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BANGALORE CITY (INDIA)

PHYSICAL TRAINING THROUGH CORRESPONDENCE.

OVERCOMING CONSTIPATION

Constipation is a scourge which attacks only human beings! He is the only animal in creation who lives a devitalized life and eats devitalized foods. Particularly the elite and sedentary types suffer most from this malady. The percentage of sufferers in the labouring classes is negligible. Perhaps they do not know that there is such an illness as constipation. If ever they get it, it is temporary and they get rid of it soon. Their's is not an inactive devitalized life. Secondly, they cannot afford the services of doctors to cure their constipation. Physical activity and constipation seldom exist together. In short, constipation results from too soft a mode of living and eating.

WHAT IS CONSTIPATION:—It is difficult to say what constipation exactly is. It may be an incomplete elimination of the bowels, or, difficult and painful defecation owing to dried up fecal matter. It may be frequent or partial evacuations without the feeling that one is fully eased. It may be due to constriction at one or other several places in the colon. It may be ill-formed fecal matter; scybalous, (hard fecal lumps) due to insufficiency of bile or other enzymes; and several other things.

What then is normal bowel elimination? Many are under the impression that their bowels move normally when they are really constipated. Some think they are constipated when they are not. A normal bowel movement is one where the fecal matter is well-formed; brownish in colour, soft but not liquid and almost odourless. It is a complete evacuation in

an easy, painless, strainless way. There is a soft coating of soapy liquid over the matter passed, and the matter itself passes in one continuous mass out of the rectum, and nothing remains sticking to the anus after the defecation. But this is only an ideal condition. If men had such healthy and clean evacuation there need have been fewer hospitals and fewer doctors.

Constipation is most often the off-shoot of some other trouble and not the disease itself. A number of things may cause constipation. (1) Physical inactivity, lazy or sedentary habits, (2) Drug habits such as morphia, opium, bhang, and tobacco, (3) Heavy alcoholic habits, (4) Too little or too much food, (5) Chillies and condiments, (6) Single variety or too many varieties of food, (7) Heavy habits of coffee and tea, (8) Soft mealy foods which lack roughage and bulk, (9) Fried and greasy foods, (10) Improper cooking, (11) Irregular habits in life, (12) Frequent travelling and sleeplessness, (13) Change of atmosphere, (14) Mental shocks and depressions, (15) Insufficient salivation of food (due to insufficient mastication), (16) Insufficiency of liquids, (17) Gastric ulcers, (18) Muscular weakness of the stomach, (19) Torpid liver (Insufficient Secretion of bile), (20) Torpid pancreas, (21) Pyloric or duodenal troubles, (22) Intestinal stasis, (23) Hook-worm, (24) Colitis, (25) Bacillary disturbances, (26) Cecal thickening, (27) Appendicitis, (28) Weakened peristalsis in the colon, (29) Colonic-contraction, (30) Colonic ptosis or entire viscero-ptosis and several others.

I should not like to swell this list and create a scare. But any one, or any combination of these may cause constipation.

An average man does not know why he is constipated. And every constipated person cannot afford a complete examination of his alimentary tract, an analysis of his stomachic digestion and an analysis of his urine, feces, etc. Usually when he goes to a doctor, he will be given a purgative, or some laxative pills, or some such crutch for the time being. But will he ever be able to throw away these crutches? In course of time the system gets more weak owing to the continued use of these purgatives and need arises for stronger purgatives and larger doses. One by one the purgatives in a long list are tried and found ineffective. The person grows tired, and anaemic and ages too soon.

The purgatives and drugs undermined his system. They hastened the foods down the alimentary tract, by increasing the muscle irritation. The purgatives speeded up the peristaltic action so much so, the food was thrown out of the rectum before full digestion and absorption could take place. The patient felt emptiness in the stomach and in the bowels and mistook it for good digestion and appetite and loaded his stomach again, while the tissues were actually dying of hunger and lack of nutrition. An early grave was thus dug out for himself and the purgatives killed the man.

