

Chapter Eight

Inflammation



From what has already been said on this subject, it will have become apparent that inflammatory and feverish diseases are just as natural, orderly and lawful as anything else in Nature, that, therefore, after they have once started, they must not be checked or suppressed by poisonous drugs and surgical operations.

Inflammatory processes can be kept within safe limits, and they must be assisted in their constructive tendencies by the natural methods of treatment. To check and suppress acute diseases before they have run their natural course means to suppress Nature's purifying and healing efforts, to court fatal complications and to change the acute, constructive reactions into chronic disease conditions.

Those who have followed the preceding chapters will remember that their general trend has been to prove one of the fundamental principles of Nature Cure philosophy, namely the Unity of Disease and Cure.

We claim that all acute diseases are uniform in their causes, their purpose and if conditions are favorable, uniform also in their progressive development.

In former chapters I endeavored to prove and to elucidate the unity of acute diseases in regard to their causes and their purpose, the latter not being destructive, but constructive and beneficial. I demonstrated that the microorganisms of disease are not the unmitigated nuisance and evil which they are commonly regarded, but that, like everything else in Nature, they, too, serve a useful purpose. I showed that it depends upon ourselves whether their activity is harmful and destructive, or beneficial: upon our manner of living and of treating acute reactions.

Let us now trace the unity of acute diseases in regard to their general course by a brief examination of the processes of inflammation and their progressive development through five well-defined stages. We shall base our studies on the most advanced works on pathology and bacteriology. [Circa 1913.]

The Story of Inflammation

To me the story of inflammation has been one of the most wonderful revelations of the complex activities of the human organism. More than anything else it confirms to me the fundamental principles of Nature Cure, the fact that Nature is a good healer, not a poor one.

Before inflammation can arise, there must exist an exciting cause in the form of some obstruction or of some agent inimical to health and life. Such excitants of inflammation may be dead cells, blood clots, fragments of bone and other effete matter produced in the system itself or they may be foreign bodies such as particles of dust, soot, stone, iron or other metals, slivers of wood, etc.; again, they may be microorganisms or parasites.

When one or more of these exciting agents of inflammation are present in the tissues of the body in sufficient strength to call forth the reaction and opposition of the healing forces, the microscope will always reveal the following phenomena, slightly varying under different conditions:

The blood rushes to the area of irritation. Owing to this increased blood pressure, the minute arteries and veins in the immediate neighborhood of the excitant dilate and increase in size. The distension of the blood vessels stretches and thereby weakens their walls. Through these the white blood corpuscles squeeze their mobile bodies and work their way through the intervening tissues toward the affected area.

In some mysterious way they seem to sense the exact location of the danger point and hurry toward it in large numbers like soldiers summoned to meet an invading army. This faculty of the white blood corpuscles to apprehend the presence and exact location of the enemy has been ascribed to chemical attraction and is called chemotaxis.¹

¹ There are other theories on this matter today but Dr. Lindlahr's explanation is still the prevailing one.

The army of defense is made up of the white blood corpuscles or leukocytes and of connective tissue cells which separate themselves from the neighboring tissues. All these wandering cells possess the faculty of absorbing and digesting microbes. They contain certain proteolytic or protein-splitting ferments, by means of which they decompose and digest poisons and hostile microorganisms. On account of their activity as germ destroyers, these cells have been called germ killers or phagocytes. In their movements and actions these valiant little warriors act very much like intelligent beings, animated by the qualities of patience, perseverance, courage, foresight and self-sacrifice.

The phagocytes absorb morbid matter, poisons or microorganisms by enveloping them with their own bodies. It is a hand-to-hand fight, and many of the brave little soldiers are destroyed by the poisons and bacteria which they attack and swallow. What we call pus is made up of the bodies of live and dead phagocytes, disease taints and germs, blood serum, broken-down tissues and cells, in short, the debris of the battlefield.

