

## MEDICINE

# Capsule Before Breakfast Gives Immunity to Colds

**H**ALF as many colds during the winter, or even less, as a result of a capsule taken before breakfast. It sounds like a dream or a patent medicine advertisement.

The dream came true, however, for several hundred persons who were the human guinea pigs in the common cold research of Drs. George E. Rockwell and Hermann C. Van Kirk of the University of Cincinnati and Dr. H. M. Powell of the Lilly Research Laboratories, Indianapolis (*Science*, Aug. 23).

The capsules contained measured amounts of cold vaccine made of pneumococci, an influenza organism, streptococci and another organism found in the nose and throat and known to scientists as *M. catarrhalis*. The capsules were taken with half a glass of cold water half

an hour before breakfast. One capsule was taken each morning for a week and thereafter one or two were taken each week throughout the season.

Of the 445 persons taking the vaccine, 399 had 1,089 fewer colds this year than usual, the scientists report. This is a 70 per cent. decrease. The 469 controls, who did not take the vaccine, showed a decrease of only 299 colds during the year, or slightly more than 26 per cent. decrease.

"An essential decrease of 43.7 per cent." is the way the scientists put it. Looking at the figures in their tables, it appears that whereas the subjects of the experiment usually had about four colds a year, each had only about one the year the vaccine was taken. Getting away from figures, the scientists report that nearly all those taking the vaccine said they were "greatly benefited" by it.

Another group studied consisted of 46 persons who had suffered from practically continuous colds. Of these, 43 suffered from less than one cold per person during the season in which they were given the vaccine.

Part of the success is ascribed by the scientists to the make-up of the vaccine, that is, to the kinds and proportions of different "germs" in it. Another advantage was considered to be the fact that the vaccine could be taken by mouth. As a result it was easier to give it at the frequent intervals which are necessary in order to get the best results. This is because immunity or resistance to the bacteria of nose and throat infections does not last long and must be renewed by frequent doses of vaccine.

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## MEDICINE

## Cancer Experts Warn Against Hope From Lead Treatment

**W**ARNING against entertaining hope for the successful treatment of cancer by lead has been issued by the Memorial Hospital for the Treatment of Cancer and Allied Diseases, New York City.

The warning was given by the experts on the staff of this cancer hospital fol-

lowing reports from the American Chemical Society meeting in San Francisco of improved technic in utilizing lead for cancer treatment. (*SNL*, Aug. 31).

The reports were "received with scepticism and regret" at Memorial Hospital where lead treatment was given an extensive trial and then abandoned because the general poisonous effects of lead were found too severe.

"No method of combatting the chronic toxic effects of lead has been found," says the statement issued by the hospital.

"Neither lead, nor any heavy metal, has any special affinity for tumor tissues. Lead deposits, especially in the liver and bones, exert anemic effects for a long time afterwards.

"No new results of newer lead therapy methods seem to justify raising new hopes that lead will prove a desirable method of treating advanced cancer."

Dr. Bradley L. Coley especially, from personal experience, endorsed this view.

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## MEDICINE

## Extract of Maternal Tissue Successful Against Measles

**N**O SUITABLE measure for dealing with the most infectious of all childhood diseases — measles — had been found until recent experiments with a protein material obtained from the bodies of human mothers have been reported.

Newborn babies do not have measles, but the immunity, evidently derived from their mothers, disappears very early. Measles and the complications that follow it are then acknowledged as among the most dangerous of all diseases of infancy and early childhood.

Encouraging evidence regarding the new treatment reaches the medical world through the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (Aug. 17). The medical publication devotes a major article, a scientific report from its council on pharmacy and chemistry, and an editorial to this important new preparation.

Dr. Irving W. Levitas, a specialist in children's diseases, Westwood, N. J., describes twenty-eight cases of fully developed measles treated with the new substance. Of these twenty-five children were greatly benefitted, particularly in regard to cough and toxicity.

When Dr. Levitas gave the new treatment to eighteen other children one or two days after they were exposed to measles, he was able to modify the course of the disease so that in fifteen cases the symptoms were extremely mild.



### COMMEMORATING A CONGRESS

Commemorating the Fifteenth International Physiological Congress recently held in Leningrad and Moscow, a bas-relief medal portraying I. M. Sechenov, founder of Russian physiology, was struck by the Soviet Mint.

Then the substance, in larger dosage, was given to twelve children exposed to the measles in a hospital ward. After the injection of the substance, none of them "took" the disease.

In a preliminary report, the council of pharmacy and chemistry of the American Medical Association considers the new substance, which is a placental ex-

tract first used experimentally by Dr. C. H. McKann and his co-workers. It regards the product as a promising immunizing agent. Both the council and the journal editor, however, think it to early for doctors to put the extract into general use, until further evidence of its value is available.