The average man has not enough knowledge nor discretion to diagnose the cause of his constipation. The doctor cannot be paid adequately to make a deep and wide diagnosis and arrive at the truth. Grant this as possible in a few cases; but how can any doctor fathom the dirty and unhealthy habits of each individual and make him change them?

Medical men say more than ninety per cent. of the diseases men suffer from, are due to some gastro-intestinal disorder. And at least fifty per cent. of this ninety, can directly be attributed to man's lazy habits: wrong eating and living.

Now, what is the right thing to do? Cure or Prevention? Prevention of course. But who should do it? if not the person himself? The pity is, most people do not know the cause of their constipation and the rest are lazy and reluctant to act and cultivate active habits of life.

Leaving aside the lazy, let us consider what best could be done to combat constipation.

Before trying to remedy the cause, one should know what is Constipation? And what is Not? Should one bowel movement a day be considered normal or must there be two evacuations, one in the morning and one before going to bed? Or is it, as Dr. Kellogg says, "The bowels should move after each principal meal?" There is no single standard opinion regarding the ideal condition of the bowel evacuation. That it must move at least once a day is necessary from the point of view of health.

There are persons who get depressed if their bowels do not move at the scheduled hour in the morning. There are some who do not feel eased unless they have evacuated more than once in the course of the morning. In some cases, bowels do not stir unless probed by a heavy breakfast. In other case it needs a hot, strong, coffee or tea. In some cases

yet, Cruschen's or Eno's must be taken the first thing in the morning. Some, perhaps, have to say a prayer or two pacing the Verandah and wait till it is heard. Some must chew chebulic-myrobolan or drink Paraffin, or castor oil daily. There are people who are less sensitive with regard to their bowel movement. They evacuate whenever they feel..... They sleep only when they feel sleepy and eat only when they feel like eating. I put you the question: why bother if one's bowels do not move the first thing in the morning? Why should they? Man does not eat the same kind of food every day. There are parties, feasts and fasts. One day he eats foods that bind his bowels; another day he takes plenty of greens, fruits, and roughage. One day he takes soft and mealy foods. One day he does plenty of physical work and the next day he is extremely lazy. One day he eats and sleeps well; another day he comes home late from a Bacchanalian party and tosses about on his bed, heavy and sleepless. One day he fasts, on the next day he gourmands. Such being the vagaries of his palate and stomach why should he expect his bowels to move with clock-like regularity? Why must he fidget when it gets whimsical as the master himself.

Man is a tool of his environment and circumstances. The rich can command comforts and can eat and sleep at regular hours, have regular golf, walks or rides. The wage-earner has no such luck. He may have to work overtime and at odd hours and be satisfied with a few hours of sleep and scanty and non-nutritious diet. Yet he does not complain about constipation so much as the rich man does.

I now come to the conclusion that for the bowels to move freely and regularly, healthy habits, proper foods, and enough physical work are necessary. "SWEAT, MAN, SWEAT" said a great physician once. To live long and healthy, the human machine must be kept in good running condition and should not be left to rest and rust. Physical work or physical exercises alone cannot combat constipation. The diet must be natural; not a devitalized kind. It should contain plenty of greens, vegetables, vegetable salads, whole-wheat bread or chapatties, unpolished rice, and plenty of butter-milk. Polished rice, MUST GO. Polished rice is responsible for a thousand ills the human beings are suffering from. The high polishing of the rice removes even the last vestiges of the nitrogenous matter (Proteins), and leaves nothing but starch behind. It has all

fuel value; no food value at all. Whilst it supplies the human engine with enough and more fuel, it does not supply material to repair the tissue wastage.

The first thing a constipated person should do is to totally change his diet. His rice, must be whole-rice and his wheat, whole-wheat. Every meal he eats must have greens and vegetables in plenty. He must use citric fruits such as lemons or oranges, and drink butter-milk. Coffee and tea must be reduced to a minimum, if they cannot be avoided altogether. Foods fried in oil, ghee or fat must be tabooed. Sufficient quantities of liquid must be taken between meals. Liquids may be taken along with meals if one is thirsty. It is folly not to allay thirst during meals. One ought to know that the thirst is a call for water to replenish the loss of the same (through perspiration and urination) from the system. Owing to the loss of water through perspiration the blood becomes viscous. Viscous blood cannot course through the fine capillaries. The digestive enzymes cannot secrete enough, as there is not enough liquid in the system. The enzymes are all liquids.

