

DEPOSIT.

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COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.

INTERNATIONAL LIST OF CAUSES OF DEATH
1938 Revision

AND

LIST OF UNDESIRABLE OR INDEFINITE TERMS.

Printed for the assistance of Medical Practitioners
in filling up the Medical Certificates of Cause of
Death required under the various Registration Acts.



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SUGGESTIONS TO MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS.

The International List of Causes of Death, as revised in 1938, is shown on pages 2-6 of this booklet. It is desirable, in order to enable causes of deaths to be assigned to one of the titles or sub-titles of this list, that medical practitioners should employ as far as possible only those terms recognized in the Nomenclature of the Royal College of Physicians of London. The use of vague and ill-defined terms is particularly to be avoided.

An alphabetical list of undesirable terms is appended (pages 7 and 8) with comments indicating in what respect the term is unsatisfactory and what further information as to the cause of death is required in each case. This list is intended for reference only, and it is hoped that it will be consulted by certifying practitioners in any case in which they are not assured that the term used by them is included in the Nomenclature of the Royal College of Physicians.

The essential part of a Medical Certificate of Death is a statement of the disease, or violent or unnatural cause, which was *primarily responsible for the death*, or which, in other words, initiated the train of events leading to death. Secondary or contributory causes are frequently of great value for statistical purposes, and should be added to the certificate, but in no case should they be stated to the exclusion of the primary cause. Secondary causes should be stated as "due to" or "following" the primary cause.

The *terminal condition* or mode of death is not asked for in the certificate and should never be given. For this reason terms such as "Heart Failure," "Syncope," "Asphyxia," "Exhaustion" and the like, should never appear on a certificate.

In cases where an indefinite term has to be employed because more definite information is lacking it is desirable that this fact should be indicated on the certificate.

When possible, it should be stated in the certificate whether the condition was acute or chronic.

CLASS I.—*Infective and Parasitic Diseases.*

1. Typhoid fever.
2. Paratyphoid fevers.
3. Plague.
4. Cholera.
5. Undulant fever.
6. Cerebro-spinal meningo-coeal meningitis.
7. Malignant pustule and anthrax.
8. Scarlet fever.
9. Whooping cough.
10. Diphtheria.
11. Erysipelas.
12. Tetanus.
13. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system—
 - (a) With mention of occupational disease of lung.
 - (b) Other.
14. Tuberculosis of the meninges and central nervous system—
 - (a) Meninges.
 - (b) Other sites.
15. Tuberculosis of the intestines and peritoneum—
 - (a) Intestines.
 - (b) Other sites.
16. Tuberculosis of the vertebral column.
17. Tuberculosis of other bones and joints—
 - (a) Bones.
 - (b) Joints.
18. Tuberculosis of the skin and subcutaneous cellular tissue.
19. Tuberculosis of the lymphatic system.
20. Tuberculosis of the genito-urinary system.
21. Tuberculosis of other organs.
22. Disseminated tuberculosis—
 - (a) Acute generalized miliary tuberculosis.
 - (b) Chronic generalized tuberculosis.
 - (c) Unspecified.
23. Leprosy.
24. Purulent infection and septicæmia.
25. Gonococcal infections.
26. Other bacterial diseases (dysentery excepted).
27. Dysentery—
 - (a) Bacillary.
 - (b) Amoebic.
 - (c) Other.
28. Malaria.
29. Other diseases due to parasitic protozoa.
30. Syphilis—
 - (a) Locomotor ataxia.
 - (b) General paralysis of the insane.
 - (c) Aneurysm of the aorta.
 - (d) Congenital syphilis.
 - (e) Other forms of syphilis.
31. Relapsing fever.
32. Other diseases due to spirochaetæ.
33. Influenza—
 - (a) With respiratory complications.
 - (b) Without respiratory complications.
34. Smallpox.
35. Measles.
36. Acute poliomyelitis and polio encephalitis.
37. Acute infectious encephalitis (lethargic or epidemic)—
 - (a) Acute lethargic encephalitis.
 - (b) Sequelæ of encephalitis lethargica.
 - (c) Unspecified encephalitis lethargica.
38. Other diseases due to viruses—
 - (a) Yellow fever.
 - (b) Rabies.
 - (c) Herpes zoster.
 - (d) German measles.
 - (e) Chicken pox.
 - (f) Others.
39. Typhus and typhus-like diseases (rickettsiases).
40. Ankylostomiasis.
41. Hydatid disease—
 - (a) Liver.
 - (b) Other organs.
42. Other diseases due to helminths.
43. Mycoses.
44. Other infective or parasitic diseases—
 - (a) Venereal diseases (other than syphilis and gonorrhoea).
 - (b) Pernicious lymphogranulomatosis (Hodgkin's disease).
 - (c) Mumps.
 - (d) Others.

