1923

Constipation and Its Dangers

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Recommended Citation

Mundt, Anne (1923) "Constipation and Its Dangers," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 3 : No. 4 , Article 8.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol3/iss4/8

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GRANDMA or the old-fashioned nurse is responsible for a large share of the cases of constipation," says Dr. Brady in his book, "Personal Health." True enough, for until recent years, very little attention has been paid to constipation; it was looked on somewhat as a red herring; some had it and some didn't. But as for there being a scientific reason behind its presence, these grandmothers and practical nurses of ours scoffed at the idea.

What is constipation? Brady fails to state it in definition form; Webster says "idea." How is that?

What causes constipation? In the main there are three causes, habit, dietetic and physical.

The habit causes we are all familiar with—that of negligence in answering the call, of habit or custom of wearing tight clothing, of anxiety to function alone. The reasons are obvious; the muscles were bound too tightly to be able to move, the contents of the intestines were halted and digestive action ceased, making motion even more impossible. While this situation is no longer serious, it explains why more women than men were troubled with constipation.

Organic disorders are without our control and should be cared for by doctors. The more common ones should be recognized as pelvic diseases, gall stones, dilated stomach and sagging bowels. These chronic causes should have immediate care.

Results of constipation are many and varied, so I shall give you only a few of the more common ones. Minor results may be only minor at first, but with continued neglect, they become serious. These are habitual headaches, foul breath, easily irritated nerves, ill-controlled temper, bad disposition and mental depression. There are many diseases or major results that are advanced by constipation as appendicitis, piles and all painful rectal diseases, diarrhoea, gall stones, rheumatism, and hardening of the arteries. Some of these may seem only remotely related to constipation, yet the poisons from the putrefaction in the intestines is absorbed and carried out through the system.

Remedies or relief vary with individual cases, and many of these should receive professional care, but there are many things that can be done at home that will insure a normal bowel condition. These are:

a. Drink 2 quarts of water a day.
b. Eat fresh fruit, coarse foods and vegetables such as raw cabbage, celery, lettuce, onions, cucumbers, beets, turnips, baked potatoes, green and canned corn, figs, dates, prunes, apples, peaches, grapes, bananas, and roughage foods such as whole cereals, bran.
c. Exercise the abdominal muscles, by hill climbing, touching finger tips to floor, body pivoting and hearty laughing.
d. Regular habits of living—eating, sleeping, working, resting and above all, regular daily bowel movement.
e. Healthful mental attitude. Thru worry, anxiety, nervousness or fear, the digestive organs are disturbed and evacuation is irregular. I think it is Dr. Rannels of Boston who says, "Your stomach rests as easily as your mind."

This article is printed as one of the best papers written in the course in Family Health under the supervision of Miss Florence E. Busse.

Medicinal aid is advisable when necessary, but should never be taken except under professional recommendation. There are two kinds of laxatives, those which reverse osmosis, as epsom salts, and those which affect the nerves, as rhubarb, licorice, and senna leaves. None should be used without a thorough understanding of its nature.

Whether you have ever had or have never had trouble with constipation, it is wise to take special care of the abdominal organs. A little daily attention will preserve the good health you already have and will insure you against future costive troubles.

Fall Time is Pickling Time

(Continued from page 4)

Bordeaux Sauce
1 qt. chopped green tomatoes
2 qt. sliced cabbage
3 onions
1 red pepper
1 qt. vinegar
½ tsp. allspice
¼ tsp. mustard seed
1 cup brown sugar
Mix all the ingredients. Boil 25 minutes. Put in sterilized jars and seal.

Mustard Pickles
2 head cauliflower
1 qt. small onions
2 qt. ripe cucumbers
1 qt. string beans
6 large green peppers
Wash and prepare the vegetables. Cut cucumbers in small pieces and chop the peppers. Soak in brine for 24 hours. Drain. Scald the brine and pour over the pickles. Drain again. Prepare:
6 tbsp. mustard
tsp. celery salt
1 tsp. tumeric powder
1 cup sugar
Wet this mixture with enough vinegar to dissolve it. Add 2 quarts of vinegar and boil until it thickens, then stir in the pickles, fill the jars and seal.
No doubt there are peaches, pears or watermelons on hand that would be greatly appreciated this winter if pickled or spiced. The following recipe may be used successfully for any of these fruits:
64 cups brown sugar
1 cup medium sour vinegar
1 tsp. whole cloves
¼ oz. stick cinnamon
Cook the sugar, vinegar and spices for 15 minutes. Add the fruit and cook until tender. Pack into jars. The next day drain off the syrup, reheat and pour over the fruit. Do this four successive days. Then seal and store in a dark place.