The belief that drinking of water along with meals dilutes the digestive enzymes is sheer ignorance. If a thirst is not immediately allayed, it results in an unhealthy dryness. Constipation and various other complications of the blood and kidneys set in.

There is a belief amongst us—Indians—that the drinking of water during meals dilutes the digestive enzymes and retards digestion. How this was propagated and who did that are not known; but almost every other man believes in it. Reason goes blind. This is due to ignorance of the simple alimentary processes. And we are not all inquisitive.

The ingested food takes twelve to eighteen hours to go through the complete process of digestion. The undigested remains and the waste matter are thrown out of the rectum after that.

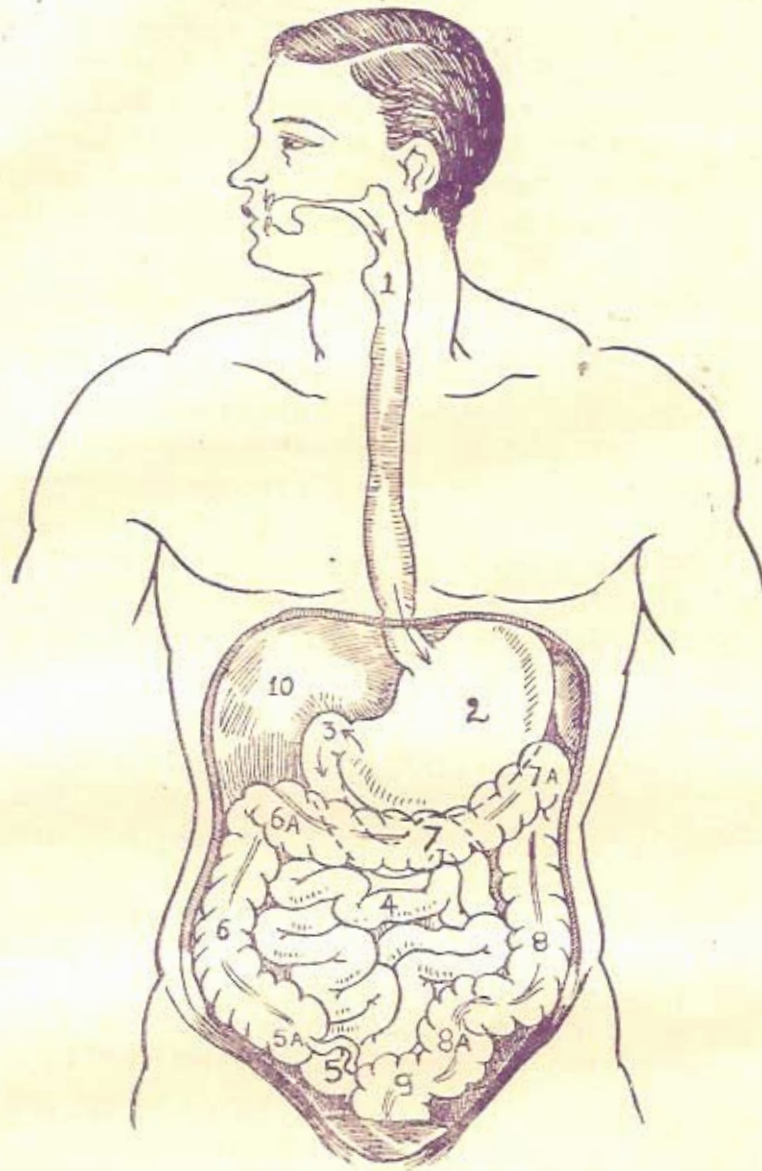
A normal man imagines that the water taken along with the food has also to pass through the forty feet of alimentary canal before being thrown out as urine. This is not true. Water is being absorbed at every inch of the alimentary tract. One must have experienced that within half an hour of drinking a copious quantity of water, one passes out a large

quantity of urine. The water he drank was absorbed in the stomach itself. The blood always maintains a uniform specific gravity and limpidity. The tissues absorb water like sponge when they are thirsty. More than two-thirds of the human body is composed of water. Our thoughts and our nerve impulses run on this water. The human body can be forced to forego food for weeks on end; but, it cannot live without water even for a couple of days.

