

Lack of Calcium Causes Temper

Physiology

Crossness, tiredness, misbehavior and all the other symptoms of problem cases, both child and adult, result when the blood has too little calcium, Dr. Walter Timme, of the Neurological Institute, New York City, has concluded. But whether dietary efforts to increase the calcium, by taking quantities of milk, fresh fruits and vegetables, and cereals, would relieve the condition, Dr. Timme has not said.

Scientists now think that the supply of calcium to the blood is controlled by the tiny parathyroid glands in the neck. When these glands reduce the supply of calcium there is apparently a disturbing effect on the nerves and subsequent conduct of the individual who then misbehaves, showing inordinate fatigability, irritability of temper, and at times even incorrigibility, non-amenability to discipline and assaultiveness.

"They were easily aroused to a high pitch of anger at the slightest provocation," Dr. Timme said. "A word,

an insinuation or even a glance being sufficient to arouse intense antagonistic reaction. These patients became problem cases at home, at school, or in whatever environment they found themselves, because of their non-adaptability and uncompromising attitude. Occasionally their behavior became so exaggerated that apparently hypomanic states developed therefrom and several of these patients had to be confined in institutions until the symptoms were ameliorated. At home, a harsh word from any member of the family, at the table for instance, would result in a plate or knife or some other utensil being thrown at the aggressor. In school, a blow, a shout or a curse would be hurled at a fellow student or even at the teacher."

Upsets in the mutual relationships of the glands and nerves are responsible for many of the drug and alcohol habitues and the easily led characters among the criminal classes, Dr. Timme said.

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Altitude Flights Dangerous

Physiology

When aviators fly to great heights, such as the altitude of 50,000 feet to which Lieut. Apollo Soucek, Navy pilot, aspires, they are endangering their lives even though they use oxygen devices.

This is the conclusion drawn from researches by Dr. Charles Richet, Jr., of the University of Paris, who conducted tests for the French Government.

Working with rabbits he found that they sometimes suffered a delayed death after coming through with seeming success the experience of being subjected to low atmospheric pressure equivalent to high altitudes. This was especially the case with the animals which were subjected to work after their experience, but some died without the stress of work being a factor.

Prof. Richet sets about 45,000 feet as the limit of altitude that can be reached by man with safety, even

when equipped with extra oxygen, unless the whole body is enclosed in a pressure chamber that shields him from the effects of the great height. Twenty thousand feet is the limit when no oxygen is supplied.

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Diet for Epilepsy

Medicine

Epileptic attacks may be controlled by a diet rich in fats, such as cream, butter, mayonnaise, bacon, and oil, combined with a reduced quantity of sugars and starchy foods.

Reporting on experiments carried on at the Chicago State Hospital, Dr. A. M. P. Saunders stated that of a group of eighty women epileptics, thirty-two were much benefited by the diet. The rest of the patients were those who had some other physical disease or were mental defectives and did not respond. With this diet the fat is only incompletely broken up in the absence of carbohydrates and a large amount of acid is formed during the digestion.

The diet must be estimated and adjusted for each individual case and the patient must be under medical supervision during the treatment, Dr. Saunders said. Some patients require only a slight change from the normal diet, and others a much more restricted diet. The patient's cooperation is necessary since, after the epileptic seizures have been brought under control, even so slight a thing as eating a piece of candy may again bring on seizures.

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Dullards Grow Slowly

Physiology

Dull children not only struggle along with a mental handicap but they are apt to be backward in physical development as well. This close linking of body and brain is shown by Dr. L. R. Wheeler of Tennessee State Teachers College, as the result of studying records of 273 children with subnormal intellect.

The group of dull children were below normal standards in height, weight and practically all other physical measurements.

Since growth is dependent on many influences, he suggests that schools should consider physical growth of a child when attempting to classify, teach, and promote him, especially if the child deviates widely above or below the normal growth for his age.

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