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## Saclac: Boon in homoeopathic practice

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### Abstract

Saclac's impact may be attributed largely to placebo response. Placebo is the second-best remedy in Homoeopathy. In the day-to-day practice, certain situations are there, in which we must prescribe placebo. When patient comes to physician and after case is taken, it is found that, he is taking some medicines. When he is already on some other treatment, in this condition, we must wait until the action of ongoing medicine ends, till then placebo is required. In treatment process, placebo is required and also after the treatment when homoeopathic aggravation occurs during improvement of the patient, in all that time physician needs placebo. Certain disease conditions like Artificial Chronic Disease, Pseudo Chronic Disease, Mental diseases due to emotions, Indisposition, Hypochondriac patients needs placebo. In experiments like randomized controlled trials with homoeopathic medicines the value of placebo is tremendous, as in controlled trials, placebo is also given to controlled cases and homoeopathic medicines are given to cases for proving, here placebo plays vital role.

**Keywords:** Placebo, medicine, second best remedy, vehicle, indisposition, artificial chronic disease, psychotherapy, homoeopathic aggravation, drug proving, supplement

### Introduction

Sugar of Milk also called as Saccharum Lactis chemically written as- C12 H22 O11

- Characteristics of sugar of milk are -it is nonmedicated vehicle, used for dispensing of homoeopathic medicine.

It's the best crystalline substance, scentless, gritty to touch, faintly sweet.

The word 'Placebo' derived from Latin word 'Placere' which means 'to please'. Placebo is a term used for a pharmacologically and pharmacodynamically inactive substance administered to a patient during the course of therapy when no active drug treatment is indicated.

### Indications of Placebo in Homoeopathy

#### 1. Indisposition i.e. in ailments caused by change in diet and regimen and in artificial chronic diseases

It's not like that, every patient that comes to doctor requires medicine. In cases like symptoms appeared due to Indisposition, A homoeopathic medicine may not be required, and also those ill health due to exposure to avoidable noxious influences, who are in habit of indulging in injurious liquors or ailments, are addicted to dissipation, who undergo prolonged abstinence from things necessary for support of life, who recide in unhealthy localities, who are deprived of exercise or open air and who destroy their health by overexertion of body and mind. The treatment in such case require is the correcting of the diet, regimen and mode of living of the individual.

Then how to manage such a case? Here it might seem very simple that just to tell the patient bluntly that he does not require medicine, but only to change his life style and correct his habits. But this is not according to human natural tendency, in which patient expects to get treated by physician for his complaints. Normally when patient goes to doctor, he expects that he will get medicine and will be cured. He do not agrees, that his trouble is due to his own ignorance towards health. To tell and make aware to patient about his mistakes regarding health and order him to change his lifestyle seems like give the responsibility of cure upon patient himself and this is not that patient wants. The patient expects the doctor should treat him for restore health and must prescribe some medicines to cure him.

Placebo is the only option in such cases to homoeopathic physician. Some patients come to physician at every change of wind, at every attack of snuffles the baby has, at every little

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headache or every little pain, and every smallest health related issues. If the physician thought to change the remedy or prescribe for each one of these little spells of indisposition, in the course of short period, have such a state of disorder in the individual that one will wonder what is the matter with that patient.

So one can give them placebo, and let the indisposition pass off of itself.

## 2. The indicated remedy must be given time to act, after the remedy is selected

Every remedy has its duration of action, which when administered must be given time to act and its action must not be interfered with by other drugs or influences until it has accomplished its utility. Also too many doses of best remedy may spoil the case. This is also true of cases where the medicine has to be given at a particular phase of disease, as in case of intermittent fevers. Hence administer the *second best remedy*- placebo, till the proper time for administration of remedy comes.

## 3. Until the Physician gets the clear picture of disease.

When a patient is suffering from disease is of a chronic character, and the patient has been taking medicine up to the time he is seen, physician should/may leave him some days quite without medicine, or in the meantime administer something of an unmedicated nature in order to be able to get the pure permanent symptoms of that chronic disease and to form a faithful picture of a disease. At times patient may say "I took some medicine, and most of my symptoms subsided." They lead to another image from which the physician can gather nothing; a scattering has taken place. Or the symptoms may cover page upon page, and yet no remedy may be clear. No individualization is possible. Administer placebo, let the portrait clear.

*"Besides this, patients themselves differ so much in their dispositions, that some, especially the so called hypochondriacs and other persons of great sensitiveness and impatient of suffering, portray their symptoms in too vivid colours and, in order to induce the physician to give them instant relief, describe their ailments in exaggerated expressions."* (Aph 96)

## 4. In Homoeopathic drug proving-

Placebo is also a very vital member of 'controlled, double blind therapeutic and proving trials.' Influences and bias on the part of provers and the investigator can significantly modify the drug responses, interfering with the interpretation of therapeutic efficacy of a drug. In order to avoid such complications, dummy preparation or substitute drug i.e. placebo is employed, which should be of the same colour and texture as that of the test substance and should be administered in the same way as that of the experiment group.

## 5. Acts as an supplement to indicated remedy-

Another use of placebo is as a supplement to the indicated remedy. Dr. Hahnemann advocated the use of sugar of milk following the giving of a remedy in order to allow the latter to unfold its activity in its whole.

Sometimes quite definite aggravations follow the good homoeopathic prescription when too low a potency is employed, and physician may think that the case has become worse then placebo works as supplementary, by

satisfying patients mind, that he has given medicine for intense symptoms.

## 6. In Psychotherapy

The use of placebo is one form and a very powerful form of psychotherapy. There is evidence that mood or emotional state of a person affects significantly the manifestation of disease, action of drug and the process of cure. The process of homoeopathic interview combined with the expectations of patient seeking homoeopathic cure may enhance the placebo response itself. Thus, homoeopaths interested in distinguishing the action of homoeopathic remedy from that of placebo response must be reasonably begin each case with placebo-“second best prescription” or may be the first.