CLASS II.—*Cancers and other Tumours.*

45. Cancer, &c., of the buccal cavity and pharynx
46. Cancer, &c., of the digestive organs and peritonum—
 - (a) Oesophagus.
 - (b) Stomach and duodenum.
 - (c) Intestines other than duodenum or rectum.
 - (d) Rectum.
 - (e) Liver and biliary passages.
 - (f) Pancreas.
 - (g) Peritonum.
 - (h) Other digestive organs.
47. Cancer, &c., of the respiratory system.
48. Cancer, &c., of the uterus.
49. Cancer, &c., of other female genital organs.
50. Cancer, &c., of the breast.
51. Cancer, &c., of the male genital organs.
52. Cancer, &c., of the male and female urinary organs.
53. Cancer, &c., of the skin.
54. Cancer, &c., of the brain and nervous system—
 - (a) Glioma (not specified as benign).
 - (b) Other.
55. Cancer, &c., of other or unspecified organs.
56. Non-malignant tumours—
 - (a) Uterus.
 - (b) Other female genital organs.
 - (c) Brain and nervous system.
 - (d) Other organs.
57. Tumours of undetermined nature—
 - (a) Uterus.
 - (b) Other female genital organs.
 - (c) Brain and nervous system.
 - (d) Other organs.

CLASS III.—*Rheumatism, Diseases of Nutrition and of the Endocrine Glands, Other General Diseases and Vitamin-Deficiency Diseases.*

58. Rheumatic fever.
59. Chronic rheumatism and other rheumatic diseases—
 - (a) Chronic rheumatism, chronic arthritis.
 - (b) Rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis.
60. Gout.
61. Diabetes mellitus.
62. Diseases of the pituitary gland.
63. Diseases of the thyroid and parathyroid glands—
 - (a) Simple goitre.
 - (b) Exophthalmic goitre.
 - (c) Myxoedema and cretinism.
 - (d) Other diseases of the thyroid glands.
 - (e) Diseases of the parathyroid glands.

64. Diseases of the thymus (including status lymphaticus).
65. Diseases of the adrenal glands.
66. Other general diseases—
 - (a) Osteomalacia.
 - (b) "Pink" disease.
 - (c) Others.
67. Scurvy—
 - (a) Infantile scurvy.
 - (b) Other forms.
68. Beri-beri.
69. Pellagra.
70. Rickets.
71. Other vitamin-deficiency diseases.

CLASS IV.—*Diseases of the Blood and Blood-forming Organs.*

72. Haemorrhagic conditions.
73. Anaemias—
 - (a) Pernicious and other hyperchromic anaemias.
 - (b) Hypochromic anaemias.
 - (c) Other anaemias.
74. Leukaemia and leukaemias—
 - (a) Leukaemia.
 - (b) Aleukaemia.
75. Diseases of the spleen.
76. Other diseases of the blood and blood-forming organs.

CLASS V.—*Chronic Poisoning and Intoxication.*

77. Alcoholism (acute and chronic).
78. Lead poisoning—
 - (a) Specified as occupational.
 - (b) Not specified as occupational.
79. Chronic poisoning by other mineral and organic substances—
 - (a) Occupational poisoning.
 - (b) Other poisoning.

CLASS VI.—*Diseases of the Nervous System and Sense Organs.*

80. Encephalitis (non-epidemic)—
 - (a) Intra-cranial abscess.
 - (b) Other forms.
81. Meningitis (non-meningococcal)—
 - (a) Simple meningitis.
 - (b) Acute cerebello-spinal meningitis (non-epidemic).
82. Diseases of the medulla and spinal cord, n.s.i.

