MEDICINE

New TB Drugs On Trial

➤ TUBERCULOSIS PATIENTS and their relatives will have to wait several months before doctors can tell them the real value of the latest drugs as promising tuberculosis remedies.

Time is needed, according to one authority, to run animal cultures on material from tuberculosis patients getting the new drugs. Such cultures may take from six to 12 weeks.

Return of temperatures to normal, weight gain and a feeling of well-being are not considered sufficient evidence that a new drug has arrested or "cured" the disease in a patient. Counts of TB germs in the patient's sputum are not considered sufficient evidence either, because these may vary considerably from day to day even in patients not getting the new drug.

Three new drugs with four different names are currently heralded as promising much in the fight against the great white plague. One is a pyrazine chemical related to nicotinic acid, or niacin, which is one of the B vitamins. This chemical is made by Lederle Laboratories under the name, Aldinamide. Successful use of it was announced at a Veterans Administration conference in St. Louis in January as reported by SCIENCE SERVICE.

The second new TB remedy is isonicotinic acid hydrazide. This is marketed by Squibb and Co. as Nydrazid and by Hoffman-La Roche as Rimifon.

The third drug, called Marsilid, is the isopropyl derivative of Rimifon. All three chemicals, with four names, are somewhat related. They are being tried in Veterans Administration and other hospitals, with reports varying from cautious to enthusiastic.

The drugs can be given by mouth, which gives them one advantage over streptomycin. TB germs may build up resistance to the new drugs, as they do streptomycin, but in that case it is believed other, related chemicals could be made and used.

Science News Letter, March 1, 1952

TECHNOLOGY

Better Windshield Safety

➤ JUST AS cracked windshields annoy automobile drivers and make driving hazardous, so they worry airplane pilots and make flying dangerous.

But pilots are more concerned about their windshields than the average driver. Airplane windshields often crack because of cold temperatures and faulty windshield deicing systems which the driver does not have to worry about.

Research now has overcome most of the trouble, the Boeing Airplane Co. announced. Scientists found windshields cracked because of "hot spots."

Hot spots were caused by uneven applications of a 20-millionths-of-an-inch-thick layer of electricity-carrying stannic oxide which is sandwiched between the two plates of glass forming the windshield.

Research workers searched for a way to measure the stannic oxide thickness to discover hot spots before they could sabotage windshields. A quick thickness-testing method was developed.

Windshields also cracked because they got too hot. Boeing research workers licked that problem by rigging a device into the plane which cuts the electricity flowing through the windshield when the glass gets too warm. The device also increases the current if ice begins to form.

Electrically heated windshields are being supplied by Boeing on its B-47 Stratojet bombers and C-97 Stratofighters.

Science News Letter, March 1, 1952

The supply of *aluminum* in 1951 fell far short of the demand even though the production of primary aluminum increased throughout the year and the recovery of aluminum from scrap was 26,000 tons more than in 1950.

Question Box

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BIOCHEMISTRY

What new class of chemicals is anti-malarial in action? p. 136.

ELECTRONICS

What is a transistor? p. 138.

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TECHNOLOGY

How do picture drawings speed airplane production? p. 134.

WILDLIFE

What is the most important news about whooping cranes? p. 140.

Photographs: Cover, California Academy of Sciences; p. 131 and 135, General Electric Company; p. 133, Boeing Airplane Company; p. 138, Bell Telephone Laboratories.

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