

complaint. In others the stomach, the kidneys, the uterus, etc., may one or all be at fault.

In these notes I shall refer more particularly to the symptoms of downward displacement of the stomach, or gastropotosis, in women.

According to my experience, downward displacement of the stomach is a cause of a considerable proportion of the cases of indigestion in women who have born children.

The gastropotosis in these cases is usually accompanied by downward displacement of other abdominal viscera, which no doubt increases the digestive disturbances.

The subjective symptoms referred to the stomach, of gastropotosis are of very little use in determining the nature of the disease.

The functions of the stomach are frequently disturbed. In the majority of the cases the gastric secretion is increased, but normal or diminished secretion is not uncommon. The motility of the stomach is probably always depressed.

In this type, as in all cases of gastropotosis, the physical signs are the most important in diagnosis. The abdomen is flaccid, and one is frequently struck with the ease with which right kidney, and in some cases other abdominal organs, may be palpated. In this connection I may state that during the last two years I have been on the outlook for patients with palpable pancreas. In two cases I could feel the head of the organ very distinctly and in many others indistinctly. The patients in whom this sign is found are emaciated and have flaccid abdomens, with downward displacement of the stomach.

The most important physical sign in gastropotosis is the recognition, by inspection, of the position of the stomach. Both the curvatures of the stomach are lower than normal and the lesser is frequently visible.

This character can readily be made out by inspection after inflation of the stomach. All that is necessary in many cases is to have the patient drink a glassful of soda water and then breathe deeply, when the distended stomach may be seen moving up and down in the abdomen. The position may also be determined by means of the splashing sound and auscultatory percussion.

Indigestion is not the only complaint of these patients. They are weak and reduced in flesh and suffer more or less from neurasthenia. Emaciation and weakness are very common symptoms. So constant is this the case that when a thin married woman consults me on account of indigestion I always think of gastropotosis as a likely cause of her complaints.