

[British Homoeopathic Society \(1943\)](#). Report on mustard gas experiments (Glasgow and London). *British Homoeopathic Journal* 33:1-12.

Key passages

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*If circumstances lead me, I will find
Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
Within the centre.*

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REPORT ON MUSTARD GAS EXPERIMENTS (GLASGOW AND LONDON)

By the SPECIAL SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE BRITISH HOMŒOPATHIC SOCIETY
to the MINISTRY OF HOME SECURITY

January 25th, 1943

FIRST EXPERIMENT, *December 11th*, 1941. WARDEN'S POST (RALSTON)

Twelve male volunteers arranged themselves in pairs according to age and approximately similar physique.

A number of glass vials similarly labelled and containing white pills were placed on a table and one member of each pair had a first choice of any of these vials. His partner was then required to choose any serial number above or below that of his partner. In this procedure, of each pair of volunteers, one received pills which had been medicated, while the other received pills without medication. The volunteer was unaware of the nature of the pills he had chosen and the Medical Officer was likewise unaware without reference to a code of serial numbers on the vials which had been previously prepared.

Procedure. Having selected a vial, the volunteer immediately noted the serial number and entered this upon his record sheet as the case number. All volunteers then bared the forearm and IMMEDIATELY took the first dose (one pill) and THEREAFTER the Medical Officer applied the 2 mm. drop of Mustard Gas (10 per cent. solution) to the forearm, and allowed the benzene to evaporate before allowing the arm to be covered by the clothing. No DRESSING was applied.

The total number of volunteers in this series of experiments was 240, of which 127 were "subjects" and 113 "controls".

After a series of preliminary experiments, it was agreed that the appearance of the lesion on the seventh day after the application of Mustard Gas solution was the best guide in assessing the result of medication.

Observations were therefore made by two medical officers on the seventh day after the application of Mustard Gas and only those cases in which there was agreement as to the appearance were included in the records. These appearances referred to the condition of the lesion and were graded into "superficial", "medium" and "deep".

It was by no means difficult to decide upon visual appearance, but where there was any doubt the description was in favour of the more severe lesion, i.e. if there was doubt as to whether the appearance suggested "superficial" or "medium", the decision was given in favour of "medium" and similarly as between "medium" and "deep".

Of one thing there was no doubt, that what might be described as "messy" lesions were almost invariably amongst the "controls".

Neither of the observers were aware at the time of inspection, which cases were medicated and which were not, and the administration of placebo to controls ensured that none of the volunteers were aware which were receiving drug and which not.

The preparation of the potencies was in the hands of qualified dispensers who had nothing to do with the experiments themselves and in whose hands remained the code numbers which were only checked up AFTER the conclusion of the observations.

No medicated dressing was used, nor any local application permitted in the cases tabulated in these records.