We can now understand how the processes just described produce the well-known cardinal symptoms of inflammation and fever; the redness, heat and swelling due to increased blood pressure, congestion and the accumulation of exudates; the pain due to irritation and to pressure on the nerves. We can also realize how impaired nutrition and the obstruction and destruction in the affected parts and organs will interfere with and inhibit functional activity.

The organism has still other ways and means of defending itself. At the time of bacterial infection, certain germ-killing substances are developed in the blood serum. Science has named these defensive proteins alexins. It has also been found that the phagocyte and tissue cells in the neighborhood of the area of irritation produce antipoisons or natural antitoxins, which neutralize the bacterial poisons and kill the microorganisms of disease.

With the Evil, Nature Provides the Cure

Furthermore, the growth and development of bacteria and parasites is inhibited and finally arrested by their own waste products. We have an example of this in the yeast germ, which thrives and multiplies in the presence of sugar in solution. Living on and

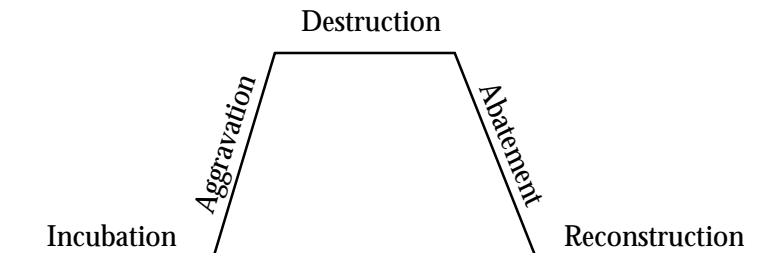
digesting the sugar, it decomposes the sugar molecules into alcohol and carbonic acid. As the alcohol increases during the process of fermentation, it gradually arrests the development and activity of the yeast cells.

Similar phenomena accompany the activity of disease germs and parasites. They produce certain waste products which gradually inhibit their own growth and increase. The vaccines, serums and antitoxins of medical science are prepared from these bacterial excrements and from extracts made of the bodies of bacteria.

In the serum and antitoxin treatment, therefore, the allopathic school is imitating Nature's procedure in checking the growth of microorganisms, but with this difference: Nature does not suppress the growth and multiplication of disease germs until the morbid matter on which they subsist has been decomposed and consumed, and until the inflammatory processes have run their course through the five stages of inflammation; while serums and antitoxins [now antibiotics] given in powerful doses at the different stages of any disease may check and suppress germ activity and the processes of inflammation before the latter have run their natural course and before the morbid matter has been eliminated.

The Five Stages of Inflammation

What has been said in former chapters confirms my claim that all acute diseases are uniform in their causes and in their purpose. From the foregoing description of inflammation it will have become clear that they are also uniform in their pathological development. The uniformity of acute inflammatory processes becomes still more apparent when we follow them through their five succeeding stages, that is: Incubation, Aggravation, Destruction, Abatement and Reconstruction, as illustrated in the following diagram:



I. Incubation. The first section of the diagram corresponds to the period of Incubation, the time between the exposure to an infectious disease and its development. This period may last from a few minutes to a few days, weeks, months or even years.

During this stage morbid matter, poisons, microorganisms and other excitants of inflammation gather and concentrate in certain parts and organs of the body. When they have accumulated to such an extent as to interfere with the normal functions or to endanger the health and life of the organism, the life forces begin to react to the obstruction or threatening danger by means of the inflammatory processes before described.

II. Aggravation. During the period of Aggravation the battle between the phagocytes and Nature's antitoxins on the one hand, and the poisons and microorganisms of disease on the other hand, gradually progresses, accompanied by a corresponding increase of fever and inflammation, until it reaches its climax, marked by the greatest intensity of feverish symptoms.

III. Destruction. This battle between the forces of disease and the healing forces is accompanied by the disintegration of tissues due to the accumulation of exudates, to pus formation, the development of abscesses, boils, fistulas, open sores, etc., and to other morbid changes. It involves the destruction of phagocytes, bacteria, blood vessels, and tissues just as a battle between contending human armies results in loss of life and property.

