

MEDICINE

Rotary Diet System

Persons allergic to certain foods found able to take them at regular intervals and in regular amounts. Will help those on starvation diets.

► A ROTARY or cyclic diet system for allergy patients, which enables them to eat a large variety of foods that otherwise might give trouble, was announced by Dr. Herbert J. Rinkel, of Kansas City, Mo., at the Fifth Annual Forum on Allergy in Cleveland.

The clue which led Dr. Rinkel to this diet system and to a new concept of how to handle allergic patients was furnished by a boy with a masked allergy to eggs. He had been eating them every day without trouble, his mother reported, and as a test he ate six eggs for lunch, without any allergic disturbance.

Dr. Rinkel was still suspicious of eggs, however, so he put the boy on a diet which excluded eggs and other foods he had been eating regularly. Five days later the boy broke his diet by taking one bite of angel food cake at a birthday party, thinking so small an amount would not matter. Within 15 minutes he had a violent sneezing spell, collapsed, and was so sick the birthday party guests had to be sent home. But for nine years since then he has been eating eggs on a regular schedule every

fifth day without any trouble at all.

This boy, and many other allergic patients, have or can develop, Dr. Rinkel believes, a threshold tolerance for many culprit foods. They can eat the same amount of the food at the same meal once every other or every third or fourth day without trouble. Varying the amount of the food, the time when it is eaten, or the interval between eating it, however, upsets the tolerance and they get hives, headache, asthma, or whatever allergic symptom troubles them.

In some of them a sudden drop in temperature or the start of the pollen season also disturbs their threshold tolerance. By very careful diet and other studies, Dr. Rinkel is able to work out a diet cycle for them that avoids such trouble.

Allergists at the meeting believe the rotary diet and other features of Dr. Rinkel's studies will help patients whose allergy has not responded to other treatment and also those who are on almost starvation diets as a result of having to eliminate one food after another from their diet.

Science News Letter, January 23, 1943

PUBLIC HEALTH

Eye Injury Frequent

One common cause of lost time among shipyard workers is flash burn or foreign body in their eyes. Lead poisoning also serious.

► FLASH BURNS of the eyes and cinders or other foreign bodies getting in the eyes are among the most serious and frequent causes of lost time among workers in shipyards, Dr. Philip Drinker, of Harvard School of Public Health, reported to the Congress on Industrial Health sponsored by the American Medical Association in Chicago. The report was based on findings of a survey he and Dr. John M. Roche, serving as consultants on safety and health for the U. S. Navy and U. S. Maritime Commission, made of selected shipyards with government contracts in all parts of the country.

These eye injuries are obviously preventable, Dr. Drinker said, but he pointed out that ships are now being built in yards which cover very large areas with welding going on everywhere in them. It is very difficult to prevent flash burns of the welder's neighbors, he explained. The danger extends even to the experienced welder who lifts his shield momentarily and happens to be near another man welding.

A serious risk of lead poisoning also exists in the shipyards because of modern high speed construction schedules. It is common shipbuilding practice to paint all metal surfaces as soon as possible

with red lead. Generally this is done after the metal plates are in final position, but to keep fast construction schedules, some pieces are painted in the yards. Welding these painted surfaces brings the danger of lead poisoning, against which special care must be taken for workers' protection.

Special ventilation to control welding fumes is necessary for the men working on the fore and after plates and double bottoms where, because of prefabrication type of construction, the men must work in relatively small spaces.

Paint sprayers, their assistants and those working in the immediate vicinity require special protection. To make sure that the men are provided with efficient protective equipment, only such masks and respirators as have been approved by the U. S. Bureau of Mines may be used in shipyards with government contracts.

In general, Dr. Drinker found the medical and safety departments of the yards well organized and well run, although the high proportion of "green" workers complicates the safety problems. Many yards, he reported, have as few as one or two percent of experienced men who had worked in shipyards before the war.

"We have been badly hit by the shortage of doctors in some districts, especially in rural communities," Dr. Drinker declared, "but probably we are no worse off than many other industries. We doubt if our position in this respect represents any new problems."

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Aero-Medical Research Wins Jeffries Award

► PIONEERING research in aviation medicine has won the John Jeffries Award for Dr. Edward C. Schneider, professor of biology at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.

Army, Navy and civil pilots have been tested by use of the Schneider Physical Fitness Index for over 20 years. It represents Dr. Schneider's best known work.

He will be presented with the award at the Honors Night Dinner of the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences to be held on Jan. 26. This honor is given annually "for outstanding contributions to the advancement of aeronautics through medical research."

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