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ARTICLE

## Title: Exploring theories of Pharmacokinetics in Homoeopathy

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## ABSTRACT

**BACKGROUND:** Pharmacokinetics is the study of how the human or animal body interacts with administered medicines inside the body until excretion from the body, as in urine, stool, sweat, etc. It primarily consists of the process of absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion (ADME). But due to the extremely diluted nature of potentized treatments, the idea of pharmacokinetics can be viewed as irrelevant in homoeopathy. Nevertheless, growing scientific interest and developments have led to a reassessment of how homoeopathic medications interact with biological systems.

**OBJECTIVES:** This article aims to explore the various concepts and applicability of pharmacokinetics principles in homoeopathy. It seeks to study existing research, propose mechanisms of action for homoeopathic remedies at ultra-high dilutions, and analyse whether traceable pharmacokinetic profiles can be established using modern technology.

**METHODS:** A thorough review of the literature was conducted, including articles from peer-reviewed journals, homoeopathic literature, and experimental trials of homoeopathic medicines. We included articles discussing nanostructures and bioavailability tests, among others. The focus of the review was on methods using nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR), electron microscopy, and high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), which showed some remnants of material in potentized homoeopathic medicines.

**RESULTS:** Recent evidence indicates that even ultra-diluted homoeopathic medicines may well contain nanoparticles or nanostructures originating from the source, which could interact with biological receptors and induce physiological responses. While classical ADME models are not relevant here, there is suggestive evidence to support the transport and actions of nanostructured medicines based on

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receptor-mediated or immune-modulatory pathways.

**CONCLUSION:** Modern pharmacokinetics may not be fully extended to homoeopathy, owing to the ultra-diluted level of medicines used, but it is now possible to consider the pharmacokinetics of homoeopathy again, following advances in nano-pharmacology and biophysics. Interdisciplinary studies with a more coherent scientific basis are necessary to unify emerging pharmacokinetic evidence and homoeopathy.

**Keywords:** *Pharmacokinetics, ADME, Homoeopathic medicines, immunomodulatory, nanoparticles, nanotechnology, epitaxy*

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## INTRODUCTION

Pharmacokinetics is derived from the ancient Greek words 'pharmakon,' meaning 'drug,' and 'kinetikos,' meaning 'movement.'[1] It is the quantitative study of drug movement in, through, and out of the body. Pharmacokinetics in modern medicine covers the absorption, distribution, metabolism, and excretion (ADME) of medicines. Applying pharmacokinetic concepts to homoeopathy is quite challenging because most homoeopathic drugs are diluted to concentrations higher than Avogadro's number, where all molecules of the original ingredient become undetectable. Motivation in researching the pharmacokinetics of homoeopathic medications has increased due to advances in nanotechnology.

## PHARMACOKINETICS COMPONENTS [2,3]

1. Absorption: It is the movement of a drug from its site of administration into the circulation. Factors influencing absorption include the route of administration, drug formulation, gastrointestinal motility, and the presence of food and other drugs.
2. Distribution: With a concentration gradient from the plasma's direction to the tissues, the drug is transferred to various tissues and organs that did not previously contain it. Blood flow, tissue permeability, drug-protein binding, and lipid solubility are some of the variables that affect it.
3. Metabolism/ Biotransformation: It refers to the chemical alteration of the drug in the body.

ISSN (O): 2583-2158

Its primary site for drug alteration is the liver; others are the kidneys, the intestine, the lungs, and the plasma. It transforms medications into more easily absorbed and excreted water-soluble molecules. It can activate, deactivate, or modify the pharmacological properties of a drug. Cytochrome P450 (CYP) is responsible for this process of drug metabolism.

4. Excretion: Excretion is the removal of the absorbed drug from the body. Drugs are excreted in urine, faeces, exhaled air, sweat, saliva, and milk.

## THEORIES OF PHARMACOKINETICS IN HOMOEOPATHY

Given the ultra-diluted nature of homoeopathic remedies, several theories on the pharmacokinetics of homoeopathic medicines have been proposed to explain how these medicines affect the body.

