

Review Article

Veterinary Homeopathy: From Philosophy to Practice — An Indian Perspective on AYUSH-Based Integrative Animal Healthcare.

Ms. Bhagyashri D. Nagare*

Research Scholar, Smt. CMP Homeopathic Medical College, Ville parle, West, Mumbai, Maharashtra
400056, India.

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ABSTRACT

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Homeopathy is a holistic and alternative system of medicine that employs highly diluted substances to stimulate self-healing in living beings. Its application in veterinary medicine has seen considerable growth globally, especially in India, where traditional medicine systems like AYUSH are actively promoted in animal healthcare. Veterinary homeopathy offers promising therapeutic options for managing chronic diseases, allergic disorders, behavioral issues, infections, and general well-being in livestock, companion animals, poultry, and even wildlife. This minimally invasive therapy is valued for its gentle approach, absence of harmful side effects, and potential role in reducing antibiotic resistance. Despite ongoing debates concerning its scientific credibility, many veterinarians report positive clinical outcomes through individualized treatment regimens based on homeopathic principles. This review aims to consolidate the available knowledge on the philosophical foundations, commonly used remedies with their dosage forms, clinical applications, research evidence, regulatory frameworks, and future directions of homeopathy in veterinary medicine. The review also highlights the contribution of Indian veterinary practices in integrating homeopathy under AYUSH initiatives for rural and conventional animal care. While anecdotal evidence is substantial, a critical need exists for rigorous scientific research, standardization of treatment protocols, and professional training for veterinary practitioners. Addressing these aspects could significantly advance veterinary homeopathy from a complementary therapy to a more widely accepted integrative modality in modern animal healthcare. This comprehensive review seeks to encourage evidence-based adoption and responsible utilization of homeopathy for animal welfare and public health advancement.

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* **Corresponding Author-** *NagareB.*, Research Scholar, Smt. CMP Homeopathic Medical College, Ville parle, West, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400056, India.

Introduction:

Homeopathy, developed in the late 18th century by Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, is grounded in the foundational

principle of "similia similibus curentur," or "like cures like." This therapeutic system employs highly diluted preparations of natural substances to stimulate the body's

inherent healing abilities. Initially conceived for human medicine, homeopathy has gradually extended into veterinary applications due to its non-invasive approach and minimal side effects. In veterinary practice, homeopathy seeks to address not just the physical manifestations of disease but also the underlying energetic imbalances within the animal's body. As animals cannot verbally communicate their discomforts, veterinary homeopathy relies heavily on careful observation of physical symptoms, behavioral changes, and responses to environmental stimuli.

Globally, veterinary homeopathy is gaining momentum, particularly in countries like India, Germany, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. In India, where traditional medicine systems are deeply rooted, the integration of homeopathy in animal healthcare is actively promoted under the Ministry of AYUSH. This framework supports the use of complementary therapies in both rural and urban animal health management. India's vast population of livestock and companion animals, coupled with the increasing demand for organic and residue-free animal products, has further propelled the use of alternative therapies such as homeopathy.

History of Veterinary Homeopathic Medicine

The history of veterinary homeopathy parallels that of human homeopathy, with its origins tracing back to the work of Dr. Samuel Hahnemann in the late 18th century. Dr. Hahnemann's principles of 'like cures like' and potentization of remedies laid the foundation for homeopathic practices, which were initially limited to human applications. However, the therapeutic success of homeopathic treatments soon led practitioners to explore its application in animal healthcare. The first documented uses of homeopathy in veterinary medicine emerged in Europe during the 19th century, particularly in Germany and the United Kingdom, where veterinarians began employing homeopathic remedies to

treat livestock and horses. This period saw the development of specialized veterinary materia medica and repertories that adapted Hahnemann's principles to address animal physiology and disease presentations. Throughout the 20th century, the practice spread to other parts of Europe and eventually to countries like India, where traditional and alternative medicine systems were culturally accepted. In India, veterinary homeopathy gained formal recognition under the broader umbrella of AYUSH, reflecting governmental support for integrating traditional knowledge into mainstream animal healthcare services. The establishment of homeopathic veterinary clinics, the inclusion of homeopathy in veterinary curricula, and the development of research initiatives have all contributed to the growth and formalization of veterinary homeopathy. Today, veterinary homeopathy is considered a complementary and integrative therapeutic option in various countries, supported by both anecdotal successes and emerging scientific research.

