Emlyn Thomas

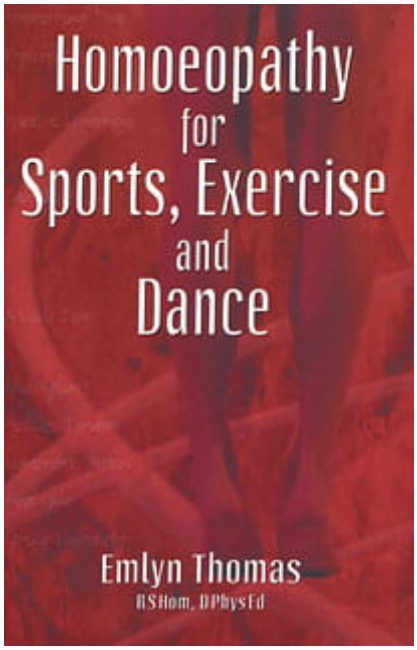
Homoeopathy for Sports, Exercise and Dance

Sample text

Homoeopathy for Sports, Exercise and Dance

from Emlyn Thomas

editor: Beaconsfield



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Preface

This book is intended for all sports medicine practitioners, coaches, teachers, athletes (including games players and exercisers) and dancers who wish to use homoeopathic medicine. Many already do so, but in a limited way, relying on two or three well-tried remedies for specific acute conditions. It will also be of relevance for homoeopaths in their management of patients with sports, exercise and dance injuries. The material in this book will enable the user to expand his or her knowledge of this effective system of medicine, and to deliver a faster and more complete healing after injury.

Homoeopathy is simple until it becomes complicated, and I have done my best to keep it simple. It has been necessary to delve into the principles and background in order to help the reader understand homoeopathy in a way that is deeper than merely using a handbook to look up a condition and pick a remedy. This understanding will make the reader a more effective and confident prescriber.

The book is presented in two sections. The first explains homoeopathy and its development from a sports, exercise and dance point of view.

The second section looks at using homoeopathy to treat injury with regard to first contact, regional injuries and the common complaints that beset active people. With its descriptions of our remedies and a detailed index of conditions and remedies, this section can be regarded as a therapeutic handbook for choosing the best remedy. In conclusion, it examines ways in which performance may be improved.

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not be ignored. Many cases of traumatic injury will require Arnica, and it could be a routine specific first remedy in those cases. The way that trauma responds to Arnica still surprises me.

Later in this book I list the remedies that have been found effective for specific acute pathological conditions. Your own experience will enable you to discover their value.

Homoeopathic Case-Taking

When a case is referred to a homoeopath he or she could spend up to one and a half hours taking the case history. The homoeopath's task is similar to that of a detective, but in this case one is looking for clues to the correct remedy picture displayed in the patient's present state, and how those differ from the normal state of health. The more pronounced the symptoms the better. Symptoms that are peculiar and characteristic to the patient are important, as are those that are strange and unusual. A burning pain relieved by heat is an example of a 'strange' symptom.

If a patient is unsure of his symptoms and needs much help to bring them out, they may not actually be of much use. Spontaneous symptoms are much more important. Even the fact that a patient cannot talk about himself may be relevant as a symptom.

As already discussed, the homoeopath will concentrate on mental, emotional and general symptoms more than physical conditions. It is an essential tenet of homoeopathic treatment that by prescribing a remedy which enables the central control of the organism to right itself, the acute symptoms will automatically and speedily be healed. Every injury, traumatic or otherwise, alters the central state of the individual, and that altered central state is demonstrated by changes in the individual's emotions, mental and general state.

Just as the purely physical effects of injury are worse in highly trained athletes "because of the greater vascularity of their tissue, so the successful athlete or dancer suffers more serious mental, emotional and general effects from injury. These effects are not merely associated with the loss of function from injury, but can become much more deeply-seated. Anxiety from the loss of livelihood and ambition, depression and dissatisfaction are serious affects of injury. If these effects are ignored and left untreated, the long-term results may well be disastrous.

Common Symptoms

Certain symptoms are present in specific conditions. For example, if someone has sprained an ankle you would expect them to say that

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they had pain there, just as someone with arthritis or tendinitis will experience pain and stiffness. In homoeopathic terms these are *common* symptoms experienced by everyone with that condition. It is the difference between one person's pain and another's that the homoeopath is looking for. This is why we concentrate on sensations, location, concomitants and modalities, and search for the symptoms which are peculiar to that person.

The homoeopath will concentrate on the strongest and most important symptoms in the search for the matching remedies. He will divide the symptoms into mental, emotional, general and physical categories, and allocate importance to them as determined by the case-taking process.