83. Intra-cranial lesions of vascular origin—

- (a) Cerebral hæmorrhage.
- (b) Cerebral embolism.
- (c) Cerebral thrombosis.
- (d) Softening of the brain.
- (e) Hemiplegia and other paralysis without specified cause.
- (f) Apoplexy and other intra-cranial effusions.

84. Mental disorders and deficiency—

- (a) Mental deficiency.
- (b) Schizophrenia.
- (c) Other mental disorders.

85. Epilepsy.

86. Convulsions in children under five years of age.

87. Other diseases of the nervous system—

- (a) Chorea.
- (b) Neuritis.
- (c) Paralysis agitans.
- (d) Disseminated sclerosis.
- (e) Others.

88. Diseases of the organs of vision.

89. Diseases of the ear and of the mastoid process.

CLASS VII.—*Diseases of the Circulatory System.*

90. Pericarditis

91. Acute endocarditis—

- (a) Bacterial endocarditis.
- (b) Other acute endocarditis.

92. Chronic affections of the valves and endocardium—

- (a) Aortic valve.
- (b) Mitral valve.
- (c) Aortic and mitral valves.
- (d) Endocarditis not returned as acute or chronic (45 years and over).
- (e) Other valvular diseases.

93. Diseases of the myocardium—

- (a) Acute myocarditis.
- (b) Fatty heart.
- (c) Other myocardial degeneration.
- (d) Myocarditis not specified as acute or chronic.

94. Diseases of the coronary arteries and angina pectoris—

- (a) Diseases of the coronary arteries.
- (b) Angina pectoris with record of coronary disease.
- (c) Angina pectoris without mention of coronary disease.

95. Other diseases of the heart—

- (a) Functional heart disease without mention of organic lesion.
- (b) Cardiac dilatation (cause unspecified).
- (c) Other and unspecified diseases of the heart.

96. Aneurysm (other than heart and aorta).

97. Arterio sclerosis (excluding diseases of the coronary arteries, renal sclerosis, and cerebral hæmorrhage).

98. Gangrene.

99. Other diseases of the arteries.

100. Diseases of the veins—

- (a) Varices.
- (b) Other diseases of the veins.

101. Diseases of the lymphatic system (lymphangitis, &c.).

102. High blood pressure (idiopathic).

103. Other diseases of the circulatory system.

CLASS VIII.—*Diseases of the Respiratory System.*

104. Diseases of the nasal fossæ and annexa.

105. Diseases of the larynx.

106. Bronchitis—

- (a) Acute.
- (b) Chronic.
- (c) Unspecified (under five years).
- (d) Unspecified (five years and over).

107. Broncho-pneumonia, including capillary bronchitis.

108. Lobar pneumonia.

109. Pneumonia, unspecified.

110. Pleurisy.

111. Congestion, œdem, embolism, &c., of the lungs.

112. Asthma.

113. Pulmonary emphysema.

114. Other diseases of the respiratory system—

- (a) Silicosis and other occupational respiratory diseases.
- (b) Gangrene of lung.
- (c) Abscess of the lung.
- (d) Chronic interstitial pneumonia other than occupational.
- (e) Other diseases of the respiratory system not specified as occupational.

CLASS IX.—*Diseases of the Digestive System.*

115. Diseases of the buccal cavity and anneta, and of the pharynx and tonsils—

- (a) Diseases of the pharynx and tonsils.
- (b) Other diseases.

116. Diseases of the œsophagus.

117. Ulcer of the stomach or duodenum—

- (a) Stomach.
- (b) Duodenum.

118. Other diseases of the stomach (cancer excepted).

119. Diarrhoea and enteritis (under two years).

120. Diarrhoea and enteritis (two years and over).

121. Appendicitis.
 122. Hernia, intestinal obstruction—
 (a) Hernia.
 (b) Intestinal obstruction.
 123. Other diseases of the intestines.
 124. Cirrhosis of the liver—
 (a) With mention of alcoholism.
 (b) Without mention of alcoholism.
 125. Other diseases of the liver—
 (a) Acute yellow atrophy.
 (b) Other diseases.
 126. Biliary calculi.
 127. Other diseases of the gall-bladder and bile-ducts.
 128. Diseases of the pancreas.
 129. Peritonitis without stated cause.

CLASS X.—Diseases of the Genito-Urinary System.

