

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPING IMMUNE SYSTEM: A HOMEOPATHIC VIEW

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ABSTRACT

The paediatric age group represents a critical phase of immune system development, during which children are particularly vulnerable to infections due to physiological immaturity of the defence mechanisms. Recurrent respiratory tract infections, tonsillitis, gastrointestinal disturbances, allergic manifestations, and delayed recovery are frequently encountered in clinical practice and often reflect an underlying weakness of immunity rather than isolated acute illnesses. While conventional medical management focuses primarily on controlling acute episodes, repeated recurrence indicates the need for a deeper, more holistic approach. Homeopathy offers a unique perspective in enhancing immunity in children by addressing the underlying susceptibility through individualised treatment. Rather than merely suppressing symptoms, homeopathy aims to strengthen the vital force, thereby improving the child's inherent

resistance to disease. This article explores the role of homeopathy in enhancing immunity in children through classical principles laid down in the *Organon of Medicine*, supported by the practical application of *Materia Medica* and *Repertory*. Emphasis is placed on constitutional prescribing, miasmatic understanding, and observation-based paediatric case-taking.

Commonly indicated remedies such as *Calcareacarbonica*, *Sulphur*, *Silicea*, *Pulsatilla*, and *Tuberculinum* are discussed with clinical examples to illustrate their role in managing recurrent infections and immune weakness. The preventive and promotive role of homeopathy in reducing disease susceptibility and improving overall vitality is also highlighted. Through safe, gentle, and individualised intervention, homeopathy plays a significant role in supporting immune development and long-term health in children.

KEYWORDS: Paediatric immunity, Homeopathy, Vital force, Constitutional treatment, Recurrent infections.

INTRODUCTION

Childhood is a dynamic period marked by rapid physical growth, emotional development, and gradual maturation of the immune system. During infancy and early childhood, exposure to environmental pathogens is inevitable as children begin to interact with their surroundings. While occasional infections are a normal part of immune training, frequent recurrence of illness with poor recovery often signals an underlying weakness of immunity.

In routine paediatric practice, it is common to encounter children suffering from repeated episodes of upper respiratory tract infections, tonsillitis, otitis media, diarrhoea, skin infections, and allergic conditions. These children are often labelled as having “low immunity” and are repeatedly treated with symptomatic medications. However, such an approach may not address the fundamental susceptibility that predisposes the child to recurrent illness.

Homeopathy views health and disease from a holistic standpoint, recognising that true healing involves restoration of internal balance rather than temporary suppression of symptoms. Samuel Hahnemann described disease as a dynamic disturbance of the vital force and emphasised that cure is achieved by correcting this disturbance through a remedy capable of producing a similar dynamic effect. From this perspective, enhancing immunity in children involves strengthening the vital force so that the child becomes less susceptible to disease and better able to adapt to environmental stressors.

What is Immunity?

Immunity refers to the ability of the body to resist and defend itself against disease-causing agents such as bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, and other harmful substances. It involves a complex network of organs, cells, tissues, and biochemical mechanisms that work together to recognize and eliminate foreign pathogens. The immune system plays a crucial role in maintaining health by preventing infections, limiting disease progression, and promoting recovery.

In children, the immune system is still in the process of development and maturation. During infancy and early childhood, exposure to environmental antigens helps train and strengthen immune responses. While occasional infections are considered a normal part of this developmental process, recurrent or persistent illnesses may indicate an imbalance or weakness in the body's defensive mechanisms.

From a broader perspective, immunity not only protects against infectious diseases but also contributes to maintaining physiological balance within the body. A well-functioning immune system enables the organism to adapt to environmental changes, recover efficiently from illness, and maintain overall vitality.

Types of Immunity

Immunity can be broadly classified into two main types: innate immunity and acquired immunity.

Innate Immunity

Innate immunity, also known as natural or non-specific immunity, is the first line of defence present in the body from birth. It provides immediate protection against invading microorganisms and includes physical barriers such as the skin and mucous membranes, as well as physiological mechanisms like inflammation and fever.

Components of innate immunity include

- Skin and mucous membranes
- Phagocytic cells such as neutrophils and macrophages
- Natural killer cells
- Complement proteins and inflammatory mediators

Innate immunity responds quickly to pathogens but does not provide long-lasting or pathogen-specific protection.

Acquired Immunity

Acquired immunity, also known as adaptive immunity, develops after exposure to specific pathogens or antigens. It is characterised by specificity and memory, allowing the immune system to respond more effectively upon repeated exposure to the same organism.

Acquired immunity can be further divided into

Active immunity – developed when the body produces its own antibodies after exposure to an infection or vaccination.

Passive immunity – acquired through transfer of antibodies from another source, such as maternal antibodies passed to the infant through the placenta or breast milk.

In children, the gradual development of acquired immunity plays a vital role in strengthening resistance to infections over time.

UNDERSTANDING IMMUNITY FROM A HOMEOPATHIC PERSPECTIVE

In conventional medicine, immunity is largely understood in terms of antibodies, immune cells, and biochemical responses. While these mechanisms are important, homeopathy views immunity as a broader expression of the organism's vitality and balance. A child with strong immunity not only resists infection but also recovers quickly and completely when illness occurs.

From a homeopathic standpoint, poor immunity in children may manifest as

- Frequent infections with short symptom-free intervals
- Delayed or incomplete recovery
- Failure to thrive or poor weight gain
- Digestive disturbances and poor assimilation
- Hypersensitivity to weather, food, or emotions

Such presentations indicate an imbalance of the vital force rather than isolated pathology. Homeopathic treatment aims to restore this balance by stimulating the body's self-regulatory mechanisms through the law of similars.

