



# HOMEOPATHY EXPLAINED

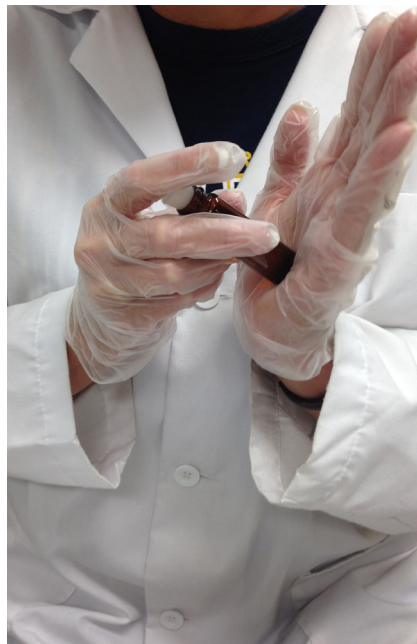
*By Dr. Lisa Samet*

*At some point in your life, you've probably walked down the aisle of a health food store and seen rows of small, stacked bottles labeled with exotic names and the word homeopathy.*



## ABOUT DR. LISA SAMET

**Dr. Lisa Samet, ND,** provides Washington Homeopathic Products with a weekly column on using homeopathy for the family. She's a naturopathic physician who specializes in homeopathic medicine and is perhaps best known as a guest expert used by Dr. Mehmet Oz, MD, on the popular TV program, the Dr. Oz Show. Dr. Samet sees patients in her Montreal office as well as long distance using Skype. Learn more by visiting her on the web [www.lisasamet.com](http://www.lisasamet.com)



Seeing them in a health food store leads some to think homeopathic medicines are just another form of herbal medicine or simply that homeopathy is synonymous with "natural." Although natural plant substances are often used in the beginning steps of the manufacturing process, the plants then undergo a successive process of dilution and agitation (vigorous shaking) to arrive at a finished product that contains very minute and exact quantities of the original substance.

The FDA regulates the manufacture of homeopathic medicine and all manufacturers must comply with strict guidelines to ensure its safety. The very dilute substances in homeopathy stimulate the body's natural response to illnesses or injuries allowing the body to heal itself. As I will explain in this article, these diluted substances trigger a reaction in the body that allows one to find relief from many conditions including the troublesome summertime affliction - poison ivy!



## SO WHAT IS HOMEOPATHY EXACTLY?

Homeopathy operates on a law of nature—“like cures like,” and has been used clinically for more than 200 years. It is a well-established system of medicine and is used worldwide by tens of thousands of physicians and more than five hundred million people, which according to the World Health Organization makes it the second most commonly used form of alternative medicine. The word homeopathy is derived from the Greek words *homeo* meaning “similar,” and *pathos* meaning “suffering” (such as the pathology of a disease).

## WHAT DOES “LIKE CURES LIKE” MEAN?

It means a substance (mineral, animal, or plant) that could cause illness or a symptom can also treat the same illness when given in a homeopathic dose. The perfect illustration of this in practice is the poison ivy (*Rhus toxicodendron*) plant that produces a terrible rash and pus-filled vesicles if one comes into contact with it. However, a homeopathically prepared medicinal dose of the plant will STOP the rash. Incredible!



## WHAT DO THE NUMBERS AND THE LETTERS X OR C MEAN?

In the case of a plant source such as poison ivy, a tincture of 1 part plant and 9 parts alcohol and water is made (1x) and then combined with additional alcohol and succussed (vigorously agitated) to make the 2x strength or potency. This process continues using the lower potency to make the next higher x potency. Cs are made from the 2x (1c) by repeatedly diluting 1 part of the lower potency to 99 parts of alcohol—succussing at each potency. The actual substance of plant material becomes more and more dilute, yet more homeopathically potent. The number 6, for example, means it has been diluted and succussed 6 times; a 30, 30 times. Therefore, the strength of a 30x/c is said to be greater than a 6x/c. In homeopathy, the higher the number, the stronger the medicine, even though the actual material substance becomes less and less with each dilution.

## HOW CAN LESS BE MORE?

Current research explains homeopathy as a form of nanomedicine. Homeopaths use medicines made from extremely small quantities of nanoparticles created when the medicines are made (nanoparticles range in size from 1 nanometer (nm) on a side up to 1000 nm or more).<sup>1</sup>

For more than sixty years, scientists, using ever more refined spectroscopic equipment, have discovered unexpected properties of the remedies used by homeopaths and have also been able to detect the original medicinal substance used to create each remedy.

With this knowledge of nanoparticles, scientists are now able to differentiate one remedy and potency from another. Not only that, but scientists are now able to measure physiological changes produced by homeopathic remedies in a large number of experimental cell, plant, animal, and human studies.

## ONE MIGHT ASK, “COULD THIS PHENOMENON OF PHYSIOLOGICAL CHANGE BE JUST A PLACEBO EFFECT OF SOME KIND?”

The placebo response can't explain objectively measurable randomized, placebo-controlled trials. Similarly, the innumerable homeopathic cures reported in animals, infants, and unconscious people also cannot be explained by the placebo response.

## HOW COMMON IS POISON IVY AND HOW DOES ONE GET IT?

One of many examples of homeopathy in action involves the common poison ivy rash. Virtually everyone is familiar with this menace of gardeners and hikers alike as 85% of the population is allergic. The plant grows just about anywhere, though it's most commonly found on the edges of forests, lawns, and roadways. It can grow as a vine, creep along the ground, or grow as a bush – and its very durable root systems make it difficult to remove. Identifying it is easy—it always grows with three shiny leaves in a cluster. The poison ivy rash is caused by an oil found in the plant called urushiol (you-ROO-shee-all). When this oil touches your skin, it often causes an itchy, blistering rash—and that rash can spread to cover large sections of the body.

## HOW CAN HOMEOPATHY HELP WITH POISON IVY?

Remember the term “like cures like”? Homeopaths long ago discovered that if they gave patients suffering with a poison ivy rash a homeopathic remedy made from poison ivy, they could rapidly relieve their patients' suffering.

*Rhus toxicodendron* (or *Rhus tox*; the Latin name for poison ivy) is the

active ingredient in Washington Homeopathic Products' Be gone Poison Ivy™. For those with a particularly aggressive poison ivy rash, Washington Homeopathic Products also offers additional relief with Be gone Scratch-N-Itch™. Many find this topical product helps dry the excretion of puss and diminishes the itching from poison ivy and oak.

So, next time you are enjoying the great outdoors—fear not the possibility of a poison ivy rash. You now have homeopathy to help bring speedy relief!

