

[The Method of Cure with Dr. Burton's Recipe] Dr. William James Almon

Date: Published in 1738.

Contributors

Contributor Role

Compiler

Contributor Name

Dr. William James Almon

Publication Format

Manuscript

Type

Medicine

Symptoms

coughing

whooping cough

strangury

pertussis

pulmonary symptoms

nausea

distended stomach

Ingredients

peruvian bark

paregoric elixir

cantharides

camphire

asafoetida

calomel

pitch

extract of bark

simple water

julep

balsam of copaiba

vitriol

Gold Sulphuratum Aureum

Places

Halifax
Nova Scotia
Settle
York
Yorkshire
England

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

Detailed recommendations and medicines, including a Latin prescription, on treating whooping cough, pp. 233-34. The method claims to be an improvement on that forwarded by Dr. John Burton in an essay on the "chincough" appended to his book, *A Treatise on the Non-Naturals* (A. Staples: London, 1738).

Transcription

The method of cure here recommended which is an improvement of the mode prescribed by Dr. Burton of York in his *Essay on the Chin Cough* published in 1738 was communicated to Dr. Lettsom by W. Abraham Sutcliff, an eminent Surgeon-Apothecary of Settle, in York-Shire, and consists of six ounces of Tincture of Peruvian Bark, half an ounce of Paregoric Elixir, and a drachm or Tincture of Canthanides, given in small doses, three or four times a day, which are gradually increased, till a slight strangury is excited, and then the dose is diminished, or taken at more distant intervals. The strangury usually comes on about the third day; and the hooping seldom continues above six days from the first exhibition of this medicine. Though it sometimes succeeds without exciting any strangury, it generally produces its salutary effect sooner, when that circumstance comes on, whether the bark is joined with the Cantharides or not.

During twenty years experience | adds our Physician | this Ingenious practitioner has almost uniformly continued the use of this medicine with the most flattering success; under his tutelage I was a witness of it; and from numerous instances which have since occurred to me in this city, I have seen no reason to interdict its use.

Previous to the exhibition of this medicine some evacuation he says will be in general necessary, which the present exigencies of the case must determine. Dr. Millar President of the Medical Society, though par-

tial to the exhibition of Assafotida, as thinking Cantharides, strongly stimulating, has lately, with a peculiar liberality of sentiment, acknowledged the efficacy of Cantharides. By using this method W.

Sutcliff we are told never lost a pertussile patient and among more than sixty, twenty two of whose cases he relates Dr. Lettsom attended only two that died, and they evidently appeared to expire under pulmonary symptoms.

The Hooping Cough is certainly a troublesome and dangerous complaint. I have seen most use from a particular emetic of the following form

Rx Aq: Distill: ℥ij
Tinc: Vitriol gr. x
Sulph. Aurat. Antim. gr. viij Misce fiat
Mistura. cochleare minim. / vel ij ad iij__

This mixture should be given as the age, strength, and Circumstances of the disease may require; the dose should be so regulated as to keep up a constant Nausea; the body kept loose by Calomel in large doses, & food in the form of Broths given per anum in preference by the Mouth, the distension of the stomach does undoubtedly accelerate the fits of Coughing; a Pitch Plaister inter scapulas is a good and slight irritating application, yet with all the united influence of Medicines not any thing seems to relieve so effectually as change of Air. I am convinced that changing air independent of any peculiar properties the air may contain, does good.

MARGIN:
Dr. Burton's
Recipe

Take a scruple of Cantharides and as much camphire W.cs when well mixed. I order to be mixed w.th three drachms of extract of Bark, the dose eight or ten grains every third or fourth hour, according to the circumstances of the cases, in a spoon-ful of simple water or julep, in which was dissolved a light balsam of Copaiba.

Translation (from second image, lines 8-11)

Recipe: 2 ounces of distilled water

10 grains elixir of vitriol

8 grains of Gold Sulphuratum Aureum. Mix. Let a mixture be made. A very small spoonful, or 2 to 3.

Translation and transcription by Winston Black

Annotations

Peruvian Bark

The bark of the cinchona tree used to treat malaria and other fevers.

Paregoric Elixir

An opium derivative used to treat diarrhea, coughs, and pain.

Cantharides

A traditional apothecary medicine also known as Spanish Fly.

strangury

Frequent and painful urination.

Assafotida

A powdered resin derived from giant fennel, commonly used in India. (Also Assa Fetida or Asofoetida)

Calomel

Mercury chloride, once used as a purgative as well as an insecticide and fungicide.

Balsam of Copaiba

An essential oil derived from the South American copaiba tree used for a variety of medicinal and cosmetic purposes. It has been found to have anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, and antihemorrhagic properties.

The Method of Cure with Dr. Burton's Recipe recipe from Early Modern Maritime Recipes:

<https://emmr.lib.unb.ca/recipes/205>