

Davis (W.)

Typhoid Fever Treated by the Woodbridge Method.

Report of Eighteen Cases of Typhoid Fever treated by the Woodbridge
Method at the Worcester, Mass., City Hospital without a death.

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TYPHOID FEVER TREATED BY THE WOODBIDGE METHOD.

BY WESLEY DAVIS, M.D.

During my service from Oct. 1, 1895 to Jan. 1, 1896, there were admitted eighteen cases of typhoid fever all of which were treated by the Woodbridge method, only that the tablets were given in double doses, two every half hour in place of one every fifteen minutes. Of these cases four had intestinal hemorrhage, none commencing later than the fourth day of treatment; we had very little tympanites; no sordes, tongue rarely found dry and then only for a short time, practically no delirium. Three cases had relapse, one a slight recrudescence of four or five days, the other two had an elevation of 2 or 3 degrees and it was ten to fourteen days before the temperature reached normal again; no cause could be discovered. Two or three were nauseated by the treatment and it was suspended for a few hours and subnitrate of bismuth given, when the treatment was resumed and persisted in, not even hemorrhage being considered a contra-indication.

Several had stomatitis to such an extent that the tablets were suspended and guaiacol carb. given in from 3 to 5 gr. doses alternately with the capsules, and the bowels were kept open with 1-20 gr. of podophyllin given with each dose of medicine *i.e.*, every hour and a half or small doses of magnesia sulph., or both as seemed necessary.

One case came in with a septic hand which ultimately required amputation, but fortunately for the diagnosis he had an intestinal hemorrhage of half a pint the second day after admission. Another after several hemorrhages had a chill and temperature of

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106 degrees on two consecutive days, after which no local complication being discoverable it yielded to quinin; another had a sharp attack of local peritonitis, probably nature's method of preventing perforation. There was one case of parotitis, also one of double pleurisy with slight effusion developing after ten days when the temperature was nearly normal. We had the reputation of having *mild* typhoid fever at the City Hospital during the fall. When we consider that it is mainly a charitable institution and that the city as a whole presented the usual death rate from the fever, I am compelled to think that the treatment was in a measure, at least, responsible for the mild form assumed and *no deaths*. With the same number of cases during the corresponding period of 1894 we had four deaths under the regular treatment. No typhoid case was refused admission if we could make room for it, as we were anxious to give the treatment a thorough trial. In strict justice I wish to say that one case in a state of delirium such that it could not be longer cared for at home, was sent to the hospital after my visit one day and died before my arrival the next day, being in the hospital fifteen hours. I have not included this case but refer to it that there may not seem to be a discrepancy when the hospital report shows one death from typhoid fever during the period. The house officer says this was the only case this season where he has seen the characteristic sordes upon the teeth. The regular treatment by sponge baths, usually cold, when the temperature rose to 102.5 or 103 degrees was faithfully pursued and turpentine stupes, opiates, quinin, strychnia and stimulants when indicated were not omitted. The diet in all cases was liquid at first. Milk, lime water and milk, beef tea, beef juice and broths of various kinds in regular quantities and at stated intervals. Stale bread or toast made from it was given, whenever desired by the patient regardless of temperature, if the tongue was moist and tolerably clean; if this was eaten with a relish and did no harm it was allowed more freely and

soon followed by custards, dropped egg, egg on toast, etc. *if desired*, and in a few days tender boiled chicken, baked potatoes and the like. During the treatment the stools smell quite strongly of the medicine, which would appear to show that they can get to the site of disease in the small intestines. This antiseptic treatment seems to prevent decomposition and the formation of gas whatever diet may be given and the convalescence is more rapid in consequence of the extra amount of nourishment tolerated and assimilated.

I learn from the board of health, where all cases of fever are required to be reported, that during the three months there were 69 cases reported, from which, if we deduct the 18 at the hospital, we have 51 cases cared for by the various methods and means that a city of a hundred thousand inhabitants affords, with a mortality of 12, a death rate of $23\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. outside the hospital.

I wish to add that I have treated by this method seven cases in private practice without a death, and some have seemed to show that it can be aborted.

