

# The Three Systems of Pharmacy: *Allopathic, Ayurvedic & Homoeopathic — A Comparative Review*

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## ABSTRACT

This review compares how Allopathic, Ayurvedic, and Homoeopathic pharmacy systems work — from raw material to patient. It integrates classical dose principles of Hippocrates, Paracelsus, Charaka, and Hahnemann with modern pharmacological concepts. Case vignettes and comparison tables make each system practical and easy to understand.

*Keywords: Allopathic Pharmacy, Ayurvedic Pharmacy, Homoeopathic Pharmacy, Dose-Response, Potentisation, Shodhana, Bhaishajya Kalpana, Integrative Medicine*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Think of three expert chefs — one trained in France (Allopathy), one in ancient India (Ayurveda), one in Germany (Homoeopathy). Each uses different ingredients and techniques, yet all aim to heal. Pharmacy works the same way. All three systems share one goal: deliver a safe and effective remedy to a sick person. They differ in philosophy, source of drugs, manufacturing process, and how they think about dose. This article explains each system simply, with practical examples.

### At a Glance: The Three Systems

Feature	Allopathic	Ayurvedic	Homoeopathic
Meaning	Treat with opposite (allo = other)	Science of Life (Ayur = life, Veda = science)	Like cures Like (Homoios = similar)
Origin	18th–19th century Europe	Ancient India (5000+ years)	18th century Germany — Hahnemann

Drug Source	Synthetic, semi-synthetic, biological	Herbs, minerals, animal products	All kingdoms + nosodes + imponderabilia
Key Process	Chemical synthesis / extraction	Shodhana, Bhavana, Paka, Bhasma	Potentiation (dilution + succussion)
Dose Idea	mg/kg — material dose	Matra — based on Prakriti, Agni, season	Minimum dose — potency, not quantity
Treats	Disease (organ/molecular target)	Patient as a whole (Dosha balance)	Patient's symptom totality (vital force)
Regulation (India)	CDSCO / Drugs & Cosmetics Act	AYUSH / ASU Drug Rules	AYUSH / H.P. Act / HPI

## 2. ALLOPATHIC PHARMACY — Targeting Disease with Opposite Action

Allopathy treats disease by using drugs that produce the OPPOSITE effect. Fever → antipyretic. Infection → antibiotic. High BP → antihypertensive. It is grounded in molecular pharmacology, clinical trials, and evidence-based medicine.

### How a Drug is Made (Simple Steps)

Step	What Happens	Example
1. Discovery	Find a molecular target (receptor/enzyme)	ACE enzyme in hypertension
2. Synthesis	Chemical synthesis or extraction from nature	Aspirin from salicylic acid; Penicillin from mold
3. Testing	Animal studies, then Phase I–IV human trials	10,000+ patients over ~10 years
4. Formulation	Mix drug + excipients into final dosage form	Tablet, capsule, injection, patch
5. QC & Approval	GMP manufacturing; CDSCO approval (India)	Batch testing, sterility, potency checks
6. Dispensing	Pharmacist verifies, labels, counsels patient	Correct dose + patient education

### Key Pharmacological Laws of Dose

Concept	Simple Meaning	Clinical Example
Dose-Response	More dose → more effect (until toxicity)	Antibiotic fixed 7-day course
Therapeutic Index (TI)	TI = Toxic dose ÷ Effective dose. Higher = safer	Penicillin TI >100; Digoxin TI <2

Hormesis	Low dose stimulates; high dose harms	Low-dose aspirin protects heart; high-dose causes GI bleed
ADME	Absorption, Distribution, Metabolism, Excretion	Kidney disease → adjust dose
Pharmacogenomics	Your genes change how drugs work in your body	CYP2D6 gene affects codeine metabolism

### Case Vignette — Allopathy

Patient: 55-year-old male, BP 160/100 mmHg, Type 2 diabetes. Drug: Ramipril 5 mg (ACE inhibitor). It blocks conversion of Angiotensin I → Angiotensin II (a vasoconstrictor) — producing the OPPOSITE effect. Started at 2.5 mg to avoid first-dose hypotension (TI ~10). Titrated up after 2 weeks. BP controlled at 130/80 mmHg within 4 weeks.

