

MEDICINE

Assign Rheumatism Drug

Cortisone distribution to institutions has been put in the hands of a committee of the National Academy of Sciences to speed investigation.

➤ SCARCE supplies of the dramatically effective drug, Cortisone or Compound E, for treating rheumatoid arthritis, will be allotted by a committee of the National Academy of Sciences, under the chairmanship of Dr. Chester S. Keefer of Boston, who during the war also was "czar" of civilian penicillin and streptomycin distribution.

The small amount of the new drug available during the remaining months of this year will be used for clinical and investigational purposes to provide information vitally needed to insure its safe and effective use.

The value of Cortisone in controlling the symptoms of this painfully crippling disease is "regarded as established", the announcement of Dr. A. N. Richards, Academy president, states, but "much remains to be learned concerning its possible untoward effects, its usefulness in other diseases and the mechanism of its action."

For that reason the Research Corporation, which administers the patents on the new drug, turned to the National Academy and pledged itself to accept the recommendations of the Academy committee as final authority in distributing all of this year's supply of Cortisone.

Applications for a supply of Cortisone must be submitted on a form that can be obtained from Dr. Keefer at 2101 Constitution Ave., Washington, D. C., but he will consider only requests from institutions with adequate facilities for investigation and clinical control.

Some of the new drug will be used in diseases other than rheumatism experimentally if the investigators believe that the usefulness of the new treatment can be extended.

The Academy committee, which will use the facilities of the National Research Council for its work, consists of Dr. Keefer as chairman and Dr. Hans T. Clarke of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, Dr. E. A. Doisy, St. Louis University School of Medicine, Dr. Robert F. Loeb, of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, New York, Dr. C. N. H. Long, Yale University School of Medicine, Dr. E. K. Marshall, Jr., of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, and Dr. Joseph T. Wearn of Lakeside Hospital, Cleveland, with Dr. David E. Price of the U. S. Public Health Service as liaison with that governmental agency.

Cortisone, (originally known as Compound E, which name was abandoned because of confusion with vitamin E) is a

complex chemical that was originally obtained from the cortex of the adrenal gland. It is now being prepared synthetically from a bile acid. It was isolated by Dr. E. C. Kendall of the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Philip S. Hench of the Mayo Clinic headed the group that pioneered its clinical use just a few months ago. Merck and Co. chemists participated in the biochemical investigations that resulted in its partial synthesis. The full scientific name of Cortisone is 17-hydroxy-11 dehydrocorticosterone.

Science News Letter, August 13, 1949

PSYCHOLOGY

Infants' Sleeping Habits Charted Under New Grant

➤ WHETHER the sleep of the innocent is untroubled or not is a problem scientists are going to tackle. Infants between six and 26 weeks old will have their sleeping habits charted under a \$10,000 grant made for this purpose to the department of physiology at the University of Chicago by Swift and Company.

One phase of the study will cover the diet and its effect on infants' sleeping habits. Researchers intend to add 25% protein in the form of specially prepared meats to the feeding formula of the babies.

The sleeping pattern of these infants will be recorded by a special device attached to the crib.

Science News Letter, August 13, 1949

MEDICINE

Advice for Next Winter: Avoid Snow on Frostbite

➤ MOP off your brow, pull up a cold drink and listen to the latest medical advice: "Don't rub snow on frostbite."

This untimely (south of the Arctic) warning was published in the YALE JOURNAL OF BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE. If you can remember it next winter, though, it may be mighty important.

The old practice of putting snow or cold water on frostbitten portions of the body may cause gangrene, not prevent it. This has been discovered in experiments conducted by Drs. Robert E. Lempke of Johns Hopkins Hospital and Harris B. Shumacker, Jr., of Indiana University.

The scientists made their findings by freezing the tails of mice. When the frozen tails were rapidly warmed, no gangrene set in, but it did when cold was applied.

Rapid thawing and a solution of tetra-

ethylammonium were found effective in preventing gangrene when used individually or together. Another satisfactory method was to use these with heparin which limits blood clotting.

Science News Letter, August 13, 1949

CHEMISTRY

New Chemical To Replace Benzedrine in Inhalers

➤ A NEW chemical compound will replace benzedrine in nasal inhalers used to relieve colds, hay fever, and sinusitis, Smith, Kline & French Laboratories, pharmaceutical manufacturers, announced.

The new remedy is called Benzedrex and its discovery is credited to Dr. Glenn E. Ullyot, head chemist for the firm. It has the advantage of being able to shrink the nasal membranes and thus relieve the congestion in the nose. At the same time it does not stimulate the user the way benzedrine does.

The search for this substitute chemical remedy grew from the reports of prisoners who removed the benzedrine-medicated paper from inside the containers to chew them or dunk them in beverages to get a "lift". Recently a bill was submitted to Congress which would have required a physician's prescription to obtain the benzedrine inhaler.

Other forms of benzedrine used by physicians to treat a variety of conditions will be obtainable by prescription, the firm stated.

Science News Letter, August 13, 1949



SUBSTITUTE FOR BENZEDRINE INHALERS—Benzedrex, the new relief for colds, is shown undergoing tests by Dr. Glenn E. Ullyot, its discoverer. Dr. Edwin J. Fellows, who directed the experiments on the new drug, is watching the procedure.