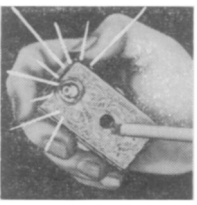


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MEDICINE

Sudden Deafness Routed

► **IF YOU SUDDENLY** go deaf, make a beeline for the ear doctor's office. The faster you get there, the better your chances for having your hearing restored. Delaying more than six weeks may mean losing your hearing in the affected ear.

Dr. Woodrow D. Schlosser, consultant to the Pennsylvania Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology in Philadelphia, has found hearing can be restored to 50% of sudden deafness cases by the use of drugs if the patient seeks help the first six weeks.

The treatment is simple. In most instances, treatment is based upon the assumption that a blood vessel leading to the inner ear has become spastic. Histamine, which dilates capillaries, is given intravenously for three days and then by oral dosage for six to 12 weeks, depending upon progress. Another vaso-dilator, nicotinic acid, has also been used.

Because the vascular spasms are believed related to lack of function of the autonomic nervous system, drugs of the belladonna family, which includes antispasmodics and painkillers, have been used. More recently, heparin has come into the picture.

Most cases of sudden deafness (75%) occur in persons over 40 years old, more commonly in women than in men. Ringing in the ears precedes sudden deafness in

85% of the cases, while dizziness occurs in one-third of the patients.

Dr. Schlosser said that the cause of this malady is not fully known, but several agents are suspected. These include hemorrhages to the inner ear, thrombosis and such viral infections as sub-clinical mumps. Also included are fatigue, emotional upsets, allergies, endocrine imbalance and generalized stress.

Tests showed that the hearing loss is due to sensori-neural impairment rather than to a middle ear lesion.

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MEDICINE

Drug Therapy Can Damage Bone Marrow

► **DRUGS USED** to treat cancer can damage bone marrow. However, five cancer patients whose bone marrow was damaged by treatment with chemicals deadly to cells have recovered spontaneously, Ian Campbell Cree of Wanstead Hospital, London, reports in the British Medical Journal, Nov. 19, 1960. The five cases studied by Grant Batchelor of the West London Hospital showed remarkable powers of bone-marrow recovery, Mr. Cree, formerly of West London Hospital, said.

The drugs used were thiotepa (triethylene thiophosphoramide) and testosterone, the male hormone.

Surgery and chemotherapy, or drug treatment, for some 50 cases of breast cancer given by Mr. Batchelor and other British surgeons and reported during the past year have shown favorable results.

Mr. Cree said that although the final verdict of this form of treatment must await a five-year or even a ten-year follow-up, the disappearance of skin metastases, or spread, the complete clearing of chest effusions, and the relief of pain in affected bones, combined with a remarkable improvement in the sense of well-being in advanced cases, has been most encouraging.

The only important side effect encountered was toxic damage to the bone marrow among five of 17 cases treated. Caution in dosage was advised.

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