For you to have a clear grasp of this subject: Constipation, you must try and understand a few technical details. Here is a brief description of the process of digestion and of the Alimentary Canal.....Refer to Fig. I.

No. 1 represents Esophagus, better known as the throat. The masticated food from the mouth passed down this throat into the Stomach (No. 2). The muscles in the stomach become active. The food gets well churned and mixed with the enzyme, the stomach secretes. The food is now termed Chyme, and the stomachic digestion is over. The chyme now passes into the Pylorus, where it gets mixed with the bile, (got from the liver) and the Pancreatic enzyme (got from the organ called Pancreas). The fat and starch portions in the food are made ready for absorption by the action of these two enzymes. The food now enters on its long journey through the small intestines. The intestine too secretes an enzyme of its own which gets well mixed with the food. The food in this condition is called Chyle and is ready for absorption. Millions of villi in the intestine pick up the digested food as it slowly passes along its long journey. The digested food slowly gets collected in the lacteals. All the lacteals unite into one big duct, and empties into the heart and gets mixed with the blood. The blood carries sustenance to every part of the body. The remaining undigested and indigestible portion of the food passes into the Colon (ascending Colon) through the Ileo-Cecal Valve.

THE COLON:—The Colon which is nearly 5 feet long is divided into 3 main parts called the Ascending Colon, the Transverse Colon, and the Descending Colon. The inner surface of the Colon is a series of semi-lunar (half-moon shaped) folds which delays the onward progress of the contents. Sufficient nutrition is thus absorbed from the solidifying contents. If the inner surface of the Colon was smooth, the contents would rush to the Rectum, making premature evacuation necessary, and an extreme Physical loss and waste would result.



The Alimentary Canal.

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|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Esophagus. | 6. (a) Hepatic Flexure. |
| 2. Stomach. | 7. Transverse Colon. |
| 3. Pylorus. | 7. (a) Splenic Flexure. |
| 4. Intestines. | 8. Descending Colon. |
| 5. Vermiform-Appendix. | 8. (a) Sigmoid loop. |
| 5. (a) Cecal Pouch. | 9. Rectum. |
| 6. Ascending Colon. | 10. Liver. |

TYPES OF CONSTIPATION:—The Colon is the receptacle for the waste that becomes feces and it is here that its mass becomes solidified. Dry feces are rarely found in the first part of the Colon (the Cecum). One may find large tumor like masses of feces at either the Hepatic or the Splenic-flexure; or a doughy sausage-like mass in the upper part of the abdomen above the navel; or irregular lumpy masses may be felt in the left groin.

As already mentioned a cause of constipation is the intestinal stasis. In such cases there may be very small evacuations each time, because there are steadily increasing accumulations in the intestinal canal. In some cases there is practically no sensation; for the bowels are inactive or perhaps 'DEAD': the stools are large, hard, knotty, and dry as if burned. Sometimes one has very light coloured stools associated with other symptoms of torpid liver. A grayish white-coated tongue is another symptom of this. In other cases there is a fairly frequent though rather faint sensation for evacuation, but the stools are extremely small and ribbon-like. And in such cases the odour is highly disagreeable.

SOME MORE TYPES OF CONSTIPATION:—Constipation is also sometimes due to the torpidity or, congestion of the liver. There is then a dragging pain on the right side near the ribs and sometimes near the right Kidney too. When constipation occurs due to deficient secretion and digestion in the small intestines, the stools passed are moderate in quantity, dry and light in colour. There is dull pain in the neck; the tip and edges of the tongue are red while other parts are coated with sticky matter and there is flatulence too.

