

While cancer of the uterus may develop in early life it is most common after the thirty-fifth year. Whenever there is a uterine haemorrhage that cannot be accounted for, the uterus should be most carefully examined to see if there be any signs of cancer as it is only in the early stages of the growth that a cure may be hoped for. If the cervix be especially hard at any one point or show little prickle-like points that bleed easily then a wedge about a quarter of an inch broad and half an inch in depth should be cut out, put in alcohol or formalin and sent at once to the pathologist for examination. If the cervix be normal, then the body and cervical canal should be thoroughly curetted on all sides and the scrapings sent to the pathologist. The mucous membrane in health as seen under the microscope is just as different from that of cancer as are two totally different patterns of wall paper.

Much has been said about the treatment of cancer of the uterus and great improvements inaugurated in the operative technique. As has been pointed out elsewhere the only hope lies in the early diagnosis by the family physician. Unfortunately in a good many cases there are few, if any, signs of cancer until the disease is far advanced and operation out of the question. As a typical example I may mention a lady 69 years of age whom I saw in consultation in St. Louis less than two weeks ago. Her first haemorrhage occurred within a month of the time she came for operation and yet on vaginal examination the entire cervix was involved and the left broad ligament fixed by growth. I fully believe that in the near future the prediction of Dr. Kelly and others will be verified—namely, that every woman will present herself for examination at least three or four times yearly. In this way if any growth be present it will be gotten at in its incipency. Our first duty as physicians is to educate women as to the absolute necessity of having any irregularity of menstruation or any uterine haemorrhages carefully investigated at once. When they learn the seriousness of delay and the satisfactory results that may be obtained by prompt attention many more will be saved.

In the short time at my disposal no attempt has been made to enter much into detail. I have given you nothing new but have endeavored to merely group the various cases of uterine haemorrhage in such a manner that they can be easily understood.