

Ads from the Past

Over the Counter Remedy for Dysentery

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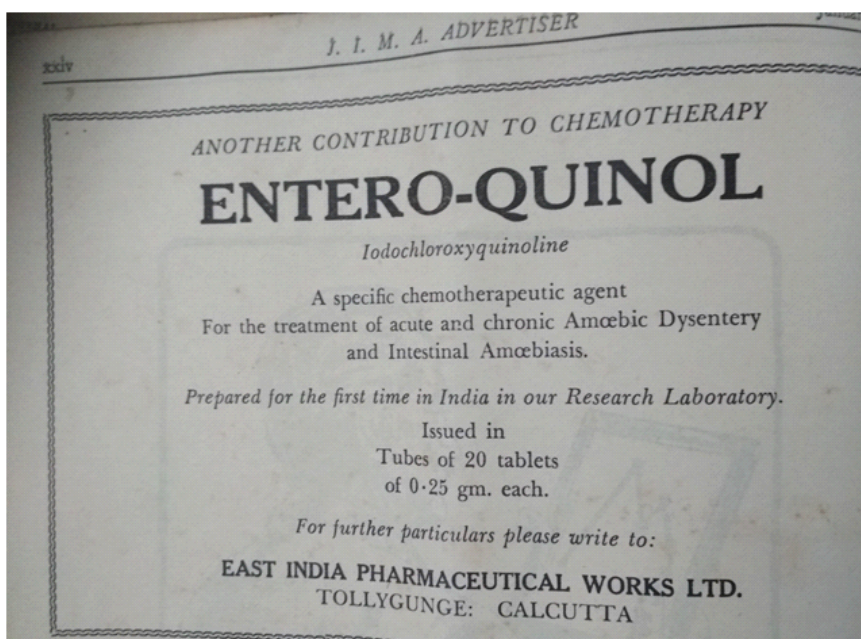
This is an advertisement from January, 1946. But this medicine is very much available even today in all chemist shops of the country and is freely sold over the counter.

Iodochloroxyquinoline was an Amoebicide first used in the 1930s. This drug directly kills the intestinal trophozoites. It gives quick symptomatic relief and is very cheap. Thus, this drug has a sort of cult following among the common public in India and many Indians, on getting the first symptoms of diarrhoea or dysentery, would start this medicine on their own. In spite of being rejected by modern physicians for over four decades due to its documented side effects, this drug enjoys a steady popularity even today, bolstered by word of the mouth. Although the trade name remains the same, the composition is now slightly altered to Quiniodochlor. It still contains Iodine, which raises possibility of interaction with thyroid function.

Between 1955 and 1970, there were tens of thousands of cases of subacutemyelo-optic neuropathy in Japan. Epidemiological data linked the disease to the use of Clioquinol, a drug similar to enteroquinol. This led to a worldwide ban on further use of the drug and most modern texts would not even mention this chemical compound, let alone the dosage. But in India, people have continued to use this drug (using any dose they think convenient) and

there has not been much report of adverse reactions. At the time in the 1970s, when huge number of cases was reported from Japan, only 10 odd cases could be reported over a period of 10 years from Bombay (Wadia, JJ Hospital).

Quinodochlor has additional antifungal properties, which could be useful in dermatological diseases like *P. versicolor*. But since all research into the drug stopped after the ban, there is no way of knowing its efficacy for these alternative indications. Since millions of people in India are using this drug without prescription and not much side effects are coming out, it may be worthwhile to look into the reuse possibilities of this extremely cheap medicine.



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