

HEALTH HINTS.

BY DR. HARRIETT VAN BUREN PECKHAM, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

THERE are numerous accidents occurring in families that require quite some attention before a physician can be secured, and it is well to have in one's mind some simple rules for action at such times. In cases of accident such as cuts, it is necessary to have free bleeding; if the blood does not flow readily, if possible, suck the wound. It has been the habit of many persons to at once apply peroxide to all cuts; this is a mistake as when it is fizzing as we all know it does, on the surface, it is also fizzing downwards and this may be means of carrying to the lower strata of tissues the germs, if any, that were on the surface. This would cause pus formation; better to use a simple wash of hot witch hazel or salt and water or a weak solution of carbolic acid or a weak solution of iodine; as many persons are very sensitive to iodine, it is wise to be cautious as to its usage. If you use iodine, do not bandage immediately as that tends to heat the tissues—leave the wound uncovered for a few minutes, then bandage lightly so as to keep all dirt out. The reason I like witch hazel is because it never poisons, also it does not irritate as so many preparations do. It has not an unpleasant smell, and if it is gotten hold of by the little folks as often happens and some of it swallowed, it will not poison them. Despite all the care, if a wound should become infected and pus form, then the peroxide is the ideal application offered, for it curdles or toughens the pus, so it can be easily removed from the cavity by either cotton or gauze which should at once be burned. Wash out the pocket where the pus was with a weak solution of carbolic acid, do not use peroxide as at the bottom of the pus pocket, where it is not easily seen, are some liquid pus drops which if touched by the peroxide will at once begin to fizz and thus may carry downwards the germs.

If a child or any one gets a burn or scald, they should quickly apply an application of either lard or an oil like olive oil or the mineral oil known as Nujol or vaseline. If none of these are available use a covering of witch hazel or bi-carbonate of soda until the others can be obtained.

In cases of fracture the first thing to do is to get the limb in as nearly its normal position as possible and keep it immobile until the surgeon can arrive to set it. If the soft parts have been bruised and there is bleeding, bandage the parts. If the bleeding is severe, apply a bandage above the place injured and tie it as tightly as possible so as to make it into a tourniquet. It may be necessary to elevate the injured part so as to prevent the flow of blood to the part. Keep the person warm as it is always a shock to receive a fracture, and if a chill follows, it may result in pneumonia.

Some children have spasms or convulsions which frighten the parents. The first thing to do is to loosen the clothing; give them plenty of fresh air but if in the cold season be sure not to have it blow directly on the child as their circulation is impeded and they are susceptible to chill, and if any pneumonia germs are in their circulation, it will give them trouble; keep them quiet, and by all means do not talk about them having the attacks before them, as it instils fear into their minds, and if the child is of a nervous turn of mind and at all apprehensive, it may brood over the fact and it will induce attacks.

Some persons faint easily; such should, if possible, lie down as soon as they feel faint, so as to readjust the circulation of the blood to the brain; it also relieves the heart action; give them plenty of fresh air and either camphor or ammonia to inhale.

If a person has an attack of indigestion which causes distress from the distension of the stomach from the flatulence caused by the fermentation of foods undigested, a very simple remedy which every one can carry in their pocket is a vial of table salt; put a pinch of the salt dry on the tongue. It immediately starts the flow of saliva which is needed to digest the foods in the stomach which have not been digested. Usually the person will almost commence to eructate the gas or flatulence and relief ensues at once. If the attack has been severe, it is well to keep quiet for a while as these attacks have a tendency to affect the heart.

Some children and even grown people have croup and attacks of laryngitis and bronchitis which come on them very suddenly, usually in the night, and are very distressing and even alarming. It is well to have on hand remedies which can be applied quickly. There are many such on the market for which much is claimed. The one that I have used successfully for many years is the paste called Antiphlogistine. This to be applied as hot as comfortable to the bare skin. As it has glycerine in its make up it will keep warm for hours, thus allowing the remedies to act on the congestion of the circulation and soften the mucus so that it can be coughed up. It is better to place the paste on some strong cloth or flannel than gauze, as gauze is so thin that it allows of the paste oozing through on to the clothing. After the attack is over and the tubes are cleared of the mucus, remove the plaster and wash the skin with hot witch hazel or salt and water when the patient can go out-doors without fear of contracting a chill.