

DYSENTERY.

When the laws of health are all obeyed, this disease never exists. Dysentery consists in an inflammation and ulceration of the lower portion of the large intestine and the rectum. There is usually more or less feverishness, frequent mucous and bloody stools, bearing down of the lower portion of the large intestine, a frequent desire to go to stool, and griping pains in the abdomen. In some cases, the ulceration extends the entire length of the large intestine and some distance into the small intestines.

Cause.— Improper food, impure water, exposure to wet and cold, intemperance, excessive use of flesh-meats.

Treatment. — The bowels should be well cleansed by a large warm enema, after which a small cold enema should be given and retained if possible. In some cases, ice water has the most soothing effect. The warm sitz-bath may be taken for eight or ten minutes at a time two or three times a day. A large cold wet compress should be applied to the abdomen constantly, and changed as often as it becomes

warm, until the inflammation is subdued. Hot fomentations applied for half an hour, or alternated with cold every ten minutes, will be found very useful. The entire surface of the body should be sponged off several times a day with water that is most agreeable to the patient's feelings, until the fever ceases. The patient should take occasional sips of ice water. The diet should be very spare until the violence of the inflammation and fever is overcome. Total abstinence from food is better. All the food taken should be bland, and of the lightest kinds, such as boiled rice, rice-meal gruel, gruel from any kind of meal, with or without milk. New milk may be given. Perfect rest in bed in a well-ventilated room is requisite even in the mildest forms of dysentery.



The Hygienic Family Physician: A Complete Guide for the Preservation of Health, and the Treatment of the Sick without Medicine, pg. 334-37 by M. G. Kellogg