

[Prophylaxis, or Method of Preventing Infection] Dr. William James Almon

Date: Published after 1796.

Contributors

Contributor Role

Compiler

Contributor Name

Dr. William James Almon

Publication Format

Print

Type

Drink

Food

Medicine

Symptoms

infectious disease

fever

Ingredients

vegetables

meats

spices

pepper

porter

tamarind water

cream of tartar

spruce beer

milk

water

bread

butter

cigar

snuff

Places

Halifax

Nova Scotia

Boston
Massachusetts
America

Source: Manuscript Notebook of Dr. William James Almon

Institution: Nova Scotia Archives | **Source Origin:** Almon Family Fonds | **Reference:** MG 1 / Microfilm Reel 10,045

Description

Recommendations for preventing the spread of infectious disease based on observations of a fever that prevailed in Boston in the summer of 1796. Newspaper clipping found on p. 260. Original source unknown.

Transcription

M E D I C A L.

Boston, August 2.

The following observations are a part of a dissertation on the fever, which prevailed in this town in the summer of 1796. I[f] you think proper you will give them insertion. I offer them for publication with more confidence and willingness, since they are said to be "judicious" by the respectable authors of the Repository, published at New-York.

Prophylaxis, or Method of preventing Infection.

DIET--All gross food, especially meat[s]s. when prepared with spices and pepper. stimuli, which greatly inflame the blood and fit it for disease, are to be avoided. Food should be chiefly vegetables, cooked in a simple manner.

DRINKS--Should be chiefly of the subsive kind. Porter is good; tamarind water, cream of tartar in water, spruce beer, &c. But the drink which most effectually allays the thirst, and perhaps is safe and healthful as any, because both nutritive and diluting, is simply milk and water, equal parts. These drinks will serve to keep the body regular, neither too lax nor too costive, a point which should be closely attended to.

The exhalation of putrid and putrifying matter, also pools and puddles of stagnant

water, must be carefully shunned.

All possible attention must be paid to cleanliness of body, by frequent shifting the linen, and washing off perspiration by frequent bathing in water of a middle temperature, or the temperature of the surrounding air.

The purity of the common atmosphere should be preserved with all possible diligence by emptying and cleansing the cellars, streets, drains, ditches, vaults, &c.

The chambers of the sick must be visited as much as humanity and the conveniency of the sick, require, and no more. Doors and windows should be opened for free ventilation.”

I now add--that bread and butter should be our principal food at this season. Sweet butter, from this balsamic and lubricant nature, is peculiarly soothing and grateful to that fretted and irritated state of the bowels which precedes the commencement of the fever, and I believe will tend much to prevent the dissolution of the blood and fluids which takes place in all its fatal terminations. Dwelling apartments should be scented with balsamic or aromatic perfumes, and remember that the kind of perfume be occasionally changed, otherwise the sensation will be lost, and the intention frustrated.

Smoke a pipe or Segar two or three times a day, or use snuff; and let the dress be comfortably cool.

SAMUEL BROWN.

Prophylaxis, or Method of Preventing Infection recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes:
<https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/189>