The stage of Destruction ends in crisis, which may be either fatal or beneficial. If the healing forces of the organism are in the ascendancy, and if they are supported by right treatment which tends to build up the blood, increase the vitality and promote elimination, then the poisons and the microorganisms of disease will gradually be overcome, absorbed or eliminated and, by degrees, the tissues will be cleared of the debris of the battlefield.

IV. Abatement. The absorption and elimination of exudates, pus, etc., take place during the period of abatement. It is accompanied by a gradual lowering of temperature, pulse rate and the other symptoms of fever and inflammation.

V. Resolution or Reconstruction. When the period of Abatement has run its course and the affected areas have been cleared of the morbid accumulations and obstructions, then, during the fifth stage of inflammation, the work of rebuilding the injured parts and

organs begins. More or less destruction has taken place in the cells and tissues, the blood vessels and organs of the areas involved. These must now be reconstructed, and this last stage of the inflammatory process is, therefore, in a way the most important. On the perfect regeneration of the injured parts depends the final effect of the acute disease upon the organism.

If the inflammation has been allowed to run its course through the different stages of acute activity and the final stage of Reconstruction, then every acute disease, whatever its name and description may be, will prove beneficial to the organism because morbid matter, foreign bodies, poisons and microorganisms have been eliminated from the system; abnormal and diseased tissues have been broken down and built up again to a purer and more normal condition.

As it were, the acute disease has acted upon the organism like a thunderstorm on the sultry, vitiated summer air. It has cleared the system of impurities and destructive influences, and re-established wholesome, normal conditions. Therefore acute diseases, when treated in harmony with Nature's intent, always prove beneficial.

If, however, through neglect or wrong treatment, the inflammatory processes are not allowed to run their natural course, if they are checked or suppressed by poisonous drugs, the ice bag or surgical operations, or if the disease conditions in the system are so far in the ascendancy that the healing forces cannot react properly, then the constructive forces may lose the battle and the disease may take a fatal ending or develop into chronic ailments.

Suppression During the First Two Stages of Inflammation

It may be suggested that suppression during the stages of Incubation and Aggravation need not have fatal consequences if followed by natural living and eliminative treatment. To this I would reply: "Such procedure always involves the danger of concentrating the disease poisons in vital parts and organs, thus laying the foundation for chronic destructive diseases."

Furthermore, it is not at all necessary to suppress inflammatory processes by poisonous drugs and other unnatural means, because we can easily and surely control them and keep them from becom-

ing dangerous by our natural means of treatment.

I shall now endeavor to prove and to illustrate the foregoing theoretical expositions by following the development of various diseases through the five stages of inflammation. I shall first take up the commonest of all forms of disease, the cold.

Catching a Cold

According to popular opinion, the catching of colds is responsible for the greater portion of human ailments. Almost daily I hear from patients who come for consultation: All my troubles date back to a cold I took at such and such a time, etc. Then I have to explain that colds are not taken suddenly and from without but that they come from within, that their period of Incubation may have extended over months or years, that a clean, healthy body possessed of good vitality cannot take cold under the ordinary thermal conditions congenial to human life, no matter how sudden the change in temperature.

At first glance, this may seem to be contrary to common experience as well as to the theory and practice of medical science. But let us follow the development of a cold from start to finish. This will throw some light on the question as to whether it can be caught, or whether it develops slowly within the organism; also whether this development or incubation may extend over a long period of time.

Taking cold may be caused by chilling of the surface of the body or part of the body. In the chilled portions of the skin the pores close, the blood recedes into the interior, and as a result of this the elimination of poisonous gases and exudates through these portions of the skin is suppressed.

This catching a cold through being exposed to a cold draft, through wet clothing, etc., is not necessarily followed by more serious consequences. If the system is not too much encumbered with morbid matter and if kidneys and intestines are in fairly good working order, these organs will take care of the extra amount of waste and morbid materials in place of the temporarily inactive skin and eliminate them without difficulty. The greater the vitality and the more normal the composition of the blood, the better the system will react in such an emergency and throw off the morbid matter which failed to be eliminated through the skin.

