

111004 - Is Homoeopathy Permissible in Islam?

the question

I want to know the ruling on using homoeopathy as a remedy. I found out that the medicine used is a liquid that contains alcohol that is used to preserve the medicine. Is it permissible to use this remedy?

Summary of answer

Homoeopathy has not been proven to be beneficial according to medical specialists, and there are those who are strongly opposed to it. Do not use any remedy unless it has been proven to be beneficial, for most patients, on the basis of either certainty or overwhelming likelihood. Beware of medicines that contain poisonous substances or alcohol, unless the amount is small and it is proven that the medicine is beneficial for most patients according to confirmed studies and proven results.

Detailed answer

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Understanding Homeopathy and Its Origins

Homoeopathy or treating like with like means giving the patient small doses of the same thing that causes the sickness. Research studies are still ongoing concerning this kind of medical treatment, and there is not yet any definitive proof of its efficacy in the world of medicine.

In Al-Mawsu`ah Al-`Arabiyyah Al-`Alamiyyah, it says:

Homoeopathy is a kind of medical treatment that is based on the principle of “let like cure like.” According to the practitioners of this method, the substance that causes symptoms in a healthy person will cure the same symptoms in a sick person.

Some plants, for example, cause rashes on the skin, so homoeopathic doctors treat the rash with the same plants.

Onions cause tearing in the eyes and make the nose run, so onion is used to treat nasal secretions caused by the cold.

The German doctor Samuel Hahnemann developed the rules of homoeopathy at the end of the eighteenth century.

Homoeopathic remedies were discovered by means of a process called “provings”, in which various experiments were carried out on healthy people and their effects watched closely; the homoeopathic doctor gives only one remedy to the patient at a time, because they believe that using more than one remedy will affect the efficacy of each remedy, and the medicine is reduced so that the patient is given the lowest effective dose of the medicine. It is believed that this approach will give the best possible results and also prevent harmful side effects.

Many homoeopathic remedies contain substances that may be poisonous or dangerous to human beings if the doses were increased. In addition to that, the medical efficacy of the homoeopathic remedies has not been proven scientifically. For these reasons, homoeopathy has been subjected to criticism by many doctors. (End quote)

Islamic Perspectives on Harmful and Alcoholic Substances in Medicine

With regard to what these remedies contain of substances, we should find out what they are in order to determine the ruling concerning them according to the Shar'i evidence from the Quran and Sunnah.

- With regard to poisonous substances, some scholars forbid the consumption of poison in either large or small amounts, whether it is harmful or expected to be beneficial. Other scholars permit it, but they laid down guidelines with regard to that.

Those who say that it is permissible say that the effect of this poison should be examined, and the extent to which it will benefit the patient's body; it is also essential that that be done in the light of numerous experiments so as to have peace of mind regarding the outcome; and these medicines should only be used to ward off a greater harm.

Ibn Qudamah (may Allah have mercy on him) said:

With regard to medicines that contain poison, if it is thought most likely that drinking or using it will result in death or insanity, then it is not permissible to use it. If it is thought most likely that it is safe and there is the hope of benefit from it, then it is better to permit taking it, so as to ward off what is more dangerous, as is the case with other medicines.

It may be that it is not permissible, because he is exposing himself to death, but the first view is more correct, because in many cases there is the fear that medicines may cause some harm, but they have still been permitted, so as to ward off a greater harm. (End quote from Al-Mughni, 1/447)

- **With regard to using medicine that contains alcohol**, it should be noted that there are two matters having to do with alcohol here: (i) is alcohol impure or not? And (ii) does mixing it with other medicines have any effect on it or not?

With regard to the former, the majority of scholars are of the view that alcohol is tangibly impure, and others are of the view that it is intangibly impure.

With regard to the latter, when alcohol is mixed with other medicines, it either has a clear, strong and obvious effect, or it does not. If its effect is clear, strong and obvious, the mixture is prohibited and using this medicine is prohibited.

If the alcohol does not have that effect on this medicine, it is permissible to use it. There is a difference between consuming alcohol directly and mixing it with something else. If it is consumed on its own, it is not permissible even in small amounts, but if it is mixed with something else, then the ruling varies according to the details given above.

Is Homoeopathy Permissible in Islam?

To sum up:

1. Homoeopathy has not been proven to be beneficial according to medical specialists, and there are those who are strongly opposed to it.
2. Do not use any remedy unless it has been proven to be beneficial, for most patients, on the basis of either certainty or overwhelming likelihood.
3. Beware of medicines that contain poisonous substances or alcohol, unless the amount is small and it is proven that that medicine is beneficial for most patients according to confirmed studies and proven results.

Alternative Remedies in Islam: Consider Ruqyah, Honey, and Black Seed

We advise you to use Ruqyah as prescribed in Shari`ah, composed of Quran and [Adhkar](#) and Du`as that are narrated in Shari`ah; read them over yourself and seek the help of Allah, [asking Him to ward off sickness from you](#). And we advise you to use medicines that Islam has stated are beneficial and useful, such as honey and black seed. There is nothing wrong with referring to doctors concerning specific amounts and how to use them.

We ask Allah to heal and grant well-being to the sick Muslims.

And Allah knows best.