130. Acute nephritis.
 131. Chronic nephritis.
 132. Nephritis not stated to be acute or chronic.
 133. Other diseases of the kidneys and ureters.
 134. Calculi of the urinary passages.
 135. Diseases of the bladder—
 (a) Cystitis.
 (b) Other diseases of the bladder.
 136. Diseases of the urethra, urinary abscess, &c.
 137. Diseases of the prostate—
 (a) Hypertrophy of the prostate.
 (b) Others.
 138. Diseases of other male genital organs (not specified as venereal).
 139. Diseases of the female genital organs (not specified as venereal)—
 (a) Ovaries, fallopian tubes and parametria.
 (b) Uterus.
 (c) Breast.
 (d) Other diseases.

CLASS XI.—Diseases of Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperal State.

140. Post-abortion infection—
 (a) Spontaneous, therapeutic or unspecified.
 (b) Criminal abortion.
 141. Abortion without mention of septic conditions—
 (a) Spontaneous, therapeutic or unspecified.
 (b) Criminal abortion.
 142. Ectopic gestation.
 143. Haemorrhage of pregnancy.

144. Toxaemia of pregnancy—
 (a) Eclampsia of pregnancy.
 (b) Albuminuria and nephritis of pregnancy.
 (c) Acute yellow atrophy of liver associated with pregnancy.
 (d) Other toxæmia of pregnancy.
 145. Other diseases and accidents of pregnancy.
 146. Haemorrhage of childbirth and the puerperium.
 147. Infection during childbirth and the puerperium—
 (a) Puerperal infections.
 (b) Puerperal thrombophlebitis.
 (c) Puerperal embolism and sudden death.
 148. Puerperal toxæmia—
 (a) Puerperal eclampsia.
 (b) Puerperal albuminuria and nephritis.
 (c) Acute yellow atrophy of liver (post-partum).
 (d) Other puerperal toxæmia.
 149. Other accidents of childbirth—
 (a) Caesarean section.
 (b) Other surgical operations and instrumental delivery.
 (c) Others.
 150. Other or unspecified diseases of childbirth and the puerperium—
 (a) Puerperal diseases of the breast.
 (b) Others.

CLASS XII.—Diseases of the Skin and Cellular Tissue.

151. Carbuncle, boils.
 152. Cellulitis, acute abscess.
 153. Other diseases of the skin and annexa and of the cellular tissue.

CLASS XIII.—Diseases of the Bones and Organs of Movement.

154. Osteomyelitis and periostitis.
 155. Other diseases of the bones, except tuberculosis.
 156. Diseases of the joints and other organs of movement—
 (a) Joints.
 (b) Others.

CLASS XIV.—Congenital Malformations.

157. Congenital malformations—
 (a) Congenital hydrocephalus.
 (b) Spina bifida and meningocele.
 (c) Congenital malformation of heart.
 (d) Monstrosities.
 (e) Congenital pyloric stenosis.
 (f) Cleft palate, harelip.
 (g) Imperforate anus.
 (h) Cystic disease of kidney.
 (i) Other congenital malformations.

CLASS XV.—*Diseases peculiar to the First Year of Life.*

- 138. Congenital debility.
- 139. Premature birth.
- 140. Injury at birth.
- 141. Other diseases peculiar to the first year of life—
 - (a) Asphyxia during or after birth, atelectasis.
 - (b) Intoxication due to maternal toxæmia.
 - (c) Infections of the umbilicus.
 - (d) Pemphigus and other infections of the new born.
 - (e) Melæna neonatorum.
 - (f) Icterus neonatorum.
 - (g) Others.

CLASS XVI.—*Senility, Old Age.*

- 142. Senility, old age.