If, however, the organism is already overloaded with waste and morbid materials, if the bowels and the kidneys are already weakened and atrophied through continued overwork and overstimulation, if, in addition to this, the vitality has been lowered through excesses or overexertion and the vital fluids are in an abnormal condition, then the morbid matter thrown into the circulation by the chilling and temporary inactivity of the skin cannot find an outlet through the regular channels of elimination and endeavors to escape by way of the mucous linings of the nasal passages, the throat, bronchi, stomach, bowels and genitourinary organs.

The waste materials and poisonous exudates which are being eliminated through these internal membranes cause irritation and congestion, and thus produce the well-known symptoms of inflammation and catarrhal elimination: sneezing (coryza), cough, expectoration, mucous discharges, diarrhea, leucorrhoea [vaginal discharge], etc.

In other words, these so-called colds are nothing more or less than different forms of vicarious elimination. The membranous linings of the internal organs are doing the work for the inactive, sluggish and atrophied skin, kidneys and intestines. The greater the accumulation of morbid matter in the system, the lower the vitality, and the more abnormal the composition of the blood and lymph, the greater will be the liability to the catching of colds.

What is to be gained by suppressing the different forms of catarrhal elimination with cough and catarrh cures containing opiates, astringents, antiseptics, germkillers and antipyretics? Is it not obvious that such a procedure interferes with Nature's purifying efforts, that it hinders and suppresses the inflammatory processes and the accompanying elimination of morbid matter from the system? Worst of all, that it adds drug poisons to disease poisons?

Such a course can have but one result, namely the changing of Nature's cleansing and healing efforts into chronic disease.

From the foregoing it will have become clear that the cause of a cold lies not so much in the cold draft, or the wet feet, as in the primary causes of all disease: lowered vitality, deterioration of the vital fluids and the accumulation of morbid matter and poisons in the system. The incubation period of the cold may have extended

over many years or over an entire lifetime.

What, then, is the natural cure for colds? There can be but one remedy: increased elimination through the proper channels. This is accomplished by judicious dieting and fasting, and through restoring the natural activity of the skin, kidneys and bowels by means of wet packs, cold sprays and ablutions, sitz baths, massage, chiropractic or osteopathic manipulation, homeopathic remedies, exercise, sun and air baths and all other methods of natural treatment that save vitality, build up the blood on a normal basis and promote elimination without injuring the organism.²

Suppression During the Third Stage of Inflammation

Should the inflammatory processes be suppressed during the stage of Destruction, the results would be still more serious and far-reaching. We have learned that during this stage the affected parts and organs are involved in more or less disintegration. They are filled with morbid exudates, pus, etc., which interfere with and make impossible normal nutrition and functioning. If suppression takes place during this stage, it is obvious that the affected areas will be left permanently in a condition of destruction.

Here is an illustration from practical life: Suppose necessary changes and repairs have to be made in a house. Workmen have torn down the partitions, hangings, wallpaper, etc. At this stage of the proceedings the owner discharges the workmen and the house is left in a condition of chaos. Surely, this would not be rational. It would leave the house unfit for habitation. But such a procedure would correspond exactly to the suppression of inflammatory diseases during the stage of Destruction. This also leaves the affected organs permanently in an abnormal, diseased condition.

That accounts for the mysterious sequelae or chronic after-effects which so often follow drug-treated acute diseases. [This is especially true with modern antibiotics.] I have traced numerous cases of chronic affections of the lungs and kidneys, of infantile

² Today we have many specific natural remedies to treat colds and similar infections that were not available to Dr. Lindlahr but the principles he lays down are still as vital today as the day he wrote them.

paralysis and of many other chronic ailments to such suppression. In the following I shall describe a typical case, which came under our care and treatment a few years ago.

Suppression by Means of the Ice Bag

A few years ago several gentlemen of Greek nationality called on me with the request that I visit a friend of theirs who had been lying sick for about two months in one of our great West Side [Chicago] hospitals. On investigation I found that the patient had entered the hospital suffering from a mild case of pneumonia. The doctors of the institution had ordered ice packs. Rubber sheets filled with ice were applied to the chest and other parts of the body. This had been done for several weeks until the fever subsided.

