Background:

Dispensing homeopathic medicines in a homeopathy office setting is very common among homeopaths. However, some homoeopaths feel uncertain about how and what to disclose to patients about the prescription. Based on findings of our previous study most of the homeopaths do not openly communicate the prescription details because they are concerned about possible negative impact of patient's knowledge of homeopathic medicine on the treatment outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

Our study aims at finding evidence about negative or positive effects of the current dispensing methods among homeopaths in Canada.

METHODS

A comparative study was performed. The study groups consisted of the patients who had received basic information about their medicines and those who had not. Information on actual practice of prescription, dispensing methods and related patient's reactions, and the treatment outcomes was recorded during the course of treatment, and compared between the two study groups.

Results:

Based on the results of our study, there was no statistically significant difference between the patients who received a labeled homeopathic medicine and those who did not in terms of expected treatment effects. Our findings showed that a high proportion of patients receiving a non-labeled remedy who asked about their medicine's name became more anxious and concerned about taking the prescribed medicine when the homeopath refused to provide the requested information.

Conclusion:

In our study the negative effects of not labeling homeopathic medicines on treatment outcomes dominated its positive effects. It seems to be essential to develop regulations and standards for prescriptions or office-based dispensing of homeopathic medicines, and to include these standards in training of homeopaths.