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PUBLIC HEALTH

## Education of Dog Owners Urged as Rabies Preventive

### Tendency of Dogs to Bite Varies With Breed; Dogs Bite More Frequently in June Than in "Dog Days"

**E**DUCATION of dog owners and adequate penalization of owners of biting dogs are important measures for the prevention of rabies, in the opinion of Dr. Robert Olesen, U. S. Public Health Service medical director. Dr. Olesen states these opinions in a report on the control of rabies in New York City.

June, contrary to general opinion, is the number of greatest animal bites in New York City. Animal bites are fewer in the so-called dog-days of July and August, than in May and June.

Some breeds of dogs bite more frequently than others, it appears. Dr. Olesen tentatively lists dog breeds, in order of greatest frequency of bites as follows: German police, chow, poodle, Italian bull, fox terrier (crossed), chow (crossed), airedale, pekinese, German police (crossed).

While this is the order of frequency according to the records in New York City, Dr. Olesen pointed out that popularity of a given breed, for example, which would make many such dogs present in a given community, might affect the listing. Training and environment of dogs undoubtedly plays a considerable part in the infliction of bites and these factors should also be considered, in listing frequency of bites according to breed.

Prevention of rabies by vaccinating the dogs in the community is not practical at present. Anti-rabic vaccination is still in the experimental stage. It should therefore not be relied on, although it is hoped that a successful anti-rabic vaccine will be developed in the future.

Instead Dr. Oleson recommends "Increasingly effective application of such obviously practical methods of licensing, quarantining and the destroying of stray animals."

While he approves thoroughly of such measures as control and observation of the biting animal and Pasteur treatment of the bitten person, Dr. Olesen believes that in addition public health officials should emphasize the need for discrimination in the selection, training, and care of dogs. He suggests decreasing the dog population by weeding out the unfit. Surely animals, unable to distinguish between friend and foe, and vicious animals should be destroyed.

"If dogs were given reasonable consideration and care, as befits their peculiarities when living in close proximity to human beings, it is conceivable that bites would be fewer," he suggests.

Putting the responsibility for preventing dog bites on the owner with adequate penalties for bites inflicted by his animal, should materially reduce the occurrence both of dog bites and of rabies, in Dr. Olesen's opinion.

Rabies prevention costs the city of New York approximately \$100,000 annually. Unlike many other communities, this city does not derive any income from dog licenses. This income goes instead to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The society's animal shelters, however, are available for the observation of dogs that have bitten.

The cost of preventing human and canine rabies Dr. Olesen thinks should be borne by dog owners rather than by the city. He also believes that each person bitten, whether the bite is provoked or unprovoked, should be compensated for his pain, fright, torn clothing and medical expenses.

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Tuberculosis takes its heaviest toll between the ages of 15 and 45.

ZOOLOGY

## Dog, Hero of Research, Honored by Monument

**H**ONORING the dog, so often the hero and invaluable aid of medical research, a bronze monument will be erected on the grounds of the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine at Leningrad.

The Monument to the Dog, as it is to be called, will be erected at the suggestion of Academician I. Pavlov, whose famous discoveries in physiology were made by means of studies with dogs.

The monument is to be a bronze image of a sitting dog on a pedestal. Bas-reliefs on all four sides of the pedestal will depict separate moments from the life of the dog at Pavlov's laboratory.

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ASTRONOMY

## New Comet Found During Search for Minor Planets

**T**HE heavens' newest comet, the second to be discovered by and be named after Prof. G. Van Biesbroeck of Yerkes Observatory, consists of a star-like nucleus surrounded by a round nebulosity, without any tail.

Prof. Van Biesbroeck found it on photographic plates exposed with the Yerkes 24-inch reflecting telescope while studying asteroids or minor planets. He then spotted the new comet in the 40-inch telescope.

Several known comets have also been rediscovered by Prof. Van Biesbroeck in past years.

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GENETICS

## Moth Pest of Beehives Found Scientifically Useful

**B**EE MOTHS, which are a destructive pest in beehives and are hated by all beekeepers, have found scientific usefulness in the zoology laboratory of the College of the Ozarks, Clarksville, Mo. Prof. T. L. Smith of that institution demonstrated before fellow-scientists at the summer meeting of the Genetics Society of America, the results of breeding experiments illustrating certain principles of genetics.

Prof. Smith chose the moth, he said, because it is easily handled under laboratory conditions and is a prolific breeder. He used a wild strain, and has carried it through several generations.

Among the most curious of the progeny that came from these carefully watched