### 3. AYURVEDIC PHARMACY — Nature's Intelligence, Balanced for You

Ayurveda treats the whole patient — their Prakriti (constitution), aggravated Dosha (Vata, Pitta, Kapha), Agni (digestive fire), and season. The same herb may be prescribed differently to two patients with the same diagnosis. Bhaishajya Kalpana is Ayurveda's pharmaceutical science — it transforms raw dravyas (substances) into potent, personalized medicines.

#### Sources of Ayurvedic Drugs

Source	Examples	Use
Plant (Vanaspati)	Ashwagandha, Brahmi, Haritaki, Shatavari	Adaptogen, nervine, laxative, tonic
Mineral (Khanija)	Shilajit, Swarna Bhasma, Loha Bhasma	Rasayana, anaemia, rejuvenation
Animal (Jangama)	Godanti Bhasma, Shankha Bhasma, Honey	Fever, antacid, calcium, wound healing

#### Key Pharmaceutical Processes (Bhaishajya Kalpana)

Process	What It Does	Modern Parallel	Example
Shodhana (Purification)	Removes toxins using fire, water, herbal juices	Detoxification / Purification	Guggul purified in cow milk/urine
Bhavana (Levigation)	Grinding with herbal juice repeatedly to increase potency	Nano-milling / Surface activation	Triphala churna + pomegranate juice × 7
Paka (Cooking)	Heating in ghee/oil/milk to extract active principles	Lipid-drug complexation	Brahmi Ghrita cooked 3 days

Marana / Bhasma	Metals incinerated with herbal juice → ultrafine ash	Nanoparticle synthesis	Swarna Bhasma — gold nanoparticles <50nm
Sandhana (Fermentation)	Controlled fermentation 1–3 months	Fermented phytopharmaceutical	Asava-Arishta with natural 5–10% alcohol
Arka (Distillation)	Steam distillation → aromatic water	Essential oil / Steam distillate	Pudina Arka for indigestion

### Classical Dosage Forms — Explained Simply

Form (Kalpana)	What It Is	Like...?	Example
Swarasa (Fresh Juice)	Freshly pressed plant juice	Cold-pressed juice	Amla swarasa (Vitamin C)
Kwatha (Decoction)	Herb boiled in 16x water, reduced to 1/4	Strong herbal tea	Dashamoola Kwatha for pain
Churna (Powder)	Dried, powdered herb or combination	Herbal powder / capsule fill	Triphala Churna for digestion
Vati (Tablet)	Powders bound with honey/gum into pills	Herbal tablet	Arogyavardhini Vati for liver
Avaleha/Lehya (Jam)	Semi-solid with jaggery/honey	Herbal jam	Chyawanprash for immunity
Ghrita (Medicated Ghee)	Active principles extracted into clarified butter	Lipid drug delivery	Brahmi Ghrita for memory
Taila (Medicated Oil)	Active principles in sesame/coconut oil	Topical lipid vehicle	Ksheerabala Taila for Vata
Asava-Arishta (Fermented)	Self-fermented liquid; 5–10% natural alcohol	Fermented herbal tonic	Dashamoolarishtam postpartum
Bhasma (Ash/Nanoparticle)	Metals/minerals incinerated to ultrafine ash	Nanoformulation	Loha Bhasma (nano-iron) for anaemia

### Ayurvedic Dose (Matra) — Individualized Medicine

Ayurvedic dose is never one-size-fits-all. Six factors determine the right dose for each patient:

Factor	Effect on Dose	Example
Prakriti (Constitution)	Kapha types need higher dose; Vata types lower	Kapha gets stronger Trikatu dose
Agni (Digestive Fire)	Strong Agni tolerates higher dose	Weak digestion → half Triphala dose

