

THE WET-GIRDLE.

The wet-girdle sustains the same relation to the abdomen and small of the back that the chest-wrapper sustains to the chest and shoulders. It is made and applied in the following manner: Take three or four yards of strong, yet not very coarse, toweling; wet enough of this to pass one and a third times around the body, and apply it in such a manner that the part most affected shall receive two thicknesses of the wet portion. Then pass the dry portion around the body so as to cover all of the wet portion and prevent the air from coming in contact with it, as rapid evaporation would take place if any portion of the wet cloth was left exposed to the atmosphere, and the patient would chill.

The wet girdle is very useful in all diseases of the abdominal and pelvic organs, and in all cases of weakened and relaxed or torpid abdominal muscles, and is just adapted to dyspepsia, torpid, congested, or inflamed livers, torpid or inflamed bowels, constipation, affections of the spleen and kidneys, inflammation of the bladder, catarrh of the bladder, albuminuria, uterine derangements, such as inflamed uterus, dysmenorrhœa, leucorrhœa, and other menstrual disorders, ovarian difficulties, and abdominal dropsy, in all of which diseases the patient will find the wet-girdle worn about the abdomen one of the best remedies. It is useful also in the early stages of diarrhea, dysentery, cholera morbus, and cholera.

The wet-girdle may be worn day and night in many chronic difficulties; but it should never be worn until the skin becomes sore or disorganized. It has been worn constantly by some patients for weeks at a time, only being removed to be wet as often as it became dry; but it always causes serious injury, when thus worn, as large portions of the skin become disorganized, forming many small, or a few large, running sores, which are a severe drain upon the patient's vitality.

After the wet-girdle has been worn for two or three days, it should be laid aside for two or three days, after which it may be again applied. It should be wet as often as it becomes dry. The best way is to wear it nights, removing it each morning. There are patients, however, who cannot wear the girdle nights on account of chilling while sleeping. Such persons should leave it off nights and wear it only in the middle of the day. It should never be worn when it causes chilliness. If the patient finds, after wearing the wet-girdle for a time, that the skin is becoming irritable, or painful, or if an eruption or a rash makes its appearance, its use should be discontinued at once. Whenever the wet-girdle is removed, the parts previously covered by it should be bathed in cool water and well dried and rubbed as after other baths. The wet-girdle should usually be applied warm or tepid, unless there is active inflammation, in which case it may be applied cool.

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