



Polio Survivors' Page

POLIO ... MORE THAN ONCE

*Read from Marti Whiting's nursing book - Brown, Amy F., **Medical and Surgical Nursing II**, W.B. Saunders Company 1959.*

"Incidence: Some authorities state that as high as 80 per cent of the population in this country has had poliomyelitis at some time, which was not recognized and which left no residual paralysis.It is thought that probably one case in about a hundred cases becomes paralyzed."

Under symptoms it describes the difference between minor illness and major illness.

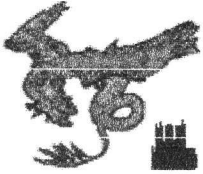
"Minor Illness: These brief illnesses are commonly seen during epidemics of poliomyelitis, usually last only 24 hours, and are more frequent in children than in adults. Clinical manifestations include fever, headache, vomiting, listlessness, and sore throat. The minor illness may be followed by signs of paralytic or nonparalytic poliomyelitis or may represent the entire case of the disease."

"Major Illness: This term relates to both paralytic and nonparalytic poliomyelitis. Lesions have developed within the central nervous system to an extent sufficient to cause neurologic symptoms. If there is a sudden onset, fever, vomiting, and a severe headache commonly occur. These symptoms may be accompanied by pain in the extremities. Soreness and stiffness of the neck, back, and hamstring muscles become prominent early.....About half the patients with major illness have paralytic poliomyelitis."

"Spinal Paralytic Poliomyelitis: This is the classic form of poliomyelitis. The clinical diagnosis becomes definite with the presence of flaccid paralysis. In the order of frequency, the muscles most commonly paralyzed are those of the legs (by far the most frequent), arms, back, thorax, face, intercostal region, and diaphragm."

"Bulbar Poliomyelitis: This, the most serious form of poliomyelitis, occurs in 10 to 20 per cent of paralytic patients in an epidemic. These are the cases in which cranial nerve nuclei are involved. Weakness of the pharynx and vocal cords results in an inability to swallow or to talk clearly, and sometimes in regurgitation of fluids through the nose. Some patients have symptoms and signs indicating involvement of the automatic centers of the medulla, particularly the respiratory center. Respiratory failure may progress rapidly."

"In 1949, three different poliomyelitis viruses were identified: Type 1, Brunhilde; Type 2, Lansing; and Type 3, Leon. A typing program, completed in 1951, revealed that all the numerous "strains" of poliovirus belonged in one or another of these three types. The diseases they cause can not be distinguished by symptoms, and all are called poliomyelitis. Infection by one virus type, however, confers immunity only against itself. It is, therefore, possible to have paralytic poliomyelitis twice, or even three times, from infection by the different virus types."



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Original Document Preparation: Tom Dempsey.

Document Reference: <URL:<http://www.eskimo.com/~dempt/msnurse.htm>>

Last modification: 14th December 1997