ORGANONIC FOUNDATION OF IMMUNE ENHANCEMENT

The philosophical basis of immune enhancement in homeopathy is clearly described in the

Organon of Medicine. In Aphorism 9, Hahnemann states that health depends on the harmonious functioning of the vital force. When this harmony is disturbed, disease manifests.

Aphorisms 72–81 emphasize the importance of understanding chronic disease tendencies, which are particularly relevant in children with recurrent infections. Repeated episodes of similar illnesses suggest an underlying chronic susceptibility that must be addressed through deep-acting constitutional remedies rather than repeated acute prescriptions alone.

In paediatric cases, early correction of this susceptibility is especially important, as timely intervention can prevent the development of chronic disease patterns later in life.

ROLE OF PAEDIATRIC CASE TAKING AND OBSERVATION

Effective immune enhancement through homeopathy begins with thorough case taking and careful observation. Children often lack the vocabulary or emotional maturity to express their symptoms clearly, making observation an essential clinical skill.

Important aspects to observe include

- Frequency, pattern, and triggers of infections
- Duration of illness and speed of recovery
- Appetite, thirst, and food preferences
- Sleep quality and posture
- Emotional reactions during illness
- Behavioural changes and activity levels
- Relationship with parents and caregivers

Observation of these parameters helps the physician understand the child's constitutional makeup and immune responsiveness.

MIASMATIC INTERPRETATION OF LOW IMMUNITY

Miasmatic understanding provides deeper insight into susceptibility patterns seen in children.

- **Psoric miasm** is commonly associated with functional disturbances, frequent colds, allergies, and hypersensitivity.
- **Tubercular miasm** is reflected in recurrent respiratory infections, restlessness, poor weight gain, and frequent relapses.
- **Syphilitic miasm** may manifest as destructive infections, severe pathology, or developmental abnormalities.

Identifying the dominant miasm allows the physician to select remedies that address immunity at a deeper level.

CONSTITUTIONAL HOMEOPATHIC MANAGEMENT

Constitutional treatment forms the cornerstone of immune enhancement in homeopathy. Rather than treating individual infections in isolation, constitutional prescribing aims to correct the child's underlying susceptibility.

Clinical benefits of constitutional treatment include

- Reduced frequency and severity of infections
- Improved recovery and vitality
- Better appetite, digestion, and sleep
- Enhanced emotional stability

Such improvements reflect strengthening of the vital force rather than mere suppression of symptoms.

MATERIA MEDICA: KEY REMEDIES FOR ENHANCING IMMUNITY

Calcarea carbonica

Indicated in children who are slow in development, flabby, and prone to frequent infections. These children often sweat excessively on the head, have enlarged tonsils, and show poor resistance to cold.

Sulphur

Useful in children with recurrent infections, poor reaction to illness, and heat intolerance. Sulphur helps improve reactivity of the vital force and is often required when well-indicated remedies fail to act.

Silicea

Indicated in children with weak immunity, delayed milestones, recurrent suppuration, and poor assimilation. These children are sensitive to cold and slow to recover.

Pulsatilla

Suitable for mild, affectionate children with frequent colds, ear infections, and digestive disturbances. Symptoms are changeable, and the child seeks comfort.

Tuberculinum

Indicated in children with recurrent infections, restlessness, poor weight gain, and family history of tuberculosis, especially when improvement is temporary.

REPERTORIAL APPROACH IN IMMUNE-WEAK CHILDREN

Repertorial analysis supports accurate remedy selection by focusing on constitutional generals rather than local pathology.

Common rubrics include

- *Generalities – Catching cold, tendency to*
- *Generalities – Reaction, lack of*
- *Mind – Weakness, children*
- *Nutrition – Emaciation in children*

James Tyler Kent emphasised that generals and mental symptoms should guide remedy choice in chronic cases.

ROLE OF ACUTE REMEDIES IN IMMUNE SUPPORT

While constitutional treatment enhances long-term immunity, acute remedies play an important supportive role during infections.

Table 1: Common acute remedies in paediatric infections.

Condition	Remedies
Acute fever	<i>Belladonna, Aconite, Ferrum phosphoricum</i>
Cough & cold	<i>Bryonia, Ipecacuanha, Antimonium tartaricum</i>
Tonsillitis	<i>Hepar sulphuris, Mercurius, Baryta carbonica</i>
Diarrhoea	<i>Podophyllum, Chamomilla, Arsenicum album</i>

PREVENTIVE AND PROMOTIVE ROLE OF HOMEOPATHY

Homeopathy plays a significant role in prevention by improving overall resistance and adaptability. Regular constitutional follow-up helps children cope better with environmental stressors and seasonal changes.

FOLLOW-UP AND ASSESSMENT OF IMMUNE IMPROVEMENT

Improvement in immunity is assessed through:

- Reduced frequency of illness
- Shorter duration and milder episodes
- Improved appetite and sleep

- Better energy levels and mood

Such changes often precede complete clinical recovery and guide further management.

SAFETY AND ACCEPTABILITY IN PAEDIATRIC PRACTICE

Homeopathic medicines are safe, gentle, and non-toxic, making them suitable for children. They do not suppress symptoms but support the body's natural healing process.

CONCLUSION

Homeopathy offers a holistic and individualised approach to enhancing immunity in children. By addressing underlying susceptibility through constitutional treatment, miasmatic understanding, and careful remedy selection, homeopathy strengthens the vital force and improves natural resistance. Integration of Organon principles with Materia Medica and Repertory enables long-term immune support and promotes overall well-being. Homeopathy thus plays a valuable role in fostering healthy immune development during the formative years of life.

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