Vayah (Age)	Children 1/4 dose; Elderly 1/2 dose	Balacaturbhadra Churna in children
Roga Bala (Disease severity)	Acute severe disease needs faster forms (Asava)	Asava preferred over Churna in chronic cases
Kala (Season/Time)	Pitta herbs reduced in summer	Reduce ginger in hot weather
Desha (Geography)	Coastal/humid vs. dry/mountain dosing differs	Reduce Pitta herbs for coastal patients

### Case Vignettes — Ayurveda

Case 1 — Type 2 Diabetes (48M, Kapha-Pitta, HbA1c 8.2%): Vijayasar Kwatha 30ml twice daily + Gudmar Churna 2g + Triphala Churna 5g at bedtime. Why it works: Vijayasar bark (epicatechin) regenerates beta cells; Gudmar (gymnemic acid) blocks intestinal glucose absorption; Triphala improves Agni and reduces Ama (metabolic toxins).

Case 2 — Iron Deficiency Anaemia (30F, Hb 8.2 g/dL): Loha Bhasma 125mg + Amalaki Churna 500mg in honey twice daily + Punarnava Mandura 2 tabs. Why it works: Loha Bhasma provides nano-iron with >90% bioavailability (vs 10–20% for conventional iron tablets); Amalaki (Vitamin C) enhances absorption; no constipation side effect.

### 4. HOMOEOPATHIC PHARMACY — The Science of Minimum Dose

Founded by Samuel Hahnemann (1755–1843), Homoeopathy uses the Law of Similars: a substance that causes symptoms in a healthy person can cure similar symptoms in a sick one. Its pharmacy is unique — potentiation transforms even toxic substances into safe, gentle remedies by serial dilution + vigorous shaking (succussion).

#### Sources of Homoeopathic Drugs

Source	Examples	Use	Case Vignette
Vegetable	Arnica, Belladonna, Bryonia, Nux vomica	Trauma, fever, pain, nausea	Arnica 200C — post-op bruising, 45M
Animal	Apis mellifica, Lachesis, Sepia	Allergy, circulation, hormonal	Apis 30C — bee-sting urticaria, 32F
Mineral	Sulphur, Silica, Natrum mur	Chronic constitutional treatment	Sulphur 200C — chronic eczema, 28M
Nosodes (disease products)	Psorinum, Tuberculinum	Miasmatic background treatment	Psorinum 30C — recurrent eruptions, 40F
Sarcodes (healthy secretions)	Thyroidinum, Insulin	Endocrine disorders	Thyroidinum 3X — hypothyroidism, 35Y
Imponderabilia (energy)	X-ray, Sol, Luna	Radiation effects, cyclical disorders	X-ray 30C — radiology technician fatigue
Tautopathic/Synthetic	Cortisone, Vaccinum	Side-effects of drugs/vaccines	Vaccinum 200C — post-vaccination malaise, 22F

### Potentiation — How It Works

Potentiation = Dilution + Succussion (or Trituration). Each step: 1 part drug + 99 parts solvent → shake vigorously = 1C. Repeat to get 2C, 3C... 30C, 200C, 1M.

Potency	Dilution	When Used	Patient Type
6C	1 in 10 <sup>12</sup>	Acute local, sensitive patients	Children, elderly, hypersensitive
30C	1 in 10 <sup>60</sup>	General acute/sub-acute conditions	Most common in daily practice
200C	1 in 10 <sup>400</sup>	Chronic, deep constitutional	Well-selected remedy cases
1M (1000C)	1 in 10 <sup>2000</sup>	Deep miasmatic/chronic	Experienced prescribers
LM (50-millesimal)	1 in 50,000 per step	Sensitive patients; daily dosing	Hahnemann's 6th Organon method

### 5th vs 6th Organon — Hahnemann's Evolving Method (§270)

Parameter	5th Edition	6th Edition
Starting material	Fresh plant juice + alcohol	Trituration: drug + sugar of milk first
Succussion strokes	2 per step	100 per step (more dynamised)
Scale	Centesimal (C) — 1:100 dilution	LM scale — 1:50,000 dilution
Clinical advantage	Standard; widely used globally	Gentler; can give daily; easily adjustable

### Case Vignette — Homoeopathy

Patient: 38F, teacher, right-sided throbbing migraine, worse from light/noise, preceded by visual aura, at menses, relieved by pressure/dark room. Remedy: Belladonna 200C (acute) → *Sanguinaria canadensis* 200C (constitutional). Logic: Belladonna produces identical throbbing right-sided headache with photophobia in healthy subjects — Law of Similars. Result: Episodes reduced from 4/month to 1 over 3 months.

