

Abscess

Definition

A collection of pus within a body cavity. According to Thomas Dusker, "The brighter the redness, the smaller will be the abscess. The softer the feeling and the darker the appearance the more extensive will be the destruction of the tissue. Thick yellow pus is termed 'healthy', thin watery and greenish pus is always bad, indicating prostration and difficulty in healing."

Symptoms

In an abscess we distinguish between the body or center and the sides or edges. The secretions are of different kinds, and upon them depend the benign or malignant character of the abscess. The discharge may consist of good or bad, of a thin, watery or thick, slimy, clammy, white, green, yellowish green, yellow or bloody, variegated, foul, offensive matter. Benign abscesses heal when the discharge ceases, the cavity or center and side close, and are covered with new skin, but a scar is generally left. A malignant abscess, on the contrary, gives no sign of healing, but rather inclines to get worse, and, if aggravated, to mortify.

Cause

An abscess is nature's way of purifying the body, bringing waste materials into a deposit that can be easily drawn out. Pus is formed by the loss of organic sulphur from cells, whereupon the cells decay. Herbs containing organic sulphur such as garlic, are used to rebuild and prevent this deficiency condition.

The causes lie either in local injuries or in a defective blending of blood and (other) juices (liquids). But generally both circumstances unite in the development of an abscess.

The basic cause of all abscesses, tumors, cysts, etc., stems back to an impure bloodstream, with its major cause being improper food intake. This condition causes poor action of liver and bowels, a faulty digestion, or disturbances in the lymphatic glands are generally responsible for the accumulation of impurities in the blood.

Herbal Aids

Poultices: The use of poultices to bring an abscess to a head and clear it out is the most important method of relief. A poultice of slippery elm, wild sage, and lobelia (equal parts) is good; another poultice that will draw very rapidly and will relieve pain at the same time is mullein (three parts) and lobelia (one part). Others are flaxseed, lobelia, and golden seal; leek boiled in milk; sour dock, hyssop and green fennel; ground ivy and yarrow; carrot; potato.

Poultices: Over the abscess area put a poultice of three parts slippery elm bark and one part lobelia herb. A poultice of hops or a poultice of hot onions, hot pumpkins, or hot (not cooked) tomatoes is equally effective. After the abscess has burst, cover it with a poultice or fomentation of comfrey leaves or roots (powdered) for fast healing.

Burdock Root: One of the best blood-purifying teas is burdock root (*Arctium lappa*). Others are chaparral (creosote bush) (*Larrea tridentata*), Oregon grape root (*Berberis aquifolium*), and red clover blossoms (*Trifolium pratense*).

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Dosage: Be generous in making poultices, covering the afflicted areas very thickly. An abscess as it ripens will get larger and continue to expand until it bursts open and drains. After the pus and solid matters are nearly drained off, fluid--sometimes bloody--will run from the abscess. This is when you put on the comfrey poultice, or fomentation.

Abscessed Tooth: See your dentist. An old and effective treatment for abscess is tincture of myrrh, applied frequently on the gums. This tincture is also good for mouth irritations generally.

Lobelia is also good for abscess.

Abscess, Dental: Cabbage is considered a healing herb in this case.

Blue Vervain: Made into a poultice with flaxseed meal, using a strong infusion of Blue Vervain instead of plain hot water, it helps promote the relief of rheumatism, neuralgia, sciatica,

This poultice helps to draw out boils, abscesses, and is especially useful to reduce swollen glands, a common ailment in these days of pollution and debilitated foods. Use this poultice for earache and ear abscess as well. Apply the tea externally to sores.

Adapted from Dr. Christopher files