

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST DIPHTHERIA: BY
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Diphtheria is a malignant contagious disease, and like scarlet fever, is frequently followed by physical defects, such as blindness, deafness and paralysis.

Whenever a child or a young person has a sore throat, with a bad odor to the breath, especially if it has fever, it should immediately be separated from all other persons, excepting necessary attendants, until it is ascertained by a physician that it has not diphtheria or other communicable disease. Mild cases may communicate malignant and fatal forms of the disease.

Diphtheria may be conveyed by personal contact, clothing, hair, paper, the discharges of the body, or anything which has touched the sick person. The diphtheria poison has great vitality, and may lie dormant for weeks, and even months. It seems to be able to travel in the air of sewers from house to house, also to rise in the emanations from putrid privies and cesspools. It can also, undoubtedly, infect foods, milk and water, and with them enter the bodies of children.

The time required to develop diphtheria may be from two to six days; the average is variously stated at from six to ten days, but the time may be extended to five or six weeks.

The greatest number of deaths from the disease occurs in children under twelve years of age. Adults usually have it in milder form than do children. Children under two years and half old are not very liable to the disease. One attack usually prevents any subsequent one, but this is not always so. If parents everywhere could only be brought to act intelligently, these diseases might become almost unknown.

GENERAL PRECAUTIONS.

Notices should be placed on every house where there is a case of diphtheria. When necessity requires one to visit such a house the clothing should afterwards be changed and a bath taken before going where there is a child.

Whenever the disease is prevalent in any district, children should be removed from the day and Sabbath schools, and should not travel in the public cars or carriages.

Close attention should be paid to the sources of the water and the food supplies. If there is any doubt about the purity of the water, boil it thoroughly before using it. Foods and milk should not be used which come from a house in which there is diphtheria. Filth may be considered a promoter of diphtheria. Perfect cleanliness should be enjoined in the house and all its surroundings. All foul odors must be destroyed in privies and cesspools by the appropriate disinfectants. Let the house receive all the pure air and sunlight possible.

Do not send your clothing to a public laundry during an epidemic of diphtheria.

PRECAUTIONS IN THE SICK ROOM.

The sick room should be in the upper part of the house, if possible. Cold draughts are especially to be avoided in this disease. An open fireplace with a lamp burning in it, is an excellent means of ventilation. The room should be cleared of all needless draperies, carpets and furniture. A sheet wet with a solution of the sulphate of zinc should hang before the door connecting the sick room with the rest of the house, or in the passage way leading to the room. No person but the nurse and the physician should enter the sick room until the patient has recovered and the room disinfected.

The nurse should not mingle at all with children, and as little as possible with the adults. Her outer dress should be made of some material which can be washed rather than of wool, which harbors the disease.

Each piece employed for wiping the nose and mouth, after being once used, should be immediately burned. A disinfecting solution should always be at hand for the patient to spit into, and all discharges of the body should be received on their very issue into vessels charged with disinfectants, and thrown into the water closet, or buried in the soil, at least one hundred feet from any well.

The hands of nurses should be washed as soon as soiled, with disinfectant water. The patient's clothing and bed clothing, whenever changed, should be thrown at once into water to which has been added the disinfecting solution, No. 4 of this article. Leave the clothes in the solution four hours, and then give them a thorough boiling. Never carry any clothing which