hence it does not interfere with the immunity. This system tries to cure the patient with the least possible doses of medicine sufficient enough to produce a curative reaction in the organism. In Homoeopathy “*The quality of the medicine is important than the quantity*”. It does not employ medicines in crude or physiological doses. This medical system tries to

## MATERIA MEDICA OF MODERN ERA: ALLOPATHIC MATERIA MEDICA:

Pedanius Dioscorides' work is considered as the first pharmacopoeia. During the Middle Ages and the modern era, the materia medica was transformed by the methods and knowledge of medicinal chemistry into the modern scientific discipline of pharmacology. In short, the old materia medica transformed into scientific pharmacology. Before the second half of the nineteenth century, the remarkable potency and specificity of the actions of drugs such as morphine, quinine, and digitalis were explained vaguely. The first pharmacology department was set up by Rudolf Buchheim in 1847, in recognition of the need to understand how therapeutic drugs and poisons produced their effects.



☞ Allopathic materia medica is the most famous and most prevalent contemporary materia medica. Modern medicine evolved on its own without any principle of its own. It was clearly demarcated by their materia medicas. The name allopathy was coined by the father of homoeopathy Dr. Samuel Hahnemann. He called this system of medicine Allopathy or Heteropathy [reference footnote to § no: 22 and § no: 54, 55 and 56 of 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Organon of medicine]. Today allopathic materia medica is replaced by pharmacology and its other branches.

Originally Hahnemann called this system as alleopathy, in the later years his followers called it Allopathy. The Greekword Allopathy is made up of two words “alloion” means dissimilar or different or heterogeneous, pathos means suffering. The name Allopathy was first coined by Hahnemann.

## Terms used in Homoeopathic Literature

*“We classify things for the purpose of doing something to them. Any classification which does not assist manipulation is worse than useless.”*

– Randolph Bourne

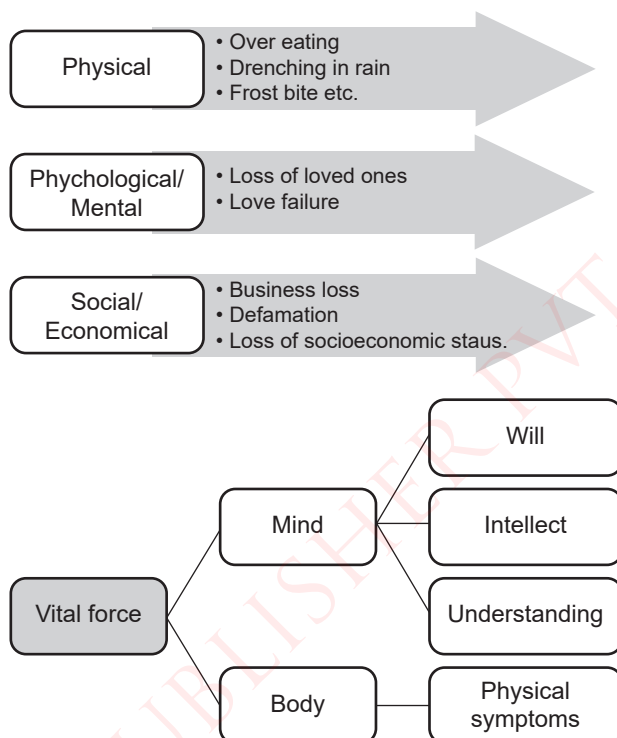
*“For last year’s words belong to last year’s language, and next year’s words await another voice.”*

– T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*.

Science is based on experimentation; results derived out of these experimentations science constructs laws. These laws have to be taught and communicated to the next generations. Scientific laws have to be proved, reproved, and experimentally verified by everyone. For effective communication every Science has its own language and terminology, homoeopathic materia medica is no exception. Homoeopathic science has its own terminology which was developed over a period of its existence through centuries. Many terms are used with a specific meaning of their own in the various works done by pioneers of homoeopathy. Each term has a volume of meaning filled in it. Precise understanding of each term and the volume of information it contains will help the beginner of materia medica to understand the essence of the homoeopathic science as well as homoeopathic materia medica. Homoeopathic interpretation of each medical term is different in comparison to the other

medical sciences. Many books on Homoeopathy were written during later parts of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and few of them in the period of 19<sup>th</sup> century, hence both modern scientific as well as ancient medical terms can be found during the course of study. A beginner of homoeopathic materia medica may notice certain strange words and terminologies used during 18<sup>th</sup> century. But through understanding of these terms is must for better understanding of homoeopathic materia medica. Only brief descriptions of the most important terms used by homoeopaths are described below. For elaborated study of each term, reader is advised to further refer source books of materia medica and its introductory chapters.