As a matter of fact, ice is more suppressive than antifever medicines. The continued icy cold applications chill the parts of the body to which they are applied, depress the vital functions and effectually suppress the inflammatory processes.

The result in this case, as in many similar ones which I had occasion to observe during and after the ice-bag treatment, was that the inflammation in the lungs had been arrested and suppressed during the stage of Destruction, when the air cells and tissues were filled with exudates, blood serum, pus, live and dead blood cells, bacteria, etc., leaving the affected areas of the lungs in a consolidated, liver-like condition.

As a consequence of suppression in the case of this Greek patient, the pneumonia had been changed from the acute to the subacute and chronic stages and the doctors in charge had told his friends that he was now suffering from miliary tuberculosis, and would probably die within a week or two.

After receiving this discouraging information, the friends of the patient came to me and prevailed upon me to take charge of the case. He was transferred to our institution, and we began at once to apply the natural methods of treatment. Instead of ice packs we used the regular cold-water packs, strips of linen wrung out of water of ordinary temperature wrapped around the body and covered with several layers of flannel bandages.

The wet packs became warm on the body in a few minutes. They relaxed the pores and drew the blood into the surface, thus promoting heat radiation and the elimination of morbid matter through

the skin. They did not suppress the fever, but kept it below the danger point.

Under this treatment, accompanied by fasting and judicious osteopathic manipulation, the inflammatory and feverish processes suppressed by the ice packs soon revived, became once more active and aggressive, and were now allowed to run their natural course through the stages of Destruction, Absorption (Abatement) and Reconstruction.

The result of the Nature Cure treatment was that about two months after the patient entered our institution, his friends bought him a ticket to sunny Greece. He had a good journey, and in the congenial climate of his native country made a perfect recovery.

I have observed a number of similar cases suffering from consolidation of the lungs and the resulting asthmatic or tubercular conditions, which had been doctored into these chronic ailments by means of antipyretics and of ice.

Equally dangerous is the ice bag if applied to the inflamed brain or the spinal column. Only too often it results either in paralysis or in death. In many instances, acute cerebrospinal meningitis is changed in this way by drug and serum treatment or by the use of ice bags into the chronic, so-called incurable infantile paralysis.

We say so-called incurable because we have treated and cured such cases in all stages of development from the acute inflammatory meningitis to the chronic paralysis of long standing.

In our treatment of acute diseases we never use ice or icy water for packs, compresses, baths or ablutions, but always water of ordinary temperature as it comes from the faucet. The water compress or pack warms up quickly, and thus brings about a natural reaction within a few minutes, while the ice bag or pack continually chills and practically freezes the affected parts and organs. This does not allow the skin to relax; it prevents a warm reaction, the radiation of the body heat and the elimination of morbid matter through the skin.³

³ At the present time ice packs are the standard treatment for athletic injuries. While they do keep down the swelling by preventing the normal inflammatory process from taking place, we are still not convinced that this is a wise treatment in the long run. It would be interesting to follow a few of the athletes so treated to see what the future may bring them. (Continued on next page.)

Suppression During the Fourth and Fifth Stages of Inflammation

Let us see what happens when acute diseases are suppressed during the stages of Abatement and Reconstruction. If the defenders of the body, the phagocyte and antitoxins, produced in the tissues and organs, gain the victory over the inimical forces which are threatening the health and life of the organism, then the symptoms of inflammation, swelling, redness, heat, pain and the accelerated heart action which accompanies them, gradually subside. The debris of the battlefield is carried away through the venous circulation which forms the drainage system of the body. [Also by the lymphatic system.]

When in this way all morbid materials have been completely eliminated, Vital Force, "the physician within," will commence to regenerate and reconstruct the injured and destroyed cells and tissues.

