

**Homeopathic Healthcare**  
George Guess, MD

**Sprains**

Homeopathy can rapidly alleviate the pain, swelling, stiffness, and/or lameness of sprains in many cases. In most cases it contributes to a relatively speedy, complication-free recovery. In addition to homeopathic medicines, the usual measures for sprains — ace bandages, air casts, ice, elevation, rest — should be employed.

The term sprain applies to an injury (stretching or tearing) of a ligament (a strong fibrous band that extends from one bony surface to another across a joint lending structural stability to the joint).

**Homeopathic Remedies**

The very first remedy to consider for an acute sprain immediately after the injury is **Arnica** (leopard's bane). This remedy helps the soreness, swelling and bruising of an acutely sprained joint. Often the patient will fear anyone touching the injured part, saying, "I'm all right. Just leave it alone!" The area is worse from touch, pressure, motion. Sometimes the immediate response to the remedy will be profound; at other times, especially in ankle injuries, observed changes may be minimal, but Arnica will set the stage for a more rapid response to a follow-up remedy.

Next in line routinely for ankle sprains after Arnica is **Ruta** (herb of grace or rue). It can relieve the marked stiffness and bruised pain and lameness of the injured part. The area is better from heat, wrapping, and gentle motion; worse from cold and exertion. Wrist sprains are another common injury helped with Ruta, as are bone bruises.

Two other extremely common homeopathic remedies for sprains are Bryonia (wild hops) and Rhus toxicodendron (poison ivy).

**Bryonia** sprains cause severe sharp, stitching, or sore pains which are worse from the slightest motion. Keeping perfectly still, cold, and pressure help.

**Rhus toxicodendron** sprains cause a stiff, painful, restless feeling. The discomfort is worse with initial motion, keeping still, overuse, and cold exposure. It is better from continued motion and warm applications.

**Ledum palustre** (marsh tea) sprains cause coldness and bruising in the injured part. The discomfort is worse from heat and better from ice cold applications and ice cold bathing.

**Bellis perennis** (daisy) can be indicated for sprains, especially when there is bruising, the injured area feels cold, and the lymph nodes which drain the affected area are enlarged. Bellis is also a useful remedy for gardeners' strained backs and for injuries to the pelvic area resulting in a sore, bruised sensation.

**Kreosotum** (creosote) is useful for sprains of the Achilles tendon and of the left thumb.

Two remedies frequently are of service for chronic lingering sprains — **Calcarea carbonica** (calcium carbonate) and **Calcarea phosphorica** (calcium phosphate).

**Calcarea carbonica's** chronic sprains are aggravated by overexertion; cold and cold, damp weather aggravate, as does exertion (walking on a sprained ankle for example).

**Calcarea phosphorica** is indicated for sprains that are slow to heal with stiffness and coldness in the joint. Symptoms are worse from cold and cold, damp.

While there are several other homeopathic remedies which may be required for acute and chronic sprains, those above are the most frequently required.

*Dr. Guess is a family physician and has practiced classical homeopathic medicine since 1978. He maintains a private family practice in Crozet, Virginia, near Charlottesville. He is the past editor of the American Journal of Homeopathic Medicine (a professional homeopathic medical journal) and Vice-President of the American Board of Homeotherapeutics (a national homeopathic specialty board). [www.drgeorgeguess.com](http://www.drgeorgeguess.com).*