

[Methods of Treatment to Be Used for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Dead by Drowning]

Date: 1786/03/07

Publication Format
Print

Type
Medicine

Symptoms
drowning

Ingredients
ashes
embers
grains
sand
water
tobacco
brandy
gin
rum
volatile salts
spirits of hart horn
hart horn
feather
snuff

Places
Halifax
Nova Scotia
London
England

Source: Nova Scotia Gazette and the Weekly Chronicle

Institution: Nova Scotia Archives | **Source Origin:** Nova Scotia Newspapers on Microfilm | **Reference:** Consult the Nova Scotia Archives' "Nova Scotia Newspapers on Microfilm" list (Royal Gazette) for a complete account of microfilm reels for this paper. EMMR includes recipes from Microfilm Reels 990, 8155, 8156, 8158, 8162

Description

Detailed directions for a number of techniques that might be used to restore an apparent drowning victim, including smoke enemas, mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, the application of hart horn spirits, and throat tickling. Vol. 16, No. 1039. Microfilm Reel 8162. The instructions were appended as "Methods of Treatment" (pp. 83-87) to a collection of epistolary first-hand accounts of drowning recovery published as *Reports of the Humane Society, Instituted in the Year 1774, For the Recovery of Persons Apparently Drowned* (London, 1777).

Transcription

Methods of Treatment to be used for the Recovery of Persons apparently dead by drowning.

I. IN removing the body to a convenient place, great care should be taken that it be not bruised, nor shaken violently, nor roughly handled, nor carried over any

one's shoulders with the head hanging downwards, nor rolled upon the ground, or over a barrel, nor lifted up by the heels; for experience proves that all these methods are injurious, and often destroys the remains of life.

The unfortunate object should be cautiously conveyed in the arms of two or more persons, or in a carriage upon straw, laying as on a bed, with the head a little raised, and kept in as natural and easy a position as possible.

II. The body being well dried with a cloth, should be placed in a bed, or blanket, properly warmed, but not too near a large fire; bottles of hot water should be laid to the bottoms of the feet, in the joints of the knees, and under the arm pits, and a warming pan moderately heated, or hot bricks wrapped in cloths, should be rubbed over the body, and particularly along the back. The natural and kindly warmth of a healthy person laying by the side of the body, particularly by that of a child, has been found in many cases very efficacious. The windows or doors of a room should be left open, and no more people admitted into it than is absolutely necessary, as the life of the person greatly depends upon his having the benefit of a pure air. The shirt or cloaths of an attendant, or the skin of a sheep fresh killed, may also be used with advantage. Should these accidents happen in the neighbourhood of a warm bath, brew-house, bake-house, glass-house, soap manufactory, or any fabrick were warm lees ashes, embers, grains, sand, water, &c. can be easily procured, it would be very proper to place the body in any of these, moderated to a degree of heat, but very lit-

tle exceeding that of a healthy person.

III. The body being placed in one or other of these advantageous circumstances as speedily as possible, various stimulating means should next be employed; the most ed-
ficacious one, blowing with force into the lungs, by ap-
plying the mouth to that of the patient, closing at the
same time his nostrils with one hand, and gentle the air a-
gain, by pressing the chest with the other, imitating the
strong breathing of a healthy person; the medium of a
handkerchief or cloth may be used to render the operati-
on less indelicate;--throwing the smoke of tobacco up
the fundament into the bowels, by means of a pipe or
fumigator, such as are used in administering clysters ; a
pair of bellows may be employed while the other can be
procured;--rubbing the belly, chest, back and arms,
with a coarse cloth, or dry salt, so as not to rub off the
skin, or with a flannel dipt in brandy, rum, or gin;--
applying spirits of harthorne, volatile salts, or any other
stimulating substance, to the nostrils, and rubbing them
upon the temples very frequently; -- tickling the throat
with a feather, so as to excite a propensity to vomit, and
the nostrils also with a feather snuff, or any other stimu-
lant so as to provoke sneezing: the body should at inter-
vals be shaken also, and varied in its position.

One or other of these methods should be preserved in
until the patient be restored.

We have been as circumstantial as possible in the afore-
said directions, that if one conveniency should be want-
ing, the attendants may not be at a loss for others.

Where the patient has lain but a short time senseless, blow-
ing into the lungs and bowels has been in some cases
found sufficient : yet a speedy recovery is not to be ex-
pected in general. The above methods are therefore to
be continued with spirit for two hours or upwards, al-
though there be not the least symptoms of returning life:
the vulgar notion that people will recover in a few mi-
nutes or not at all, and the ignorant foolish ridiculing of
those who are willing to preserve, as if they were at-
tempting impossibilities, have most certainly caused the
deaths of many, who might otherwise have been saved.

Most of the above means are happily of such a nature,
that they may be begun immediately, and that by persons
who are not acquainted with the medical art; yet it is
always adviseable to seek the assistance of some regular
practitioners as soon as possible, as it is presumed that such
a one will be more skillful and expert, and better able to
vary the methods of procedure, as circumstances may re-

quire.

The [Society](#) think it proper to observe, that most of the above means of restoration are applicable to various other cases of apparent deaths, whether from hanging, apoplectic and convulsive fits, cold suffocation by damp or noxious vapour proceeding from coal mines, the confined air of wells, cisterns, caves or the must of summoning liquors.

Whenever any good has been produced by the means recommended, the person who has superintended the cure, is desired to write a circumstantial account of it to *James Horsefield*, Esquire, Treasurer, Middle Temple, or *Mr. Wm. Haws*, Secretary to the [Society](#), Pelsgrave Place, Strand.

The [Society](#) pay the rewards within the limits of their institution, in the following manner ;

Four guineas whenever life has been restored.

Two guineas in every unsuccessful attempt, provided the mode of treatment prescribed by the [Society](#) has been used two hours.

One guinea to publicans, &c. who receive the bodies readily into their house.

Annotations

[Society](#)

The London-based Humane Society for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Drowned founded in 1774.

Methods of Treatment to Be Used for the Recovery of Persons Apparently Dead by Drowning recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes: <https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/130>