

# GULBRANSEN

(Pronounced Gul-BRAN-sen)

## Player-Piano

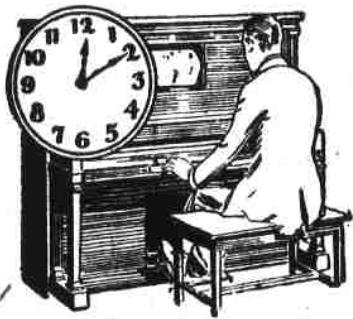


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## Our Health Talk

By B. E. WASHBURN

### Digestive Upsets in Babies

SEVERAL inquiries have been received from readers as to the cause and relief of digestive troubles in babies from one to two years of age. Constipation, diarrhea, and colic; and the preparation of oatmeal and barley water have been asked about in particular.



DR. WASHBURN

Constipation in babies is usually the result of improper feeding; the food may not be of the right kind (the milk may not be of the right strength), it may be badly prepared, or the feedings may be given at irregular intervals. Sometimes a baby does not get enough water to drink and this may cause constipation. Habitual constipation is nearly always an indication that the baby is not getting the right kind of food. Its milk mixture is probably not strong enough and the milk should be prepared with oatmeal water instead of plain water.

A baby's bowels should move every day and if they do not, a soap stick should be used before the baby is put to bed. This stick is made by shaping a small piece of good white soap so that it can be gently pushed into the baby's rectum, and held there for a few moments. This will usually result in the baby's having a bowel movement at once. Covering the soap stick with vaseline will allow it to be introduced without too much force.

To prepare oatmeal or barley water, add two teaspoonfuls of oatmeal or barley flour to a pint of boiling water. Boil for 20 minutes and then strain.

Diarrhea is an indication of an acute and often serious upset of the digestive system. When a baby has diarrhea, either with or without vomiting, all food should be stopped at once, but it should be allowed plenty of boiled water to drink. If the baby refuses to drink cooled, boiled water, give it barley or oatmeal water, but never sweeten the water. Two teaspoonfuls of castor oil should be given and if improvement is not rapid and marked, a doctor should be sent for.

The soiled diapers should be saved for the doctor to examine; but they must be kept covered so that the flies cannot get to them, since many forms of baby diarrhea are infectious. Care should be taken to wash the hands thoroughly after changing a diaper or before preparing food. The soiled diapers should be kept in a solution of disinfectant (two tablespoonfuls of carbolic acid to two quarts of warm water is a good disinfectant for this purpose) in a covered vessel, and finally boiled for 20 minutes.

The prevention of diarrhea lies in giving the baby the right kind of food, in seeing that the food is fresh, and that the baby's eating utensils are kept clean. Flies should never have access to a baby's food or to the utensils in which the food is prepared.

Colic is often due to too much fat or protein in the milk mixture or to giving the baby too much milk or other foods. Reducing the total amount of food, or by using less milk and more water in the milk mixture, are the best procedures to try in case of regular and habitual colic. Eating too fast and too often is another cause; and gas often gathers in a baby's stomach and bowels, or air may be swallowed, and give rise to colicky pains.

An acute attack of colic may often be relieved by applying heat (a water bottle) over the baby's stomach, or an enema of warm water. A few drops (three to five) of peppermint water in a little warm water may be of benefit. It is not wise to give paregoric, Bate-ma drops, soothing syrups, or cordials to babies as these nearly always cause constipation; and they certainly mask other symptoms.

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