Veterinary homeopathy is applied in the treatment and prevention of a wide range of animal health issues, including chronic illnesses, infections, musculoskeletal disorders, digestive disturbances, skin conditions, and behavioral problems. Its application is particularly valuable in organic farming, where restrictions on the use of antibiotics and synthetic drugs are stringent. By reducing reliance on conventional pharmaceuticals, homeopathy may also contribute to mitigating the global challenge of antimicrobial resistance.

Despite its widespread use, veterinary homeopathy continues to face criticism and skepticism from certain sections of the scientific community. The primary concerns revolve around the extreme dilution levels of homeopathic remedies and the lack of robust empirical evidence confirming their efficacy. Nevertheless, various clinical studies and practitioner reports indicate

positive outcomes in treating both acute and chronic animal conditions through individualized homeopathic prescriptions. In this context, veterinary homeopathy represents an integrative approach that complements conventional treatments, promoting holistic animal welfare.

The Indian context provides a unique case study in the adoption of veterinary homeopathy. Government support, academic interest, and grassroots-level usage converge to create a favorable environment for its development. The Ministry of AYUSH, in collaboration with agricultural and veterinary bodies, has been instrumental in disseminating knowledge, developing guidelines, and encouraging research into veterinary homeopathy practices.

This review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of homeopathy's philosophical underpinnings, commonly used remedies, dosage forms, clinical applications, evidence-based research, and regulatory status within veterinary medicine. Special emphasis is placed on its implementation in the Indian scenario, where traditional systems of medicine are respected and increasingly incorporated into mainstream veterinary practice. The objective is to bridge the knowledge gap and encourage informed discussions around the scientific evaluation and responsible integration of homeopathy in modern animal healthcare systems [1,2]

Philosophical Framework of Veterinary Homeopathy

Veterinary homeopathy is grounded in the philosophical tenets originally formulated for human medicine but carefully adapted to suit animal health management. Central to this philosophy is the principle of 'similia similibus curentur' or 'like cures like,' which postulates that substances capable of producing symptoms in a healthy organism can treat similar symptoms in a diseased one when administered in highly diluted forms. In veterinary contexts, the identification of symptoms

relies heavily on meticulous observation of an animal's behavior, physical signs, and environmental responses, given their inability to verbalize discomfort.

Individualization of treatment is another cornerstone of veterinary homeopathy. Each animal is regarded as unique, with its own constitutional type and symptom expression. Practitioners assess subtle behavioral changes, feeding habits, physical conditions, and environmental influences to determine the most appropriate remedy. Homeopathic remedies are derived from plant, mineral, and animal sources, prepared through successive dilution and succussion processes believed to potentiate their healing properties while minimizing toxicity.

The concept of vital force, an energetic essence sustaining life, is emphasized in veterinary homeopathy. Illness is seen as a disturbance in this vital force, and treatment aims to restore balance through the stimulation of self-healing mechanisms. Miasmatic theory further informs chronic disease treatment, addressing inherited or acquired disease predispositions.

Holistic in nature, veterinary homeopathy does not focus solely on the presenting complaint but evaluates the animal as a whole. This integrative approach seeks to harmonize physical, emotional, and energetic health, making homeopathy particularly suitable for chronic, recurring, or idiopathic conditions in veterinary patients.

