

PULMONARY CONSUMPTION. (Closely related to pulmonary tuberculosis)

There are several varieties of pulmonary consumption, but inasmuch as they all result in the wasting of the patient's body and vitality, and as they all require about the same treatment, the separate varieties will not be presented here. The symptoms are such that they are not noticed much, and the patient seldom thinks there is much the matter with him until he is past help.

In all forms of pulmonary consumption, the conditions are as follows: The lungs are inflamed and ulcerated, or they contain abscesses, or the mucous membrane of the air-cells is coated over with a catarrhal membrane, or the lungs are filled with tubercles. It matters not which of these conditions exist, the result is the same. The blood is not properly aerated, as the patient cannot inhale sufficient air to vivify it properly, consequently, the blood is not in condition to be used in building the tissues, and the patient gradually wastes away. The wasting, however, does not particularly consist in the destruction of tissue in the lungs. It consists in this: The same waste and decay of tissue that takes place in health, as the result of vital action, takes place in disease, as the result of vital action. In health, the tissues are rebuilt as fast as waste occurs, consequently, the strength

does not fail. In consumption, the same waste of tissue occurs, but as the blood has not sufficient vitality to make tissue, it is not used to any extent, consequently, as the tissues are not rebuilt, the body must soon waste away. Another fact to be noticed is, that in all forms of consumption, the internal organs, especially the lungs, are congested or inflamed, while there is but a feeble circulation in the extremities and in the surface.

Treatment.— From the forgoing remarks, it will be seen that in treating consumption, there are two things to be accomplished if we would be successful. 1. The congested and inflamed condition of the lungs is to be overcome. 2. The tissues of the patient's body are to be supplied with well-vitalized blood. Here, then, we have indicated the course of treatment to pursue. The congestion is to be overcome by inducing an active superficial circulation. This is to be accomplished by baths of a few minutes' duration at as low a temperature as will be agreeable to the patient. He must not chill, neither must his system receive a shock. The baths should be tepid or cool. If the cool bath is employed, it should not be continued more than one or two minutes, and the patient should be well rubbed during the bath. The tepid bath may be continued from two to five

minutes according to the strength of the patient, and should end by pouring cool water over the patient. Never give consumptive patients a bath sufficiently cold to cause a shock.

The above baths should be given once or twice a week, and everyone should be followed by friction, or good dry-hand rubbing. If the patient does not warm up by the rubbing, and a good reaction does not take place, the bath will do injury. The patient should clothe his extremities as warmly as any part of his body, and be sure to keep them always warm. To overcome the inflammation in the lungs, make cold, cool, or tepid applications to the chest, with hot fomentations, or dry heat to the spine for ten or fifteen minutes at a time two or three times a week, and wear the wet compress over the lungs three or four nights each week. The wet jacket may be worn in place of this if it does not cause the patient to chill in the night.

The sun-bath should be taken daily, and the patient should be much in the open air and sun shine, and should occupy a well-ventilated room night and day. His bed should be well aired daily.

To supply the tissues with well-vitalized blood, the patient must subsist upon nourishing food, discarding all stimulating substances, all grease, fats, oils, and

condiments of all kinds. See Diet for the Sick. He must take all the outdoor exercise that his strength will permit, and must accustom himself to full and free breathing. The last will require much time, practice, and patience. To accomplish it, the patient should stand erect, with the shoulders well back, or he should lie on his back, without a pillow, on the floor, table, or some other hard, level substance; then, with the lips closed, he should slowly fill his lungs, drawing the air in through the nostrils. Great care is required at first not to strain the lungs. The lungs should be thus filled two or three times, then the patient should rest five minutes, and then fill them as before. He should continue this exercise for half an hour at a time, several times each day, commencing gradually at first, only filling the lungs nearly full. While thus filling the lungs, and during the whole time he is thus occupied, the patient should strike all parts of his chest and abdomen with the closed hand, very gently at first, afterward using more force, but never so as to cause much pain. This full breathing and drumming the chest and abdomen must be persevered in until the lungs fill naturally without it. This may require many months.

The dress must be very loose about the waist; corsets must not be worn. The patient should read Part I. of this work, and practice all it teaches. So also should

all who would escape this fatal disease; for ninety-nine cases of consumption out of every hundred result from violating the laws of health needlessly. The young, especially, should strive to so live that they may escape this dreaded and fatal disease. Oil-baths have been recommended in this disease— see Oil-bath— but I have never given them.

Those who are troubled with lung difficulty should spend a few months at some health institute in the early stages of this disease; for more benefit can be received by them in one month in the early stages than in six months at a later period. The great trouble in treating this disease is that it is generally neglected until it is too late to help the patient.