

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

### FOR WHAT PURPOSES MAY ENEMAS BE GIVEN? GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF EACH KIND.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this month to Nurse Gotlob, S.R.N., S.C.M., S.M., Burges Road, Thorpe Bay, Essex.

#### PRIZE PAPER.

*Enemas or enemata* are given *per rectum* for various purposes, viz. :—

- (1) A purgative to produce action of bowels.
- (2) To introduce nourishment, when insufficient food taken by mouth, or to give stomach a rest.
- (3) To stimulate and counteract shock.
- (4) To relieve pain.
- (5) To reduce flatulence and distension.
- (6) To kill worms, anthelmintic.
- (7) As an astringent.
- (8) As a sedative.

When possible all enemata should be given with patient lying on left side, knees flexed, otherwise patient to be kept lying flat on back, as in cases of injury to spine, pelvis, fractured femur, or after abdominal operation. The former position, lying on left side, is more efficacious, since large intestine runs backward from anus in direction of left hip. Place warm mackintosh under patient and cover with blanket. Have warm bedpan to hand. All enemata should be given slowly and all air expelled from syringe, as it may cause unnecessary pain and discomfort. Insert nozzle as gently as possible, and it is usually lubricated with vaseline, or a piece of rubber catheter attached to nozzle. Higginson's syringe is the one usually used, also catheter with glass barrel of syringe and glass funnel.

#### Methods of Giving.

(1) *Purgative* in cases of constipation. Soap and water, 1½ ozs. for each year up to 12 years at temperature 98 deg. F., given with Higginson's syringe. Adults 1 to 2 parts soap mucilage.

*Olive oil*, 4 to 6 oz. given with catheter and funnel warm, followed in two to six hours by soap and water enema.

In cases of chronic intestinal obstruction, a very large enema may be given by the doctor, called a gravitation enema.

When *Ol Oil*, 1 part, and soap and water, 5 to 6 parts given, this requires a long rectal tube with tubing and funnel. Foot of bed is raised, pillows removed from head and placed under buttocks.

*Glycerine*, for which a special vulcanite syringe is used. Two to 4 oz. for adults; ½ oz. for child.

This is not given diluted, as it acts by irritating the wall of the bowel, causing intestine to contract. Always give warm. Sometimes *Ol Ricini*, or *Castor Oil*, 1 to 2 oz., is added to ordinary soap and water, in which case *Ol* must be first mixed with raw starch, as it will then readily mix with soap and water and not float on top, as it is likely to do.

(2) *Nourishment or nutrient*.

This is given very slowly, 20 min. for ½ pint, and given with catheter and barrel of glass syringe and glass funnel. The powers of digestion by rectum are not very

marked, as it is no part of its work, although it freely absorbs fluids. Therefore, any food must be thoroughly digested, and *peptonised* milk must be given; also beef tea, white of egg, raw meat juice, etc. A little salt must always be added.

*To peptonise milk*.—There are two methods, hot and cold. The latter more suitable for dyspeptics.

*For cold*.—Take 2 teaspoonfuls liq. pancreaticus and ½ teaspoonful soda bicarb. and add to 1 pint milk and 5 oz. water. Place on ice.

*Hot process*.—Skim milk and add 5 oz. water and heat to 140 deg. F. Add liq. pancreaticus and soda bicarb. Pour diluted milk into covered jar and let stand near fire for 1½ hours. Bring to boil for 2 minutes and add cream which was removed when skimmed.

Size and quality of enema as ordered by doctor. Usually 7 oz. is given alternately four-hourly with saline injection of 1 pint. Saline, 1 pint, with glucose and soda bicarb., ½ oz., is now usually given in place of nutrient. Owing to limit of power possessed by rectum, the whole of enema is never absorbed, and it is essential that bowels should be washed out once in 24 hours, or twice, with sterilised water.

Foot of bed should be raised, as it enables the fluid to run higher up bowel and prevents pressure on anal aperture and helps patient to retain same. Inject catheter about 6 in.

(3) *Stimulant and to counteract shock*.—Given by catheter, glass barrel of syringe and funnel. Following may be given :—

(1) Brandy, ½ oz. in 2 oz. warm water for collapse after operation.

(2) Brandy, 1 oz. to saline 1 pint.

(3) Hot coffee, ½ pint to 1 pint in cases of opium poisoning.

(4) Hot port wine, 4 oz.

(5) Saline, 1 dram salt to 1 pint water, warm, for hæmorrhage.

(4) *To relieve pain or excessive diarrhæa*, or hæmorrhage, as seen in typhoid fever. For adults, 2 oz. starch, mixed with prescribed dose of opium, slowly injected at 95 deg. F., or cold with catheter and barrel of glass syringe.

(5) *To reduce flatulence and distension of bowel*.—Half pint thin boiled starch, to which ½ oz. turpentine has been added. Gruel may be substituted for starch. Give with catheter and glass funnel of syringe and funnel.

(6) *Destruction of worms*.—Salt and water, 1 oz.; salt to 1 pint water. Infusion of quassia, 6 to 10 oz.

(7) *Astringent*, or to produce constipation.—Nitrate of silver, 5 grs. to 1 oz. water; alum, 1 oz. to 1 pint water.

(8) *Sedative*.—Mist. pot brom. and chloral according to doctor's orders. Give warm by catheter and funnel.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

Miss Winifred Moss, S.R.N., Royal Infirmary, Leicester, sends an admirable paper which deserves honourable mention.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT MONTH.

What is Tetanus? How is it caused and how treated?

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)