**Homoeopathic Philosophy:** An introductory knowledge about homoeopathic philosophy is cardinal to master homoeopathic materia medica. Every human organism is unique in this world. Each and every living creature reacts to its surroundings in an individual manner. This individual reaction is different not only in healthy state but also in sick. Every person reacts to his surroundings in different manner. The same way every sick individual reacts to disease causing forces like bacteria, virus, fungus, and miasm, as well as chemical, physical, environmental and emotional causes like excessive joy, sorrow and even to drug substances in different form. Reaction of an individual to disease causing forces may be mental or physical or both. Hahnemann though describes that the sickness is always spiritual, mental or psychological first, and then reflects its sickness to its body. In short we can conclude that the sickness progresses from center vital force (life preserving inner force) to peripheral anatomical parts. Homoeopathy strongly believes that the man is initially sick and not his cells or tissues. So treatment is to be given to the sick man and not to the name of his disease. Hence study of each individual sick person is the only answer to cure. Hence came the dictum “treat the sick patient, not the disease.”



According to this explanation homoeopathy becomes the holistic medical science, studying both mind and body, in health as well as in disease. Because of this reason homoeopathic medicines must possess the power to alter the state of both mind and body. Hence homoeopathic materia medica studies both the mental and physical alterations the drug is capable of producing. Homoeopathic materia medica tries to explain drug action on individual as a whole i.e. his sick mind in general and his anatomical parts in particular. Hence actions of every drug substance on individual person, his vital force, mind (mental symptoms, general symptoms, desires, aversions, thermal reactions, dreams, constitution, temperament, diathesis etc.) and also on his body anatomical parts as “particular symptoms” have to be studied. Thus homoeopathic materia medica has developed in accordance to

homoeopathic philosophy. This philosophical approach makes homoeopathic system one of the holistic systems of medicines.

**Drug, Medicine and Remedy:** The words drug, medicine and remedy are commonly used as synonymous by a common man, but for a medical student these terms are unique and different in their meaning. Drugs have been used for cure of disease since antiquity. Various doctrines of healing sprang up through the years of history of medicine. The most interesting was the 'Doctrine of signatures' but faulty methods of drug application. Hahnemann discovered a genuine process of ascertaining the pure and peculiar effect of medicine on healthy human beings is known as drug proving. In aphorism 105 Hahnemann, says that drug proving is a process of acquiring knowledge of instruments intended for the cure of natural diseases. Aphorism: 105 to 145 deals with drug proving. In homoeopathic literature, the words drug, medicine, and remedy each have a different meaning to it.

**Drugs:** *H. A Roberts says "a drug is any material agent, in however attenuated form, the ingestion of which is capable of so disturbing this balance of vital force that the functioning of one or more organs of the body no longer carried out to the best of the whole."*

Drugs are the substances which have the capacity to alter the state of health of an individual. Drugs are crude medicinal substances. Drugs can be collected from so many sources like plants, animals, minerals, diseased bodies [Nosodes], and healthy body secretions [Sarcodes], and natural forces, etc. Drugs are typically distinguished from food and substances that provide nutritional support.

A Drug is any substance or product that is used or intended to be used to modify or explore physiological systems or pathological states for the benefit of the recipient. The word drug is derived from the French word "droque" which means dry herb.

## History Principle, Nature and Construction of True Materia Medica [§ No: 143-145]

*“How else could medicines effect what they do in diseases than by means of power of theirs to alter the healthy body.....certain in this way alone can they cure...”*

*“A collection of real, pure, reliable modes of action of simple medicinal substances, a volume of book of nature.”*

– S. Hahnemann; *Organon of Medicine*. § 143.

Construction of materia medica is a laborious, industrious, and technical subject to handle. A study of the history of medicine explains that Dr. Hahnemann was much disappointed with his contemporary materia medicas. He is reported to have written to Hufeland and his friends *“I have been putting drugs of which I know little into the bodies of which I know less: so I can but renounce the practice of medicine that I may no longer incur the risk of doing injury”*. Materia medicas of his times were either the results of pure fictions of the authors (doctrine of signature) or the rewritings of the empirical observations of the old Materia medicas. To avoid such mishaps in Homoeopathic materia medica Dr. Hahnemann recommended certain rules and regulations

in the construction of homoeopathic materia medica in his *Magnum opus Organon of medicine* in § 143 to 145.

