

**Homeopathic Healthcare**  
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**Managing Stress Homeopathically**

Stress is an integral part of modern life – too integral in my opinion. Unfortunately, practically speaking, for most of us there is little that can be done to eliminate all the sources of stress in our lives. Of course, not all stress is bad for us. Some physical stress is required for our bones and muscles to grow strong; a bit of microbial/infectious stress is necessary for our immune systems to function optimally; the stress of academic striving enriches our minds and our awareness of the world. Some stress is in our best interest.

But there is the other kind of stress too – the kind that frazzles our nerves, depresses our spirits, fosters illness, threatens relationships, etc. Yet even these stresses can propel some of us to grow, to overcome. In the end, excepting for particularly severe stressors, it is our individual make-up and reaction to stress that determines its effects. The strength of our constitution, our overall resistance enables us to overcome stress or, at the least, continue to function reasonably well despite its presence in our lives. So often, the way we define and interpret potentially stressful triggers dictates our response.

Certainly, there is much that we can do for ourselves to manage and counter stress. Reducing stress, when we can, is the first sensible strategy. Stress management techniques (yoga, meditation, relaxation exercises, prayer, Tai Chi, Qi gong, etc.) can greatly enhance one's ability to cope with stress. Proper diet and nutrition, exercise, and adequate rest also elevate one's stress threshold.

Yet even the strongest of us can fall prey to the vitality-eroding effects of stress. A severe physical trauma, bankruptcy, job termination, the death of a loved one, a failed relationship – any of these significant stresses can trigger a cascade of emotional and physical symptoms, as well as set the stage for the development of disease. It is at such times that homeopathic medicine can provide significant, safe relief and restore vitality. Homeopathic medicines act in such a way as to boost our resistance to stress. Even when the stress is on-going, successfully-treated patients seem to be able to redefine the stressor; their perspective shifts and, in consequence, the significance of the stress in their lives diminishes, and with it its impact on their health. Interestingly, over the course of decades of clinical experience with these remedies, homeopathic physicians have discovered that the therapeutic indications of many homeopathic remedies correlate closely with both the specific nature of the stress and the resulting specific pattern of symptomatology. Consequently, when selecting the appropriate remedy for an individual, both of these characteristics should be taken into account.

Below is a listing of some homeopathic medicines commonly indicated for significant stress-related disorders.

**Homeopathic Remedies for Stress**

Dosage: For acute stress take one dose of the indicated remedy in 30C or 200C potency every 4-6 hours until symptoms are relieved. If there has been no response within 24-36 hours, try a different homeopathic medicine.

**Aconite:** Type of stress: shock (especially when the fear of death is present), being chilled (especially from a cold wind). Reaction: Very frightened and trembling; restless; anxious; numbness/tingling.

**Arnica:** Type of stress: injury/accident (especially blunt trauma), exertion, and sometimes general emotional shock. Reaction: In a state of shock; sometimes dissociated (as if not fully in his/her

body); says he is well and shuns help; averse to being touched or examined; sore, bruised sensation.

**Gelsemium:** Type of stress: anticipatory anxiety (as before exams or some ordeal), bad news, loss; also, jet lag (also *Arnica*). Reaction: Feels paralyzed with fear and anxiety; may tremble; seems dull, sleepy; diarrhea, heavy forehead headache, lack of thirst; entire body feels weak, achy, and heavy (eyelids droop).

**Ignatia:** Type of stress: grief (such as a death or romantic loss), disappointment. Reaction: Very sad, may be hysterical; wants to be alone (liable to weep only when alone, and then sobs hysterically); grief gets caught in the throat, with the sensation of a lump or constriction; sighing heavily (or yawning frequently).

**Kali phosphoricum:** Type of stress: mental strain, mental exertion; convalescence after an illness. Reaction: nervous exhaustion; feels he/she cannot cope – overwhelmed; weak and tired; jumpy; sensitive; very irritable; headache, insomnia.

**Nux vomica:** Type of stress: overwork, business-related stress, anger/conflict. Reaction: irritability and anger, impatience, over-control, over-indulgence in caffeine and alcohol; headaches, stomach upset, constipation, insomnia after 3 am.

**Phosphoricum acidum:** Type of stress: grief, homesickness. Reaction: sadness and indifference to everything; fatigue; hair loss; diarrhea; dryness of mucus membranes; thirst for refreshing juices/drinks.

**Staphysagria:** Type of stress: humiliation, bullying, criticism, unfair accusation. Reaction: suppressed anger with trembling; dwells on altercations, imagining what he/she should have said if had had the nerve; bladder symptoms, sharp pains, insomnia, etc.

There are, of course, many, many more homeopathic remedies for stress and stress-related illnesses. When complaints are of a chronic (long-lasting) nature, it is recommended that treatment be sought from a professional homeopath.

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