Observation

Observations, first impressions and talking to others such as family members or the primary therapist, are important and I always pay much attention to them. I write everything down. Dress, posture, gestures, the way they speak and answer questions, colouring, and whether they are pale or ruddy are just a few of the details that appear in my case notes. These are comprehensive and as complete as possible, and are analysed by the homoeopath later, giving more importance to some symptoms according to how the patient reported them or how strongly they were £xperienced.

The Constitution

The concept of 'constitution' is a very old one, pre-dating homoeopathy. It is also a Victorian medical concept which has been carried forward into modern homoeopathy.

We regard the constitution as the physiological canvas on which the psychological activities of life are painted and enacted. It is the physical carrier of the life or 'vital' force, and the fundamental basis for expression of all the wishes and intentions of the individual. All the feelings of health, joy, harmony and love are expressed through the constitution, as are those of envy, jealousy, anger, anxiety and disease. The constitution carries the relics of past trauma, disease, grief and other influences, often going back for a generation and more.

The healthy individual's constitution is balanced and harmonised, and he or she tends to be at ease with the stresses of life and able to cope with modern living. There is a feeling of peace, health, relaxation and wellbeing. If the balance and harmony is missing, the individual lacks

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A performer may sometimes use corticosteroids to suppress pain and continue performing. Their effect is to suppress the acute inflammatory reaction and to reduce the phagocytic reaction of polymorphs and macrophages. The most serious effect of such treatment is to delay healing and decrease the bulk and strength of scar tissue. They are sometimes useful in treatment of chronic inflammatory conditions, such as recurring tennis elbow and other conditions where a palpable knot of scar tissue may be tender. Tenosynovitis, peritendinitis, bursitis and synovitis, as well as other inflammatory conditions causing pain and impaired function, may also respond well to injected corticosteroid. There is no published research showing the long-term effects of these drugs, and I suggest they should only be used with caution.

The level of pain can indicate the seriousness of an injury and the altered state of the individual. Never ignore it or play, run, work or dance through it.

Sports physicians are easily accessible and can provide a skilled diagnosis. Physiotherapy is the most effective treatment for injuries sustained by physical performers. From the immediate application of RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation) to exercises promoting rehabilitation, and including all the thermal and electrical techniques, the physiotherapist or osteopath are almost the only resources for the injured athlete. Although the physical relief of pain, easing of stiffness, reduction of swelling and haematoma, and mobilisation by manipulation or other means, all go a long way towards speedy and effective healing, they often leave the deeper effects of the injury untreated. Rehabilitation plays an important part in recovery, but is often cut short or neglected because of the urge to return to activity. Because homoeopathic medicine treats the whole person it often ensures more complete and speedier healing, and thus a quicker return to activity.

The Patient, Not the Pathology

Look at the patient as a whole. Observe the way the person feels and responds to the injury, as well as to you. You will also need to ask a few questions, and use your powers of observation on the person and not just the injury.

Whenever I see a patient who has suffered an injury, the site of that injury may be secondary to its effects. Whether it is an injured ankle, broken leg, torn muscle or concussion, my first few questions usually decide the first remedy. If the injury was the result of trauma, whether due to a blow, twisting, stretching or friction, if there is haematoma,

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swelling and bleeding, and if the injury is very sore and painful, the person feels bruised all over and says he feels fine, I would prescribe Arnica immediately.

I am often asked to prescribe for people with an acute condition. Regardless of the location of the injury, my first few questions are about the pain, when it occurs and whether it is improved or exacerbated by continued movement. At the same time I observe how the patient seems as a person - posture, general demeanour, hot or cold, restless, fearful, nervous, afraid to be touched or treated, and as many of the obvious symptoms as possible.

The symptoms decide the remedy. The three people below received the same remedy despite having different injuries.

1) The badminton player in Case 11 (page 61) who had injured his lower back and complained that any movement was painful. He also said that it became worse if he continued to move, so that he had to keep very still.
2) A rock climber who fell and fractured the neck of his scapula could not get out of bed or wash, because even the smallest movement was painful.
3) A recreational runner was diagnosed as having plantar fasciitis. The pain under his foot made him reluctant to put it to the ground or move it in any way.

They all told me that it was not only moving the injured part that hurt, but also the fear of the pain that prevented them from moving. Any movement was painful - even moving the eyes or talking. In all three cases the patients were able to move again more comfortably within minutes of taking Bryonia.

