

## HIVES—URTICARIA.

## ITS CAUSES AND TREATMENT.

One of the very common diseases of childhood, and one that occasions much suffering to the child, is nettle-rash, or Urticaria, or, more commonly, Hives. This disease is of an acute inflammatory nature, characterized by the sudden development of whitish, pinkish, reddish elevations or wheals. They come out suddenly and remain a variable period—from a few minutes to a few hours. There is intense itching and burning. The eruption varies in size and general appearance. Sometimes the spots are no larger than a pea, while again great wheals may be seen. The spots are white or red, or may contain a watery exudation. Rubbing the skin vigorously will help the rash to appear.

Hives are most commonly associated with some gastric disorder, especially from particular kinds of food that disagree with the individual system. Strawberries are the cause in some children, while in others rich food and pastries are exciting causes. Occasionally there is a nervous affection causing the disease. The sudden changes of weather may also produce this annoying rash.

In some cases gastric derangement will be first noticed. Even acute nausea and vomiting, with pain in the region of the liver, may exist prior to the development of the eruption. A sensation of smarting and burning, at some particular spot, may be the first indication of trouble. The wheals burn, bite, sting and itch acutely. Urticaria is a simple ailment except in young babies. In poorly nourished children, those feeble at birth and who are subject to constitutional diseases, Hives may possess more or less danger. Suppression of the Hives in young children may result in acute bronchitis or pneumonia.

The treatment of Urticaria is simple. Investigate the diet. Certain articles of food may cause the rash in children,

just as in some adults the disease occurs from eating strawberries, oysters, lobsters or certain other articles of diet. The diet should be of milk at first, and experiments can be made as to other foods agreeable to the patient. Local medication is necessary only when the itching and burning is very severe. Then a soda bath, a salt bath, or a weak dilution of the selected internal remedy may prove beneficial in allaying the irritation.

Homœopathic remedies have long been recognized as of great value in the treatment of this disease. In some cases only a very close study of the little patient and the symptoms presented will enable the physician to find the indicated remedy.

Pulsatilla will meet cases where the Hives are of gastric origin, with nausea and vomiting.

Antimonium Crudum is a useful remedy when the use of acids have irritated the stomach. Heat will aggravate the eruption and the child is intensely irritable and wants to be let alone.

Nux Vomica will relieve cases caused by rich foods, with the wheals appearing over the region of the stomach and liver. A drowsy, sleepy condition exists and there may be some jaundice.

Urtica Urens is the remedy needed when there is intense, fiery itching of the skin. The face becomes blotched and swollen.

Dulcamara is useful in cold, damp weather. When the rash disappears violent attacks of coughing may result. The child is blue and cold.

Other useful remedies are: Arsenicum, Calcarea Carb, Rhus tox, Sepia, Apis, and Sulphur.

A. R. GRIFFITH, M. D.

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"Ask only the well about their health."