

Letters to the Editor

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Homeopathic Remedies for Treatment of the Common Cold

Original Article: Treatment of the Common Cold in Children and Adults

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TO THE EDITOR: This article does not mention homeopathy as a complementary and alternative medicine treatment for the common cold. In fact, there is evidence suggesting that homeopathy could be useful for this condition.

Complex homeopathic remedies have shown effectiveness for the common cold,^{1,2} as have individualized homeopathic remedies for children.³ In another study, self-treatment was shown to be effective.⁴ There are also studies suggesting that homeopathy could be effective for preventing the common cold.⁵

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IN REPLY: We thank Dr. Fior for considering another intervention for the common cold. Unfortunately, the studies that Dr. Fior cites have various methodologic flaws (e.g., different combinations of products used in the same study, nonrandom assignment of patients, no placebo-controlled arm) that preclude conclusions about effectiveness. A systematic review of two trials found that homeopathic treatments are no better than placebo for the treatment of upper respiratory tract infections in children.¹ Although we provided information in our article about several complementary and alternative medicine products that have benefits for the common cold, more rigorous study of individual homeopathic treatments is needed.

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1. Altunç U, Pittler MH, Ernst E. Homeopathy for childhood and adolescent ailments: systematic review of randomized clinical trials. *Mayo Clin Proc*. 2007;82(1):69-75. ■