

the
DISPENSING
pocket book

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This pocket book has been written to provide advice on purchasing and dispensing homeopathic remedies. Produced in a joint venture by the Homeopathic Supply Company & Helios Homœopathic Pharmacy it acts as an introduction to the services we provide and answers the most commonly asked questions

The Homeopathic Supply Company is based in Bodham, near Holt, in North Norfolk. The company was started in 1985 by Robert and Anne Barker, whilst Robert was studying homeopathy. We supply sac-lac, dispensing and storage containers, books, posters, EFT products and other sundries. We are also the main distributor for Barefoot Botanicals products. Our customers are predominantly practitioners, but we also supply to individual users of complementary therapies.

A catalogue is available on request or can be downloaded from our website*

If you are not sure exactly what you want our informed staff are always happy to give advice on any of our products. Various discounts are available for the purchase of larger quantities.

For students and new practitioners we supply a **Dispensing Starter Pack** containing a selection of the most frequently used items to get you underway in your practice. Details can be found in our catalogue.

* www.hsconline.co.uk

Ordering information

You can order by telephone, email or order online at www.hsconline.co.uk.

If ordering by email please remember to include your name, address and telephone number. Payment can be made by debit or credit card (cheque by arrangement).

The office is open between 9.30am and 4.30pm Monday to Friday. Outside of these times orders can be left on the answer phone. Orders from within the UK are normally dispatched within 36 hours of receipt, using first class post or 48hour Parcel Post. 24hour delivery is also available at an extra charge (charged at cost). Postage is free on orders over £15 but may be charged on discounted products.

Helios Homeopathic Pharmacy has been established for over twenty years and provides a source of potent, reliable remedies. The facilities at Tunbridge Wells include the Pharmacy, a multi-disciplinary clinic and an over the counter sales operation. There is also a franchise situated at Covent Garden in London.

You can order by phone, email, fax or via the website. The pharmacy is open 9.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm Saturday.

Prescriptions and small orders placed before 3pm are dispatched the same day, by first class post (Monday to Friday). All other orders are dispatched as soon as possible, the usual delivery time being three to four days after receipt of the order. Payment can be made by credit or debit card.

www.helios.co.uk

How to purchase
and make up
your remedies

Remedies are available in various forms. They can be purchased as mother tinctures, liquid potencies (in 25% alcohol), pillules, soft or hard tablets, granules or medicating potency (in 90% alcohol). There are two sizes of granules: a coarse size for regular potencies and a No.0 ('poppy seed') size for LM potencies.

As practitioners you have the choice to buy ready made remedies, or medicating potencies plus unmedicated sugar tablets or pillules (commonly know as sac-lac). There are various options for dispensing remedies to your patients. For example if you wished to give Arnica 30C, you could buy ready made medicated pillules, tablets or liquid potency from Helios Pharmacy and then either give the patient the complete container or transfer some into another bottle or dispensing envelope. Alternatively you could buy unmedicated sac-lac plus Arnica 30C medicating potency. The medicating potency is then used to medicate the sac-lac, the method for this is given on the next page.

Medicating potency is potentised alcohol which is used to medicate hard or soft tablets; sugar pillules and granules. The remedy, in the required potency, is ordered from the homeopathic pharmacy as a medicating potency and is supplied in a bottle which has a dropper unit fitted into the neck.

The usual procedure is to put the required amount of unmedicated tablets or pillules into a bottle or plastic envelope and then add drops of the medicating potency to them. The exception to this is when using soft tablets, where this method needs to be modified slightly in order not to end up with a soggy mess! When using soft tablets, first run the medicating potency around the inside of the bottle and then add the tablets. When adding the tablets to the medicated bottle take care not to contaminate your remaining stock of tablets.

Unmedicated tablets and pillules are sold in various sizes, which form and size you decide to use is a matter of personal preference. The pillules of SL56 size are the most widely used and are the type in the Helios kits. The soft tablets are often preferable for children as they dissolve quickly. The larger tablets may be more appropriate for less dextrous patients, such as the elderly or an arthritic person.

The amount of medicating potency required is dependant upon the amount of sac-lac used. The quantities recommended for the most frequently used sizes of bottles are given on the following page. However please remember that these are **minimum** quantities, it is not incorrect if more than this is used.