When the large intestines are at fault the tongue is furred, the breath fetid and complexion sallow. Occasionally there are colicky pains as well. Stools are dark or like clay. What passes first is very hard and dark and what follows is softer or liquidy. Sometimes the hard and dried up mass which has first passed makes a laceration and causes profuse bleeding from the anus. It causes fissures too. This means that the peristaltic action (worm-like-movement) is very weak in the Colon. And because the 'Feces' remain there for a long time and as the water absorbing quality in the bowels is great, almost all the liquid portion in the stools is absorbed into the system. Poisonous as it is, it causes numberless ills by getting into

the system. People who have this kind of constipation are a lot windy and their breath is unbearable.

Types of Stools:—Flat stools indicate hemorrhoids. Pipe-like stools indicate a ptosis of the Colon. Dry, hard, round feces (scybalus) frequently indicate diabetes, also a severe case of intestinal Atony with retention of feces, or ulcer of the stomach. They are usually present in drug addicts. Pale and putty-like stools under the ordinary diet usually indicate long retention of feces, though in this condition, the feces becomes dark. Milk diet also might produce such pale feces. Slate coloured stools result, when iron, bismuth or manganese are taken internally. They are present in cases of acute Constipation too.

Offensive stools usually indicate retained feces, undigested food, fermented processes, large consumption of meat (which has rotted in the Colon), jaundice or rickets. They are also present when odorous foods like onions and garlic are eaten.

Black stools—usually result from decomposed blood in the intestinal canal and often indicate cancer of the stomach, of the duodenum, of the intestines or of the liver.

Bright blood in the stools—usually results from injuries in the lower intestines, by constipation, rectal ulcer, or hemorrhoids (Piles). Concretions (stone-like masses of feces from which all moisture has been absorbed) may be due to gall stones or pancreatic stones. Sand in stools result from mucous-collitis, also from Cancer of the Colon. If the stools be hard the following tips may be tried. Eight or ten dried seed grapes (Sultanas) chewed well, seed and all and followed with a drink of one glass of hot-water, before going to bed acts as a mild laxative. A better remedy is to soak a tea-spoonful of 'Isapgol' seeds (a kind of tiny pinkish-brown seeds in the shape of wheat; only very small, which when soaked in water becomes soft and mucillagenous), in a glass of water for an hour or two and the whole thing stirred well and taken just before going to bed. If the taste is insipid as, it naturally is, add a little sugarcandy (Palmyra sugar preferably). This is a proven remedy for intestinal irritation of all kinds, for constipation, for loss of PHOSPHATES and ALBUMIN in the urine, and for night emissions (Involuntary discharge of semen during sleep).

If one is heavily constipated and finds his bowels not moving even once in two days, he should irrigate his colon (Bowel-Wash) twice a week. Constipation brings on pelvic congestion, and this in turn gives rise to frequent emissions. The emissions are aggravated by habitual constipation. When constipation brings about pelvic congestion owing to accumulation of fecal matter, auto-intoxication (absorption of poisons into the blood, owing to the stagnation of feces) is started. The whole system gets poisoned and there is much nervous irritation especially around the pelvic region, the small of the back, and the genital-centres. This irritation in the genitals, gives rise to emissions. Such emissions weaken the mind, memory, eye-sight and digestion. Poor digestion makes the man weak. Constipation poisons him. When constipation becomes chronic, emissions follow suit. They form vicious circles and if emissions must be combated, constipation must first be cured.

Those who suffer from frequent night emissions are habitually constipated. There are no exceptions to this rule. And it is peculiar that the diet of such persons has a binding tendency on the bowels.

Constipation dries up the various liquids in the system. The skin becomes dry and sallow; the eyes deep and dull; digestion, hopeless; tongue, coated; liver, torpid; breath, fetid; senses, blunt; thoughts, muddled. Cheer passes into gloom; and all ambition, turns despair, making life, drab.

Every possible measure must therefore be taken to root out constipation, before it grips a man. Diet, Massage and Exercise, all three must be used in such cases. Cold sitz-baths and hip-baths do good (sit in a tub filled with cold-water up to your waist, keep the legs out of the tub, splash cold-water over the abdomen, and massage the colon from five to ten minutes).