### 5. CLASSICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DOSE

Scholar	Era	Core Teaching	Modern Relevance
Hippocrates	460–370 BCE	'Extreme remedies for extreme diseases'; First, do no harm	Safety first; risk-benefit balance
Charaka	~600 BCE	Matra determined by Agni, Prakriti, Kala; Anupana crucial	Personalized dosing; drug delivery

Sushruta	~600 BCE	Shodhana before toxic minerals; dose calibration in surgery	Pharmaceutical safety; excipient processing
Paracelsus	1493–1541	'The dose makes the poison' — all things medicinal or toxic by quantity	Therapeutic Index; hormesis; toxicology
Hahnemann	1755–1843	Minimum dose via dynamisation; single remedy; Law of Similars	Low-dose medicine; sensitivity; hormesis

## 6. ANCIENT WISDOM MEETS MODERN SCIENCE

Traditional Concept	System	Modern Validation
Bhasma (Nanoparticles)	Ayurveda	Swarna Bhasma: gold nanoparticles <50nm; immunomodulatory & anti-cancer research (IIT studies)
Shodhana of Aconite	Ayurveda	Aconitine (toxic) reduced >90% by milk processing (J Ethnopharmacol 2014)
Bhavana (repeated trituration)	Ayurveda	HPLC: increased active compound release post-Bhavana (mechanochemistry)
Piperine in Trikatu	Ayurveda	BioPerine patent: piperine increases drug bioavailability 30–200% (Planta Med 1998)
Asava-Arishta fermentation	Ayurveda	GC-MS: terpenoids and alkaloids increased post-fermentation; probiotic effect
Hormesis (low-dose stimulation)	Paracelsus/Homoeopathy	5000+ peer-reviewed studies in TOXNET database (Calabrese & Baldwin 2003)
Individualized medicine	Ayurveda + Homoeopathy	Pharmacogenomics: CYP450 variants explain 30% of drug response variation

## 7. HOW THEY WORK TOGETHER — Integrative Medicine

These three systems are not enemies — they are complementary. The WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy 2019–2025 calls for integrating traditional medicine into global health systems.

Condition	Allopathy	Ayurveda	Homoeopathy
Cancer (on chemo)	Chemotherapy + antiemetics	Ashwagandha, Guduchi for immunity; manage side effects	Constitutional remedy; Cadmium sulph for chemo nausea
Type 2 Diabetes	Metformin, SGLT2 inhibitors	Vijayasar Kwatha, Gudmar Churna, dietary guidelines (Pathya)	Uranium nitricum, Phosphoric acid constitutionally
Chronic Eczema	Topical steroids, antihistamines	Khadirarista, Manjishtha, Gandhaka Rasayana; Neem taila	Sulphur, Graphites, Psorinum constitutionally
Recurrent Child Infections	Antibiotics when needed; vaccines	Sitopladi Churna, Talisadi Churna for immunity	Calcarea carb, Silica for susceptibility

## 8. CONCLUSION

Pharmacy — in all three traditions — is the science of transformation: raw matter into medicine, suffering into relief. The Allopathic pharmacist works with molecules and targets. The Ayurvedic Vaidya works with the intelligence of nature refined over millennia. The Homoeopathic physician works with the dynamic response of the vital force.

Rather than competing, these systems illuminate different facets of the same healing reality. Hippocrates taught caution. Charaka and Sushruta taught that the patient is more than a disease. Paracelsus taught that dose is everything. Hahnemann taught that sensitivity matters as much as strength. The clinician who understands all three holds a richer therapeutic toolkit than any one tradition can offer alone.

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