

the central and western states were attacked very little, with a total of thirty-nine to fifty cases having been developed in Detroit.

Just as other contagious and infectious diseases are communicated and transmitted to others by the sick or carriers, so is infantile paralysis. Unfortunately, we are still at sea as with what means this disease is communicated, but we do know that all discharges of the patients with the disease is infectious. I shall not attempt to dwell on this disease in this paper at length, but will discuss the characteristics in brief.

DEFINITION

Infantile paralysis or Poliomyelitis is an acute infectious and communicable disease characterized, at times, but not always, by involvement of the central nervous system, as a result of which it is frequently followed by paralysis.

Infantile paralysis is a disease attacking all ages, mostly children under five years of age, no one being exempt. With the advancement of age to sixteen years the number decreases. Over sixteen it is not very common. The malady is always ushered in by the usual symptoms of an acute infectious diseases, such as fever, which varies from 101° to 105° , coryza, headache, pains in back of neck, vomiting, constipation, or diarrhoea, the forerunner being more common.

*Read before the Maimonides Medical Society.

Associated with these symptoms are irritability, headaches, pains about the body, drowsiness, the latter not being constant, for the patient can be aroused to talk and take nourishment, but falls off into drowsiness when left alone, and becomes very irritable when disturbed. Hyperesthesia. Contractions of the muscles about the body and neck causing rigidity of the head, which is not constant as in meningitis.

The deep reflexes may be in the early onset exaggerated but are practically always diminished or absent. It may be noticed that there is extreme pain along the spinal column. Owing to these aches and pains the patient may be noticed to move about in bed, and change position frequently.

I shall not attempt to elaborate on signs and symptoms in this description, but give a resume of the disease during the onset. Clinically seen without the examination of spinal fluid, and in the face of an epidemic, one is justified in making a diagnosis of infantile paralysis.

ETIOLOGY

This is now being attributed to a small virus, which can only be seen by a high power oil immersion lens. Although there is much dispute as to whether this virus, as recognized by *Flexner* and *Noguchi*,¹ or the