

DIET FOR THE SICK.

Food for the sick should be nutritious, easy of digestion, and free from oily or fatty substances. **The following articles should be religiously abstained from:** pork, fats, butter, salted or smoked meats, and in many cases, all kinds of meats, salt fish, and most kinds of fresh fish, lobsters, clams, and oysters, rich gravies, and greasy soups, **mustard, pepper, spices of all kinds, vinegar, pickles, raw vegetables of all kinds** (*this would then include juicing of raw vegetables*), **cheese**, rich pastry and puddings, oily nuts, tea, coffee, **condiments of every kind**, rich preserves, hard boiled eggs, fried eggs, and fried food of all kinds, distilled and fermented liquors of every kind, and whatever else impairs or injures digestion.

If the patient is suffering with severe acute disease, he should take very little food, and that should be prepared in as plain and simple a manner as possible. This class of patients should subsist upon gruel made from some kind of meal; such as wheat, oat, corn, or barley meal. It may be given without milk, or with the addition of one-third milk. Milk toast, dry toast, boiled rice, wheat-meal and oat-meal mush, ripe fruit, either cooked or uncooked, baked apples, etc., are all good food for the sick; but they should be taken in small quantities by those who are suffering with febrile diseases. As a general rule, chronic

invalids will find it far better for their health to partake of food but twice in the twenty-four hours than to eat oftener. They should breakfast at from seven to half-past eight, A. M., and dine at from half-past one to three, P. M. **Not more than three or four varieties of food should be eaten at one meal**, and these should generally be preparations of some kind of grain, fruit, or vegetable. ~~Fresh meat, such as beef, mutton, venison, etc., may be used occasionally in small quantities. (not today with all the diseased animals) Milk and cream may be sparingly used in cooking (not today with all the diseased animals).~~ **Concentrated foods should not be used.** They will not properly sustain life. Unbolted wheat-meal or oat meal bread, mush, and cracked wheat, corn-meal bread, mush, and gruel, boiled rice, pearl barley, potatoes, apples, baked, raw or stewed, are all staple articles, and may be used freely; while green corn, hulled corn, parched corn, green and ripe peas and beans, and many other fruits, grains, and vegetables, may be frequently used.

There are, however, some forms of dyspepsia in which the unbolted wheat meal, corn meal, cracked wheat, and oaten grits, will prove very irritating, and cannot be used. This is the case in ulcerated conditions of the duodenum and rectum. Sometimes the liver, when in a diseased condition, excretes an acrid, corroding bile which corrodes the duodenum, or upper portion of the small intestine, causing ulceration of its mucous

membrane. Then, again, the rectum sometimes becomes ulcerated, the ulcers being caused by piles. In either of these cases, unbolted wheat meal, cracked wheat, and other coarse articles of diet, will be very apt to irritate the ulcerated surface and thereby increase the pain and also the purulent discharges.

Local quiet is very essential to the healing of the ulcerated surface of the intestines, therefore the diet, in these cases, should consist of a very small amount of farinaceous food with mealy potatoes, baked apples, grapes, and most kinds of subacid fruits. Arrowroot, tapioca, etc., may be used. Those who are dyspeptic should be careful to avoid all those articles of food which they have found to be injurious to them. They **must not overeat**, and **should not usually eat both fruits and vegetables at the same meal**. If their cases are very bad, they should use mostly dry food, such as dry toast, graham crackers, and parched corn, all of which should be **thoroughly masticated before being swallowed**. Patients who are recovering from a severe acute disease usually have voracious appetites. Such persons will have to be extremely careful not to overeat, and not to indulge their appetites by using hurtful substances. Thousands sacrifice their lives yearly by not properly restraining their appetites while they are weak and unable to use much food. Persons who have been accustomed to the so-called good things of this life will, without doubt, find it to be quite a trial to restrict themselves to a strictly hygienic diet; yet if they

can become accustomed to such a diet, they will be amply rewarded in the end by improved health and strength. It is true, however, that many who have abjured drugs, and who have discontinued the use of flesh-meat, tea, coffee, etc., find themselves weaker than before making this change in their diet. I have known several such persons, and they have brought their experience forward as proof of the unsoundness of the vegetarian theory. But in every case, when inquiry was made, it was found that mistakes had been made. In some cases, they had suddenly discontinued the use of articles that were stimulating, and restricted themselves to a meager diet; in other cases, they did not cook the food so as to make it relish; in still other cases, they substituted large quantities of sugar and cream or butter in place of the meat they formerly used. Such practice is all wrong. Break off from the use of meat gradually, and supply its place with good hygienic food, **well cooked**, and in good variety. Never overwork when making these changes, but graduate the work to the strength. Be sure to secure good unleavened bread.

The Hygienic Family Physician: A Complete Guide for the Preservation of Health, and the Treatment of the Sick without Medicine, pg. 191-194 by M. G. Kellogg