

THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE TREATMENT OF  
ACUTE AND CHRONIC OTITIS MEDIA  
SUPPURATIVA

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This important subject in the field of otology has become so hackneyed during the past few years that I feel an apology is due the members of this Association for introducing it at this time, but I also feel that the subject is such an important one that I have not hesitated to do so in order to make a plea for more rationalism in the treatment of this troublesome class of cases. If we are to believe what one set of men say about these cases, we should submit all of our patients to operation, and, on the other hand, if we go to the other extreme advocated by many prominent aural surgeons, and treat all cases conservatively, we are exactly where we started ten years ago. Between these two extremes there must surely be safe ground and it is my purpose to point out very briefly where, in my opinion, this safe ground lies.

First of all, I think it may be laid down as a safe proposition that each case is a law unto itself, and that each and every case should be studied on its merits, and a line of treatment adopted which, in our judgment, is proper in each case.

Many cases of Chronic Otitis Media Suppurativa will get well and stay well under conservative treatment, or suffer an occasional readily cured relapse.

On the other hand, when we have to deal with a case presenting urgent symptoms there cannot be any discussion as to the necessity of operation; operation is demanded without hesitation. If we could always diagnose Cholesteatoma or Necrosis with absolute certainty, we should waste time on conservative treatment, but unfortunately we are, in our present state of knowledge, quite unable to do so.