

In determining the temperature of the water we must have regard to the strength and condition of the patient, for if the shock be too great we obtain only depression, and thus if the patient be very weak the water must not be very cold.

Persons of plethoric habit must bathe with much caution, for the excitement produced in such people may be too great, and thus headache, giddiness, congestion of the brain, may follow the use of the bath.

Children under two years of age should not have cold sea or fresh-water baths given them. At this early period of life they are easily influenced, and may be seriously injured. Warm sea bathing for such is preferable, or the cold bath may be administered in the following way:—The child must be placed (or, if too young to stand, held) with its feet in warm water, and before a good fire, and cold water should be poured over the body for one to two minutes. The water should not be applied to the head. When administered in this way, very young children may have cold baths given them with the very best result. The same method should also be adopted with older children if they be weak, or if the weather be very cold, or the water may be slightly warmed in addition.

May pregnant women bathe? If they have had previous abortions, if they be nervous and irritable, baths had better be abstained from. Under other circumstances, both the mother and child will be much benefited by sea bathing. It is also unadvisable to commence a course of bathing at the time of menstruation, and at first bathing should be discontinued at these periods.

Patients who are very weak should not at once commence to bathe in the cold sea; with such the system may be so weak that only depression will result from the use of the bath. In such people cold bathing is apt to cause shiverings, trembling, a feeling of excessive fatigue, and with loss of appetite and other symptoms, and these results continue for the rest of the day, and often much longer. If such symptoms occur, or if the patient be considered too weak for cold bathing, tepid baths should be used, and the temperature of these should be daily lowered until the temperature of the sea is reached. It has been stated that water in motion produces a greater shock than water at rest, and we have seen that the amount of shock must be regulated to the condition of the patient; consequently, weak people should bathe in a calm sea. Persons of stronger health may choose a rough sea; for the action of the billows on the body is pleasurable and exhilarating to the spirits, and in such persons produce great tonic effects.

Too much exercise in the water should be avoided by weak people, as such are liable to be easily fatigued, and then depression follows. Patients