



## NATUROPATHIC SERVICES

### How To Use Your Natural Medicines

*Here are our most common asked questions about Natural Medicines and their use.  
Don't forget that we have Product Information Sheets for most of the products in our store.*

#### **NUTRITIONAL MEDICINES**

Nutritional supplementation -- vitamins, minerals, and other nutritive components typically taken in capsules or liquids. Further information about specific nutrients can be found on our website.

##### **How do I take nutritional supplements?**

Most multivitamins, especially those with minerals, are best taken with food. In some individuals, a big capsule creates some stomach upset and taking it with food will prevent this effect.

Specific single nutrients or nutrient mixes that are made for specific conditions may have a specific timing for dosing. If this is the case, it will be marked with the requirement. For example, stress support formulas are typically dosed in the morning.

##### **Do I need a general multivitamin, and if so, which one?**

A food based multi-vitamin is the most appropriate for long-term use. It contains a smaller amount of nutrients in their appropriate food context, making them both gentle and very full spectrum.

Where a person needs extra nutritional support, multi's that are oriented toward a specific condition may be used.

A healthy person eating a varied diet including lots of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and well raised animal products should not need a multivitamin unless food quality is an issue.

The most common deficiencies are the minerals, especially magnesium, zinc, chromium and selenium.

The requirement for antioxidants may go up during an active immune process, such as Vitamins A, C and E.

People with digestive difficulties may have several deficiencies based on the inability to properly absorb or process nutrients from the diet. We use high quality absorbable forms of nutrients for these patients.

##### **How do my drug prescriptions interact with nutrients?**

In many cases, drugs deplete crucial nutrients. This is the main type of interaction with nutrients! If Dr. Gaul knows that you are on a specific medication, she may recommend specific replacement nutrients for the time period that you are using your drug.

##### **How do I take and store fatty acid supplements?**

Encapsulated fatty acids are fine to store at room temperature. Oils should generally be stored in the fridge, especially after opening. They can be taken neat or with food (since they are a food product!). Often it is easy to take your oils in dressing for salad. Just don't cook with them.

#### **HERBAL MEDICINES**

Herbal medicine refers to remedies made from plant roots, leaves, and/or flowers and taken as tea, capsule or liquid extract.

##### **How do I prepare tea?**

Tea should be prepared in hot water, and steeped covered. If the tea consists of flowers, 5 minutes is sufficient. For leaves, 10 minutes.

Root based tea should be gently simmered, covered, in water for 10 minutes, then top up the water to the original volume.

Teas can be consumed throughout the day, and they can be combined with meals. They can be sweetened with honey or stevia, but do not add milk (it binds many active principles).



### **How do I take a tincture?**

Tinctures can be taken undiluted, or diluted with water or juice. If you miss a dose, you can double the dose at the time for the next dose.

### **Can kids take herbal remedies?**

Yes, children can take herbal medicines. The doses are adjusted depending on weight of the child.

### **Are herbs safe in pregnancy?**

Most herbal remedies are safe in pregnancy, especially after the first trimester. For a more detailed list, ask for our handout of *Herbal Medicines in Pregnancy*.

### **Do herbal medicines expire?**

Packaged, tableted herbs all have expiry dates that indicate the time frame for which the tablet is guaranteed to be potent. Expired products will not harm you but they will lose efficacy slowly after this date. Most tinctures will last 5 years with good care to store them out of light and heat. Tea will last 2-3 years if kept reasonably out of light and heat.

### **What about interactions with drugs?**

Most herbal medicines are safe in people of all ages. There are, however, some herbal medicines that can interfere with pharmaceuticals. If you are taking a pharmaceutical, Dr. Gaul always checks for interactions before prescribing herbal medicines. If you have not advised Dr. Gaul about the pharmaceuticals you are taking, please let us know so that we can do the required checks. Interactions are not typical for most herbs.

## **HOMEOPATHIC MEDICINES**

Homeopathics are dilute remedies made from plant, mineral or animal substances.