Commonly Used Homeopathic Remedies in Veterinary Medicine

Remedy	Indications	Dosage Form
<i>Arnica montana</i>	Post-surgery, trauma, injury, pain, inflammation	Oral globules, mother tincture
Belladonna	Sudden fever, heatstroke, acute infections	Oral globules, liquid dilution
Nux vomica	Digestive disturbances, toxicity, colic	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Rhus toxicodendron</i>	Arthritis, muscular pain	Oral globules, external ointment
Silicea	Expulsion of foreign bodies, wound healing	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Aconitum napellus</i>	Shock, acute febrile conditions	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	Skin disorders, papilloma	Oral globules, external ointment
Sulphur	Chronic skin conditions, constitutional remedy	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Calcarea carbonica</i>	Developmental delays, bone disorders	Oral globules, liquid dilution
Hepar sulphuris calcareum	Abscesses, suppuration	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Carbo vegetabilis</i>	Emergency collapse, bloating, flatulence	Oral globules, liquid dilution
Phosphorus	Bleeding tendencies, respiratory disorders	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	Nerve injuries, pain	Oral globules, external ointment
<i>China officinalis</i>	Weakness after blood loss, dehydration	Oral globules, liquid dilution
Graphites	Chronic skin eruptions, oozing wounds	Oral globules, external ointment
<i>Lycopodium clavatum</i>	Digestive disturbances, liver complaints	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Natrum muriaticum</i>	Emaciation, dehydration, chronic illnesses	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Pulsatilla nigricans</i>	Mucopurulent discharges, emotional imbalance	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Bryonia alba</i>	Joint pain exacerbated by movement	Oral globules, liquid dilution
<i>Gelsemium sempervirens</i>	Weakness, tremors, paralysis	Oral globules, liquid dilution

These remedies are frequently documented in clinical veterinary practice across India (Chandrasekaran et al., 2019) [4].

Clinical Applications

Veterinary homeopathy encompasses a wide spectrum of clinical applications, addressing various health concerns

across different animal species. The adaptability of homeopathic treatment to both preventive and curative care has contributed to its growing popularity among veterinary practitioners worldwide. This therapeutic modality is utilized not only for alleviating physical ailments but also for managing behavioral issues and enhancing overall animal welfare.

In **livestock**, homeopathy is extensively used to manage conditions like mastitis, reproductive disorders, parasitic infestations, and foot-and-mouth disease [5]. For dairy cattle, remedies such as Belladonna and Hepar sulphuris calcareum are administered to manage udder infections and abscesses, reducing reliance on antibiotics [5,6]. The gentle nature of homeopathy makes it suitable for treating pregnant and lactating animals, contributing to the production of organic, residue-free milk and meat products.

Among **companion animals**, homeopathy addresses dermatological conditions, allergies, musculoskeletal issues, and behavioral problems such as anxiety and aggression. Remedies like Sulphur, Rhus toxicodendron, and Pulsatilla nigricans are frequently prescribed for chronic skin conditions and joint ailments in dogs and cats. Behavioral disorders are managed using remedies such as Gelsemium sempervirens and Phosphorus to alleviate anxiety and stress-related behaviors.

In **poultry**, homeopathy plays a role in improving growth rates, managing respiratory diseases, and enhancing immunity. Remedies such as Aconitum napellus and China officinalis are employed to combat acute respiratory conditions and general weakness in birds, respectively [6]. The adoption of homeopathy in poultry farms contributes to sustainable poultry production by minimizing the use of conventional antibiotics.

Equine medicine benefits from homeopathy in managing conditions like tendonitis, laminitis, colic, and

respiratory ailments. Horses respond well to remedies like *Bryonia alba* and *Arnica montana* for musculoskeletal injuries and post-trauma recovery [4,6].

In **wildlife rehabilitation**, homeopathy is used to manage stress, injuries, and post-capture trauma. Remedies are selected based on observed symptoms and behaviors to facilitate recovery in injured or rescued animals without introducing chemical residues.

Overall, veterinary homeopathy supports holistic animal care by offering individualized treatment strategies tailored to the physical and behavioral presentations of each animal. Its integration into organic farming and sustainable animal husbandry practices highlights its value as a complementary tool in modern veterinary medicine [3-7].

Evidence-Based Research

Evidence-based research in veterinary homeopathy remains a developing domain with a mix of supportive and inconclusive findings. Numerous anecdotal reports and practitioner observations suggest positive outcomes in treating various animal ailments using homeopathy. However, systematic and controlled studies are limited, and existing results often reflect methodological inconsistencies.

Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) form the backbone of scientific evaluation in this field. Klocke et al. (2010) conducted a rigorously designed trial indicating the efficacy of homeopathic treatment in managing clinical mastitis in dairy cows, demonstrating reduced clinical symptoms and shortened recovery times when compared to untreated controls. Similarly, research by Vaarst et al. (2014) highlighted improvements in poultry stress responses and wound healing post-application of homeopathic remedies, reinforcing the potential for non-invasive treatments in commercial animal production [5,6].

Mathie et al. (2014) systematically reviewed RCTs across various species and conditions, concluding that while some studies reported favorable outcomes, methodological flaws and small sample sizes often limited the robustness of conclusions. Challenges in standardizing remedy selection, dosage, and assessment of clinical endpoints continue to hinder consistent evidence generation. The placebo effect, a persistent concern in homeopathic research, also complicates interpretations, although its relevance in non-verbal animal patients remains debated [7].

Laboratory-based research, including in vitro studies, has attempted to elucidate the biochemical and immunological mechanisms behind highly diluted homeopathic remedies, with some studies (Bellavite et al., 2006) suggesting measurable biological effects, though replication remains challenging.

Overall, while preliminary evidence supports the efficacy of veterinary homeopathy in certain contexts, a critical need persists for large-scale, well-designed clinical trials and mechanistic studies. Establishing clear diagnostic criteria, remedy standardization, and objective clinical outcome measures will be essential for advancing veterinary homeopathy towards broader scientific acceptance.

Regulatory Status and Integration in India

In India, the integration and regulation of homeopathy in veterinary medicine are overseen primarily by the Ministry of AYUSH, which actively promotes the use of traditional medicine systems, including homeopathy, across both human and animal health sectors. The Ministry's initiatives aim to standardize veterinary homeopathy practices and ensure their incorporation into mainstream animal healthcare, particularly in rural and underserved areas.

Veterinary homeopathy in India benefits from government-endorsed programs such as the National

AYUSH Mission (NAM) and state-level AYUSH schemes, which emphasize rural outreach and capacity building among veterinary practitioners. The Ministry of Agriculture collaborates with the Ministry of AYUSH to promote homeopathic treatment protocols for livestock health management as part of sustainable and organic farming strategies. Despite such initiatives, there remains a lack of a dedicated regulatory body solely focused on veterinary homeopathy, resulting in varied implementation standards across states.

Regulatory frameworks governing veterinary homeopathy in India include guidelines from the Ministry of AYUSH and veterinary councils, though these are less comprehensive compared to regulations governing human homeopathy. Veterinary colleges in India increasingly incorporate introductory modules and workshops on veterinary homeopathy, reflecting a growing academic interest. However, structured postgraduate or diploma programs specifically dedicated to veterinary homeopathy remain limited.

Official pharmacopoeial standards for veterinary homeopathic remedies are not yet established independently. Current practice generally follows the guidelines laid down in the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI), with adaptations as per veterinary clinical needs. Efforts to develop dedicated veterinary pharmacopoeia and remedy standardization are underway under the supervision of AYUSH and related agencies. (Ministry of AYUSH, 2022) [2].

In terms of policy, veterinary homeopathy is promoted as part of sustainable animal health initiatives focusing on residue-free milk and meat production, aligning with organic farming and eco-friendly animal husbandry practices. Various government-funded workshops, training programs, and field research projects support the dissemination of veterinary homeopathy knowledge among livestock farmers and veterinarians.

Despite these positive steps, challenges such as lack of widespread practitioner acceptance, limited clinical documentation, and absence of mandatory regulatory protocols inhibit the broader acceptance and standardized application of veterinary homeopathy in India. Future regulatory efforts are likely to focus on remedy standardization, practitioner certification, formal curriculum development, and evidence-based practice guidelines to facilitate the responsible integration of homeopathy within India's veterinary healthcare framework. (Ministry of Agriculture, 2022) [8].

