BATHS.

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Water baths are given at various temperatures varying from just above freezing, 33°F. to 112°F., and in all cases these temperatures should be ascertained by thermometer and not by hand.

The water for a :—

cold	bath should be	33° to	65°F.
cool	,, ,,	65° to	80°F.
tepid	,, ,,	80° to	90°F.
warm	,, ,,	90° to	100°F.
hot	,, ,,	100° to	112°F.

A COLD BATH is given for the purpose of lowering the temperature, and also to produce a nervous shock and reaction. It is very seldom that a patient is lowered immediately into a cold bath. It is first prepared at a temperature of 80°F. to 90°F., and after the patient is put in, the temperature is lowered by adding cold water or lumps of ice. Great care should be taken, as this bath is not unattended with risk, but it is very beneficial for lessening fever ; the patient's temperature must be taken every few minutes, and as soon as it has reached the desired point, he should be taken out, or immediately if marked lividity or shivering comes on, and be quickly wrapped in a warm blanket. If shivering or collapsed, hot bottles and stimulants should be resorted to. If a cold bath cannot be given for want of convenience, or because the condition of the patient does not allow removal, a cold bed bath may be substituted—a mackintosh is spread beneath the patient, the head of the bed being raised on blocks, the sides of the mackintosh are held up and cold or iced water poured over the patient, the water being directed into a tub placed in a suitable position at the foot of the bed.

The uses of a HOT BATH are various ; it is given to relieve pain and spasm in renal colic, to excite and stimulate the nervous circulatory system in collapse, to relieve difficulty with urine in case of retention, and to promote the action of the skin in kidney disease.

A WARM BATH has many of the effects of the hot bath, but has a more soothing effect on the nervous system, and is used in the excitement of chorea and delirium. If prolonged, both these baths may cause languor and fainting, and it must always be remembered that sick people often become faint in hot baths and should therefore be carefully watched and never left alone.

A HOT AIR BATH is usually given to promote sweating in kidney disease and in chronic rheumatism. To give a hot air bath, a special apparatus is necessary. When possible, electric lights suspended from a cradle are placed in the bed. A thermometer should be attached. The patient is stripped and wrapped in a hot blanket, a long mackintosh being rolled in the bed under him. The cradle is covered with a mackintosh and two or three blankets, which should be well tucked in all round carefully. The usual length of a hot air bath is 15 to 20 minutes.

Great care must be taken not to burn the patient or the bedclothes. Warm sponging and hot drinks will increase the sweating.

Hot air is often applied locally to joints and other parts, especially in chronic rheumatism. The temperature at which a local or general hot air bath is given is from 110°F. to 150°F., or in some cases 200°F.

VAPOUR BATHS are used for much the same purpose as hot air baths, and also in some skin cases. A vapour bath in bed is managed in the same way as a hot air bath, except that steam from boiling water instead of hot air is introduced into the bed.

SHOWER BATHS are used medicinally to reduce mental excitement or to reduce a nervous shock.

Baths are frequently used in skin diseases—the most commonly used are :—

THE STARCH BATH.—Mix two pounds of starch with cold water to dissolve it, then add boiling water to make a mucilage. Pour this mucilage into thirty gallons of water of the required temperature.

THE BRAN BATH.—Pour boiling water over two pounds of bran in a muslin bag, and add enough water to make a bath.

THE OATMEAL BATH.—Pour boiling water over half a pound or more of oatmeal tied loosely in a muslin bag, squeezing it out in the water until the water feels soft to the hand—a good sized bag of oatmeal will soften the water for two or three baths.

THE ACID BATH.—Add hydrochloric acid four ounces to thirty gallons of water.

THE ALKALINE BATH.—Add half a pound of bicarbonate of soda to thirty gallons of water.

THE SULPHUR BATH.—Dissolve sulphurate of potash four ounces in thirty gallons of water. For children it should be made weaker.

THE MUSTARD BATH.—Mix, according to strength required, 2–4 ounces of mustard into a smooth paste with warm water. Add it to four gallons of warm water at a temperature of 92° to 105°F. This is known as a stimulating bath.

THE BORIC ACID BATH.—Take a saturated solution of boric acid and heat to the required temperature, or add an equal quantity of hot water to the saturated solution. Temperature of the bath, 92° to 105°F.

TUBERCULOSIS AS A FAMILY AND ECONOMIC PROBLEM.

Dr. F. Leonard Keith (Medical Officer for Bethnal Green), lecturing on "Tuberculosis as a Family and Economic Problem," at the Winter School for Health Visitors and School Nurses at Bedford College for Women, Regent's Park (as reported in the *Times*), said that while there were formidable barriers still to be broken down before tuberculosis could be eradicated, the death rate from this disease was steadily declining and had dropped 40 to 50 per cent. in the last forty years. "At the same time," he said, "there is almost universal infection of the race by tuberculous bacilli, but there are few people now susceptible to the disease in a pronounced form. If we find a case in an early stage—and by modern diagnostic methods this can easily be detected, provided people will come to us—the disease is quite curable."

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