CLASS XVII.—*Violent or Accidental Deaths.*

- 143. Suicide by poisoning—
 - (a) Suicide by solid or liquid toxic or corrosive substances.
 - (b) Suicide by poisonous gas.
- 144. Other forms of suicide—
 - (a) Suicide by hanging or strangulation.
 - (b) Suicide by drowning.
 - (c) Suicide by firearms and explosives.
 - (d) Suicide by cutting or piercing instruments.
 - (e) Suicide by jumping from high places.
 - (f) Suicide on railways.
 - (g) Other suicide by crushing.
 - (h) Suicide by other or unspecified means.
- 145. Infanticide (infants under one year).
- 146. Homicide by firearms (one year and over).
- 147. Homicide by cutting or piercing instruments (one year and over).
- 148. Homicide by other or unspecified means (one year and over).
- 149. Accidents on railways.
- 150. Automobile accidents—
 - (a) Collisions with trains.
 - (b) Collisions with trams.
 - (c) Other automobile accidents.
- 151. Other road transport accidents—
 - (a) Trolley accidents (on road).
 - (b) Others.
- 152. Water transport accidents.
- 153. Air transport accidents.

- 154. Accidents in mines and quarries.
- 155. Agricultural and forestry accidents—
 - (a) Accidents from farm machinery and vehicles.
 - (b) Injury by animals.
 - (c) Others.
- 156. Accidents caused by machinery, &c.
- 157. Food poisoning.
- 158. Accidental absorption of poisonous gases.
- 159. Other acute accidental poisoning (not by gas).
- 160. Conflagration.
- 161. Accidental burns (conflagration excepted).
- 162. Accidental mechanical suffocation.
- 163. Accidental drowning.
- 164. Accidental injury by firearms.
- 165. Accidental injury by cutting or piercing instruments.
- 166. Accidental injury by fall, crushing, landslide, &c.—
 - (a) Fall not otherwise specified.
 - (b) Other crushings.
- 167. Catatylism.
- 168. Injury by animals.
- 169. Hunger or thirst.
- 170. Excessive cold.
- 171. Excessive heat.
- 172. Lightning.
- 173. Electricity (lightning excepted).
- 174. Attack by venomous animals—
 - (a) Snakebite.
 - (b) Other.
- 175. Other accidents—
 - (a) Vaccinia and other sequelæ of vaccination.
 - (b) Other accidents due to medical or surgical intervention.
 - (c) Lack of care of the new-born.
 - (d) Other accidents.
- 176. Deaths of persons in military service during operations of war.
- 177. Deaths of civilians due to operations of war.
- 178. Legal executions.

CLASS XVIII.—*Ill-defined Causes of Death.*

- 179. Sudden death.
- 180. Cause of death unstated or ill-defined—
 - (a) Undefined.
 - (b) Unknown or unspecified.

LIST OF INDEFINITE OR UNDESIRABLE TERMS.

7

Undesirable Term	Further Information Required	Undesirable Term	Further Information Required
Abcess	State cause (especially whether tuberculous) and situation	Defective development ..	Cause of this condition. Was the case one of premature birth or of congenital malformation?
Acidosis	Disease causing this condition	Dentition, teething ..	Disease causing death
Aortitis, arteritis ..	Was condition due to syphilis?	Dilatation of stomach ..	Symptomatic. What was the cause?
Atrophy of brain or other organ ..	Disease causing this condition	Disease of lungs, brain, heart or other organ ..	State form of disease and whether acute or chronic
Bleedings	Condition confining patient to bed	Dropsy, anasarca, ascites ..	Disease causing this condition
Bright's disease ..	Was it acute or chronic, and if acute what was the cause?	Drowning	State whether accident or suicide
Bronchitis	If tuberculous, this should be stated	Eclampsia	Disease causing this condition. Was it puerperal?
Burns	Always state the circumstances and whether accidental or suicidal	Embolism	Site and cause of the embolism. If it was puerperal or post-operative this should be stated
Cancer, carcinoma ..	(a) Variety; (b) Seat of primary occurrence if known, otherwise of fatal growth	Encephalitis	Cause of this condition, if known
Cardiac asthma ..	Disease causing this condition	Endocarditis	Specify whether acute or chronic
Cardiac debility ..		Extracystation of urine ..	What was the cause? If due to a diseased condition, define the primary condition
Cardiac dilatation ..		Fever	Name the disease (typhoid fever, lobar pneumonia, &c.) in which the "fever" occurs
Cardiac paralysis ..		Fits	Very indefinite. State whether epilepsy, epilepsy, &c.
Catarrh	Avoid this term if possible	Fracture	Indefinite. State (1) the nature of the violence that produced it; (2) the means of injury
Cebulitis	See "Abcess"	Gangrene	Disease causing this condition. If due to violence state the means of injury and whether accident, suicide, or homicide
Cerebral softening ..	Disease causing this condition	Gastritis, gastric catarrh, acute indigestion ..	These terms should not be loosely used to cover almost any fatal affection with irritation of stomach
Cerebro-spinal meningitis ..	See "Meningitis"	General paralysis, paralysis ..	If general paralysis of the insane is meant add the words "of the insane"
Childbirth	How this physiological process caused death	Gleets	Specify whether benign or malignant
Cirrhosis of liver ..	Cause of this condition. Was it alcoholic or non-alcoholic?	Hæmoptysis	Disease causing this condition. Was it a case of tuberculous phthisis?
Colic	Disease causing this condition	Hæmorrhage	Source and cause of the hæmorrhage
Congestion of brain, kidney, liver, lung, or other organ ..	If the disease amounted to an inflammation, use the appropriate term (lobar pneumonia, chronic nephritis, enteritis, &c.). Merely passive congestion should not be reported as a cause of death. State the primary cause	Heart disease, heart trouble	The exact form of the cardiac affection (mitral regurgitation, chronic myocarditis, &c.) should be stated
Convulsions	Disease causing this condition		
Croup	Disease causing this condition (diphtheria, laryngitis, &c.). Avoid using the word croup at all		
Diabetic	Disease causing this condition		