## 7. In Homoeopathic aggravation.

In cases of Homoeopathic aggravation (Aph 280), Dr. Hahnemann advises- 'In order to be convinced of this, the patient is left without medicine for eight, ten or fifteen days, meanwhile giving him only some powders of sugar of milk.' (Aph 281)

## 8. If you are not sure give placebo

When a physician is called to a new case, and decision is to be made for medication. To avoid a mistake in the first prescription which might prejudice the case by confusing it, so a quick and satisfactory cure would be impossible. When physician is unable to decide what remedy is indicated and time is required to study up case, so give the remedy at once if you are sure of it, but not otherwise. If you are not sure, give placebo.

All this emphasizes the fact that homoeopathic drugs dare not be lightly used, precaution in regard to medicine is to be taken of by judicious resort to a placebo.

The placebo effect refers to the phenomenon where a patient experiences an improvement in symptoms after receiving an inactive substance or intervention, simply due to their belief in its therapeutic effects. It highlights the complex relationship between the mind and body and shows the importance of psychological factors in the healing process. The placebo effect is well-documented and has been observed across various medical conditions. It plays a significant role in clinical trials and can lead to improvements in subjective measures such as pain, mood, and overall well-being.

*The common trend of human being, whenever he or she feels ill, is to have a strong impulse to take some medicine for the illness. But sometimes it happens that there remain no necessity to administer to the particular patient, and the respective physician does not like to administer any medicine to him; then the physician prescribe some non medicated substance which are called placebo for the sake of patients. In the meantime, until the second medicament is given, one can soothe the patient's mind and desire for medicine with something inconspicuous such as a few teaspoons a day, of sugar of milk. Placebo is an agent employed in medical practice with the primary aim of gratifying the patient. It is the psychological state of the individual at the time of its administration that determines the effects produced by the placebo.*

## Homoeopathy and Placebo

Many people still believe that Homoeopathy is a placebo. For them it must come as a surprise that Hahnemann unlike

most of his contemporaries was already familiar with a phenomenon which we call today placebo effect. First, he differentiated clearly between the homoeopathic drugs administered in line with law of similar that is “similia similibus curentur” and such pharmaceutical substances he considered quite rightly as medicine (for example “milk sugar”). Second, as far as we know, he was the first physician who systematically used a single blinded approach in therapy. In aphorism 91, Hahnemann states, when the disease is of chronic character and patient has been taking medicine up to the time he is seen, the physician can leave him some days quite without medicine or meantime can administer something of an unmedicinal nature and defer to a subsequent period. In case of hypochondriacs, when pure fabrication of symptoms comes, Dr. Hahnemann advises the physician to “give them nothing at all, or something quite unmedicinal” in footnote to aphorism 96.

Aphorism 281, states that when the improvement begins, in order to be convinced of this, the patient is left without any medicine for eight, ten, fifteen days, meanwhile giving him only some powders of sugar of milk. *As observed in the case journals, the main reason for giving placebo by Dr Hahnemann was to please the impatient patient who was used to take frequent medications in allopathic medicine, not only every day but sometimes also hourly.* In the homoeopathic treatment of serious chronic pathology, if the remedy is correct, usually a strong initial aggravation take place and not the therapeutic results expected, here one can take help of sac.lac. to continue with patients desire to take medicine.

Results of studies of placebos showed improvement in 56% of patients experiencing cancer related fatigue, 70% of women experiencing menopausal hot flushes, and 75% to 80% of the patients with depression.

People who find placebo prescribing acceptable seem to do primarily because they believe placebos can be effective and they prioritize such patient benefit over other concerns.

**Placebo effect and the brain:** Functional imaging upon placebo analgesia shows activation of some areas in brain. High placebo responses link with dopamine activity. Since the body brain response that controls the placebo effect is neurological, they work best for conditions controlled by the neurological system, such as pain, irritable bowel syndrome, depression, Parkinson’s disease.

**Physiological Effect of Placebo:** A ground breaking study in the late 70’s showed for the first time that a placebo could trigger the release of Endorphins (the body’s natural painkillers), just as certain active drugs do. In the study, it is said that placebos instead of pain medication, to 40 dental patients who had just had their wisdom teeth removed got relief from pain. Not surprisingly, because the patients thought they were getting medicine that would indeed relieve their pain, most reported relief. But then the researchers gave the patients an antidote to morphine, which chemically blocks the receptor sites for both Endorphins and Morphine in the brain. When the researchers administered it, the patients pain returned. This proved that by taking the placebos, the patients have been creating their own endorphins- their own natural pain relievers.

It was the milestone in placebo research, because it meant that, the relief that study subjects experienced wasn’t all in

their minds; it was in their minds and their bodies- in their state of being. In an another study, participants are given a placebo but are told it is a stimulant. When the participants take that pill, their blood pressure and pulse rate were increased, and their reaction speeds are improved. Similarly, when the same people are given the same placebo and told it will help to relax and sleep, they experiencing relaxation instead.

## Conclusion

Dr. Hahnemann states, our mission is to cure the patient not to hurt them. It is very much better to give placebo than an unwanted or wrong medicines.

Bruce H. Lipton states that, if the brain expects that a treatment will work. It sends healing chemicals into the bloodstream, which facilitates that. That’s why the “placebo” effect is so powerful for every type of healing and the opposite is equally true and equally powerful: when the brain expects that the therapy will not work, it is called the “nocebo” effect. The placebo response is about being healed by thought alone. In current scenario, the placebo is mandatory not only in homoeopathy but in all types of medical systems, in situations where a real medicine is not needed.

## Conflict of Interest

Not available

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