

VAGINAL HYSTERECTOMY FOR UTERINE CANCER.

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The unsatisfactory results that have followed the various plans of treating uterine cancer have led surgeons to resort to operations more and more radical until complete removal of the organ has been resorted to. The number of times this has been done successfully warrants the hope that with the improved methods of operating the mortality may be reduced, many lives saved and others prolonged, or, if death result from recurrence of the disease, it may at least be less painful and loathsome.

It is certain that a careful selection of cases must be made for the operation of hysterectomy if this surgical procedure is not to fall into disrepute. Conditions applicable to the surgical treatment of cancer elsewhere in the body should guide us in the treatment of cancer uteri. The rule should be to resort to that operation by which the whole of the disease can be removed with the least risk to the patient's life. If the disease be in the body of the uterus, or if beginning at the os uteri, it invades the cervical canal far up to the body or even to the internal os, extirpation of the entire organ is the most reliable means of cure. If other tissues than the uterus be involved, hysterectomy could only be palliative, and is too serious an operation to be undertaken with no prospect of a radical cure. If the disease be so confined to the cervix that the whole cancerous part can be removed by supra-vaginal amputation, this should be the operation selected.

The following case was one in which cancerous growth began around the external os and extended beyond the internal os, so that extirpation of the uterus offered the only means of cure. Microscopic sections prepared by Dr. Caven and exhibited before the Pathological Society of Toronto showed the extent of disease to be as stated above :

Mrs. C., aged 55, has had several children, and has always enjoyed good health until nine months ago, when she began to have menorrhagia, which gradually grew worse until she came under the care of Dr. Jenner of Kingsville, who applied nitric