

AN
INAUGURAL DISSERTATION

ON

*Treatment of Inflammation
of the neck of the Uterus*

SUBMITTED TO THE

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Treatment of Inflammation of the neck of the uterus

It is very seldom that inflammation of the neck of the uterus is seen in its incipient stage.

The inquietude and suffering of the patient is so slight, that she scarcely imagines any thing wrong consequently makes no complaint.

Were she to seek advice the want of any well marked symptoms would prevent the existence of disease being suspected. But when the disease has proceeded farther, when the inflammation has laid hold of the deeper tissues of the cervix, the symptoms are well marked and

The patient will tell you there is something wrong and by carefully observing the symptoms complained of, you may be able to recognize the disease in its early stage.

When there is simply inflammation of the membrane covering the cervix, it may be subdued by emollient and astringent injections, warm or tepid baths, rest, and due regard to the general health.

Much oftener however the cervix will be found enlarged, the inflammation deep seated and extending to the cervical cavity. In such cases the remedies above mentioned are not sufficient to subdue the inflammation and we must have

When applied to a non-ulcerated mucous surface it merely seems to produce a white film or epithelial esca, the falling of which is never followed by ulceration nor excoriation and all evidences of its having been applied disappears in a few days.

The solid nitrate of silver or a strong solution should be applied every three, four or five days, to the inflamed membrane covering the cervix.

This also is the mode of treatment when there is inflammation in the cavity of the uterine neck; carrying the caustic by means of a camel hair pencil as far back as the inflammation extends.

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by treatment, it becomes acutely
painful. This change is very
trying to the patient who is
apt to think herself worse if
not apprized of it beforehand.
The cervical cavity is very sensi-
tive with most females cau-
sing the patient to suffer a
considerable amount of pain
when this region is cauterized.
The pain is sometimes very much
prolonged but its duration is
variable in different persons
and even in the same person
at different times.

It may continue an hour or two
or perhaps two three or four days.
Sometimes the pain is felt
behind the pubis in the region

where the neck of the uterus is situated and in the very spot where the caustic has been applied; but in the majority of instances there is pain in the back ovarian and hypogastric regions, which shows at once to the patient the connection which exists between the local disease and the sensations formerly experienced.

Local depletion. Such as the abstraction of blood by means of leeches and scarification is, of much value and quite as applicable to the cervix in acute inflammation as it is to the external parts of the body.

of cold water saturated with alum - thrown far up into the vagina.

For want of these precautions too much blood may be lost from a very limited number of leeches without any commensurate local benefit being derived.

The object of applying the leeches is to reduce the uterine inflammation and remove the congestion, but not to drain the rest of the system through the womb. A rational course must be pursued to derive that benefit from leeches which they really can give. They should be applied once or twice at

the commencement of the treatment, when the inflammation is acute, but may be considered generally speaking as having done all the good towards reducing the inflammation of which they are capable except in connexion with the exacerbation caused by menstruation.

Just before menstruation local depletion often removes a degree of congestion that would otherwise prevent or retard its appearance and thus an easy period ensues.

But it is more especially after menstruation that leeches to the cervix uteri are valuable.

After the menstrual flux has ceased the uterus often seems incapable of expelling the blood which physiologically fills it, during menstruation and thus the organ remains in a state of morbid congestion, which is very unfavorable to the subsidence of the inflammatory disease.

This morbid congestion is removed by the application of leeches, which may be repeated every month until the inflammation be subdued; should the case seem to require their use; care however must be taken that too much blood be not lost at these periodical bleedings.

The practitioner should apply

the leeches himself, for he is thereby able to form an opinion on many points which will guide him as to their repetition besides having an opportunity of making a very careful examination of the uterine organs.

There is another grand reason why the leeches should be applied by the physician to avoid pain—The external surface of the neck, as we have seen, is not so sensitive and when the leeches fix on it the patient experiences little or no pain. Generally speaking she is only aware of their presence from the dragging sensation to which suction gives rise which ceases in a few minutes.

The cervical cavity on the contrary is very sensitive and if a leech fixes in it, the patient may experience most excruciating pain.

It comes on as an acute pain in the uterine region gradually increasing and at last gives rise to torments of the most severe character which returns every two or three minutes like labor pains, as is the case with all uterine spasms.

In such cases we should administer chloroform or an enemata of laudanum. As the os is not un frequently found open in these cases the leeches may enter the cavity if necessary are taken to prevent their entrance. The most efficient treatment is the introduction of a

small cone of sponge or cotton into the open os. This plug should be introduced with care so as to give no pain and a string should be fastened to it by which its extraction may be effected.

