

## FORMALDEHYDE ANTIDOTAL TO "IVY POISONING."

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Susceptibility to poison ivy varies greatly, as most persons know. Some persons are very susceptible and get a frightful eruption on even a slight exposure or contact, perhaps followed by pus infection, particularly if there has been much scratching in seeking to get relief from the intolerable itching. Pus infection is of course a complication, and may produce disfiguration of the skin.

The writer himself is scarcely affected by the common poison ivy (*Rhus toxicodendron*), known also as three-leaved ivy; but he is quite susceptible to the swamp sumach or poison tree (*Rhus venenata* or *vernix*), found in the tamarack swamps of northern Indiana, and during repeated poisonings all sorts of applications were made in the hope of finding, if not a cure, at least prompt relief.

A number of years ago the writer discovered that a dilute solution of formaldehyde acted "like a charm". But wherever the skin was broken the solution produced smarting, which, however, was readily overcome by adding a little phenol or carbolic acid. It was further quickly learned that by applying the solution thinly at once after an exposure, no eruption at all appeared. However, if any evidence did appear a few hours later, or even the next day, an application at once checked it.

Experimentally, bottles of the solution were supplied to a number of persons, for trial in case of an acute attack—verifying the writer's experience. Persons with an old eruption and broken skin belong to a different category, and may require a different treatment.

To the old experienced ivy-poisoning victim and to the dermatologist who is constantly called upon to treat cases the headline tells the story in a few words. The average physician may exclaim: "What, another new remedy—to be added to the hundreds of old ones." But the physician knows that formaldehyde is a powerful remedy, and he also knows that improperly used it may do harm—it must be used in dilute solution.

Have your druggist make up an ounce or two of IVY POISON ANTIDOTE. Formaldehyde one part, phenol one part, water twenty-five parts. Keep in a bottle with a cotton swab fastened in the cork. Directions: Apply thinly as soon as possible after an exposure. If needed, may repeat once or twice, after a few hours or the next day. Be careful.

