

redness, inflammation or destruction of tissue according to their strength and character.

It is an irritant when applied in a mild form, and an escharotic when used in a concentrated form.

Its action as an escharotic is not brought about by any chemical influence that it exerts on the tissues. It does not, like the caustic acid and alkalies, coagulate the albuminous tissues. It acts more by direct interference with the nutrition of the tissues, causing rather a condensation and "mummifying" than an actual destruction of tissue. The escharotic action of arsenic is characterized by a high degree of inflammation, great swelling, and quick destruction of the part. It is a very painful escharotic. It should be always remembered that when weak applications of arsenic are used to destroy tissue, the arsenic may be absorbed in such quantities as to bring about fatal poisoning, while if a strong preparation is employed such a destruction of tissue takes place that absorption is prevented.

A case has come under my observation where a medical man applied a weak arsenical paste, for the removal of a malignant tumor, to the breast of a woman. It was followed by the prominent symptoms of acute arsenical poisoning, from which the woman recovered. Some days afterwards a weaker arsenical paste was used, and it was kept applied for some time.