# [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 "chin-cough" appended to his book, A Treatise on the Non-Naturals (A. Staples: London, 1738).

Transcription

The method of cure here recommended which is an im
-provement of the mode prescribed by Dr. Burton of York
in his Essay on the Chin Cough published in 1738 was com
-municated to Dr. Lettsom by W. Abraham Sutcliff, an emi-
-nent Surgeon-Apothecary of Settle, in York-Shire, and con-
-sists of six ounces of Tincture of Peruvian Bark, half an
ounce of Paregoric Elixir, and a drachm or Tincture of Can-
-thanides, 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 conti-
-nues above six days from the first exhibition of this
medicine. Though it sometimes succeeds without exci-
-ting 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 evacuati-
-on 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 dange-
-rous complaint. I have seen most use from a particu-
-lar 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 preferrence
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 effectu-
-ally as change of Air. I am convinced that chang
-ing 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