

Capitan claims that diathesis influences the organism in two ways—firstly, by interfering with cellular nutrition, while also altering the constitution of the cell itself, and this is especially marked in gout; secondly, by these altered cells giving birth to abnormal products, either in nature or quantity, which act as substances favoring the development of micro-organisms.

Third, General Hygiene—The hygiene of the newly-born infant will always determine its powers of reaction with regard to infection, whatever these hygienic conditions may be. Food, aeration, cleanliness, antiseptics of skin, digestive tract, etc., are important factors to consider under this heading, and are worthy of proper interpretation at the hands of the attending physician, as any of these not properly conducted may explain such or such another infectious disease of the future, to all of which the child is above all exposed. We can to-day, with our knowledge of bacteriology, more strenuously insist upon good hygiene, and more clearly define the rules for the better carrying out of the proper hygienic measures. The effects of pure air and mitigated insolation upon micro-organisms are well known; the exaltation of virulence of certain normal inhabitants of the digestive tract through errors of feeding are not by most practitioners ignored, consequently enlightened by these peculiarities of development of microbes, we are better prepared to meet the wants of the organism in order to assist its defence against infection.

Fourth, Age—We know with what frequency certain infectious diseases develop in preference at certain periods of life. In young children, enteritis and tuberculosis are very common; later we meet with eruptive fevers and osteomyelitis, and still later, when bordering upon adult life, typhoid is not uncommon. In adults, infections of the stomach, liver and kidneys predominate, while in the decline of life cancer and lung infections, particularly tuberculosis (which may have been latent for years), are among the most common infections.

Fifth, Sex—Is a factor not to be ignored. Women, on account of the menstrual function, pregnancy and lactation, are exposed to tuberculosis in its various forms, septicaemia, pyemia, erysipelas, nephritis, etc., while men, by their different habits of life, and their tendency to the excessive use of alcohol, are particularly exposed to hepatic, renal and cerebral infections.