

To Cure a Cold

*Arthur J. Patek, AB, MD, Editor, Wisconsin Medical Journal
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Consul-General Guenther, of Frankfort, Germany, reports a new cure for a cold. It consists of a mixture of cocaine, paranephrine, and water, applied on cotton to the nose. It arrests secretions, and cures the cold, usually, by several applications. Inasmuch as colds can lead to dangerous diseases, it is wise to prevent its protraction. In the case of children, Doctor Vohsen advises mothers to cut a small rubber tube obliquely and to insert the sharpened end into the nose; then, by means of a rubber ball, blow air into the tube. Thus the secretions in one side may be blown out through the other side. This eases the children and allows them to breathe freely. One can see at a glance how valuable such knowledge is. It can be used in all kinds of cases affecting the nose and throat.

The above abstract, culled from the U.S. Consular Reports, should not be allowed to escape severe criticism. Spread broadcast, such statements as these may do incalculable harm. There is a feeling among intelligent physicians, amounting in effect to a law, against the placing of cocaine in the hands of a patient. The enormous increase in the number of cocaine habitués, has been traced largely to the use of this drug in the manner suggested in this report. One need witness but once the fatal and demoralizing effect of the cocaine habit, to fully appreciate the awful and incurable depravity that is its ultimate end.

With regard to the other suggestion credited to Dr. Vohsen, a few words may suffice. When it is realized that in most instances acute coryza leads to more or less occlusion of both nasal chambers, the forcible blowing of air into one side, if the other be occluded, may lead to the carrying of infectious discharges into the Eustachian tube and middle ear, and setting up an acute tubal catarrh or acute otitis media, with their always possible sequelæ – mastoiditis or subsequent deafness. One may with good reason remind the Consul General in connection with the above abstract, that even in medical literature “all is not gold that glitters.”

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