

WHEN A SPRAIN IS NOT A SPRAIN

It May be a Dislocation or a Fracture

Time to Call Doctor—Things That May be Done in the Meantime—Heroic Measures Not Recommended.

New York, Aug. 10.—Sprains and strains are a class of injuries which cause little concern and, consequently, to which little attention is paid. The result is, according to the medical correspondent of The London Times, that a great deal of disability is caused which need not have occurred at all. He gives explanations which rob sprains of some of their mystery.

Sprains are not by any means so trivial as they are usually supposed to be. Some of them are not "sprains" at all, but slight dislocations, and it is by knowledge of this fact that so-called bloodless surgeons acquire their reputation. A return of the members to their correct position often ends the pain and discomfort of these accidents.

Again, some sprains are fractures. The bones may not have been separated, and so the fact that a break has occurred is overlooked. Not until permanent damage has been done is professional help called in.

Finally, there are cases in which the ligaments—i.e., the binding material forming the hinges of a joint or the means of fixation of a muscle-tendon to a bone—have been torn asunder. These cases may prove exceedingly troublesome, and if not attended to may result in permanent weakness.

It is a good and safe rule to call in a doctor, says the writer, when any severe or even moderate severe sprain has been encountered. By this means the calamities attending neglect of serious injury are avoided.

Before The Doctor Comes.

But before the doctor comes, or in those cases in which medical aid may be difficult or impossible to obtain, a measure of help can be secured if certain simple considerations are borne in mind.

The first of these is that movement is not likely to help matters. At the best, it can only be unstructured movement—that is to say, the kind which often makes bad worse. At the worst, it may aggravate the damage, he says.

When a sprain or strain has occurred, try to rest the part. At home there may be no difficulty, but if the accident takes place on a hillside when one is alone the matter is very different. In such a case complete rest is, of course, out of the question.

Paraffin, he says, is a valuable remedy. A sprained ankle, for example, is considerably assisted by the application, outside of the boot, of a handkerchief dipped in water, and bound on as tightly as possible. As the handkerchief shrinks and increases the pressure, the physician says.

When the sprain occurs at home the use of adhesive plaster is very valuable, he asserts. Every self-respecting house should contain a roll of this, but in any case, most chemists stock it. The plaster should be cut in strips and these laid on, overlapping each other so as nearly, but not quite, to surround the limb.

Applied at Skin Tension.

The important point is that the plaster should be applied at once and at skin tension, he points out.

If it is put on tighter than skin tension swelling will result and great pain be caused—so much so that the strapping will have to be taken off. If, on the other hand, it is applied too loose, it will fail of its purpose.

There is nothing quite so difficult as to persuade people not to apply strapping tightly. They act under the idea that a kind of splint is needed, and attempt to bind up the skin. In fact, that is not the object of the method at all. Its real object is to exercise very gentle pressure on the skin and so prevent swelling, he says.

Why lightly applied pressure should, in fact, accomplish this result is not clear. But then, the nature of the swelling which follows sprains is itself rather a mystery. It does not always develop, and it may come quickly or only after the lapse of hours. Moreover, it is liable to recur in those cases in which an illness, such as influenza, takes place within a short period of the time of a sprain or strain.

Another first-aid measure which is worth trying, and which can always be tried, is to place the injured part under the cold-water tap and allow a gentle

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stream of water to flow over it. This procedure seems to be effective in proportion as the rate of the water flow is moderated. The full force of the tap, like tight strapping, does more harm than good, he warns.

Cannot Walk Off Sprains.

In cases in which the sprain is very slight, rest should not be denied; but, again, it should not be overdone. The real indicator is the amount of discomfort caused by the exercise of the injured part. When pain becomes severe, effort should invariably be suspended. The "heroic" fashion of "walking off" sprains is both unwise and useless. You cannot walk them off.

At night, very often, these injuries begin to throb and interfere with sleep. In nine cases out of ten that is because they have been tightly tied up, and the proper thing to do is to unfasten the ties or remove the strapping. What has happened is that swelling has taken place under the bandages or plaster, which has consequently begun to interfere with the circulation of the limb. Any constriction, if persisted in, always produces throbbing of this kind.

The bandage, having been removed, need not be kept off all night. They should be readjusted at skin tension and if necessary taken off again later, and again applied. As a rule, however, if the rule about skin tension has been observed there will be no further increase of swelling.

Many lotions are helpful to soothe the throbbing, but by far the best is the old-fashioned extract of witch-hazel. Applied on cotton rags, undoubtedly helps matters very much and may reduce the amount of swelling, he advises. Finally, he says, the limb is often helpful, especially in the case of sprained knees and ankles. But no rule is so inflexible as this. In the case of a sprained ankle, for example, it is a good idea to have the foot elevated, outside of the boot, of a handkerchief dipped in water, and bound on as tightly as possible. As the handkerchief shrinks and increases the pressure, the physician says.

HOLY ORDERS FOR WOMEN.

(Halifax Record.)

Holy orders for women will be put before the coming general convention of the Episcopal Church in Portland, Oregon. Only it has been felt for some time that the Order of Deaconesses was not clearly enough defined from the province now covered by the sisterhoods, and a commission was named at the general convention in 1919 to present a report on this convention.

In some of the Protestant bodies women are admitted to full orders and have received pastoral. This is not contemplated in the Episcopal canon, as it is distinctly contrary to another rule, which provides that "no deacon may be chosen the rector of a parish or to be chaplain in the Army or Navy of the United States."

"Minor orders" only are contemplated, and the report makes this clear in the proviso that nothing in the proposed canon shall be taken as "favoring the elevation of the Priesthood to women; but, instead, to provide an order similar to the primitive Order of Deaconesses, as found in the Epistles of St. Paul and the Acts of the Holy Apostles."

It is expected that this report will create more future than it has in the past. At the Pan-American Conference in London, in 1920, The fear is expressed that the canon will be used as an opening wedge for the elevation of women. By the proposed canon, a woman will undergo the same examination and be subjected to the same conditions set for men by the Standing Committee of the Diocese prior to her acceptance by the Bishop. Now any woman of "good character and report" may be accepted. The Canons also set the literary attainments she must have.

Three cars laden with coal from the Norwegian steamer Liv, which were being hauled to the Atlantic Sugar Refinery, ran off the rails in front of the Empress warehouse soon after five o'clock yesterday afternoon. The work of unloading the Empress was delayed for several hours before repairs were effected and the cars removed from the wharf.

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When food is only imperfectly digested, it gives rise to fermentation, clogs the bowels, and renders the blood impure. This results in dull eyes, muddy skin, blotches, pimples and other disfiguring marks. Beecham's Pills act immediately on the stomach, liver and bowels; regulate them and keep them in a vigorous condition. They are mild, harmless and dependable. They are compounded of remedies of vegetable origin having great medicinal value.

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