



## Nosodes in homeopathic practice, a survey

In the last few years hundreds, and in some European countries, thousands of CAM and homeopathic medicinal products have disappeared from the market and are no longer available for patients. As Nosodes are the group of homeopathic medicinal products facing the greatest difficulties, we have worked on obtaining more reliable data about their role in practice. With this report we do not analyse the history of the effects of the bureaucratic regulatory requirements on the production and registration of homeopathic remedies, but we investigate the role of nosodes as an integral part of homeopathic practice, and we hope to contribute to the understanding of homeopathy as a whole. In summer 2005, the VKHD — the German professional organisation of Heilpraktikers practising homeopathy — sent a questionnaire to its members and others with a homeopathic journal. We received 207 response sheets from both Heilpraktikers and homeopathic doctors.

Response sheets that obviously displayed a misunderstanding of the questions were sorted out. In some cases, we contacted respondents by phone or mail to clarify and exclude misunderstandings. Within the possibilities provided by such a survey — which is not a clinical study — we have identified the following trends.

- (1) 41% of the reported availability problems affected *carcinosinum*. This high figure results from both major availability problems and frequent prescription or indication. *Carcinosinum* is followed by *tuberculinum*, *medorrhinum*, *luesinum*, *borrelia* and many others. *Psorinum* has a low figure because the survey took place in summer 2005, but now we have major problems with *psorinum* as well. More than 75% of the reported problems affect nosodes from human pathological origin which are most essential for homeopathic treatment of chronic diseases *lege artis Hahnemannis*. An increasing number of homeopaths (2005: 11%) prescribe nosodes produced in other European countries to cope with the reported problems.
- (2) There is an average of 33% of patient cases where nosodes, either as an intermediate or as the main or only remedy, have been indispensable for successful homeopathic treatment of chronic diseases. As is to be expected, there are differences concerning the individual ways of working in different practices, but nonetheless one third is the average.

NB: To obtain more reliable data, clear definitions of "chronic" and of "healing / considerable improvement" were given, including the previous duration of the disease (min. one year, or three months for babies) and the time of subsequent observation (one year at least).

- (3) Nosodes are used in all age groups, without significant differences. The exact figures in the above mentioned context are: 33.26 for Children under 4 years age, 34.99 for children 4 - 11 years, 33.26 for adolescents above 11 and adults. There might be a slight trend for children from 4 to 11 years to need nosodes more often, but taking into account fuzziness effects, this is not statistically significant. As summarized above, in one third of successful homeopathically treated cases nosodes are indispensable.
- (4) Homeopaths also prescribe nosodes for acute diseases: frequently (17%), occasionally (42%) or rarely (34%).
- (5) Another part of our questionnaire asked for the frequency of successfully treated chronic cases where nosodes had been indispensable, related to different groups of clinical diagnosis using the above mentioned definitions of "chronic" and "healed / considerably improved".  
 Due to the work connected with this part of the questionnaire, only 108 of the 207 response sheets could be evaluated for these questions. We have assumed that this more difficult part of the questionnaire probably caused a reduction in the overall response rate as well. It was also clear that some colleagues worked out exact figures from their practice, whilst others gave estimated figures.  
 We have summarised the results as given in the appendix. They show that homeopathy is not just a treatment system for minor disorders of well being, but is regularly used in the treatment of severe diseases, esp. after other medical options have failed. The largest case numbers were for chronic or recurrent infections (like bronchitis, otitis, sinusitis, cystitis etc.), followed by allergic or atopic diseases (neurodermatitis, asthma, etc.) and infantile and child development disorders including ADS/ADHS.  
 The high figures for ADHS, psychological disorders etc. confirm what is methodologically evident in classical homeopathic practice: that nosodes are predominantly prescribed for cases in which there is no obvious direct connection to the disease they are actually sourced from.  
 For further reference see appendix.
- (6) The questionnaire also asked for the lowest potencies of nosodes prescribed by the individual homeopaths. The given figures are:
- 81% use only C12 / D24 / Q(LM)4 and above
  - 17% use C6 / D12 / Q(LM)1 and above
  - 2,4% use potencies below C6/D12 as well
- Classical homeopaths do need all potencies of remedies esp. of animal, herbal or mineral origin, but they don't prescribe nosodes in low potencies very often.

In this survey, we did not ask about the special significance of nosodes from human pathological origin. This may be a subject of further surveys. Nevertheless, we know that human pathological nosodes like *Carcinosinum*, *Medorrhinum*, *Luesinum* etc. have a very central role in the homeopathic treatment of many chronic diseases, and their prescription is mostly based on the homeopathic and not pathological relation to the disease they are sourced from.

