

MEDICINE

Cancer Fight Progress

A 17-year survey of cancer patients in Connecticut, unique of its kind, shows definite progress in saving and extending the lives of those afflicted.

➤ **SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS** in the fight against cancer is shown in a unique, 17-year-long survey published by the Connecticut State Department of Health.

Steady improvement in diagnosis and treatment are the reasons for the progress against cancer given by Dr. Matthew H. Griswold, chief of the state's division of cancer and other chronic diseases.

The findings are from the Connecticut Cancer Record Register, covering systematic and continuous records for the entire state for the period 1935-1951.

The record is unique in that it is the only known continuous record of all recognized cases of cancer collected from the total population of the state with a lifetime medical follow-up, over so long a period. Both state and federal public health authorities consider it of the utmost value in making epidemiological studies of cancer in the general United States population.

Only one other body of data, compiled by the National Cancer Institute from single surveys of cancer illness in ten large cities in different parts of the country, is of like importance. Abroad, a register of cancer cases almost paralleling that in Connecticut is maintained in Denmark.

Besides showing definite progress in saving and extending the lives of cancer patients, the report tends to corroborate the validity of the five-year survival idea as a reliable index of successful treatment, or of cure of cancer.

Five-year survivals of Connecticut cancer patients increased from 19% in the period 1935-1940 to 25% in the 1947-1951 period for males and from 29% to 38% in the same periods for females.

The records also show that the likelihood of successful treatment and the chances for survival are best when cancer is diagnosed while localized at the site of origin. The study shows that 39% of patients with local-

ized cancer in the 1935-1940 period met the five-year survival index, and this increased to 44% in the 1941-1946 span and 51% in the 1947-1951 interval.

By contrast, in cases where cancer had not been detected early enough but had spread to nearby tissues the five-year survival index increased from 18% to only 22% in these same periods, while the proportion of those with distant spread of their disease remained at about two percent for the whole 17-year period.

Marked improvement is noted in survival rates for cancer of the large intestine, rectum, prostate, thyroid, uterine cervix and main body of the uterus. The report indicates relatively no improvement, however, in survival rates for cancer of the stomach, lung, esophagus and ovary.

Science News Letter, June 16, 1956

SURGERY

Plastics Help Cure Cancer of Throat

➤ **SOME CANCER PATIENTS** are getting what might be called a plastic throat to replace what had to be cut out because of cancer. As a result, increasing numbers of them are being cured.

How this use of a "cheap and readily available product of the plastics industry" is helping the cancer fight was reported by Dr. H. Mason Morfit of the University of Colorado School of Medicine, Denver, at the Third National Cancer Conference in Detroit.

When cancer strikes the throat, larynx or upper esophagus, so much tissue must be removed when the cancer is cut out that surgeons have had trouble restoring continuity of the digestive tract, Dr. Morfit pointed out. These regions are where food must be swallowed and started on its way through to the stomach.

Thanks to use of artificial materials, 11 patients can now eat normally after having their cancers cut out.

Besides polyethylene plastic, a pliable fine stainless steel mesh or vitallium mesh covered with a skin graft from other areas of the patient's body have been used.

Antibiotics, blood banks and modern anesthesia methods are also helping improve the cure rate for patients with these cancers.

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Name Quiz Answers

Now that you have taken the quiz on animal names, check your answers. Give yourself two points for each correct answer.

Answers: 1. pup, kit, kitten and yearling; 2. infant; 3. little-neck; 4. calf; 5. grub, maggot; 6. tadpole, bullhead; 7. kit; 8. chick; 9. calf; 10. colt.

Group V

Answers: 1. bull; 2. tom; 3. dog; 4. buck or stag; 5. drake; 6. Billy; 7. gander; 8. boar; 9. king; 10. he-chuck.

Group IV

Answers: 1. cow; 2. vixen, she-fox or bitch; 3. she-goat or nanny; 4. jenny howler; 5. pen; 6. sow, pig, hog or porker; 7. tigress; 8. cow; 9. dam, mare or nag; 10. doe or puss.

Group III

Answers: 1. pheasant; 2. hogs, wild swine; 3. herring, bass, porpoise; 4. snipe; 5. hawk; 6. herons; 7. plover or salmon; 8. wildfowl, especially ducks; 9. sheep, goats, geese or lions; 10. geese on water.

Group II

Answers: 1. watch; 2. gang; 3. building; 4. skull; 5. troop; 6. colony; 7. bevy; 8. pack; 9. brood; 10. muster.

Group I

Answers: 1. watch; 2. gang; 3. building; 4. skull; 5. troop; 6. colony; 7. bevy; 8. pack; 9. brood; 10. muster.

Science News Letter, June 16, 1956

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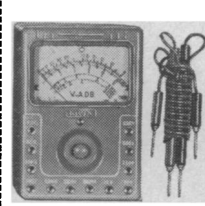
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