Challenges

Challenges in Veterinary Homeopathy	Description
Lack of Standard Protocols	Absence of universally accepted treatment guidelines and remedy standardization limits consistency across veterinary practitioners.
Skepticism Among Veterinarians	Scientific debates over efficacy and dilution principles create reluctance among modern veterinary professionals to adopt homeopathy in their practice.
Limited Inclusion in Veterinary Curricula	Most veterinary academic programs in India and globally provide minimal formal education or clinical training on homeopathy.
Inadequate Research Funding and Infrastructure	Limited allocation of funds and resources restricts large-scale clinical trials and mechanistic studies on veterinary homeopathy.
Remedy Selection Challenges	Difficulty in remedy selection due to animals' inability to verbally communicate symptoms complicates individualized prescriptions.
Absence of Dedicated Regulatory Framework	India lacks a focused regulatory system exclusively governing veterinary homeopathy, leading to varied practices and oversight.
Practitioner Training Gaps	Few structured postgraduate or certification programs exist for veterinary professionals specializing in homeopathy.
Limited Clinical Documentation	Scarcity of systematically recorded clinical outcomes restricts evidence accumulation and inhibits knowledge dissemination.
Public Awareness Deficit	Farmers and animal owners often lack awareness of veterinary homeopathy as an alternative therapeutic option.
Industry Resistance	Pharmaceutical industry dominance and regulatory prioritization of conventional medicine present barriers to broader adoption.

Future Scope

The future scope of veterinary homeopathy is broad and evolving, especially as interest in sustainable and integrative animal healthcare grows globally and in India. Key future directions include:

Expansion of Scientific Research: Large-scale, multi-centric clinical trials and meta-analyses need to be

conducted to validate the efficacy and safety of homeopathic treatments in diverse veterinary conditions. Collaborative research initiatives involving veterinary colleges, AYUSH institutions, and agricultural universities can facilitate more credible evidence generation [5to7].

Development of Veterinary Homeopathic Pharmacopeia: Establishing a dedicated veterinary homeopathic pharmacopeia under the guidance of the Ministry of AYUSH and veterinary councils will help standardize remedies, their preparation, and their dosage forms. This will ensure consistency and reliability in treatment outcomes [2].

Policy Integration and Regulatory Frameworks: Stronger regulatory policies focusing exclusively on veterinary homeopathy are essential. Policies should address remedy standardization, training requirements, and practice guidelines. Integration of homeopathy into national animal health programs could promote sustainable animal farming and organic product certification [2,8].

Veterinarian Training and Education: Comprehensive postgraduate diplomas and certification programs for veterinarians specializing in homeopathy must be established. This includes curriculum development for undergraduate courses and continuing professional development (CPD) initiatives to promote integrative veterinary medicine [2,4].

Adoption in Organic and Sustainable Farming: Veterinary homeopathy aligns well with organic farming principles due to its non-toxic, residue-free treatment approach. Future strategies should include incentivizing its use in organic dairy and poultry farming to meet growing consumer demands for chemical-free animal products [5,6,10].

Digital and Data-Driven Adoption: Development of digital repositories, mobile applications, and AI-driven

platforms for remedy selection and clinical documentation could enhance the precision and monitoring of homeopathic treatments in animals, aiding large-scale data collection and research [2].

International Collaborations: Strengthening partnerships with international veterinary homeopathy associations can lead to the adoption of global best practices, standardization, and knowledge sharing across borders [7,10].

Public Awareness and Farmer Education: Public outreach programs targeting farmers and livestock owners should focus on educating them about the benefits, limitations, and safe practices of veterinary homeopathy. Workshops, demonstration farms, and government-sponsored training sessions could foster broader acceptance [2,8]

Environmental Sustainability Contributions: By reducing the dependency on antibiotics and synthetic drugs, veterinary homeopathy can play a role in addressing issues like antimicrobial resistance (AMR) and environmental contamination, contributing to global sustainable development goals [6,10].

In conclusion, realizing the full potential of veterinary homeopathy requires coordinated efforts in research, education, policy, and practice. With strategic advancements, veterinary homeopathy can evolve into a scientifically robust, sustainable, and widely accepted complementary therapy within modern veterinary healthcare systems.