## Summary

From the results of this survey we can state that an average of 33% of successful homeopathically treated or considerably improved chronic cases (definitions see above), nosodes have been indispensable, either as an intermediate remedy or as the main remedy. Nosodes are considered indispensable in chronic conditions like chronic recurrent infections, neurodermatitis, asthma bronchiale, ADHS, urogenital diseases,

psychological disorders and many others. Their prescription is mostly based on homeopathic principles and not on a pathological or isopathic relation to the disease they are sourced from. **The use of nosodes (esp. of nosodes from human pathological origin — which is to be confirmed by other surveys) is an integral part of the homeopathic science and art of healing.** This means, without nosodes homeopathic practice *lege artis* is not possible. Our figures are based on the self-assessment of homeopaths, but in spite of expected fuzziness factors we have shown clear trends.

Carl Classen, Feb 8th 2006

## Appendix A — Reported problems of availability affected the following nosodes

NB: The given figures represent *both* availability problems and frequency of prescription or indication.

Carcinosinum	40.58%
Tuberculinum	17.39%
Medorrhinum	14.01%
Luesinum	5.32%
Borrelia	4.83%
FSME	2.42%
Bacillinum	1.45%
Coxsackie	1.45%
Hepatitis A, B, C	1.45%
Tetanus	1.45%
AIDS nosode	0.97%
Candida	0.97%
Diphtherinum	0.97%
Influenzinum	0.97%
Chlamydia trachomatis	0.48%
Lyssinum	0.48%
Pertussinum	0.48%
Psorinum	0.48%
Scarlatinum	0.48%
Streptococcinum	0.48%
Variolinum	0.48%
Misc. vaccination nosodes and others	2.41%
 Total	 100.00%
 Total "classical" nosodes (Carc., Tub., Med., Lues., Psor.)	 77.78%
Total "rare" nosodes	22.22%
Estimated "human patholog. origin*" >	75.00%

\* "human origin" can only be estimated, because there are different methods of production for some of the nosodes.

10.63% of the practitioners have prescribed nosodes produced in other European countries to cope with availability problems.

## Appendix B — Use of nosodes in successful homeopathic treatment of chronic diseases

<b>Cases in your practice</b> , where the use of nosodes has been indispensable and which fulfil the given criteria for previous duration of disease (min. 1 year, babies 3 month) and of healing (min. considerable improvement, min. 1 year of subsequent observation).	<b>Total from 108 form sheets</b>	<b>Nosodes are considered esp. important for...</b>
<b>(1)</b> Chronic recurrent infectious diseases (such as bronchitis, otitis m., sinusitis, urinary tract infections etc.)	6360	68
<b>(2)</b> Arthritis, rheumatism of joints, myalgias, fibromyalgia	1174	13
<b>(3)</b> Neurodermatitis, bronchial asthma, allergies, atopic diseases	3964	55
<b>(4)</b> Skin diseases: non atopic eczema, acne, lichen, warts etc. (except psoriasis)	1990	16
<b>(5)</b> Psoriasis and metabolic diseases: diabetes II, gout, hyperlipidaemia	677	10
<b>(6)</b> Migraine and cluster headache	1229	6
<b>(7)</b> Heart and blood vessel diseases	589	0
<b>(8)</b> Diseases of urogenital organs (nephritis, kidney stones; myoma, severe dysmenorrhoea, endometriosis; prostate diseases; disorders of sexual function etc.)	1747	20
<b>(9)</b> Development disorders and protracted development of children, and ADS/ADHS	1919	43
<b>(10)</b> Tumour diseases	417	11
<b>(11)</b> Psychological disorders (fear- or compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia etc.) and insomnia	869	11
<b>(12)</b> Severe mental or psychological diseases (bipolar disorders, severe depression, disorders of personality etc.)	370	4
<b>(13)</b> Neurological diseases (Epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, ALS, chronic pain syndromes etc.)	499	3
<b>(14)</b> Other autoimmune disorders (please give the name) Muscular dystrophy 3 Vitiligo 1 M. Hashimoto 15 Ulcerative colitis 10 M. Crohn 6 M. Werlhof 1 (other diseases have been assigned above)	36	0
<b>(15)</b> Other diseases (please name) Thyroid disorders (except Hashimoto) 50 HIV 2 Chronic fatigue syndrome 2 (other diseases have been assigned above)	54	7