

### Devitalizing Pulp.

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There is, perhaps, no operation that calls for treatment at the hands of the dental surgeon, and which is attended with so much unnecessary pain, as the devitalizing of pulps.

We believe that much of the pain which so many operators complain of, as resulting from the application of arsenious acid to a live pulp, is due to the wretched manner in which the agent is too frequently employed.

There are various reasons for this deplorable state of affairs, but the one that stands out in bold relief, high above all others is—carelessness.

Too often when we find an exposure, which it is necessary to devitalize, we neglect to thoroughly remove all the debris immediately overlying and surrounding the point of exposure, and thus at the very outset we make a mistake.

Then again, perhaps, the saliva has almost unchecked headway into the cavity, or the devitalizing agent is not applied directly to the pulp, but is placed almost anywhere so long as it is in the cavity.

And then the grand finale is realized when a pellet of absorbent cotton, saturated with a solution of sandarach, or some other combination of a similar nature, is inserted to seal the orifice.

And it generally succeeds in sealing up more than the cavity, for in about nine cases in every ten it gums over the point of exposure, and prevents the proper operation of the arsenic and a raging toothache is the immediate result.

This should not be.

There is no duty in life, no matter how simple or insignificant, but the proper performance calls for more or less care and the observance of certain laws, or facts. How much more necessary then is it to have a systematized method in dealing with that minute but complex combination of arteries, veins, and nerves we term the dental pulp?

To properly destroy a pulp, it is absolutely necessary that the agent be placed in immediate contact. All decayed and loose particles should be carefully removed and the cavity thoroughly flooded with warm water. If this is conscientiously performed, it ensures us one great essential, namely, that of a clean point to receive the application.

If possible, the rubber dam should be applied and the cavity dried as much as possible. The exposure should also be enlarged