

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

DESCRIBE THE APPARATUS REQUIRED AND METHOD EMPLOYED FOR (a) WASHING OUT A STOMACH (b) WASHING OUT A BLADDER.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Helena Wills Sutherland, Chalmers Hospital, Edinburgh.

PRIZE PAPER.

(a) *Apparatus required for washing out a stomach:—*

- (i) Soft indiarubber stomach-tube, about three feet in length, catheter shaped at one end, and having a mark eighteen inches from that end.
- (ii) Glass connection, for observation as well as for uniting the tubing.
- (iii) Rubber tubing, about three feet in length.
- (iv) Large glass funnel.
- (v) Pail.
- (vi) Measure and jugs with fluid for the lavage.
- (vii) Thermometer.
- (viii) Lubricant for tube.

Method of procedure.—Prop the patient up with plenty of pillows, so that she has a firm support. Spread a mackintosh and bath towel over her chest and round her neck. The funnel is fitted to the long tubing, and this and the stomach tube are held together by the glass connection. These are put ready in warm water. Empty the water from the tubing and lubricate the catheter end, using oil or butter. Glycerine (when obtainable) may be used, but its sweetness tends to make the patient retch. The tube is passed to the back of the throat, and the patient performs the act of swallowing. The tube is gently and slowly pushed down the œsophagus, the patient swallowing constantly, and breathing regularly all the time. The eighteen-inch mark should come to the incisor teeth. For lavage use plain water, bicarbonate of soda, 3i-Oi, or weak Condy's Fluid. The fluid for lavage is poured into the funnel, which is slightly raised to allow the fluid to run into the patient's stomach. The funnel must be filled up again before it is quite empty, otherwise air gets into the stomach and interferes with the syphonage. The amount used at a time varies with the patient and her condition, a dilated stomach requiring more than one of normal size. The funnel is then inverted and lowered, the fluid and contents of the stomach being syphoned back into the pail. This is repeated several times until the fluid is returned clear. Leave a few ounces of fluid in the stomach before withdrawing the tube. The patient should rest for an hour after a lavage.

(b) *Apparatus required for washing out a bladder:—*

- (i) Medium-sized rubber catheter (6-10), sterilized by boiling. Put ready in bowl of antiseptic lotion, biniodide (1-5,000), or lysol 3i-Oi.
- (ii) Glass connection.
- (iii) Rubber tubing, 3-4 feet in length.
- (iv) Glass funnel.
- (v) Lotion for the wash-out, 2-3 pints. Use boracic or a mild antiseptic, or Condy's Fluid.
- (vi) Pail.
- (vii) Mackintosh, sterile swabs, and towels.
- (viii) Hand lamp, if light is not good. If this is not obtainable, turn the bed so that the light comes from the foot.

Procedure.—Have the patient lying on her back with knees slightly drawn up and flexed outwards. Turn down the bedclothes and put towels above and below the pubes. Put mackintosh under the patient. If the nurse has to do the wash-out singlehanded, she must see that the light is in position, and that everything else is ready and within her reach. She must then wash her hands thoroughly, using a nail-brush, and afterwards rinse them in an antiseptic lotion. The patient must then be well washed round the pubes, then the labia are separated—the nurse using her left hand—and kept so till the catheter is passed. Round the orifice of the urethra is then washed, great care being taken not to swab upwards, otherwise vaginal discharge may be lodged, so that it is taken into the bladder when the catheter is introduced. When everything is absolutely clean, the catheter is passed straight into the urethra. Care must be taken not to let it touch any surrounding structures. If this occurs, the catheter must be re-sterilized and the cleaning-up process repeated. The glass connection, rubber tubing, and funnel are attached to the catheter, and the lotion for the lavage poured in, about half a pint at a time. Here also the funnel must not be allowed to get empty while the fluid is being poured in. The fluid is syphoned back in the same manner as with the stomach lavage. When the fluid returns clear, the catheter is withdrawn and the labia swabbed up again.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors are awarded honourable mention:—Sister T. E. Beeby, Miss E. G. Andrews, Miss E. M. Jukes, Miss Doris Sall, Miss Bessie Matthews, Miss J. Simpson.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

Mention some of the principal diseases of the digestive system and the appropriate nursing care.

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