

DENTISTRY

Fluoridation Growing

FLUORIDATION of community water supplies is becoming increasingly popular throughout the world.

Seven European countries are already adding fluorides to their water supplies, Dr. W. Stewart Ross, London, England, said in a panel discussion at the American Dental Association meeting in New York.

The countries are Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain and the German Federal Republic. Interest in fluoridation runs high in South America and Europe, he said. However, not all countries are adding fluorides to their water supplies.

The British dentist predicted that once water fluoridation is instituted on a national basis in one or two countries in Europe where the majority of inhabitants get their water "on tap," other countries will follow suit.

One reason the adoption of fluoridation has taken so long in Europe is that Europeans believe it necessary to conduct their own investigations into the decay-inhibiting properties of fluorides.

Despite the uniform results obtained in widespread United States studies, investigations are being conducted in Europe because drinking and eating habits vary from country to country and democratic feeling exists which tells Europeans "to let us see for ourselves."

Another panelist, Dr. Juan Chaneles, Buenos Aires, said that several South American countries have decided to adopt fluoridation, which he described as "one of

the few rational procedures in the fight against dental caries."

The procedure is being tested in several small towns in Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, and Venezuela. Adoption of fluoridation in South American countries has been slow due to a lack of necessary funds and the urgency of sanitary problems, he said.

Stress Injures Teeth

EMOTIONAL stress can cause a person to lose his teeth or at least damage his gums.

Persons who are in the habit of grinding their teeth while they are under emotional stress can damage their gums. This can lead to a loss of teeth, Dr. James S. Millsap of Houston, Texas, told colleagues attending the Dental Association meeting.

A review of the findings of several studies dealing with the causes of excessive wear of the teeth revealed that:

When the jaws are in rest position, the teeth are apart.

Teeth do not come into contact during chewing of food.

Tooth contact occurs only during swallowing.

During the chewing of food, the forces applied to the teeth are relatively small.

We use our teeth in normal function less than one hour a day.

Friction of tooth enamel against tooth enamel is the only thing that will give excessive wear on the biting surfaces.

According to these studies, wear and tear

of the teeth does not occur during the chewing process. Thus the wear that the dentist sees must be produced when the teeth are used for something other than chewing, he reasoned.

Habits are the principal cause of the non-chewing use of teeth, Dr. Millsap continued. These habits may be divided into three groups: habit neuroses, caused by psychological stress; occupational habits, an individual using his teeth in the performance of his job, and a broad group of habits including everything from opening bottle caps with the teeth to pipe smoking.

These habits may be responsible for specific changes in the tissues supporting the teeth. These changes eventually lead to loss of teeth.

Hypnotism Helps Dentist

HYPNOTISM can help acceptance of new false teeth.

The dentist can use hypnosis when replacing all of a patient's natural teeth, Dr. Allyn S. Abramson, Los Angeles dentist, told the American Dental Association.

Dentists can create a willingness on the part of the patient "to accept without reservations the transition from natural to artificial teeth" by placing the patient in a light trance before extracting the teeth, he said. A deep trance, however, is not recommended for dental surgery.

Pre-surgical anguish can often be abolished by giving the patient tranquilizers. A feeling of well being can be maintained by continuing such medication after surgery, he added.

The transition from natural to false teeth is a crisis for many patients, Dr. Arthur W. Schultz, also of Los Angeles, said.

The use of diagnostic charts will produce gratifying results when all teeth have to be replaced, Dr. Schultz said. The charts should tabulate the patient's medical history as well as his current physical condition, including such important items as blood pressure, heart condition, digestive disturbances and allergies.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Marjorie Van De Water Given Writer's Award

MARJORIE Van de Water, psychology writer for SCIENCE SERVICE, has won the 1959 Science Writer's Prize awarded by the American Psychological Foundation for her "illustrious career of interpreting psychology popularly" both in books and in the daily press.

The Foundation's Trustees altered their customary procedure for the award as the prize of \$500 is normally given for an outstanding reportorial job from the preceding year.

Miss Van de Water was honored at the American Psychological Association meeting in Cincinnati. The Foundation's Gold Medal was awarded to Prof. E. G. Boring of Harvard University; Miss Van de Water and Prof. Boring were collaborators on *Psychology for the Fighting Man*.



SEAT-SUIT—Suspended in boost or blastoff position, Gary Grabam, Boeing Airplane Company engineer, models the "hammock-seat" restraint system he developed. The device is made of nylon net with steel cables sewn into it seems. Engineer Peter Downey operates the cabin simulator.