History of homoeopathic materia medica: Dr. Hahnemann in his *Organon of Medicine* appreciates Abrecht Von Haller (1708 – 77) as the first person to suggest that medicine should be proved on human beings and the symptoms thus obtained will form the basis of a real materia medica, useful in the treatment of human beings. In the year 1829 Johannes Evangelista Purkinje (1787 – 1869) of Bohemia, a renowned physiologist of Purkinje's fibers fame experimented upon himself the action of camphor, belladonna, stramonium, and turpentine.

However, it was Hahnemann who started this new line of materia medica practically by testing the drugs on himself, his friends, and family members. He called this process by the name of Human Drug proving which literally means proving the (curative) properties lying in drugs. Please remember his writing "fragmenta de viribus medica mentorum positivis, sive in sano corpore humano observatis". After coming across that remark of William Cullen about Cinchona bark which he was translating in 1790. Dr. Hahnemann tested drugs one after another and this process of drug proving became the basis of his 'Materia Medica Pura', the first part of which containing drugs was published in 1811. In his *Organon of medicine*, he describes the process in detail in regard to selection of the provers, their mode of life, food, regimen, and the recording of symptoms in Paragraphs 105-145.

Dr. Hahnemann called his materia medica *Materia Medica "Pura"* because it contains the pure, unaltered effects of the drugs as observed on healthy human beings of different ages and both sexes. It did not contain any information collected from any other sources. After him, many disciples of Hahnemann proved many remedies and thus a



real vast materia medica for homoeopathy was created. Later on symptoms other than those found during proving like clinical symptoms, toxicological symptoms, etc were also incorporated.

**The principle of homoeopathic materia medica:** The principle behind the construction of homoeopathic materia medica is the “healthy human drug proving”. The recording of the symptoms produced when the drug is proven on healthy human beings both male and female, all age groups, and different constitutions is considered in this. All these experiments and opinions remained of no use to the application of therapeutics, till Hahnemann made it more practical by the process of healthy human drug proving. Hence Hahnemann can be called as the “Father of the Human Functional Pathology”. The altered functional symptoms produced by the drug substance on the healthy human beings are enlisted in homoeopathic materia medica. Because of all these reasons few homoeopaths call materia medica as the “Human experimental pathology”.

**Construction of homoeopathic materia medica:** For the construction of homoeopathic Materia medica the following are required:

- I. THE DRUG SUBSTANCE
- II. THE SELECTION OF PROVER
- III. SYSTEMIC RECORDING OF SYMPTOMS

**I. THE DRUG SUBSTANCE: Preparation of drugs for proving:** three types of drugs are used in the proving.

- a. Heroic drugs: very strong in action and are required in small quantities to excite the symptoms,
- b. Moderate drugs: which are mild in their action and are required in considerable quantity,

- c. Weak drugs: excite action only in delicate, irritable, and sensitive persons. The substances belonging to the animal and vegetable kingdom have medicinal qualities in their raw and fresh state in a most perfect state [§ no: 266].

Those animal and vegetable substances used as food contain very nutritious contents along with medicinal properties. Medicinal properties of these substances are not well developed in their crude form. But in some substances their medicinal qualities are destroyed or diminished by cooking methods, fermentation process [ex: in making breads, etc], boiling, stewing, toasting, roasting, baking, etc. moreover by adding salt, vinegar, etc their injurious qualities are reduced. Hence their medicinal properties are also lost. While preserving, storing the medicinal plants one above the other might also reduce their medicinal efficacy [footnote to § no: 266].

Preparation and storage of medicines prepared from the indigenous plants [§ no: 267]:

The fresh juices of the indigenous plants are immediately after their extraction mixed with equal parts of spirits [strength sufficient to burn a lamp].

The mixture is allowed to stand for a day and night [24 hrs] in a tightly closed bottle, till the fibrinous and albuminous matter deposits at the bottom.

The clear super incumbent fluid is then decanted and used for medicinal use.

Alcohol can be added to the extract to prevent any type of fermentation in the vegetable juices.

This extract can be stored for a long time safely by keeping it in a well-corked bottle, and protecting it from sunlight, heat, and strong-smelling substances. Wax may be applied to the lid in order to prevent the entry of any amount of moisture

## The Source books of Homoeopathic Materia Medica

*"I shall occupy myself here with the practical part of medicine only, with the healing art itself, in order to show how it is that diseases have hitherto been so imperfectly treated."*

– Dr. Samuel Hahnemann.

*"Works on materia medica were too numerous and too scattered to be readily accessible."*

– Dr. J. H. Clarke.

No one can master all symptoms of materia medica. Kent says there is no royal road to a perfect understanding of materia medica. It requires much hard work to have a basic working knowledge of materia medica. Hence expertsing materia medica is not a cakewalk. To master homoeopathic materia medica one can read the following sourcebooks of materia medica.