Undesirable Term.	Further Information Required.	Undesirable Term.	Further Information Required.
Heart failure, cardiac weakness, cardiac asthma, &c.	If no more definite statement can be furnished the return will be classified under ill-defined diseases, not under heart disease	Perforation or rupture ..	State cause of this condition
Homicide ..	State means employed	Phthisis	Always state whether tuberculous
Hydrocephalus ..	Cause of this condition, especially if congenital or tuberculous	Pleurisy	Cause of this condition
Infantile paralysis ..	If this term is used as a synonym of acute anterior poliomyelitis use the latter term	Pneumonia	State whether lobar or broncho-pneumonia. Did it follow influenza, measles, or other infectious disease
Infection, disease ..	Name the disease, part affected, and nature of infection	Prussians poisoning ..	Restrict the use of this term to food poisoning
Jaundice, icterus ..	Disease causing this condition	Puerperal infection ..	State the form of puerperal infection
Malignant disease ..	Taken as equivalent to cancer. The word "malignant" should never be used in reference to any other disease	Pyæmia	See "Septicæmia"
Malnutrition	Disease causing this condition	Rheumatism, arthritis, &c.	Acute or chronic?
Marasmus	Disease causing this condition	Rodent ulcer	State position of ulcer
Membranous laryngitis ..	Was the condition diphtheritic?	Salpingitis	Cause of this condition. Was it puerperal, venereal, &c.?
Meningitis	Cause of this condition, e.g., sepsis (stating source), tuberculosis, meningococcal infection, &c.	Sclerosis	Was it sclerosis of the spinal cord or general arteriosclerosis?
Natural cause	What disease (probably) caused death	Septicæmia, sepsis, &c...	Cause of this condition. If localized what part was affected? Was it puerperal or traumatic?
Nephritis	Acute or chronic? Was it puerperal or scarlatinal?	Specific	This will always be understood in the sense of syphilis
Oedema of lungs, &c. ..	Usually terminal. Name disease causing this condition	Stricture of intestine, œsophagus, pylorus, &c.	Cause of this condition. Was it cancer?
Old age, senility ..	Disease causing death	Suicide	State means employed
Operation	Always state the condition for which the operation was performed, and, if possible, the cause of this condition	Tabs	Tabs æternalis should not be abbreviated to "tabs"
Paralysis, paraplegia, hemiplegia ..	Nature, cause, and situation of lesion	Toxæmia	Cause of this condition
Parametritis, peritonitis, pelvic abscess, &c.	State the cause of this condition, especially if puerperal	Tuberculosis	State whether general or local, and, if local, the part affected
Parotitis (parotiditis) ..	State definitely whether mumps or not	Typhoid pneumonia ..	Avoid the use of this term. Was it a case of enteric fever?
		Tumour, neoplasm, new growth ..	Always specify whether malignant or benign and state part affected
		Uremia	Cause of uræmia. Was it puerperal, post-convulsional, chronic Bright's disease, &c.?

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