

**The Effect of *Argentum nitricum* 200CH on Pulse Rate, Blood Pressure and Perceived Levels of Anxiety in Students Undergoing a Test**

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Johannesburg, in partial fulfillment of the degree of Masters of Technology:

Homoeopathy,

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**DECLARATION**

I, Christinette Snyman declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Masters of Technology at the University of Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other Technikon or University.

\_\_\_\_\_  
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## ABSTRACT

Anxiety is a universal human emotion, described as a state of changed mood with obvious negative affect and expectation of future adversity and danger (American Psychiatric Association, 1994). Although anxiety can be an important motivational drive, it can become debilitating when experienced to an extreme degree (Smith *et al.*, (1996). Nervousness or apprehension in students due to an upcoming examination is an extremely widespread occurrence. However, some students experience test related anxiety to such an extent that it interferes with their studying and may lead to other negative effects of anxiety such as inability to concentrate or focus, depression, poor academic results and loss of self-esteem and self-confidence (American Counseling Association, 2004). Homoeopathy is an effective form of treatment for many acute disorders and the remedy *Argentum nitricum* is considered a specific treatment for anxiety, especially when related to an upcoming event (Morrison, 1993; Swayne, 1998).

The aim of this study was to determine the effect of *Argentum nitricum* 200CH on blood pressure, pulse rate and perceived levels of anxiety in students undergoing a test.

The research study was conducted according to the randomized, double-blind method. Forty participants older than eighteen years of age and studying the same course were recruited from the University of Johannesburg. The fact that the participants were currently in the same year and studying the same course, ensured that that similar stress levels were experienced. Participants were randomly divided into an experimental and control group consisting of twenty participants respectively. During the course of the study, neither the researcher nor the participants were aware of the nature of the groups. Perceived anxiety levels as well as cardiovascular responses to anxiety were assessed by way of a State-Trait-Anxiety-Inventory (**Appendix F**) and measurement of blood pressure and pulse rate. Each participant

was required to undergo these investigations fifteen days prior to the test, as this provided a baseline level to compare with measurements taken on the day that participants wrote a test. *Argentum nitricum* 200CH or placebo was taken daily at eight o'clock in the morning for five days prior to the test, including the day of the test. Results from measurement of blood pressure and pulse rate were entered on the participant's Data Collection Table (Appendix B) and compared and analysed according to the paired t-test. Furthermore the results from the State-Trait-Anxiety-Inventory for each participant was determined, compared and analysed using the paired t-test.

The results of this study showed that *Argentum nitricum* 200CH does not reduce test related anxiety in a general population of tertiary students, although it did have a definite effect on the pulse rate of the experimental group which remained more stable and increased to a lesser degree than that of the control group.

This work is dedicated to my parents, who in quiet expectation supported me in every way possible throughout my studies.

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