1. Fragmenta de viribus medica mentorum positivis sive in sanocorpore humano observatis.
2. Hahnemann's materia medica pura published between 1811-21
3. Hahnemann's chronic disease its cause and cure-published in 1828.
4. Dr. Jorg's provings. Dr.Jorg was a contemporary of

Hahnemann and a professor at Leipzig University. He proved medicines like Camphor, Digitalis, Opium, Arnica, and Ignatia Etc. Hahnemann seems to use these sources in his second editions of materia medica.

5. Hering's guiding symptoms of materia medica in 10 volumes.
6. T. F. Allen's encyclopedia in 10 volumes.
7. Richard Hughes cyclopedia of drug pathogenesis.
8. Clarke's Dictionary of Homoeopathic Materia Medica in 4 volumes.
9. Provings by American provers union.
10. Australian society of provers.
11. Ernest Stapf's additions.
12. E. M. Hale's contributions ion his new remedies.
13. Hartlaub and Trink's pathogenesis.
14. S.C. Ghosh's drugs of Hindustan.
15. D. N. Chatergee's drugs of India.
16. American Institute of homoeopathy and other individual provings of drugs that are published in the reputed magazines day to day.

The most important sourcebooks of homoeopathy have been discussed herewith.

### **FRAGMENTA DE VIRIBUS MEDICA MENTORUS POSITIVES SIVE IN SANO CARPORE HUMANO OBSERVATIS. (Latin-1805)**

(Fragmentary observations relative to the positive powers of medicines on the human body)

This magnificent work of Hahnemann is considered as the precursor of the homoeopathic materia medica. This

book contained the path-breaking first drug proving of the Hahnemann made him the father of “human functional pathology”. This book was written in Latin language and published in the year of 1805 by M/S Sumper Joan Ambrose Barthii of Leipzig. This was published in two volumes.

Volume I: Pars prima and

Volume II: Pars secunda

Pars prima: The first volume was published in 1805. It has 277 pages of contents including the introduction and the main text of the book.

Pars Secunda: The second volume was the index or rudimentary repertory. It contained 476 pages including its preface ad repertory parts.

In the later editions, the two parts were compiled into one volume. Dr. F. F. Quin of London homoeopathic fame published this book in a single volume in the year of 1834.

The book contained the pathogenetic actions of 27 drugs. These symptoms were partly collected from the provings of Hahnemann and partly from the toxicological provings of others. The majority of the quotations were taken from the leading practitioners of the old school. The 27 medicines appeared in the following order.

|                    |                               |                        |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Aconitum napellus, | Acris tincture<br>(Causticum) | Arnica<br>Montana      |
| Belladonna         | Camphora,                     | Cantharides            |
| Capsicum annum     | Chamomilla                    | Cinchona               |
| Coculus,           | Copaifera<br>balsamum,        | Cuoprum<br>vitriolatum |
| Digitalis          | Drosera                       | Hyocyamus,             |
| Ignatia            | Ipecacunha                    | Ledum                  |

| <b>Volume</b> | <b>Year of publication</b> | <b>No of remedies</b>            | <b>Names of remedies</b>   |
|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Volume I:     | 1811                       | 12 medicines                     | Bell, Dulc, Cina, Cann.s, Cocc, Nux, Op, Moschus, Oleand, Merc, Acon, Arn.             |
| Volume II     | 1816                       | 8 medicines with magnet remedies | Caust, Ars, Ferr, Ign, Puls, Rheum, Rhus, Bry, Magnes, North and South Pole.           |
| Volume III    | 1817                       | 8 medicines                      | Cham, Cinch, Hell, Asar, Ipec, Scilla, Stram, Ver-Alb                                  |
| Volume IV     | 1818                       | 12 medicines                     | Hyos, Dig, Aur, Guaiac, Camph, Led, Ruta, Sars, Con, Chel, Sulph, Arg.                 |
| Volume V      | 1819                       | 11 medicines                     | Euphr, Meny, Cycl, Samb, Calc, Acetica, Mur-acid, Thuja, Tarax, RhosAcid, Spig, Staph. |
| Volume VI:    | 1821                       | 10 medicines                     | Angustura, Mang, Caps, Verb, Coloc, Spog, Dros, Bism, Cic, Stannum.                    |

## Types of Homoeopathic Materia Medica

*“An artist painting a family painting keeping all eyes of all the members of family in one part of the picture, all the nose in one another and so on”*