COLON WASH:—(ENEMA). Here is an effective method of washing the colon. The usual method is not effective, as it cannot wash the entire colon; but only, the descending portion of it. Let me explain:—

The usual quantity of water taken into the bowels at one time does not exceed two pints. This can only fill up a third of the colon (descending colon only) and the water does not pervade the transverse and the ascending colons.

That means, water never enters the Cecal-pouch: the seat of habitual constipation. Unless this portion of the colon is washed thoroughly, it cannot be called a bowel-wash at all. What is the good of cleaning only the upper part of the drain while all heavy sediment stays clogging the passage.

In order to flush the colon completely, 8 to 10 pints of water have to be taken in, that being the capacity of an adult colon. But it is dangerous to take that much amount of water, for, the colon may burst at some weak, or clogged point. So, I have devised a method of my own to effect a full cleaning of the colon. THIS IS HOW IT IS DONE:—

Take an enema of one, or one and half pints of warm water. After that, lie on your back with legs drawn up and the hips elevated (by placing a thick pillow below the hips, or by elevating the bed itself into that position....) Place the palms firmly one over the other, on the spot where the sigmoid-loop is (near the left pelvic bone), and draw the water inside up against the descending colon, then push it across the transverse-colon to the hepatic flexure, and then, right down the ascending-colon to the Cecal-region. This Anti-peristaltic massage should be a continuous unbroken movement. Commence again from the left, (sigmoid-loop) and proceed as before to the Cecal-region. Repeat this 10 to 15 times, keeping the abdomen relaxed all along. Each time you massage in this anti-clockwise direction you will be forcing the water into the Cecal region. You must hear the splash of the water in this region, when you place your palm, and give the Cecal pouch a vigorous shaking. If you do not hear the splash inside this region, the massage has not been properly done. Do it again.

When you can distinctly hear splashes of the water in the Cecal-region, the bowel wash is complete. Now, you may massage the colon in its natural course, i.e., up along the ascending colon, then across the transverse colon to the splenic flexure, and then down the descending-colon to the rectum. You may repeat this massage 8 to 10 times. After this, get up and walk about, till there is an urge to evacuate.

The bowel is now washed clean. The severely constipated person may take one or two such washes a week, gradually lowering the number of washes to once a week and then once a fortnight, and finally once a month.

To effect the tone and the peristalsis in the colon, daily massages are a help. The massages are done lying on the back (on a level surface) with knees drawn up.

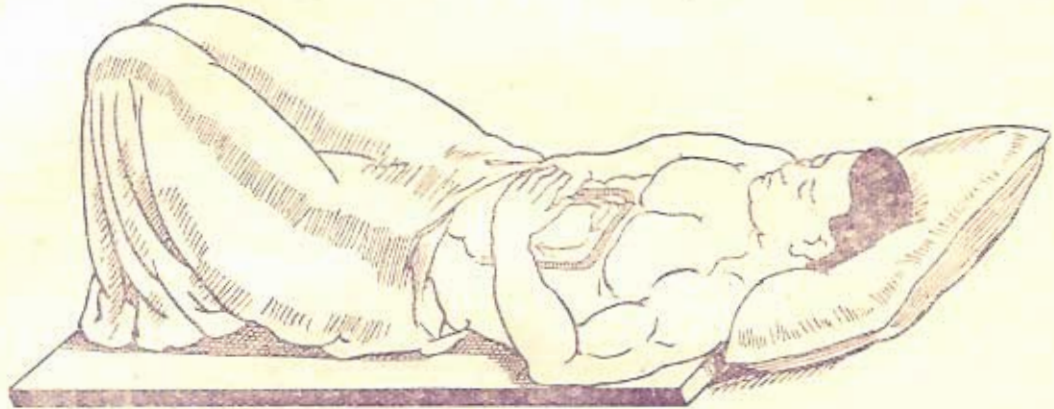


Fig. 2

MASSAGE 1. Observe Fig. 2. Take up the position as detailed above. Apply a little vaseline or oil lightly over the abdomen and massage along the colon; up the ascending colon, along the transverse-colon, and down the descending colon. Commence again from the starting position and repeat the massage. Repeat 10 to 15 times. Massage softly, firmly, slowly, and in continuous movement. Take 8 to 10 seconds to complete each turn. Keep the abdomen well relaxed during the massages.