### **How do I dose homeopathic remedies?**

When we are giving constitutional doses, we dose only 1 to 3 times in total and re-evaluate in 6 to 8 weeks' time. (Constitutional homeopathics are prescribed based on all mental, emotional and physical characteristics of the patient. If you have a constitutional homeopathic that has worked well for you or your child before, it may be used at first sign of illness, dosed in this way.)

For acute complaints, homeopathics are given based on the intensity of the symptoms.

If you have an acute symptom that is very strong, for example, having urinary urging that is significant enough that it is all you can focus on, you could repeat the remedy up to every 15 minutes. If you have symptoms that are bothersome but not interfering with most normal function, you could dose the homeopathic 4 to 6 times per day.

If the symptoms are severe, a remedy should help within the hour. If the symptoms are milder, it may take several hours to see the relief. If there is no response in the symptoms in a day, you likely don't have the right remedy.

The actual number of pellets or amount of liquid given does not matter that much for homeopathics of 30C or more. It is the frequency of repetition that is relevant. Each time you dose a remedy, you are giving the body the pattern to respond to.

### **Can I take homeopathics with other remedies?**

Yes. Just take them about 10 minutes away from other remedies or strong tastes. Homeopathics can typically be combined together if you are using more than one homeopathic product.

### **Will peppermint negate my homeopathic?**

Usually not, especially if it is separated from the homeopathic by at least an hour. Well selected remedies tend to work without much interference.

### **How do I give homeopathics to a baby?**

Homeopathic remedies are very safe for children and may be given from birth. Liquid remedies may be administered directly.



Pellets can be dissolved in water and then given directly. Pellets may be crushed and given directly. A nursing mother may take the remedy and the homeopathic will be transmitted through the fluid of the breastmilk, although the effect may be weaker, depending on the health of the mother. Often if a child is ill, both the mother and child need the same remedy!

### **Can I overdose on homeopathics?**

You cannot overdose on a homeopathic remedy by taking too many pellets or too many drops at once. Homeopathic remedies can be "proven" where the remedy creates symptoms if they are repeated too frequently. This is not a toxic response, just an energetic one and can be antidoted if necessary.

### **Can I take homeopathics when pregnant?**

Yes. Homeopathics are safe in pregnancy. We have successfully used them for many complaints of pregnancy. See our pregnancy section.

### **Can I take homeopathics while nursing?**

Yes. If you are using it for an acute illness, you may even treat your baby as you treat yourself! If the remedy is not needed, the baby will not be harmed in any way.

### **Do homeopathics expire?**

Homeopathics kept cool and dry and away from strong electromagnetic fields can have a shelf life of many decades. They have expiry dates on them because typically an expiry date is required by law. There has been concern about taking homeopathics through Xray machines at the airport. There is some interference. Usually Xraying them on occasion does not have an effect. However, if you have a nice kit, just buy a film bag to protect them. Film bags are carried at photo shops. Ask us for a copy of the multilingual card that asks airport employees not to Xray them.

### **I am concerned about some of the homeopathic ingredients.**

Homeopathics can be made from all sorts of substances. Most homeopathic preparations contain the energetic imprint but not the physical substance from which it was made.

For example, the nosodes. Nosodes are homeopathics made for specific diseases. The Streptococcus nosode is made from Strep bacteria, killed and made into a "mother" tincture and then diluted. Dilutions are usually "C" dilutions, meaning "100" in Roman numerals. For a 30C homeopathic, one drop of "mother" has been put in 99 drops of water and succussed (shaken hard, like a paint mixer), then one drop of that 1C dilution is put into another 99 drops of water to make a 2C, to 30 times. By the time you get a 30C, there is no trace of physical substance left in the solution. It appears, though, as if the water solvent picks up the signature of the original substance.

Some of the most useful homeopathics are made from substances that would otherwise be quite toxic to take internally. For example, Arnica is not well tolerated in tincture, but it is excellent for use as a homeopathic!