

## VIROLOGY

# Suggest "Adenovirus"

► INSTEAD OF CALLING the boss to tell him you are staying home today because you have caught the "bug," or a "virus," you soon may be able to tell him you are suffering with an "adenovirus."

This is the hope of seven scientists who propose a family name for a new group of viruses suspected of being the cause of many colds that annually plague the population.

The doctors report in *Science* (July 20) that the viruses, which primarily affect the respiratory tract, have been called by many different names as they have been discovered, leading to confusion.

Some are known as the APC viruses, others have been termed the RI viruses and the ARD viruses.

Research has shown these viruses are all members of the same family. Rather than have doctors and laymen alike think one is different than another, the doctors have decided they should all be called "adenoviruses." The name was chosen because the 13 strains of the virus first reported were located in the adenoids of humans.

The scientists ask in their report that

"adenovirus" be used and express the hope that it will be accepted by the International Nomenclature Committee.

The viruses, for which vaccines are now being tested in the military, cause a special kind of cold, or upper respiratory disease, to use the technically correct term. This is not the sneezing, runny nose type. It is one in which its victims have sore throats and some fever. In summer outbreaks, the disease is less severe than in winter. Red eyes are a symptom of the summer "adenovirus attack."

The scientists proposing the name are Drs. John F. Enders, chairman pro tem, Children's Medical Center, Boston, Mass.; Joseph A. Bell and Robert J. Huebner, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md.; John H. Dingle, Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio; Thomas Francis, Jr., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Maurice R. Hilleman, Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, Washington, and A.M.-M. Payne, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.

Science News Letter, August 4, 1956

## ENTOMOLOGY

# Flies Make DDT Harmless

► FLIES susceptible to DDT, as well as those resistant to the insecticide, are able to render small amounts of the poison harmless.

This finding by a British scientist may indicate the difference between DDT-resistant flies and susceptible flies is one of degree and not of kind. In other words, all flies may be able to resist the insecticide to some extent, and those able to resist it better than others survive in larger numbers and produce more offspring, which inherit the resistance of their parents.

Scientists have not been certain whether all flies have some degree of resistance, or whether it has been totally absent in some and present in others.

Entomologist A. B. Hadaway of the Colonial Insecticides Research Unit at Porton, Wiltshire County, near London, exposed female house flies to small amounts of insecticides at intervals of 24 to 48 hours.

Two series of experiments were run. In one, flies were given equal doses of insecticides at intervals of 24 to 48 hours. Different insecticides were tried on different groups of flies. DDT, dieldrin and Diazinon were fully cumulative even after 48 hours, but gamma BHC was not. About half the gamma BHC had been rendered ineffective by the time of the second dose.

In the second series of experiments, smaller amounts of each insecticide were applied daily to individual flies, and the resistance of different age groups was checked.

The scientist concluded that, although the degree of resistance to different insecticides varies "considerably," house flies from a normal strain can "eliminate, metabolize or store in a harmless condition" some of the absorbed insecticide "provided that the dosage is sufficiently low."

House flies were found to resist gamma BHC most effectively, DDT second, then dieldrin and finally Diazinon, the entomologist reports in *Nature* (July 21).

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## BIOPHYSICS

# Find Spleen Cells Save Mice From Radiation

► HOPE that an injection might save victims of atomic explosions from death is seen in a report from Britain's Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell.

Mice, given a lethal dose of X-rays, recovered when treated with an intravenous injection of spleen cells from infant mice. The therapeutic activity of tissue culture from infant spleen and embryonic liver lasts for several days, Dr. Carol L. Miller of the AERE reports in *Nature* (July 21).

The tissues used in the tests were cultured in a basic medium of rabbit serum and glucose. Of the mice tested, 73.3% survived when injected with the infant mouse spleen. Less than one percent of the untreated mice lived.

Similar studies made in this country

have shown similar results. Blood plasma, freshly drawn from the spleen, will protect against radiation, Drs. Bruce R. Allen, H. Gwendolyn Wardell and Michael Clay of Columbia University's Radiological Laboratory have found.

Two British doctors, D. W. H. Barnes and J. F. Loutit, have also demonstrated the life-saving effect of spleen cells on deadly doses of radiation. They have shown, too, that fragments of life-saving spleen can be stored and will still provide therapeutic activity.

Scientists caution, however, that it is still a long way from mouse to man.

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