

BBC Inside Out South West wrote to the managing director of Ainsworths, Anthony Pinkus, posing as Margaret Smith, the mother of an unvaccinated child. This is the full text of the exchange.

From: Margaret Smith
To: Enquiries
Subject: Whooping cough

Hello I wonder if you can help me, I am not sure where else to get this information. My four year old son has not had the whooping cough vaccine (although he has had tetanus) and I have always been happy I made the right decision but I am worried now there is now so much about it on the news. I also know someone who has whooping cough (an adult) and it has really knocked them for six. My freind swears by homeopathy and say there is something i could give him which would help protect him. Do you know if this is true and where I could get it?

Thanks so much
Margaret Smith(Mrs)

From: Tony Pinkus
To: Margaret Smith

Dear Margaret

Thank you for your enquiry.

Whereas I have been dispensing homoeopathic Pertussin 30c for 30 years for this purpose - and made sure I gave it to my own children, I am unable to make a claim for its success as there have been no successful trials reported. There was one trial conducted (in the early 80s by a homoeopathic GP) which failed miserably, not because the remedy didn't work, but because of the haphazard ways that GPs reported Whooping Cough. At the time they got 12.5p for each report of a cough deemed to be whooping cough, and most were keen not to do the work for so little remuneration. Others over-reported it, whilst some fell in between and thus there was no baseline upon which to evaluate *any* treatment or prevention for the disease.

Homoeopathy uses prevention and treatment regimes to assist in common childhood illnesses and if you want to use these you are welcome to do so. Typically the remedy PERTUSSIN 30c is used in prevention and DROSER 30c or COCUS CACTI 30c or ANTIM TART 30c are used in treatment. We supply all of these online at www.ainsworths.com and you only need a small vial in each case, 7g pills are adequate with two pills as a dose three times daily for treatment. Prevention dosages are more guesswork as they rely on having had a dose close to the time of contact, and this is an unknown factor. As such we usually advise daily dosages for three days then once weekly for six weeks and monthly for three months afterward. This would take you through the prone period.

Once again I repeat that we are making no claims here and that If you wish to speak to a homoeopath, please do ring us on the pharmacy line and we will be happy to assist you.

Kind regards

Tony Pinkus
Chief Pharmacist

From: Margaret Smith
To: Tony Pinkus

Dear Tony

Thank you so much for this it is a huge help. Would you recommend he gets the vaccine anyway? I'm just worrying about the next time I see my GP as she is very much in favour and will probably have another go at convincing me!

Thank you again

Margaret

From: Tony Pinkus

To: Margaret Smith

Dear Margaret

Personally I would use the Pertussin 30c alone and did with my own children, who are now adults and never had a problem. In fact they had no vaccines.

It is very much a personal decision and one that you must feel comfortable with, whatever you choose. The GP will undoubtedly throw a lot of fear in your direction, particularly as there is no alternative treatment as far as she is concerned and she will have no experience of homoeopathy to balance her decision. If you make a compromise and have both, then the homoeopathic remedy will offset the side effects of the vaccine.

Regards

Tony