*—Richard Hughes criticizing the schematic materia medica.*

Since the release of “Materia Medica Pura” in the year 1811 till date, many changes have been noticed both in the presentation homoeopathic materia medica as well as its classification, construction, and philosophy. It has been felt by many contemporary practitioners of homoeopathy that materia medica presented by Master Hahnemann, his followers is voluminous, old fashioned, difficult to read by the students at the majority. To make materia medica interesting different authors made attempts to present materia medica in various forms. These attempts gave way to fanciful expressions of different authors thus making the content of materia medica dilute. The majority of the authors concentrated on the presentation but holistic content of Hahnemannian philosophy seemed to be neglected by many. One materia medica covers the constitutional mental personality, other covers only keynotes and peculiar, rare symptoms alone. Hence in order to understand a drug picture, the beginner is in a condition to consult all materia

medicas available today inspite of large varieties of materia medicas available. None of the materia medica available today seems to quench the thirst for wisdom singlehandedly. Few varieties or types of materia medicas present in our literature today are classified below.

**A. Clinical Homoeopathic Materia medica:** Though the name suggests clinical materia medicas it not only contains the clinical symptoms of the drugs but also the regular symptoms available in other sources of materia medicas as well. It is impossible to distinguish the clinical symptoms from the pathogenetic symptoms added to materia medica based on proving alone.

C. G. Rau's Special Pathology and Diagnostic Hints with Therapeutics.

Clarke's The Prescriber, Clinical Repertory.

Shedd's Clinical Repertory.

H.C. Allen's Key Notes and Characteristics of the Leading Remedies.

T. F. Allen's A Hand Book of Materia Medica

A Clinical Materia Medica By E. A. Farrington

A Dictionary of Practical Materia Medica by Clarke. Also Contains Some Clinical Symptoms For The Better Understanding Of The Remedies.

Pocket Manuel of Homoeopathic Materia Medica with Repertory by William Boericke.

**B. Schematic (Anatomical) Materia medica:** This method of study is the most classical and followed by the Master. This is considered as the most systemic and rational style of a presentation but to the reader, it seems to be the most monotonous method and tires him sooner. Dr.Hahnemann, C. J. Hampel, Richard Hughes,



and Farrington seem to follow this method. This method is very close to the allopathic style of writing.

Homoeopathic Materia Medica Pura by Hahnemann

The Guiding Symptoms of Our Homoeopathic Materia Medica by Hering

Encyclopedia of Pure Materia Medica by T. F. Allen.

A Dictionary of Practical Materia Medica by Clarke-1900, the anatomical schema has 27 headings in three volumes and contains 1061 medicines.

Edwin Hale's Materia Medica and Special Therapeutics -Two Volumes (1st volume contains 586 medicines, the second volume contains 212 remedies.)

Text Book of Materia Medica by Lippe-1975 (230remedies)

Hand Book of Materia Medica and Homoeopathic Therapeutics by T. F. Allen

Cowperthwaithe's Text Book of Materia Medica – Published In 1887, Contains 246 Medicines.

Boerickes's Manuel of Homoeopathic Materia Medica.

Merits of schematic type:

All symptoms are systematically presented. Hence referring and remembering symptoms is easy.

Referring to particular symptoms under a particular drug during clinical practice is easy because of schematic presentation for every drug.

#### **Demerits of this method:**

Highlight the worthy P.Q.R.S symptoms of the remedy may not be possible as the schema has to be fulfilled.

Richard Hughes criticizes this method as parts separated in hazardous manner. "An artist painting a family paint-

ing keeping all eyes of all the members of the family in one part of the picture, all the nose in one another and so on.”

**C. Picture type of Materia medica:** This type of materia medica is the most popular and famous method. The axiom of Hahnemann “treat the patient and not the diseases” seems to be fulfilled in this method of materia medica, as each drug picture is presented in the constitutional, psycho-analytical method of study. Each drug is described as a personality. The personality of the drug with its characteristics like behaviour, desires aversions, look of the patient, his mode of living, etc will be beautifully sketched. This method is wonderful in the hands of the masters of the subject and not for the beginners. But the limitation of this method is the chance of the inclusion of the fancy of the author is more.

Homoeopathic Drug Pictures by M. L. Taylor-published in 1952 -125 remedies.

Lecturers of Materia Medica by J. T. Kent-published in 1904 -174 remedies.

Homoeopathic Materia Medica of Graphical Pictures by Pulford.

A Textbook of Materia medica -N. M. Choudhary

Leaders in Homoeopathic Materia medica- E. B. Nash.

Oushado Parichay (An introduction to medicines) in Bengal an Indian language – by Narendra Nath Banerjee.

**D. Psychoanalytical /interpretative Materia medica:** This method is the slightly modified method of the picture method. The difference being the mental psychological aspect of the drug personality is giving more importance.

The essence of Materia medica- George Vithoulkas.

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