

The Common Cold.

By A. E. Hopkins.

UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS the various organs and tissues that go to make up the human body have various functions to fulfil. Each function, when normality is the common state, harmonises with all the others, performing all the tasks which the body has to perform throughout life with perfect precision, and the most exacting co-operation of all the tissues and organs involved. When this condition truly exists it represents normal health.

However, very few persons enjoy perfect health due to many causes such as incorrect feeding, insufficient exercise, inhaling impure air and lack of use of the maximum capacity of the lungs. Cleanliness and right thinking are essential, otherwise the opposite to these habits will contribute their quota to a state below normal, or a condition known as ill-health.

When for some reason extra work is thrown upon some organ or tissue, some other section of the multitudinous functions of the body will have to bear an overload, and this factor is often the cause of breakdown, resulting in certain forms of disease developing.

Bowel irregularity and general sluggishness may exact a strain on the kidneys, necessitating maybe an extra strain on the skin as a compensation for this difficulty.

The elimination of waste, if greater than the normal functioning of the body requires, may overwork the channel affected by strain, and various methods of overcoming this inequality may be introduced to overcome the trouble.

By this stage it should be appreciated that the elimination is not the disease in itself, but is a manifestation for the cause of overworking some organ or tissue, and to endeavour to rectify one abnormal function will, if successful, only pass the overload or strain on to another organ, which in turn will endeavour to compensate itself by overworking the eliminating channel in another direction, and so on.

The law of compensation, or the inherent effort to rectify abnormalities are constantly in action throughout life, and a good deal of time and effort can be wasted by trying to overcome its efforts, without paying heed to the fundamental underlying causes.

So much for this brief review of bodily functions and their compensating efforts, so now we come to the question of one type of complaint that is common in the world today, the common cold.

In the condition known as a cold the tissue directly concerned is the lining or mucous membrane. This tissue is a continuity of the skin lining all the internal cavities of the different parts of the human body. It contains small secreting glands, but the actual form varies in different parts of the body, where different functions operate. In sections of the breathing passages it carries a hairlike surface which assists in urging the mucous or secretion towards the outlet, and this natural action affords protection against the ingress of foreign irritating matter.

The normal mucous developed in the secretion glands assists in helping the body towards normal functioning. For example, in the alimentary canal it acts as a lubricant for the passage of food. It can be imagined how destructive to the delicate lining rough harsh food

substances could be if the passage of it through the length of the digestive tracts was not lubricated. Mucous also prevents friction, when organs and tissues are in direct contact and movable as they are in all living tissues. Thus it can be seen that normal mucous plays a vitally important part in the smooth running of the human machine. In health, the correct amounts only are secreted, and used to preserve the accurate, perfect, frictionless mechanism of human internal movements.

When toxic waste matter is retained in the body because of disturbed metabolism due to various causes, the result is soon observed in the mucous membranes. They become thickened and congested. At this early stage the person concerned is not definitely ill, as opposed to health, but the body is so charged that it requires only a spark to set up a distressing condition. This often shows itself when an over-toxic body is exposed to draughts, cold air, damp and overwork, and any condition producing mental and physical strain. Thus, according to the part of the body where such a condition is manifested, so it procures its name, and when it affects the breathing passages, it carries the well-known title of "a cold."

Having arrived at a name further consideration of the cause may not be out of place.

The obvious signs of a cold indicate to the observer and to an enlightened sufferer, that the upper air passages in the nose, throat and sometimes the upper bronchii, are under stress, and are endeavouring to throw off all the stored-up waste toxins, in the form of excessive mucous. When the body arrives at a stage when it can tolerate a certain amount of toxic matter the cold will conclude its course, and normal functioning will ensue, until such time as an excess is again generated.

Judged by itself the common cold is not a dangerous process but if neglected can develop to more serious consequences. It may spread to the whole respiratory system causing laryngitis, bronchitis, or gastritis, perhaps ulceration, and many other complaints in the digestive system, as the catarrhal condition spreads. It can affect the bowels, causing colitis and other troubles.

In brief a toxic condition is a smouldering fire in the body, which, if neglected, needs only a spark to cause it to flare up, causing distress in some part of the human system.

If a cold is properly managed it remains as a limited complaint that runs a normal course of sneezing, coughing and nose blowing, which all constitute normal efforts to free the congested membranes from excess of waste toxic products. It must be borne in mind that the human body tolerates a certain amount of waste toxic matter as normal, and eliminates this normal waste through the normal eliminating channels, the bowels, the bladder, exhaled breath and the skin.

The first approach is obviously to lighten the burden on the eliminating channels by reducing the toxic charge in the body. If large quantities of fats, sugars and starches are ingested whilst a cold is in progress the burden of elimination becomes too great, the cold being prolonged, with a heavier strain on the constitution, and with a general weakening debilitating result. This is the way to engender a chronic disease, when the reactive powers of the body can no longer function effectively. Even so, chronic disease may be considered to be the body's way of containing toxic matter in certain departments, thus preventing the wholesale spread of

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)