

# PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS



## PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS IN TYPHOID NURSING

By M. LOUISE MARTIN, R. N.

Superintendent Martin's Ferry Hospital, Martin's Ferry, Ohio.

THIS is a disease which attacks many localities, and very few treat it in the same way. Therefore, we should be well informed as to the many necessary points in every case, from the nursing standpoint.

It is generally admitted that the result of each case depends largely upon the nursing and it is reasonably expected that a trained nurse should administer the treatment in the best possible manner. It should be done in an intelligent, conscientious way.

All diseases depend upon the nursing to a certain extent, but there are few diseases in which a nurse can show her skillful training, as in typhoid fever. As there are very few drugs used, the treatment must be properly administered, so as to obtain the desired results.

I may be able to mention a few useful suggestions. First, in regard to bathing the patient. This should be done daily, even though the patient is getting temperature baths frequently. It keeps the skin in a good condition and makes your patient feel more comfortable. Put him between two blankets (old ones answer well for this purpose), using tepid water, soap, and a nice soft cloth or sponge. Sponge the entire surface of the body thoroughly and keep him protected from the cold in the best possible manner. After the bath has been completed, change the bed linen and fix him up comfortably, if necessary apply hot water bottles. Do not let the patient become chilled. Change the bed linen as often as your supply will allow, the lower sheet every day. Freshen the bed in every possible way. There will be a disagreeable odor about the patient and room, unless the strictest cleanliness is observed.

Your patient's mouth requires your most diligent attention. It should and can be kept clean by frequent use of a mild antiseptic solution. It should have a thorough cleansing every morning. This is very conveniently done by using tooth-picks wrapped at the end with cotton, the teeth and gums being easily cleaned in this way without an irritating effect. If the tongue is coated, use very weak solution of peroxide of hydrogen, about 5i to ʒi of water, and if necessary, scrape the tongue gently with the handle of a spoon; have a spoon for this purpose alone.

After you have once made the mouth clean, it can be easily kept so, by using a mouth wash after each nourishment. This is very important and should never be neglected. If the tongue becomes hard and dry, apply a little glycerine and lemon juice, with a soft cloth or the tip of your finger.

The back is the greatest bug bear a nurse has to encounter, requiring constant care and then sometimes developing a bed-sore. With the proper care, most every case can be avoided. You have to begin at the start to rub the back twice a day with weakened solution of alcohol. If the skin becomes red and tender, use a little zinc powder with the alcohol. It tends to harden the skin. If it once breaks, you will find it hard to heal. Turn the patient from side to side, not allowing him to remain in one position very long. If necessary, use a rubber ring wrapped with a soft bandage. In case a bed sore should appear, report to the attending physician at once; never rely on your own treatment. The patient's temperature should be taken every two or three hours as ordered. The physician will usually have his own method of giving baths. In case it should be one you are not familiar with, ask him to tell you exactly how to give it. Treatment poorly given is worse than none at all.

In every temperature bath, your patient should be well protected. If an ordinary cold bath is ordered, put the patient between blankets (using a rubber to protect the bed), have the head low, with an ice cap applied, use cold water, beginning by sponging the forehead and face, chest, abdomen, etc. Sponge thoroughly the entire surface of body, giving about five minutes to each extremity and five to the back and chest. Leave him between the blankets perfectly quiet for one-half hour, then take the temperature, remove the blankets, put on a gown, and cover properly.

Of course, a patient is not allowed to get up for anything, without permission from the doctor. Use drinking tubes for medicine and nourishment. You will find some patients who cannot use a bed-pan. Report this at once, and if strong enough, they may be allowed to use a slop-jar. You will notice, in extremely weak cases, there will be very little trouble in the use of a bed-pan.

There may be trouble with the bowels, as constipation is not of unfrequent occurrence. Enemas are usually employed, as drugs have a more or less irritating effect on the bowels and they are usually in a very bad condition anyway, certainly if it is a severe case. In giving enemas, high or low, extreme care should be taken. First, see that the syringe is in a good condition, expel the air from the tube, have the solution properly mixed and the right temperature, use vaseline on the tube and insert it

gently, allow the water to flow slowly. When it has all been given, have the patient remain in the same position (left side), for a few minutes, or as long as he can retain it. Examine the stool thoroughly and report its character. See that everything used for the patient is thoroughly disinfected.

Examine the urine, as to amount, color, etc., and make a record on the chart of same, but do not save a specimen for examination unless ordered. The physician will judge from your report whether it is necessary or not.

The diet has to be attended to properly, as it is the source of a great deal of trouble and worry. Poorly prepared nourishment will cause serious trouble for your patient. It should be fresh, nicely prepared and given at the correct time, every two or three hours, as ordered.

Explain to your patient from the first why he can have but a certain quantity and never give over that. You will find some patients who haven't any desire for food. Exert every effort to get them to take it, begin with a very small quantity and gradually increase. They will then understand from the beginning that you know exactly what to do and how to do it and be sure not to leave your work in a condition to be criticised.

During convalescence, be as firm as you possibly know how to be. Do not allow any privileges that you have not been told to give. A relapse is always dreaded, as the system has been thoroughly taxed and the second attack so often proves fatal. Do all in your power to prevent a relapse.

---

RECEIPTS for an invalid with stomach trouble—having to have food cooked individually for her—by her nurse:

Eggs. Coddled by leaving in boiling water for three minutes.

Cocoa. One heaping teaspoon of cocoa, one ounce of milk, four ounces of water, three lumps of sugar. Boil water and cocoa, then add milk, without letting it boil.

Cereal. Put into upper pot of double boiler ten ounces of water, two ounces of cereal, one-half teaspoon of salt. Boil water and salt, add cereal to boiled water *slowly*. Let boil over fire, stirring for five minutes. Then put pot in the double boiler and boil, for hominy and rice four hours, cream of wheat and farina two hours.

