

Study into Bach as a pre-anaesthetic medicine

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Preoperative anxiety and tension can cause mental stress for patients who are about to undergo an operation. This in turn can prevent the smooth introduction of anaesthesia. For this reason it is very important to help pre-operative patients stay calm and free from anxiety. Drugs can be used, but they don't work well for everybody, and sometimes they cause an excessive reaction.

Bach remedies are mainly made from plants. They don't have side effects and can be used safely. *Rescue™ Remedy*, a combination of remedies, is said to alleviate various stresses, so I decided to study its usefulness as pre-anaesthetic medication.

To do this I set up a randomised comparative test and double blind study using patients who were undergoing surgery and either having general or spinal anaesthesia. Patients who had high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease or mental disorders were excluded. The research was fully explained to the patients and forty of them who signed the written agreement were chosen as volunteers. The ethical committee of the Tsudanuma Chuoh General Hospital approved the research.

The volunteers were divided into two groups of twenty. Both groups received treatment bottles that were prepared in the usual way, but while the treatment bottles of one group contained four drops of *Rescue™ Remedy*, those of the control group only contained mineral water. Patients in both groups were asked to take four drops of the remedies orally at any time prior to the day of the operation, as frequently as they liked, and whenever they felt anxious and stressful; or if they simply felt like taking remedies.

When evaluating the results we recorded the number of times that the person had taken the remedy before entering the operating room. We measured blood pressure and heart rates when the person arrived in the operating room. We used the Visual Analog Scale to measure levels of anxiety and tension the day before the operation and after entering the operating room, and data were reported using standard statistical methods for measuring average results, standard deviation and so on.

One of the forty volunteers did not undergo the scheduled operation due to cancellation and three others had not felt the need to take *Rescue™ Remedy*, so these four people were excluded from the research. This left 36 people in the study. There was no significant difference statistically in the 2 groups as to age, sex, height or weight.

We found no significant difference between the two groups as to blood pressure at systolic, diastolic and mean blood pressure. No significant statistical difference was found in heart rates either, although heart rate showed a tendency to decrease amongst subjects who took *Rescue™ Remedy* in comparison with the control group.

Other measures produced more interesting results. In particular, the frequency of intake of *Rescue™ Remedy* decreased significantly in the group of subjects who had actually taken *Rescue™ Remedy* when compared to the control group's intake from the fake treatment bottle. This last result seems to show that taking *Rescue™ Remedy* alleviated preoperative stress in the test group. Subjects felt anxiety and tension less frequently, thus they took the remedy less frequently. This confirms earlier research into pre-anaesthetic medication which showed that patients felt a subjective alleviation of anxiety when taking medication, despite the fact that the heart rate still increased at the time of entering the operating room.

These results indicate that *Rescue™ Remedy* can alleviate anxiety and tension prior to operations, and that it should be considered to have potential as a pre-anaesthetic medication.

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