Number of drops of medicating potency required

container		pillules	hard tablets	soft tablets
S5	4gram	2	2	4
S10	8gram	3	4	6
S15	14gram	4	7	12

Once the bottle is medicated, put the cap on securely and shake it a couple of times to distribute the medication around the tablets.

Medicating Granules

Granules are medicated in the same way as pillules using the same number of drops, but a slightly different method is used in order to ensure that all the granules are sufficiently wetted. Fill the bottle three-quarters full with granules and then add three-quarters of the medicating potency to be used. Cap the bottle and roll it around to ensure than the granules are thoroughly medicated. Add the remainder of the granules and then the rest of the medicating potency. Once again, cap the bottle and roll it around to wet the remaining granules.

LM potencies

These are purchased from the pharmacy as 'poppy seed' size granules. The size of the LM granules from Helios is such that 100 = 60mg (1 grain) as Hahnemann suggested. One granule is dissolved in a 'stock bottle' containing purified water (available from a chemist) preserved with alcohol to give a 15% alcohol solution. This is best achieved by using medicinal alcohol (ethanol). Brandy or vodka can also be used as a preservative, but bear in mind that whilst the strength of medicinal alcohol is usually 90%, brandy and vodka contains only around 40% alcohol, so in order to ensure that your solution is adequately preserved, a sufficient quantity needs to be used so that the final solution contains at least 15% alcohol.

Dropper bottles were not available in Hahnemann's time, so he used larger bottles and suggested doses in multiples of tablespoons, teaspoons or coffee-spoons, plus eight, ten or twelve succussions before each dose. You can keep to this method if you prefer, but it may be easier to use a dropper bottle and instruct patients to take a number of drops or a 'squirt' from this, adjusting the dose according to the patient's response.

As an alternative to buying the LM granules, Helios can also supply LM potencies already made up for the patient in dropper bottle sizes from 15ml to 150ml. The patient then takes doses from this stock bottle.

Liquid Remedies

Liquid remedies can be made by using a similar method as for LM potencies, adding medicating potency to a bottle containing water preserved with alcohol.

Flower Essences

These can be bought as stock bottles from which a dosage bottle is made up for the patient. The amount of the stock solution used varies with the type of essence, but as a general guide - for Bach Flower Remedies four drops are added to a bottle containing a solution of water preserved with 15% alcohol (see instructions for LM potencies), from this the patient takes their dose, usually four drops twice daily but this can vary according to the patient's response. For Australian bush Flower Essences the same method is used but the number of drops used at each stage is usually seven.

Alcohol for preserving remedies

The sale of alcohol is controlled by HM Customs and Revenue according to the Alcoholic Liquor Duties Act 1979. Alcohol for medicinal use is subject to the same duty as that for alcoholic beverages, this is currently set at £19.56 per litre.

Alcohol is sold as either duty-free or duty-paid.

HM Customs and Revenue allow the purchase of duty-free spirits for the manufacture of homeopathic and herbal remedies which are recognised by them as having a medicinal action and hold a list of approved remedies. An Authority to Receive Duty Free Spirits is required to purchase duty-free alcohol, this is issued by HM Customs and Revenue. In order to obtain this authority specific requirements must be met regarding premises, storage, control of supply etc and it is doubtful that an individual healthcare practitioner would be able to meet these standards.

It may be possible to buy a small quantity of duty-paid alcohol from a pharmacist. The pharmacist would need to be satisfied of your practitioner status and of your intention to use the alcohol solely for your practice. However, in practice it is unlikely that a high street chemist would stock suitable grade alcohol.

Hayman Ltd can supply either duty-free or duty-paid food grade fermentation alcohol which is suitable for remedies but can they only supply in large quantities. Hayman can be contacted on 01376 517517 www.hayman.co.uk

Further information on alcohol regulations can be found on HM Customs and Revenue website - www.hmrc.gov.uk or telephone the National Advice Service on 0845 010 9000

The alternative is to use brandy or vodka for preserving remedies, brandy has traditionally been used for flower remedies for example, see the section on LM potencies for more guidance on this.

Alcohol sensitivity

If a patient is concerned about the alcohol content of a remedy or is sensitive to alcohol, a liquid dose can be put into warm water which will allow the alcohol to evaporate off. Instruct the patient to add the required number of drops to warm water and leave to stand for five to ten minutes before taking.

