

MEDICINE

New Drug Stops Hiccups

► HICCUPS CAN be stopped by one of the new so-called wonder drugs, chlorpromazine, Drs. B. Lyman Stewart and A. G. Redeker of Los Angeles have discovered.

In five of seven patients treated the hiccups were stopped, and they were partially controlled in the other two, the doctors report.

In two patients, the hiccups were so severe that they overshadowed the original disease and kept the patients in the hospital.

One of these hiccuped day and night for six days following a gall-bladder operation. The hiccups were partially controlled if he was put into a deep sleep with morphine and barbiturate sleeping medicines, but the hiccups always came back.

A single injection of chlorpromazine stopped his hiccuping and he was well enough to leave the hospital four days later.

The chlorpromazine was effective in this and other patients after many known remedies for the condition had failed. The drowsiness that often comes as a side-effect

of the drug was never serious and was even welcomed by the patients with hiccups.

Chlorpromazine was originally developed by the Rhone-Poulenc-Specia Laboratory in France as an anti-nausea and anti-vomiting drug. Drs. Stewart and Redeker report good results with it for this purpose also.

Later, the side-effects of the drug, such as its sedative and blood-pressure lowering action, have led to its trial in a wide variety of conditions, including mental sickness, and to increase the effect of pain-relieving drugs so that smaller doses of these need be given.

Injection into the muscles was found by the Los Angeles doctors the most effective way of giving it though it can also be given by mouth, they state in *California Medicine* (Sept.).

Chlorpromazine is marketed in the United States by Smith, Kline and French Laboratories, Philadelphia, under the trade-name, Thorazine.

Science News Letter, October 2, 1954

PUBLIC SAFETY

Toy Space for Safety

► WHEN YOU stub your toe on Junior's toy engine or trip over Sister's toy iron and cord, you may suffer nothing more than a minor bruise and loss of temper. However, Grandma or Grandpa, less agile than you, might have had a bad fall and suffered serious injury.

About two-thirds of all fatal falls take place in and about the home, Metropolitan Life Insurance Company statisticians report. Of course, not all of these were falls over children's toys. A good many were on stairs, and some, among older people, came when the oldsters were just walking about the house.

However, a toy abandoned at the top or bottom of the stairs or in the passage between two rooms might have contributed to some of the fatal falls.

This all adds up to the fact that providing a suitable place for the children's toys is a matter of health and safety as well as good housekeeping. Low, open shelves are easy to build and inexpensive. They should be sized to hold toys of varying sizes.

The open shelves make it easy for small children to see and reach their playthings and encourage them in the habit of keeping possessions in good order.

Boxes, on the other hand, encourage slinging the toys in at the end of the day and throwing them all out on the floor at the next playtime in the search for a particular one the child wants at that moment.

Cupboards with doors that are hard to open and shut will discourage the young children.

The shelves should be conveniently located near where the children will play with their toys. For example, shelves for trucks, wagons and other toys for active play should be in the child's bedroom where their noise will be least disturbing to the family. Books and small blocks might be kept on a shelf in the living room.

Since young children usually play where their mothers are working, the kitchen also should have some toy shelves. Sister's tea set and pans, Junior's pounding board and hammer, might well be kept there.

Science News Letter, October 2, 1954

NEUROLOGY

Inject Boiling Water to Stop Severe Nerve Pain

► THE SEVERE and recurring pain of tic douloureux, or trigeminal neuralgia, can be stopped by injecting a few drops of boiling water into the nerve center from which the pain originates, Dr. Rudolph Jaeger of Jefferson Medical College reports in *Science* (Sept. 17).

The water is injected through the cheek into the nerve center in the head from which the pain originates. The relief is believed to be permanent, the nerve cells being partially or completely destroyed.

Dr. Jaeger reports success in 14 cases treated in the past year without major complication. One patient was relieved of the pain of cancer of the jaw by the method.

Paralysis of the chewing muscles has al-

ways been produced but Dr. Jaeger believes this is temporary.

Injections of alcohol into the nerve or a surgical operation in which the nerve is cut are at present standard methods of treating trigeminal neuralgia.

Science News Letter, October 2, 1954

CHEMISTRY

New Corn's Cornstarch Makes Plastic Fibers

► PLASTIC FILMS, fibers and sheets from cornstarch were forecast for the future by Dr. Ivan A. Wolff of the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Northern Utilization Research Branch, Peoria, Ill., at the American Chemical Society meeting in New York.

A special kind of cornstarch, amylose, from a new corn hybrid would be used. The usual kind of cornstarch that makes pastes, puddings and adhesives has a branched molecular structure, whereas amylose has thread-like molecular structure, useful in plastics.

The new kinds of corn hybrids contain up to 60% of film-forming amylose.

Science News Letter, October 2, 1954

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