If, however, these processes of elimination and reconstruction are interfered with or interrupted before they are completed, then the affected parts and organs will not have a chance to become entirely well or strong. They will remain in an abnormal, crippled condition, and their functional activity will be seriously handicapped.

The Aftereffects of Drug-Treated Typhoid Fever

In hundreds of cases I have told patients after a glance into their eyes that they were suffering from chronic indigestion, malassimilation and malnutrition caused by drug-treated typhoid fever; and every time the records in the eyes were confirmed by the history of the patient.

In such cases the outer rim of the iris shows a wreath of whitish or drug-colored circular flakes. I have named this wreath "the typhoid rosary." It corresponds to the lymphatic and other absorbent vessels in the intestines, and appears in the iris of the eye when these structures have been injured or atrophied by drug, ice or

(Continued from page 63) In my own practice we do see many athletes with serious chronic problems following their active career. We always wonder if the ice treatment may have had something to do with this.

surgical treatment. Wherever this has been done, the venous and lymphatic vessels in the intestines do not absorb the food materials and these pass through the digestive tract and out of the body without being properly digested and assimilated.

During the destructive stages of typhoid fever, the intestines become denuded by the sloughing of their membranous linings. These sloughed membranes give the stools of the typhoid fever patient their peculiar pea soup appearance. In a similar manner the lymphatic, venous and glandular structures which constitute the absorbent vessels of the intestines atrophy and slough away.

If the inflammatory processes are allowed to run their normal course under natural methods of treatment through the stages of Destruction, Absorption and Reconstruction, Nature will rebuild the membranous and glandular structures of the intestinal canal perfectly, convalescence will be rapid and the patient will enjoy better health than before he contracted the disease.

If, however, through injudicious feeding or the administration of quinine, mercury, purging salts, opiates or other destructive agents, Nature's processes are interfered with, prematurely checked and suppressed, then the sloughed membranes and absorbent vessels are not reconstructed, and the intestinal tract is left in a denuded and atrophied condition.

Such a patient may arise from his bed thinking that he is cured; but unless he is afterward treated by natural methods, he will never make a full recovery. It will take him, perhaps, months or years to die a gradual, miserable death through malassimilation and malnutrition, which usually end in some form of wasting disease, such as pernicious anemia [they did not know of vitamin B-12 at that time] or tuberculosis. If he does not actually die from the effects of the wrongly treated typhoid fever, he will be troubled all his life with intestinal indigestion, constipation, malassimilation and the accompanying nervous disorders.

A Change for the Better

Speaking of typhoid fever, we are glad to say that for this particular form of disease the most advanced medical science has adopted the Nature Cure treatment, that is, straight cold water and fasting and no drugs, as it was originated by the pioneers of Nature Cure in Germany more than fifty years ago.

This treatment, which medical science has found so eminently successful in typhoid fever, would prove equally efficacious in all other acute diseases if the regular doctors would only try it. It is a strange and curious fact that so far they have never found it worth while to do so. All Nature Cure physicians know from their daily experience in actual practice that the simple water treatment and fasting is sufficient to cure all other forms of acute diseases just as easily and effectively as typhoid fever. By this is proved the Unity of Treatment in all acute diseases.

Both in typhoid fever and in tuberculosis, progressive medical men have now entirely abandoned the germ-killing method of treatment. They have found it absolutely useless and superfluous to hunt for drugs and serums to kill the typhoid and tuberculosis bacilli in these, the two most destructive diseases afflicting the human family. They were forced to admit that the simple remedies of the Nature Cure school, cold water and fasting in typhoid fever and the fresh-air treatment in tuberculosis, are the only worthwhile methods to fight these formidable enemies to health and life.⁴

If they would continue their researches and experiments along these natural lines, they would attain infinitely more satisfactory results than through their germ-hunting and germ-killing theories and practices.



⁴ This was changed by antibiotics. However, the principles described by Dr. Lindlahr regarding the suppression of disease are as true with antibiotics as with the drugs used in his day. The antibiotics may save lives from the acute disease but they leave the patient with a chronic weakness that may in the long run be far more dangerous to his health than the acute ailment.