

Dynamization and Dilution

Hahnemann recognized that the use of substances that cause symptoms similar to an existing disease would acutely aggravate the condition and present other side effects. Thus he advocated the dilution of the substance to the point where the symptoms were no longer present.

Dilutions are performed as ten or one hundred fold steps. Dilutions of 1:10 are designated in the U.S. by the Roman Numeral X (1X = 1/10, 2X = 1/100, 3X = 1/1000, etc). Dilutions of 1:100 are designated by the Roman Numeral C (1C = 1/100, 2C=1/10,000, 3C = 1/1,000,000, etc). Liquids are diluted with alcohol (ethanol), water, or alcohol/water mixtures, whereas insoluble powders are diluted with lactose (milk sugar).

Many homeopathic remedies would be expected to contain zero molecules of the original substance. Supposing 40g of calcium (one mole) were diluted by homeopathic principles starting from 100% pure substance. Avogadro's number tells us that we have 6.02×10^{23} molecules per mole. By 7C the remedy would be expected to contain about 6 billion calcium molecules, and by about 11C, it would be expected to have only about 60 $((1/100)^{11} \times 6.02 \times 10^{23} = 60.2)$. At the 12C (or 24X) dilution, there is a 50/50 chance of one molecule being present. The dilution at which one would expect to have only one molecule does depend upon the starting number of molecules, but assuming that we started with all the atoms estimated to be in the universe, about 6×10^{79} , then we end up with a 50% chance to have one molecule left at 40C (or 80X), still far more concentrated than the 200C dilutions that are commonly dispensed.

The dilutions advocated by Hahnemann and those used today often reduce the concentration of the initial substance to infinitesimal levels. Hahnemann himself understood that dilutions of the magnitude he used eliminated all of the original substance. He believed, however, that the *healing power* of the substance could be preserved and actually concentrated by the process of **dynamization**.

Hahnemann believed that physical disruption of the solution or powder during the dilution process could release the spirit-like dynamic healing force contained within the substance. He believed that even after it has been completely removed from the solution by enormous dilution, the healing force remained. The dynamization could be induced by succussion of the solution between dilution steps or, in the case of a powder, by trituration in a mortar.

Hahnemann writes of this proposed phenomenon by analogy to magnetism:

"Only after (a) bar of steel is dynamized, rubbing it with a dull file in one direction, will it become a true active powerful magnet, one able to attract iron and steel to itself and impart to another bar of steel by mere contact and even some distance away, magnetic power and this in a higher degree the more it has been rubbed. In the same way will triturating a medicinal substance and shaking of its solution (dynamization, potentiation) develop the medicinal powers hidden within and manifest them more and more or if one may say so, spiritualizes the material substance itself"

(Organon § 269, 6th ed.)