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HEALTH TALKS

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All That Wheezes Is Not Asthma

"Last June," writes a correspondent, "the doctor told me I had valvular heart trouble. It had been present for years and I was unaware of it. Blood pressure nearly normal. I can hold my breath only twenty seconds. I have what I call bronchial asthma, have been subject to it more or less constantly for years. Bringing a bucket of coal upstairs sets me wheezing."

A great many people who imagine they have asthma, have no asthma at all. We haven't examined the correspondent, of course, but his description does not tally with that of bronchial asthma. In bronchial (or spasmodic) asthma the difficulty of breathing is not constant, but comes only in spells lasting from a few hours to a few days, with intervals of perfect freedom.

What the correspondent describes is rather the dys noea, or difficult breathing, of impaired circulation. He probably has a dilated heart; the state which doctors call "loss of compensation." That is, for years, since his heart valves became incompetent, his heart has been doing overwork; it has been pumping out at each beat more than enough blood to meet his demands, the excess being pumped out to compensate for the quantity that leaks back through the damaged valve at each beat. The valve, you might say, is incrusted with carbon; it has been distorted by the scar formation following some past infection and inflammation.

While the heart muscle has been and then for a few moments. It means absolute rest. Rising to get a drink or answer the telephone cancels all the benefit of several days of rest. So your doctor's judgment is necessary to determine how long this rest much be continued, and your nurse's skilled care is equally necessary to see that the rest is not nullified by your own mistakes.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Vaccination Now.

Would you advise me to have any little girl vaccinated against smallpox now (she is three years old) or wait until she is ready to go to school? (S. P. L.)

Answer—Now. And let the doctor have the after-dressing and care of the arm all to himself—it is his duty, and intelligent surgical dressing prevents all trouble. A vaccinator who leaves the after-care of the arm to untrained hands should not attempt to work at all.

The Old Time Mollycoddle Baby.

My baby is six months old and weighs only ten pounds. I give her not quite a quart of milk in 24 hours, and friends say she is starving and that I should feed her meat broth and the juice of half an orange in the morning. I had always supposed a baby should have nothing but milk until she is a year old. (Mrs. H. O.)

Answer—As soon as a baby cuts a tooth the tooth should be given something to do. From the fifth month some fresh orange or other fruit juice daily, apart from milk feedings. From

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11 Nov 2026

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