Indian Veterinary Homeopathic Manufacturers and Their Products

India is home to several prominent manufacturers specializing in veterinary homeopathic products, contributing to the accessibility and expansion of homeopathy in animal healthcare. Some key companies and their notable products include:

Manufacturer	Product	Uses
Dr. Willmar Schwabe	Schwabe Livotone	Liver tonic and

India Pvt. Ltd., Noida	Vet Drops	digestive aid in livestock
HAPCO – Homeopathic Animal Product Company, Rajkot	Mastilep, Tymplex	Mastitis management, bloating and indigestion treatment in cattle
SBL Pvt. Ltd., Delhi	SBL Liv-T, SBL Wormorid Vet Tablets	Liver health support, deworming in livestock and pets
Bhandari Homoeopathic Laboratories, Kolkata	Uterine Drops, Anti-Mastitis Tablets	Reproductive health, mastitis prevention in dairy animals
Medisynth Chemicals Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai	Alfalfa Tonic Vet, Bio-Combination Vet Tablets	General tonic for growth and immunity, mineral support for livestock
Fourrts (India) Laboratories Pvt. Ltd. – Veterinary Division, Chennai	Digeston Drops, Fourrts Cough Drops Vet	Digestive disorders, respiratory infections in animals
Vibcare Pharma Pvt. Ltd., Panchkula	V-Liv Syrup, V-Worm Syrup	Liver care, gastrointestinal parasite management
Hahnemann Scientific Laboratory (India) Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata	Feedzyme Vet, Homeo-Cal Vet	Appetite stimulation, calcium supplementation for livestock and poultry
BJain Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd., Noida	Worm Stop Drops, Appetite Plus Vet Drops	Deworming, appetite stimulation in small and large animals
Excel Pharma, Ludhiana	Mastitis Care Drops, Udder Care Cream	Prevention and supportive care in mastitis, udder health improvement in dairy cattle

These manufacturers adhere to the standards prescribed in the Homeopathic Pharmacopoeia of India (HPI) and often align their practices with AYUSH regulations. The availability of indigenous veterinary homeopathic products supports local farming communities and promotes sustainable livestock management [2,4,5,6,7,8,9].

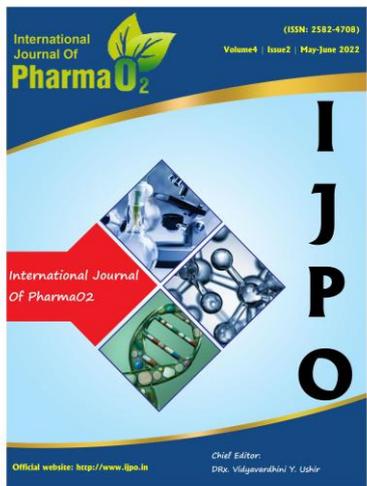
Conclusion

Veterinary homeopathy, despite controversies, offers a complementary approach in animal healthcare, especially in managing chronic and non-critical conditions. In the Indian context, leveraging AYUSH support and traditional knowledge can help integrate homeopathy responsibly within veterinary practice. Ensuring rigorous research, standardized protocols, and professional training will be crucial in validating and expanding its role in modern veterinary medicine. Veterinary homeopathy represents an evolving complementary healthcare approach, blending traditional philosophies with modern veterinary practices. In India, its integration under the Ministry of AYUSH supports the national goal of sustainable, organic, and residue-free animal production. While homeopathy offers benefits such as minimal side effects and holistic treatment, challenges persist due to limited scientific validation, absence of standardized protocols, and lack of widespread practitioner training. Expanding clinical research, developing regulatory frameworks, and enhancing veterinary education will be critical for mainstream acceptance. With coordinated efforts, veterinary homeopathy can advance from a complementary system to an evidence-based integrative modality contributing to animal welfare, public health, and environmental sustainability. Its role in addressing antimicrobial resistance further underscores its potential in contemporary veterinary healthcare systems globally and nationally.

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