

Ads from the Past

Bi-Anicide : A treatment for Gonorrhoea

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Before the discovery of penicillin and its derivatives, sexually transmitted diseases like gonorrhoea were virtually untreatable. People usually tried to hide the diseases due to social taboo and this led to quick spread of the infections.

Earlier, in the Nineteenth century, mercury or arsenic compounds were tried for STDs. Since these diseases were rampant in the aristocratic families of Europe, they spared no pains in procuring any possible cure for the disease. When news spread that a South American tree called Copaiba was effective in Gonorrhoea treatment, in 1859 Great Britain imported more than a 150 thousand pounds of the tree extract. Later, in the 1890s, some scientists even tried Gonorrhoea vaccine.

So, when sulphonamides were discovered, one of its first uses was for gonorrhoea treatment. This ad in JIMA, June, 1944 shows an early crude form of sulphonamide. It was effective. But later, as penicillin and cephalosporins were discovered, this fell into disuse. As the reader will see, in those days, the dose and direction for a tablet used to be written on the package. Thus, patients could buy them and use on their own.

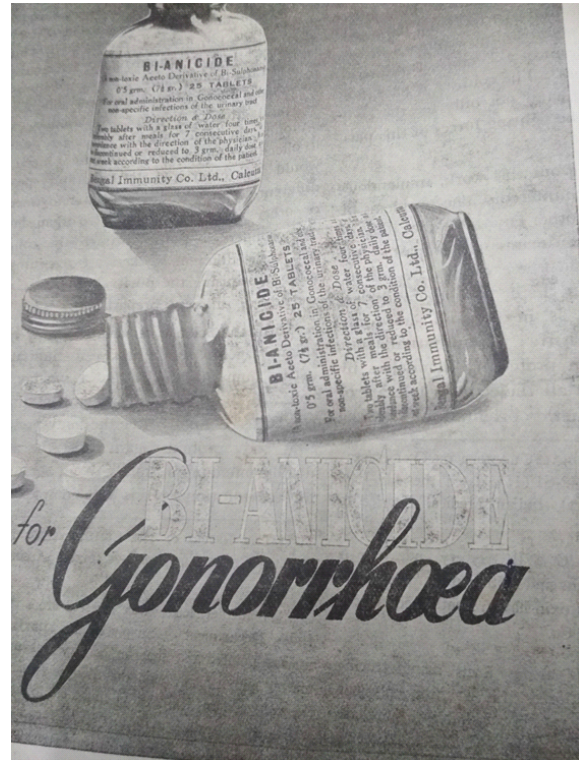


Fig 1 — The tablets for Gonorrhoea
Source : JIMA, June, 1944