

Vaccination and Homeoprophylaxis - March 2012

The Society of Homeopaths does not endorse the use of homeopathic medicines as an alternative to vaccination for the prevention of serious infectious diseases. The Society recommends that members of the public seek the advice of their GP, and/or relevant Department of Health guidelines, concerning vaccination and protection against disease whilst travelling.

The Society of Homeopaths, the UK's largest register of homeopaths, has a clear policy on vaccination, malaria prevention and 'homeoprophylaxis' (the use of homeopathic medicines to prevent specific infectious diseases).

Homeopaths registered with the Society (identifiable by the designation RSHom) agree to abide by a Code of Ethics and Practice, and are expected to follow the Society's clinical guidelines on these issues, to ensure patient safety and the practice of homeopathy in a legal and ethical manner.

Currently there is no homeopathic alternative to vaccination or anti-malarial drugs which has been proven beyond doubt to be clinically effective. It is therefore unethical for a homeopath to advise a patient against the use of conventional vaccines or anti-malarial drugs.

The Society supports patient choice in regard to vaccination. We recommend that patients seek advice from their GP, as well as organisations that specialise in providing information about this complex issue, so they can make an informed choice for themselves and their children.

There is some research evidence to suggest that homeopathic medicines may be effective in preventing serious disease(1): therefore homeoprophylaxis can be an ethical option under certain special clinical circumstances, so long as no claims of effectiveness are made. Such special clinical circumstances may include situations where the patient has been advised by the prescribing physician that vaccination is medically contra-indicated, or there is no vaccine available or homeoprophylaxis is being used in addition to vaccination.

For further advice on homeoprophylaxis under special clinical circumstances, please contact your homeopath or homeopathic pharmacist.

Considering the devastating impact that childhood infectious diseases and tropical diseases have on patients worldwide, and the limitations of conventional medical options for prevention of these diseases, the Society believes further scientific research to determine the effectiveness of potential homeopathic alternatives is essential.

1. Bracho G et al. Large-scale application of highly--diluted bacteria for Leptospirosis epidemic control. *Homeopathy*, 2010; 99: 156--166