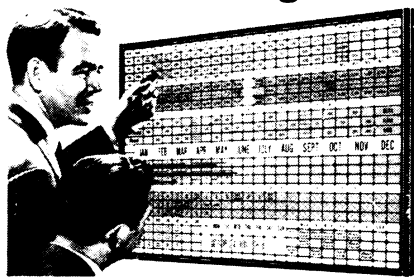


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MEDICINE

Prove Urate Crystals Cause Gouty Condition

► BY INJECTING their own knee joints two young Pennsylvania doctors showed that sodium-urate crystals can really cause gouty arthritis.

Drs. James S. Faires and Daniel J. McCarty Jr. of Hahnemann Medical College and Hospital, Philadelphia, reported in *The Lancet*, 2:682, 1962, that others had associated acute gouty attacks with sodium-urate deposits but that no one had demonstrated the relationship.

Dogs also were injected in one joint with sodium-urate crystals, with the result that they hobbled on three legs, restless and whimpering for at least four hours.

The two doctors had intended to pursue their hospital duties without medication after injecting themselves with a saline solution of sodium-urate crystals but after four hours they were prostrated with excruciating pain.

After intramuscular and oral medication they were able to walk with crutches, and after 72 hours, the symptoms had died down.

Current medical textbooks all state that the cause of the acute gouty attack is unknown. The investigators raise questions for further research which include:

Why are certain tissues in the body more susceptible than others to urate solution? Must the gouty patient be defined as one who cannot keep his urates in solution? (Urates are salts of uric acid.) What are the factors responsible for the intense inflammatory response to sodium-urate crystals in joint fluid?

• Science News Letter, 82:300 November 10, 1962

MEDICINE

Burned Children Saved By Sponge Covering

► PLASTIC SPONGES, the most modern treatment of bad burns, helped four children, with 20 per cent to 45 per cent of their bodies burned, get well.

The ventilated sponges were gradually replaced over a period of weeks by grafts from the children's own bodies, Drs. Theodore C. Jewett Jr. and William M. Chardack of the State University of New York at Buffalo reported at the meeting of the American Academy of Pediatrics in Chicago.

The polyvinyl sponge, trade named Ivalon, comes in sheets with a thickness of between three-sixteenths and a quarter of an inch.

Not only does the sponge protect burn wounds from infection, but it aids in maintaining nutrition by preventing the constant loss of protein, electrolytes, red cells and water that is a constant threat to life, the surgeons pointed out.

Better cosmetic results were seen in areas where autografts were placed on parts of the body previously covered by the sponge than on sections left uncovered, they said. (An autograft is skin taken from other parts of the patient's body.)

• Science News Letter, 82:300 November 10, 1962

Questions

MEDICINE—What is the name of the new experimental drug for malaria treatment? p. 299.

METALLOGRAPHY—For what purpose are metallographs primarily made? p. 304.

PHYSICS—What are hyper-nuclei? p. 310.

PUBLIC SAFETY—How many civil defense workers does the United States now have? p. 301.

RADIOLOGY—What chemicals were found to protect monkeys against radiation? p. 303.

TECHNOLOGY—What kind of crystal is used in the new type of laser? p. 302.

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