MASSAGE 2. Place both palms with fingers interlaced on the lowest part of the abdomen and draw the palms firmly upwards till you meet the ribs. Remove the palms and place them again at the starting position and repeat the massage 10 to 15 times. Keep the abdomen well relaxed throughout.

MASSAGE 3. Place palms one over the other firmly, right on the navel. Relax the abdomen. Now with the palms well in contact with the navel throughout, move the palms clockwise, first in small circles and then slowly widening the orbit till the biggest possible circles are described. Come to the starting point gradually retracing from the biggest, back to the smallest circle. Take one and a half minute to do this. Go through the movement again once or twice.

IMPORTANT. The centre of the palm must always be in contact with the navel. You must not rub the skin. You will have to simply roll the navel round and round firmly. I am saying for the third time... keep the abdomen well relaxed all through these massages.

EXERCISES:- Exercise 1 Study Fig. 3. Lie on your back, legs straight, and arms close to the sides, as in the dotted line position. From this position get into the position shown in the back line, exhaling deeply. Compress the legs to the

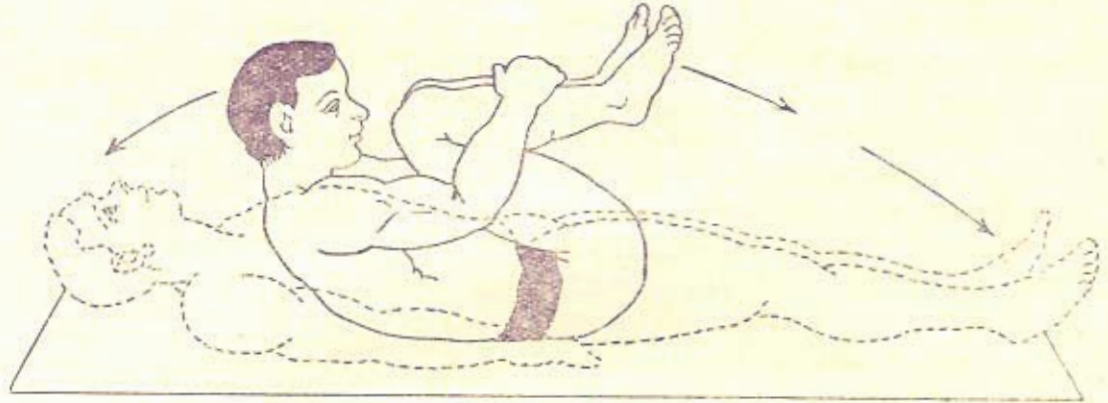


Fig. 3

body and the forehead to the knees. Hold on that position from 3 to 4 seconds inflicting proper pressure over the abdomen, and then, relax back to the dotted line position inhaling deeply. Repeat 10 to 12 times.

