

What was in the medicine cabinet?

The Bethlehem Gadfly Spanish Flu April 11, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts on the Spanish Flu 

For perspective on our current coronavirus situation, we are following the entrance of the 1918 Spanish Influenza, that paragon of pandemics, into the minds and bodies of Lehigh Valley residents who got their news through the Morning Call (the files of the Bethlehem Globe are closed to us at the moment).

Though *Hydroxychloroquine* trips off the president's tongue as easily as a Dr. Seuss lyric, we have no medicine for the coronavirus.

Neither did the Spanish Flu sufferers.

Early indication that a New York bacteriologist “discovered a serum” went nowhere, and the public health service in Washington was not able to recommend any “effective vaccine.”

The best medicine was prevention. Over and over again readers of the *Morning Call* in September and October 1918 were advised to cover your mouth when you cough, keep clean, watch the temperature, get fresh air, chew your food, wash your hands, pee and poop a lot, use clean utensils, wear comfortable clothes.

Especially, said the state health commissioner, “this is a time to let sunshine into the houses. Avoid crowded places, entertainments, churches where there are crowds. Keep in the open air as much as possible. Sunshine is what is need to keep in good trim.”

Ok, but what do you do if you catch the Flu?

There were, interestingly, a number of what we might call “over-the-counter” drugs pitched to *Call* readers: CHASCO-VIN, Father John's Medicine, Vick's VapoRub, the Hyomei Inhaler, Grejovan, and Smo-ko.



Avoid
Spanish
Influenza
Build
Fighting
Strength
with
Father
John's
Medicine

DURING THE EPIDEMIC

Take CHASCO-VIN the Taste-
less Cod Liver and Iron
Tonic.

KILL THE
INFLUENZA GERMS

Before They Get-To Working

GREJOVAN
WILL DO IT

Spray The Mouth, Nose
and Throat

FOR SALE BY

H. E. PETERS & SON

639 Hamilton Street.

INFLUENZA

Germ Killer

Disinfect Air Passages

Smo-ko

**Tobaccoless
Cigarettes**

A few puffs—good-bye Grippe—NO
TOBACCO—NO DOPE.

The smoke you inhale carries a
healing and medicating disinfectant
which penetrates the air passages that
cannot be reached any other way.

At all druggists, 20c the box.

DURING THE EPIDEMIC

Take **CHASCO-VIN** the Taste-
less Cod Liver and Iron
Tonic.

This is all you will need. Put the Inhaler in your mouth and breathe its air deep into the passages of your nose, throat and lungs. Every particle of air that enters your breathing organs will thus be charged with an antiseptic germ-killing balsam that will absolutely destroy the germs of **influenza** that have found lodgment there.

You can't do this too often. The Hyomei Inhaler is small and can be conveniently carried in a hand-bag or in your vest-pocket. Every half hour or so throughout the day take it out and draw a few breaths of its pure healing air into your nose and throat. Relief comes almost instantly. The grippe or influenza symptoms subside. Congestion ceases, fever disappears, throat conditions become normal and you soon are feeling fine. The outfit is not at all expensive for the rubber inhaler will last a life-time while the Oil of Hyomei can be obtained at little cost from any reliable druggist. Lots of people already have a Hyomei Inhaler. Take it out, charge it and use it without delay. If you haven't one get it to-day.

A few cents spent now may easily prevent serious illness and save you many dollars and help stamp out the spread of the disease.

EXTERNAL APPLICATIONS.

In order to stimulate the lining of the air passages to throw off the grippe germs, to aid in loosening the phlegm and keeping the air passages open, thus making the breathing easier, Vick's VapoRub will be found effective. Hot, wet towels should be applied over the throat, chest and back between the shoulder blades to open the pores. Then VapoRub should be rubbed in over the parts until the skin is red, spread on thickly and covered with two thicknesses of hot flannel cloths. Leave the clothing loose around the neck as the heat of the body liberates the ingredients in the form of vapors. These vapors, inhaled with each carry the medication directly to the parts affected. At the same time, VapoRub is absorbed through and stimulates the skin, attracting the blood to the surface, and thus aids in relieving the congestion within.

Of little value ultimately, of course: an estimated 675,000 Americans died of the Spanish Flu.

The smell of Vick's VapoRub still wafts in Gadfly's memory.