A weightlifter with intense lumbosacral pain extending down his leg had to keep moving all night. He called me to ask for something to relieve the pain. I asked him if, when he got up and moved around, the pain became better or worse. He replied that to start moving was very painful and that resting was even worse. If he could keep moving it was OK. This case responded well to Rhus Tox. It would have responded equally well wherever the site of the injury, because the whole person becomes restless and uncomfortable when he needs Rhus Tox, first movement is painful but continued movement relieves the pain.

Prescribe for the patient, not the pathology.

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The special symptoms for Arnica after a head injury are;

- He says he is 'OK. Fine. No problems', and will not want any fuss, or to see a doctor.
- He may have trouble walking because of dizziness, may not even be able to sit erect, and is dizzy when he closes his eyes.
- His eyes may be bloodshot and his face ruddy.
- He will not want to be touched. He may show fear of being touched, and shies away from contact with people.

Resuscitation

Every coach, trainer, physiotherapist, manager, athlete or dancer and participant in any physical activity should know how to treat an unconscious person, especially one who is not breathing. The main purpose is to restore or sustain life until hospital treatment is available.

The British Red Cross and St John Ambulance training schemes are excellent, and every one involved in offering first contact treatment to injured athletes or dancers should seek their advice and training.

Homoeopathic Remedies

If unconsciousness is due to an accident, fall or head injury wet the lips with Arnica in solution.

If the patient is clammy and cold, almost lifeless, pulse imperceptible, not breathing, or the breathing is very rapid, shallow and cold, Carbo Veg. 6c may be used in solution to wet the lips or bathe the wrists.

If the unconsciousness is caused by haemorrhage, China 6c may both stop the haemorrhage and restore the patient to consciousness. Wet the lips with China 6c in solution.

Skin Wounds

Abrasions, gravel burns and similar wounds that do not completely penetrate the skin are common among athletes and dancers who train on hard or synthetic surfaces and matting. Foreign material must be removed to prevent infection. Wash the area with Calendula lotion, allow it to dry, and then apply Calendula cream. This homoeopathic cream will promote healing, alleviate the pain of the abrasion, and prevent infection.

Open wounds, such as lacerations or puncture wounds, are more serious. Arnica 6c, taken orally, will help to stop the bleeding. Do not,

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Toothache

Mercurius Solubilis
Pain worse at night in bed, perhaps from an abscess, aggravated by draughts and cold air, tooth feels bruised, cheek swollen, pain spreads to ears, face and head, much saliva and very bad breath, with an indented tongue.
Dosage: One Mercurius 30c tablet dissolved in the mouth every hour for the pain, for five doses. Consult a dentist.

Tinea **Cruris** and **Pedis**

Itching in the groin, or between the toes, from a fungal infection from clothing or towels. Do not share towels after a shower or swim. The area should be kept clean and dry.

Calendula Cream
Applied as necessary to ease the itching.

Carbo Vegetabilis
Fiery, burning, itching between the toes. Oozing watery discharge. Foul foot sweat. The condition heals and breaks out again.
Dosage: One Carbo Veg. 30c daily for three days. Dissolve one tablet in water to make a lotion, and dab on the affected parts.

Graphites
Rawness in the folds of the skin, moist, burning, itching, exudes gluey yellow moisture. Worse from heat, warmth of bed, at night.
Dosage: One Graphites 30c tablet daily for four or five days. Also, dissolve one tablet in water and use as a lotion to bathe the affected parts.

Travel Sickness (see also **Nausea,** pages 202-3)

By sea. Cocculus 30c before sailing.

Car sickness. Petroleum, Cocculus, or Tabacum, or a combination of all three. One before a journey, and every two hours during the journey.

Air. Borax 30c. One before flying, and one every two hours during the flight.

Specific combination remedies for travel sickness are also available. See directions on the container.

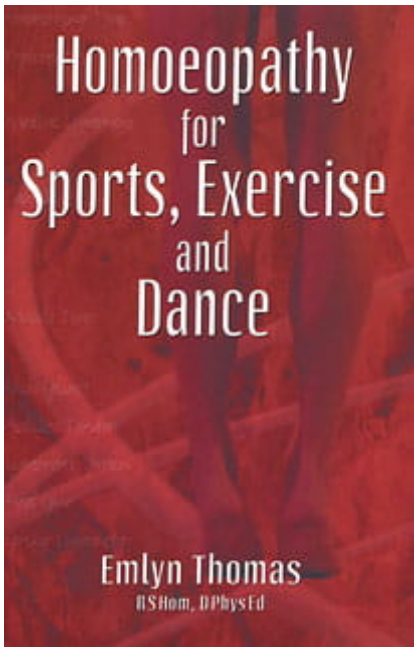
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