

The heart is the seat of frequent complications during the course of scarlet fever. Associated with the nephritis we have enlargement of the right side of the heart with Tachycardia and diminished tension of the blood vessels, and this enlargement exists in all cases of nephritis. If the case is of short duration, then this enlargement disappears and the heart resumes its normal size and tone. If the disease be prolonged, then compensatory hypertrophy results with permanent enlargement and other changes which necessarily follow in its train. Often in scarlet fever an endocarditis, a pericarditis, or myocarditis may be found, but these are rare, and many cases of endocarditis are due rather to rheumatism than to true complications of scarlet fever.

This condition (rheumatism) so frequently follows scarlet fever that it is held that scarlet fever directly pre-disposes to rheumatism, probably through the lowered tone of the joints from blood and nutritious changes. Other bone diseases may also show themselves. If patient be phthisical then tubercular disease of the joints may follow; this and septic joint disease are common sequelae following severe cases of scarlet fever.

As another complication of scarlet fever might be mentioned the condition of purpura hemorrhagica, sometimes met with, modifying the ordinary erythema. Here we find patches of ecchymoses varying in size and color, the hemorrhage often being excessive and the patches large. The prognosis in these cases is grave in proportion to the extent and severity of the hemorrhage.

As the gastro-intestinal tract is involved in the same way as the skin, we find disturbances of this tract quite common, so that nausea, vomiting, gastritis, diarrhœa, dysentery and even enteritis may show themselves, depending of course in their severity upon the degree of inflammation.

Catarrhal conditions of the respiratory tract also are met with, producing laryngitis, bronchitis, and not uncommonly catarrhal pneumonia. Any involvement of the respiratory tract calling upon the heart for increased energy is a dangerous complication. Already the heart muscle and centre has been weakened by the virus, and the toxins, and the diminished nutrition, so that it is in no condition to respond to the increased labor of sending the usual supply of blood to the congested pulmonary apparatus, and collapse may be looked for.