1. Through Homoeopathic Principles

Homoeopathic medicines interact with the vital force, which results in activation of the defence mechanism to cure the disease.[4] In aphorism 288, the 5th edition of the Organon of Medicine, Dr. Hahnemann mentioned that homoeopathic medicines are absorbed and distributed through nerves to different parts of the body.[5]

According to Dr. Richard Hughes, the drug's dynamic influence is exerted on the body and the protoplasm, the primary seat being the nervous protoplasm.[6]

2. Systemic/Immunomodulatory concept [7]

It suggests that homoeopathic remedies act by stimulating the body's self-regulatory mechanisms, triggering healing responses. Various studies demonstrate that homoeopathic medicines produce modulation of immune function at multiple levels, including modulation of gene expression, stimulation of macrophages and granulocytes, changes in expression of surface receptors, and induction of cytokines. Extensive studies are required to explore the immunomodulatory effects of a vast number of homoeopathic medicines.

3. Possible Mechanism of Hormesis

Hormesis is a dose–response relationship characterised by a biphasic dose response, where low and high doses produce opposite effects. It was first mentioned in the 18th century by the German pharmacologist, Professor Hugo Schulz.[8] It closely resembles a few of the fundamental principles of Homoeopathy, especially the concept of "minimum dose" and "similia similibus curentur". Low doses could enhance the healing power in humans, suggesting homoeopathic medicines might stimulate tissue repair in damaged cells. [3,9]

4. Nanoparticle dynamics

The presence of nanoparticles in homoeopathic medicines may shed light on some of the proposed mechanisms to explain action in homoeopathy. Due to the small size of nanoparticles, they can easily interact with biological systems at the molecular level. Nanoparticles can bind to molecules that get attached to specific receptor sites or enzymes, which, in turn, initiate the self-healing process in the body. The presence of nanoparticles in homoeopathic medicines suggests possible mechanisms of action of homoeopathic medicines.[10]

Nanoparticles of crystalline silica (silicon), along with other traces of elements, are present in the homoeopathic medicines, which may acquire structural information of the starting substance of the drug during the process of potentization (succussion). It acts as a carrier of this information to the target cells that interact with proteins and cells of the immune system.[11]

5. Epitaxy Theory

We refer to the transfer of information from the surface of one material, typically a solid, to another, usually a liquid, as epitaxy. During the process of succussion, there is the formation of minute bubbles (due to pressure exerted on) containing gaseous inclusions of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide, and possibly the drug source material.[12] In diluted homoeopathic medicine, there is the formation of clathrate-like hydrate microcrystals. The information is transferred by replicating itself similarly to crystal growth, leading to the observed effect of homoeopathic medicines and the interaction between the proteins in human cells and microcrystals.[3]

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## DISSCUSSION

The introduction of pharmacokinetic concepts into the understanding of homoeopathic medicine is contentious, as these traditionally held views are based on chemical agents that are not ultra-diluted. Pharmacokinetics is concerned with measurable concentrations of chemical substances; however, homoeopathic remedies are beyond molecular detection. New and refocused research into nanoscience and biophysics is beginning to pull together classical pharmacokinetics and the theory of homoeopathy.

In addition, the homoeopathic literature points to the idea that homoeopathic medicines typically act through nerve conduction. Recent research linking homoeopathic medicines through neuro-immunological and nanoparticle pathways highlights concordances between old teaching and contemporary science. But despite utilising more modern understandings of this new evidence, the use of pharmacokinetic measurements such as site of action, half-life, volume of distribution, or even concentration curves is an ongoing challenge in other areas of homoeopathy.

## CONCLUSION

While the traditional ADME system cannot be applied to homoeopathy due to the nature of homoeopathic medicines, recent developments in nanotechnology, biophysics, and molecular biology have renewed debate surrounding homoeopathic pharmacokinetics. The detection of nanoparticles, in combination with hypotheses regarding hormesis, immunomodulation, and epitaxy, offers a possible mechanism of how the homoeopathic medicines can interact with the human organism.

But further interdisciplinary studies of the pharmacokinetics of homoeopathic medicine are needed. Such activities may eventually serve to bridge the homoeopathic system with biomedical science towards the integrationist model of understanding therapeutics.

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