The leeches may be applied with the common cylindrical speculum it being the best instrument that can be used.

The cervix may be brought into view by this instrument and the os being closed as above directed. The leeches should be put into the speculum and pushed close up to the osuteri by a plug of cotton or sponge.

The plug may be left in about fifteen minutes and on being with drawn it will generally be found

that the leeches have filled and that some have come away already. Thus the entire operation need not consume more than twenty or thirty minutes.

I have not time or space to say anything of scarifications which are far inferior to leeches, on account of the small quantity of blood that issues from the incisions.

Injections. Vaginal injections used in a proper way form an important part of the treatment in uterine inflammation and not only so but might be used as a great prophylactic to such diseases. It is an axiom that such a disease may be, and many

Times is brought on by a stag-
 nation of the secretions of these
 parts, for the want of proper clean-
 lines and this is set up irritation
 and as I believe actual inflammation.
 The injections may be emollient,
 anodyne, astringent or they may
 consist of simply water; which may
 be cold or tepid. Cold water acts
 not only as a wash or lotion but
 has a decided curative effect.
 Water being a potent tonic and as-
 tringent, may be used with great
 benefit when the inflammation
 has subsided in order to give
 strength to the relaxed mucous
 membrane. When employed with
 this intention a large quantity—
 two or three pints—should be used.

The water should be injected once or twice during the day and may be quite cold or with the chill taken off according to the time of the year and the temperature of the body.

As a general rule the colder the water the more decided are its tonic effects, and a small portion of brandy may be added with good effect—about one part brandy to three parts water.

The emollient injections may be of milk and water or a decoction of marshmallows used tepid or cold. It has a very soothing effect and is principally useful when there is a considerable amount of irritation or inflammation about

The vagina and vulva which frequently accompany inflammation of the cervix.

Water may be rendered anodyne by the addition of sulphate of morphia or a drachm or two of the tincture of hyoscyamus.

But a better effect is obtained by injecting thrown into the rectum.

Astringent injections are most valuable remedies in the treatment of inflammation of the lower segment, of and vagina.

Those principally used are nitrate of silver, alum, sulphate of zinc, acetate of lead and a solution of tannin.

When we use the nitrate of silver in solution we should be careful

generally powerless to subdue confirmed inflammation of the substance of the cervix either internal or external. Their inefficacy in inflammation of the cervical cavity is in a great measure owing to the solution not reaching the region affected. But when successful the recovery is more tedious than when cauterization of the inflamed surface is resorted to.

Notwithstanding it is not impossible to cure the slightest form of inflammation, and perhaps ulceration of the uterine neck by vaginal injections by rest and by general medication without the use of the speculum, yet it is very desirable

That the attempt should be made if the scruples of the patient can possibly be overcome.

All delicacy must be waived.

We should also bear in mind that however careful and minute the examination made with the finger may be, it can only enable us to form a surmise as to the precise nature and extent of the disease; consequently when symptoms indicating disease are present unless we bring the speculum to our assistance, we must treat our patient in a great measure in the dark.

Moreover when once the speculum has been used for the purpose of diagnosing, its further use as a means of treatment is not likely

to meet with any obstacle on the part of the patient or friends. In order to obtain the full benefit derivable from vaginal injections they must be used properly and this is never done unless the patient be instructed how to proceed.

She should lie horizontally on her back on the bed or sofa with the pelvis slightly elevated so that the fluid may gravitate towards the uterus. The natural contractility of the vagina expels the water it is true, but not until it has well washed the entire vagina.

A flat bedpan should be placed under the pelvis to prevent the fluid from soiling the bed or linen of the patient.

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The best instrument for vaginal injections is a pump syringe with an elastic vaginal tube adapted to the syringe and presenting at its extremity four or six small holes, on the sides as well as at the end, and any quantity of fluid can be injected without its being withdrawn.

We should seldom use less than a pint of the solution when medicated and when it is water only, we may use more. The ivory and metal syringes in general use are too small and it is owing entirely to the use of these inefficient syringes and to no precaution being taken to insure the injection reaching the affected parts, that

they have fallen into disuse with some practitioners who assert that vaginal injections are of little use in the treatment of uterine inflammation.

The injections may be used to assist in ~~overcoming~~ inflammation and may be applied twice per day, along with more powerful and more efficacious means.

In these cases they act merely as an adjuvant in the treatment carrying away all morbid secretions and preventing the congestion and inflammation from extending farther.

Baths. Shower baths, may be used to much advantage as a means of invigorating the general health.

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