

RHEUMATISM.

This disease is not confined to any special locality nor to any particular organ of the body, but it particularly affects the dense tissues of the joints, the tendons, and ligaments, and the membranous sheaths of the muscles and their fibers, and the lining membranes of the cavities of the body, all of which are composed of white, fibrous tissue, to which this disease seems to be confined. There are two forms of rheumatism, the acute and the chronic.



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CHRONIC RHEUMATISM.

This disease is similar to gout, except that the large joints are affected instead of the

Rheumatoid arthritis

Rheumatoid arthritis can cause pain, swelling and deformity. As the tissue that lines your joints (synovial membrane) becomes inflamed and thickened, fluid builds up and joints erode and degrade.

small ones. It differs from acute rheumatism in that the pain and tenderness are less, and there is little or no fever.

Treatment.— The same as for gout, which see.

ACUTE RHEUMATISM.

This disease is characterized by fever, profuse sweating, and inflammation of the membranes of some one or more of the large joints. This disease is to be especially dreaded on account of the extreme suffering it causes.

Symptoms.— The early symptoms are restlessness and fever, succeeded at the end of twenty-four hours by stiffness and aching pain in the limbs and joints. Exposure to cold and damp or similar depressing influences generally precedes these symptoms. The pain quickly increases, and in a very short time is accompanied by swelling and great tenderness in one or more of the large joints, with high fever and much general disturbance. When the disease is fully

established, the patient is very restless, yet he dares not move. The pain in the affected joints (many of the joints are frequently affected) is so severe that the weight of the bed-clothes can hardly be tolerated. The skin is not unfrequently bathed in sweat.

Treatment.— Apply prolonged warm **fomentations** to the affected joints, or the hot fomentation alternated with cold every five or ten minutes for a half hour at a time, to mitigate the extreme pain and tenderness, then give a tepid **wet-sheet-pack** for an hour, unless the patient becomes weary. As soon as the patient can be moved from his bed, he should take a **warm full bath**, or a warm **sitz-bath**, for fifteen minutes, once a day, or he may take the **hot-air-bath**, or the **vapor-bath**, for ten or fifteen minutes (see direction for these in Part III.). The patient should be restricted to a very spare diet for the first few days, or until the fever subsides. The diet should be composed of wheat meal or oatmeal gruel, toast, bread, and acid fruits; lemons, especially, may be given freely.