

RESTRICTION AND PREVENTION OF SCARLET FEVER.

FROM A DOCUMENT ISSUED BY THE MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF HEALTH FOR
PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION.

Scarlet Fever is now believed to be one of the most contagious diseases. It is sometimes called 'Scarlatina,' 'Scarlet Rash,' etc. One attack usually prevents subsequent attacks. The greatest number of deaths from this disease are of children under ten years of age. Adult persons do sometimes have the disease. Scarlet Fever is believed to arise from a special contagium or poison which may be conveyed, to persons previously unaffected, by personal contact, by infected clothing or paper rags, or by any of the discharges from the body of a person affected with the disease.

The discharges from the throat, nose, and mouth are considered extremely dangerous, but those from the skin, eyes, ears, kidneys and bowels, are also dangerous, and remain so for a considerable time.

Filth, all forms of uncleanness, and neglect of ventilation increase the danger of spreading the disease.

Communication—It is believed that the disease may be communicated by a person recovering therefrom so long as the usual subsequent scaling or peeling of the skin continues, which sometimes is not completed before the lapse of seventy or eighty days, although usually completed sooner.

The interval of time which may elapse after exposure to the contagium of scarlet fever and during which a susceptible person so exposed may expect to be taken sick with the disease, varies from one to fourteen days.

Separation of the sick from the well. Whenever a child has sore throat and fever, and especially when this is accompanied by a rash on the body, the child should be immediately isolated as completely as possible from other members of the household, and from other persons, until a physician has seen it and determined whether it has scarlet fever. All persons known to be sick with this disease should be promptly and thoroughly isolated from the public.

That this is of more importance than in the case of small-pox is indicated by the fact of the much greater number of cases of sickness and of deaths from scarlet fever,—a disease in which there is no such prevention known as vaccination.

The room into which one sick with this disease is placed should previously be cleared of all needless clothing, carpets, drapery, and other materials likely to harbor the poison of the disease, except such articles as are essential to the well-being of the patient. The sick room may have no carpet, or only pieces which can afterwards be destroyed. Provision should be made for the introduction of a liberal supply of fresh air and the continual change of the air of the room without sensible currents or drafts.

Pocket-handkerchiefs, that need to be saved, should not be used by the patient; small pieces of rag should be substituted therefor, and after being once used should be immediately burned.