

Chapter Twenty-One

Suppressive Surgical Treatment of Tonsillitis and Enlarged Adenoids



The following paragraphs are taken from an article in the *Nature Cure Magazine* May, 1909, titled "Surgery for Tonsillitis and Adenoids." They will throw further interesting light on the dangerous consequences of suppressing acute and subacute diseases.

"The tonsils are excreting glands. Nature has created them for the elimination of impurities from the body. Acute, subacute and chronic tonsillitis accompanied by enlargement and cheesy decay of the tonsils means that these glands have been habitually congested with morbid matter and poisons, that they have had more work to do than they could properly attend to.

"These glandular structures constitute a valuable part of the drainage system of the organism. If the blood is poisoned through overeating and faulty food combinations, or with scrofulous, venereal or psoriatic poisons, the tonsils are called upon, along with other organs, to eliminate these morbid taints. Is it any wonder that frequently they become inflamed and subject to decay? What, however, can be gained by destroying them with iodine or extirpating them with the surgeon's scissors or the 'guillotine'?

"Because your servants are weakened by overwork, would you kill them? Because the drains in your house are too small to carry off the waste, would you blockade or remove them? Still, this is the orthodox philosophy of the medical schools applied to the management of the human body.

"...In case of any morbid discharge from the body, wherever it

be, whether through hemorrhoids, open sores, ulcers or through tonsils, scrofulous glands, etc., a fontanelle has been established to which and through which systemic poisons make their way. If such an outlet be blocked by medical or surgical treatment the stream of morbid matter has to seek another escape or else the poisons will accumulate somewhere in the body.

“Fortunate is the patient when such an escape can be established, because wherever in the system morbid excretions, suppressed by medical treatment, concentrate, there will inevitably be found the seat of chronic disease.

“After the tonsils have been removed, the morbid matter which they were eliminating usually finds the nearest and easiest outlet through the adenoid tissues and nasal membranes. These now take up the work of ‘vicarious’ elimination and, in their turn, become hyperactive and inflamed.

“Sometimes it happens that the adenoid tissues become affected before the tonsils. In that case, also, relief through the surgeon’s knife is sought and then the process is reversed: after the adenoids have been removed, the tonsils develop chronic catarrhal conditions.

“When both tonsils and adenoids have been removed, the nasal membranes will, in turn, become congested and swollen. Often the mucous elimination increases to an alarming degree, and frequently polyps and other growths make their appearance or the turbinated bones soften and swell and obstruct the nasal passages, thus again making the patient a ‘mouth breather.’

“But in vain does Nature protest against local symptomatic treatment. Science has nothing to learn from her.

“When the nose takes up the work of vicarious elimination, the same mode of treatment is resorted to. The mucous membranes of the nose are now swabbed and sprayed with antiseptics and astringents, or ‘burned’ by cauterizers, electricity, etc. The polyps are cut out, and frequently parts of the turbinated bone and septum as well, in order to open the air passages.

“Now, surely, the patient must be cured. But, strange to say, new and more serious troubles arise. The posterior nasal passages and the throat are now affected by chronic catarrhal conditions and there is much annoyance from phlegm and mucous discharges which drop into the throat. These catarrhal conditions frequently

extend to the mucous membranes of stomach and intestines.

“When the drainage system of the nose and the nasopharyngeal cavities has been completely destroyed, the impurities must either travel upward into the brain or downward into the glandular structures of the neck, thence into the bronchi and the tissues of the lungs.

“If the trend be upward, to the brain, the patient grows nervous and irritable or becomes dull and apathetic. How often is a child reprimanded or even punished for laziness and inattention when it cannot help itself? In many instances the morbid matter affects certain centers in the brain and causes nervous conditions, hysteria, St. Vitus’ dance, epilepsy, etc. In children the impurities frequently find an outlet through the eardrums in the form of pus-like discharges. This may frequently avert inflammation of the brain, meningitis, imbecility, insanity or infantile paralysis.¹

“If the trend of the suppressed impurities and poisons be downward, it often results in the hypertrophy and degeneration of the lymphatic glands of the neck. In such cases the suppressive treatment, by drugs or knife, is again applied instead of eliminative and curative measures. The scrofulous poisons, suppressed and driven back from the diseased glands in the neck, now find lodgment in the bronchi and lungs, where they accumulate and form a luxuriant soil for the growth of the bacilli of pneumonia and tuberculosis.

“In other cases, the vocal organs become seriously affected by chronic catarrhal conditions, abnormal growths and in later stages by tuberculosis. Many a fine voice has been ruined in this way.

“The prevention and the cure of all these ailments lie not in local symptomatic treatment and suppression by drugs or knife, but in the rational and natural treatment of the body as a whole.”

¹ Admittedly this chapter is a little over aggressive regarding the various diseases that may stem from the improper treatment of the tonsils, adenoids and the nasal membranes. Today much more is known about some of these diseases than in Dr. Lindlahr’s time, but the same destructive procedures are still used today and while we know they will not cause epilepsy, insanity or St. Vitus’ dance, we do know they invariably leave the child or adult with a wide variety of other difficult-to-treat chronic conditions.

