

## Introduction to Colon Hydrotherapy

Colon Hydrotherapy, a popular form of service among certain physicians in the 1930's and 40's is undergoing resurgence. Colon lavage was first recorded 1500 B.C., in Ebers Papyrus, which dealt with the practice of medicine. These enemas were described as the infusion of aqueous substances into the large intestine through the anus. Hippocrates (4th and 5th Century B.C.) recorded using enemas for fever therapy. Galen (2nd Century A.D.) also recognized and was proponent of the use of enemas. Pare in 1600 A.D. offered the first distinction between colon irrigation and the popular enema therapy of the age.

Colon Hydrotherapy since the turn of the century has experienced periods of popularity alternating with periods of reaction. The factors that contributed to this ambivalence primarily were due to the practice of colon hydrotherapy by the untrained and unskilled, which was very detrimental to its professional growth. When the therapy gained the attention of such physicians as James A. Wiltsie, M.D. and Joseph E.G. Waddington, M.D., great value was placed on the therapeutic benefits of this modality.

The philosophy attributed to colon therapy by certain physicians of this era was depicted by Dr. Waddington: *"Abnormal functioning of the intestinal canal is the precursor of much ill-health, especially of chronic disease conditions. Restoration of physiologic intestinal elimination is often the first, but to often ignored, important preliminary to eventual restoration of the health in general."*

Dr. Wiltsie contends that *"Our knowledge of the normal and abnormal physiology of the colon, and of its pathology and management, has not kept pace with that of many organs and systems of the body. As long as we continue to assume that the colon will take care of itself, just that long will we remain in complete ignorance of perhaps the most important source of ill health in the whole body."*

In summary, through misconceptions, misunderstandings and preconceived emotionalism, controversy has prevailed, but accomplished nothing. Historically, we recognize two unequivocal conclusions... first, there is something of value to this therapy or it would have been conclusively withdrawn; second, that through lack of professional control and study, colon hydrotherapy never received the attention and recognition it justly deserves.

Today, with modern technological advancements in colon hydrotherapy instrumentation, colon hydrotherapy has become a safe, valuable modality to the physician in treating disease.