Chicken. After having singed and washed it, put into enough boiling water to cover it, adding one teaspoon of salt, pepper, parsley, celery top, a bay leaf and one onion. Let simmer for three hours.

**Cream Sauce.** Melt a large teaspoon of butter and mix in a scant teaspoon of corn starch, stir until smooth. Add two ounces of mill and let boil three minutes, stirring all the while.

**Mince of Chicken.** Two ounces of chicken and one ounce of stock and heat with salt and pepper. The chicken was chopped very fine and measured in the tin measuring cup.

**Baked Custard.** Put four ounces of milk on to scald; add one beaten egg, three teaspoons of sugar, one-half teaspoon of vanilla. Fill two custard cups with the custard; bake about one-half hour in a pan of boiling water. Test by putting in the point of silver knife; if it comes out clean the custard is done.

**Chestnuts.** Boil two hours, shell, and press through a sieve. Into two ounces of chestnuts, put one and one-half teaspoons of cream, pinch of salt and pepper, and steam (as for peas) fifteen minutes.

**Macaroni.** Soak macaroni in water,—twelve ounces water and two ounces of macaroni that has been broken in small pieces; boil without covering for one hour, then in double boiler let simmer after having added one ounce of milk, one teaspoon of butter, a little pepper.

**Baked Apples.** Wash and core three or four apples. Put in an earthen dish or casserole, fill core with sugar, a little water in bottom of dish; cover and bake in oven one and one-half to two hours.

**Samp.** Soak over night in twelve ounces of water and one-half teaspoon of salt; in morning put on fire and let it come to a good boil in top of double boiler. Then put in double boiler and cook a day and a half slowly at back of range. After serving, add a goodly amount of unsalted butter.

**Peas.** One-half can of peas, press through a sieve, good pinch of salt and pepper. Steam for twenty minutes by putting into a custard baking cup or white enamel one, and placing that in a covered pan or pot of boiling water (being careful that no water gets in with the peas), add a generous teaspoon of butter, unsalted, and serve in the cup which can be set in a bowl of boiling water to keep the heat.

H. MC. D.

---

FOR NERVOUS HEADACHE AND INSOMNIA.—A steady brushing of the patient's hair is often remedial. The brush should be moderately stiff (the Ideal hair brush, which is wire with a rubber cushion, is a good one) and should be wielded with regular and not too energetic strokes. The blood is thus brought to the scalp, relieving the congested brain vessels; mental tension is relaxed; and the patient, if a woman, has the soothing

assurance that her hair is being "tended to." A slow rotary motion of the scalp, done with the finger tips, may be added. The first treatment should not be long, or the scalp will be made sore. Five minutes of the above treatment, self-applied, will help the wakeful night nurse when she goes to bed.

M. B. E.

---

For convalescents, or bed patients near a window, great pleasure may be had by watching the birds through a pair of opera or field glasses. Not only in suburban, but in city streets, birds may be seen, particularly during their spring migrations; and the daily life-history of even the ubiquitous sparrow may be made diverting, by bringing him close with the glasses.

M. B. E.

---

If the interest should go far enough for books, Chapman's "Bird Life," Chapman and Reed's "Color Key to North American Birds," Mrs. Neltje Blanchan (Doubleday's) "Bird Neighbors," Prof. Apgar's "Birds of the United States East of the Rocky Mountains," and Mrs. Florence M. Bailey's "Handbook of Birds of the Western United States," all have good keys for identification, by use of which it is easy to learn to recognize the birds.

M. B. E.

---

If one expects to make tea or coffee on the train, take a number of small pieces of cheese cloth, tie a small quantity of tea or coffee in each and pack them all neatly in a box. When ready for use put one of the little bags in a cup or coffee pot, pour boiling water over it and when the desired strength has been obtained it can be removed with a teaspoon or by the end of the string if it has been left long enough. In this way you never soil your hands, need no strainer, and have no pots to wash. Another thing, without which I can hardly get along, is an air cushion. A feather pillow becomes very stuffy and an air pillow is always cool and pleasant. Lemons are very refreshing and can be used for various purposes. Every nurse should carry *her own drinking cup*. The west simply reeks with tuberculosis, therefore it is not wise to use the cups supplied on trains or at railway stations.

E. R. R.

HAVING read the Hints to Delegates who intend crossing the continent to San Francisco I noticed the omission of what I consider an important article for those crossing the desert, namely, *lemon juice*. I have crossed several times and always take the juice of six lemons sweetened; this keeps well, counteracts the alkali water for drinking and so prevents enteric trouble. Face washing is usually dispensed with and Florida Water used instead of water, on the desert—just to wipe off the dust.

A. S. M.

IN travelling I have found a black silk night-dress of great convenience. It takes up so little room and besides can be rinsed out in a basin of water and dried very quickly.

Underwaists of the same material are also convenient, especially as you suggest wearing dark blouses. The finish on the silk seems to keep the train dust from sticking to it and they are light and convenient to handle.

M. E. W.



OVERHEARD in a Fifth Avenue Automobile: "Oh, she is so good and devoted to the church. She nurses all the time in New York, winters, and at Bar Harbor, among *that class* of patients, and she is so generous to the missionaries and the poor."

"Does she get good pay?"

"Oh, yes! She wouldn't go unless she did. She gives us twenty-five dollars whenever we need help in our work."

They didn't know a nurse sat opposite much interested and pleased.

*That* nurse is commercial in her work. She does not consider it a vocation in itself, perhaps. But then, again, she may have even more influence with her patients because she *does* place a proper value on her services and herself. She has selected her field for patients and also her field for charity and they are separate ones.