

Hello my name is Nicola Holdcroft. One of the topics I am most frequently asked about relates to Homeopathy for babies & children. Below I have tried to answer those questions as well as explaining the options open to you if you decide a homeopathic alternative is best for you.

Nicola



homeopathy

for babies and children

Homeopathy is ideal for babies and children as it is a gentle yet highly effective system of medicine. The mildly sweet pills, powders or liquids are easy to dispense and are more palatable than many conventional medicines. The highly diluted natural substances that form homeopathic remedies mean that they are safe to use in the very young, including newborn babies. More than that, homeopathy can raise the immunity of your children to help deal with illness throughout their childhood(1). Homeopathy not only helps when your child is ill. It can also help prevent illness and give support through difficult periods of their life.

What complaints can you safely treat at home?

Homeopathy works fast with children because they are usually full of vitality. Acute conditions such as ear infections, tonsillitis and flu, can be resolved rapidly using the right remedies, often avoiding the need for conventional medicines. Babies also tend to respond quickly to homeopathic treatment – there are remedies for colic, teething and nappy rash.

The suggestions below are for minor complaints; if your child's symptoms are severe or chronic (on-going or recurrent), consult a registered homeopath and/or your GP. If your child is already undergoing homeopathic treatment, it is

best to check with their homeopath before prescribing at home.

The remedies suggested above can be purchased over the counter in most chemists and health shops, as well as some supermarket chains.

When to consult a professional Homeopath?

Complaints that need professional treatment include cradle-cap, recurrent vomiting, sleep problems, digestive trouble, pain, recurrent infections, asthma and eczema, menstrual problems and acne in teenagers, as well as developmental and behavioural problems such as attention deficit disorder, temper tantrums, severe shyness and anxiety. In children with such complaints, a full case history is needed for the homeopath to select an individual treatment for your child.

Homeopaths do work with children who are also on long-term medication. There is no doubt that asthma is on the increase(2). A cough with wheezing that will not go away may be diagnosed as asthma and all too quickly, your child is put on medication. Your homeopath, with the support of your GP, may help your child reduce or come off their conventional drugs.

Teething - Chamomilla 30c
inconsolable and angry child.

Colic - Magnesium phos 30c
baby doubles up in pain.

Nappy-rash - Calendula 30c
and Calendula cream – soothing and antiseptic.

Earache - Pulsatilla 30c
clingy child, greenish discharge from ear.

Fever - Aconite 30c
sudden fevers after getting chilled.

Belladonna 30c
very high temperatures with a red face.

Gelsemium 30c
slow fevers with chills, bone pain and fatigue.

Coughs and colds Bryonia 30c
miserable, irritable, better for keeping still
Pulsatilla 30c

plenty of yellow/green mucous; clingy and upset

Vomiting - Nux vomica 30c
bilious and bad tempered

Arsenicum album 30c
after bad food, with diarrhoea and restlessness

Bumps and bruises - Arnica 30c
also for shock and exhaustion

**Information provided by the Society of Homeopaths*



What will my doctor think?

GPs increasingly welcome the contribution complementary therapies can make – 70% feel they should be freely available on the NHS(3). In recent years, GPs have been discouraged from overprescribing medicines such as inhaled steroids for asthma and hayfever(4) and are encouraged not to overprescribe antibiotics for colds and coughs. They have been advised not to prescribe certain anti-depressants to the under-18s(5). Concerns about long-term damage to the growing child, coupled with the worry of antibiotic resistant strains of bacteria, make homeopathy a safer option. Homeopaths are keen to work alongside other specialists in the health field. The best way forward for all children is to improve their immune system naturally.

References:

- (1) Belon P, Cumps J, Ennis M, et al, Inhibition of human basophil degranulation by successive histamine dilutions: results of a European multicentre trial, *Inflamm Res* 1999; 48 & Sainte-Laudy J, Modulation of allergen and anti-IgE induced human basophil activation by serial histamine dilutions. *Inflamm Res* 2000;49.
- (2) Weekly incidence of asthma episodes up 6% in children in last 25yrs. National Asthma Campaign, Audit Sept. 2001, Asthma UK.
- (3) Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) are not suitable for the under-18's. Department of Health website 2005.
- (4) Systemic adverse effects may occur with longterm use of inhaled cortico-steroids. Department of Health website 2005.
- (5) GP Magazine, 12 November 2004.

On the first Tuesday of every month Nicola Holdcroft operates a low cost children's clinic for pre school children at Health Matters in Hanley. Places are limited.

www.homeopathic-practice.co.uk