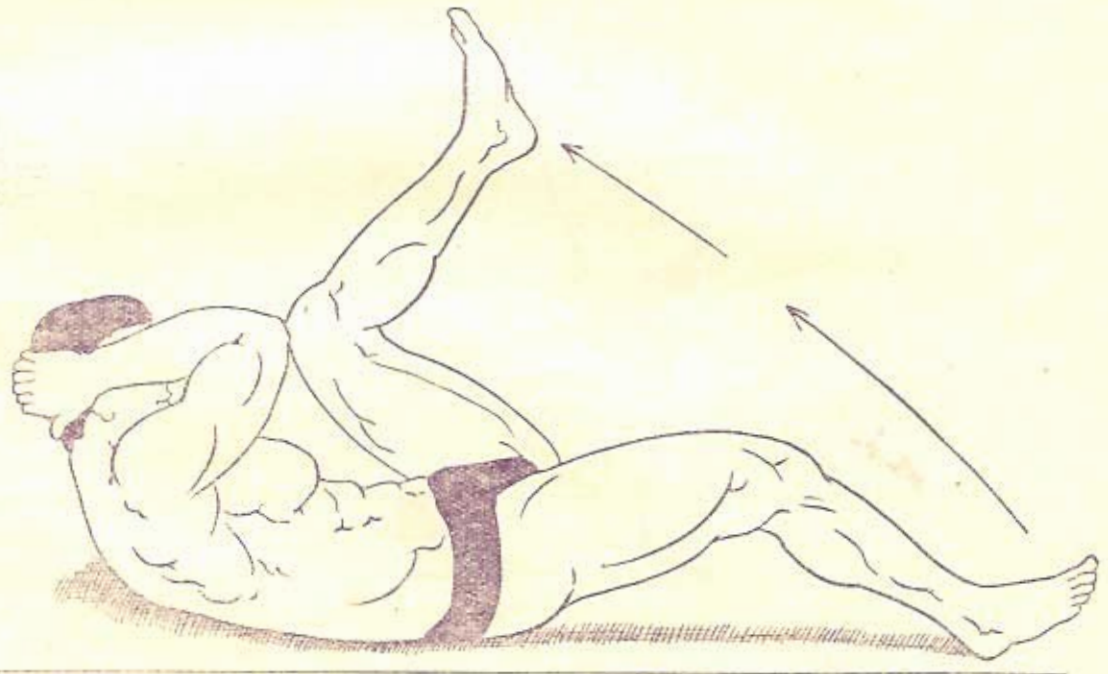


Fig. 4

EXERCISE 2. Fig. 4. Lie on the back with legs straight. Interlace fingers on back of the head. Bring the left knee

sharply upwards (while exhaling) to meet the left elbow. (They must meet.) Relax the left leg (inhaling sharply) and bring the right knee up (sharply exhaling) to meet the right elbow. Relax the left leg (inhaling sharply) and bring the right knee up (sharply exhaling) to meet the right elbow again. Relax quickly back to position inhaling. Now, bring the left knee up again, and then, the right. Go on repeating the movement in quick succession, until you are fairly tired. Mind, this exercise must be done fairly quickly, and all attention must be centred on the vigorous and quick flexion of the muscles of the abdomen and of the particular side. You have to perform at least 8 to 10 movements on either side and then rest and repeat again, and yet again. I have seen this exercise done, by making the knee and elbow of the opposite sides meet together. This is advanced doing and may be tried later.

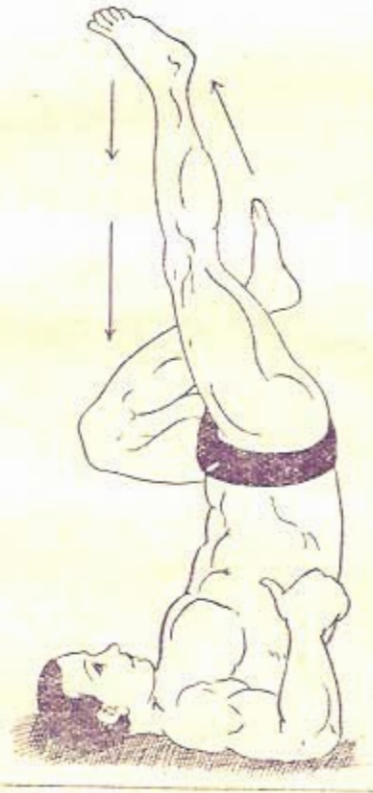


Fig. 5

EXERCISE 3. Fig. 5. Get into the position as shown in the illustration, and start peddling vigorously an imaginary bicycle until fairly tired. Rest and repeat again. Breathing must be normal during this exercise.

It is better to do the massages having finished the three exercises. They are to be done in the mornings; after the evacuation of the bowels, or, before, if the bowels be constipated.

Do not expect results in a week. You have to practise these exercises and massages along with the required changes in diet and habits, for a period of at least a month or so. The digestive organs must regain their tone, the liver must secrete, and the lazy colon must be whipped into full activity. This may require all your patience and perseverance.

Get rid of your constipation or it will get you. And remember: "No pains, no gains."