Lactose sensitivity

The term sac-lac has fallen into common usage to mean all unmedicated tablets and pillules, strictly speaking this term relates to Saccharum Lactis which is the Latin name for lactose or milk sugar. Lactose may be a problem for people who have dairy allergy or intolerance. The sugar pillules sold by The Homeopathic Supply Company are made from sucrose and do not contain any lactose. The T1 tablets (the traditional 'flat' tablets) and the ST1 and ST2 tablets (soft tablets) are however made with lactose.

Non-sugar pillules made from Xylitol are also available. Xylitol is a sugar alcohol which occurs naturally in plants such as fruit, birch bark and corn cobs. Although they share a similar name sugar alcohols have a different chemical structure to ethanol, the type of alcohol found in alcoholic beverages, and so do not affect the body in the same way.

Container capacity

The following table shows the number of tablets | pillules which fit into the various sizes of bottle available from The Homeopathic Supply Company

NB Dosage dispensers DD hold 100 SL56 pillules

*tablet pillule	container							
	S1	S1SC	S5	S7	S10	S15	S15W	PTB
T1	12	0	40	60	70	130	140	110
ST1	9	0	30	47	60	120	130	110
ST2	5	0	15	25	27	55	57	45
SL22	12	0	40	70	80	140	145	125
SL56	40	35	110	190	215	370	385	330
SL84	90	80	230	360	430	760	850	650

Number of containers filled

The table below shows the approximate number of containers of various sizes which will be filled by 250g of pillules | tablets

*tablet pillule	container		
	S1	S5	S10
T1	180	60	35
ST1	0	100	60
SL22	180	60	30
SL56	150	55	28
SL84	150	50	29
SL210	130	45	27

*tablet T
 soft tablet ST
 pillule SL

Dropper bottles

The following table gives the approximate capacity in drops of some of the most commonly used sizes of dropper bottles

container size	approximate capacity in drops
D5 5ml	100
D10 10ml	250
D15 15ml	320
D15W 15ml Winchester	340
D30W 30ml Winchester	550

Storage systems

The Homeopathic Supply Company offers various storage solutions for your remedies to suit all pockets. These vary from inexpensive cardboard boxes to an elegant handmade cherry wood case.

Fibreboard grid of various sizes is available which can be fitted into boxes, drawers or cases to hold bottles. The grid is supplied as two-meter lengths of a tough fibreboard material which has slots cut into it along its length so that when it is cut to size and slotted together a grid is created. The different sizes of grid eg FG37 and FG44, relates to the distance between the slots, the dimensions have been calculated to accommodate the most commonly used sizes of bottle.

If using the storage grid for your remedies it is recommended that you stick to one pharmacy for your supply, so that your containers are of a uniform size and shape.

Heat treatment of bottles to enable their reuse

There is some debate as to whether it is good practice to reuse bottles that have previously contained homeopathic remedies as there is no guarantee that you will be able to remove all traces of the previous remedy. Hahnemann apparently recommended hot coals for the process! The current recommended practice is to wash the bottles, rinse them well and place them in an oven at regulo 4 (350F 180C) for 20 minutes, allow to cool and repeat. Caps will not usually survive the process so it would be best to replace them with new ones.

General information for handling and storage of remedies

Good hygiene procedures must be observed when handling and dispensing remedies. Unmedicated tablets and containers should be stored in a clean, dry environment. Precautions should be taken to avoid contamination by dirt and dust, or cross-contamination with other remedies.

Avoid handling the tablets with bare hands.

When using a dropper be careful not to contaminate the pipette when taking it out of the bottle.

Empty containers should be kept closed or covered to prevent hair, dust, dirt and insects from finding their way into them.

Take particular care when dispensing liquid remedies, water provides an ideal growth medium for bacteria. Containers must be clean and the liquid preserved with sufficient alcohol to prevent bacterial growth. Be aware that, once opened, purified water will no longer be sterile and will allow the growth of bacteria.

The eyes are particularly vulnerable to infection. Any solution which is to be used for the eyes, such as an eye-wash, must be made up freshly each time it is to be used and the solution thrown away afterwards.

If remedies are to be stored for any length of time they should be kept in glass containers and protected from light. Plastic containers are not recommended for long-term storage.

Take care not to expose remedies to strong smells, such as from perfume, as this may affect the remedy.

It is possible that electromagnetic fields such as from computers or mobile phones may also affect remedies. Care should be taken to prevent this happening.

Keep bottles containing remedies tightly closed so as to prevent loss of the remedy by evaporation.

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Your notes