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A NEW HYDROTHERAPY TUB

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The advantages of hydrotherapy in the treatment of residual poliomyelitis have been well shown during the last few years.* Adequate facilities for underwater exercises are usually lacking, however. The common bathtub is too small to allow free movement of the limbs of any but the smallest children. Large circular tubs and pools have been filled with warm water and used to advantage in muscle training and in supervised swimming. But the expense of these tanks, coupled with the necessity for considerable floor space, has made them impractical in most cases.

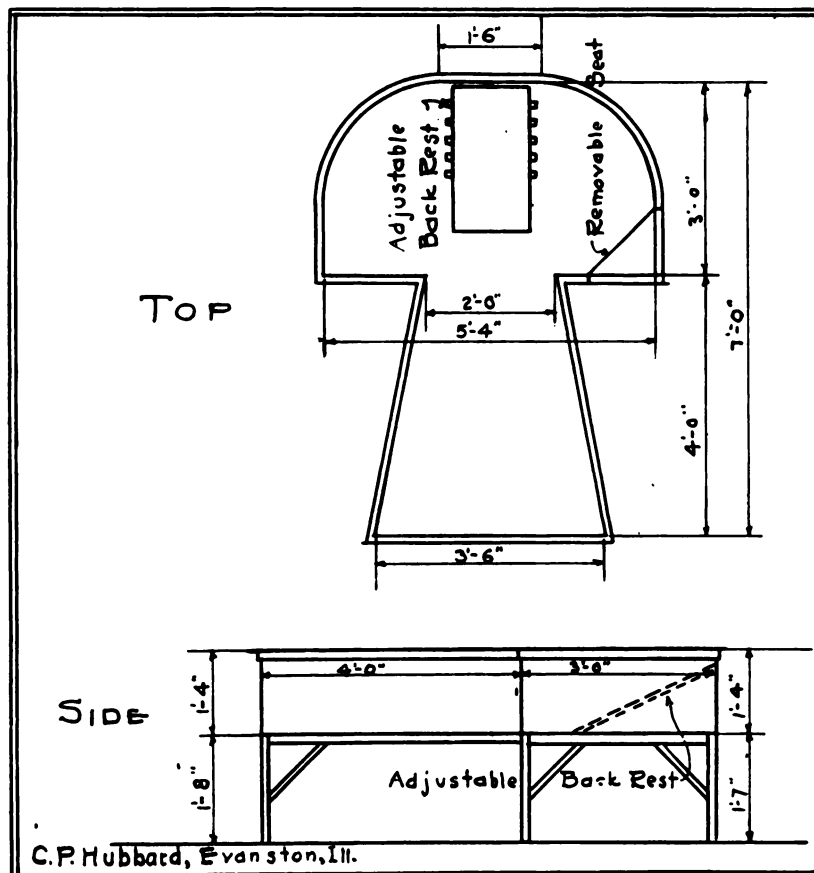


FIG. 1
A plan of the tub with dimensions

Through the kindness of the inventor, Mr. Carl Hubbard of Chicago, we offer the plans of a simple and effective tub which is in use at Madison, Wisconsin. It is made of sheet iron and mounted on legs which bring it to the proper height to avoid stooping on the part of the operator. It is of such size that the average man may be submerged and at the same time be permitted free abduction of all extremities. A minimum amount of water is required. The tub itself is not expensive, and may be set up in the ordinary home.

There are several advantages of the peculiar shape. Without being himself in the water, the physiotherapist accurately controls the exercises in all positions. By standing in the notch, he may support the extremities without the usual backstrain, especially in exercising the deltoids and glutei. The water is deep enough for buoyancy in all cases, but shallow enough for safety. Helpless cases are supported sufficiently to allow control of the exercises by a single operator. Introducing patients and removing them is as simple as in the case of the ordinary bathtub. With larger tubs, the handling of patients is one of the difficult problems. When patients are ready to walk alone, a large pool is obviously of benefit for swimming and walking instruction. For the finer muscle training, the Hubbard unit is still preferable. Exercises may be graded as in table work.

In the treatment of subacute cases this tub is of particular value. The temperature of the water may be increased to stimulate circulation in the

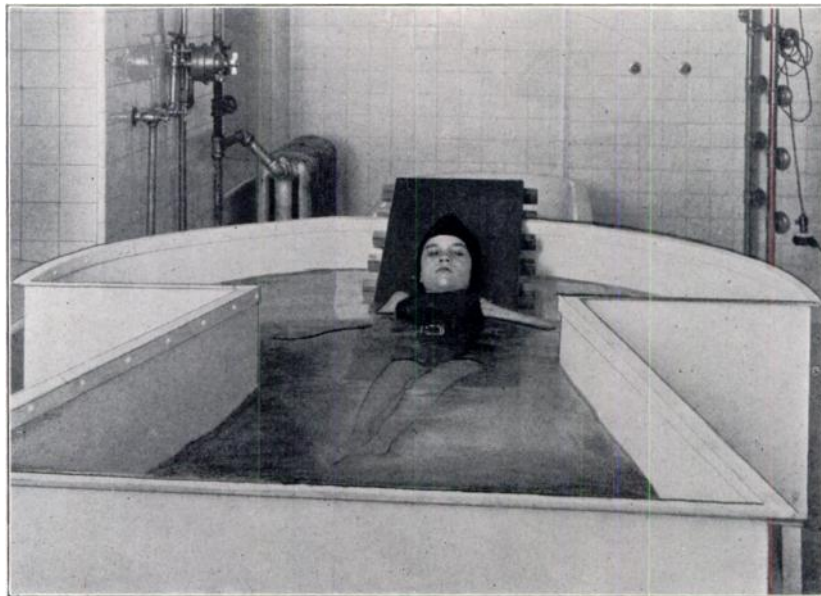


FIG. 2

The head is supported by the back rest.
The extremities are submerged for exercising.

relief of primary muscle soreness, and later in the mobilization of stiff joints. Floating exercises may be started earlier than table work with no harm to the patient. The danger of overwork is lessened when the gentle support of the water is substituted for the resistance of the table top. Later, the water offers a desirable resistance to the more rapid active movements, so that the power required increases geometrically as the patient is able to move more rapidly. At this stage it may be desirable to supplement tub work with other physiotherapeutic methods.

SUMMARY

Plans are shown for a tub to be used in the hydrotherapeutic treatment of subacute and chronic cases of poliomyelitis.

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