

MEDICINE

Drug Prevents Headache

Sufferers from migraine headaches may be relieved or cured by a new drug, methysergide maleate, that has now been licensed for prescription sale.

► A DRUG that can prevent migraine headache, or at least reduce the number and severity of attacks, has now been licensed for prescription sale.

Dr. Melvin D. Yahr, Columbia University neurologist, told SCIENCE SERVICE that the drug, methysergide maleate, is often effective and is being studied further.

The trade name of the drug is Sansert, produced by Sandoz Pharmaceuticals. Its chemical formula is 1-methyl lysergic acid butanolamine. Pregnant women and patients with hardening of the arteries or peripheral vascular disease are warned against using it, but the side effects generally have been mild in others.

"Headache is a symptom of something else," Dr. Yahr said. "When I have a patient who tells me he has been having migraine headaches I of course begin to probe into the cause. If it is always on the same side of the head I suspect a fixed disease inside the brain—something very different from ordinary migraine. It is usually some abnormality of a blood vessel."

More than 85% of the people in the United States have headaches at one time or another, it is estimated, and fewer than

15% claim they have never had a headache in their lives.

Of the headache sufferers who go to their doctors because of the extreme pain, only one in 200 to 300 will have headache from serious causes. But it hurts just as badly whether it is caused by brain tumor, infected teeth, or a psychosomatic disorder that is half in the distorted imagination.

Dr. Yahr, who is on the editorial board of the new International Journal of Neurology edited by Dr. Victor Soriano in Montevideo, Uruguay, was one of the advisers in an issue devoted to headache.

"Each issue is devoted to a specific topic," he explained. The journal is published in four languages and serves a great purpose in world studies of neurology.

The headache issue was a memorial to the late neurologist, Dr. Harold G. Wolff. Dr. Wolff emphasized the importance of preventing attacks through understanding patients' frustrations. The person with migraine attempts to gain approval by doing more and better than his fellow at a high cost of energy. It is in this tension setting that the migraine headache occurs.

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GENERAL SCIENCE

Two World Records Set For Model Airplanes

► TWO NEW world records for speed and altitude of radio-controlled model airplanes were made in Dahlgren, Va.

Breaking the previously held Russian record of 7,380 feet by more than a mile, Maynard Hill of Silver Spring, Md., flew his seven-foot model plane to an altitude of 13,320 feet. Charles R. Scott of Annandale, Va., flew his 36-inch delta plane with homemade radio equipment over the course at an average speed of 126.914 miles per hour, more than ten miles an hour faster than the previous record held by two Californians.

Both world records were made with the required observers present and all facts on measurement, weight, times and signatures needed for verification as an official world record were recorded in the log of each flight. The official records will be forwarded to Paris for world recognition.

The U.S. Naval Weapons Laboratory in Dahlgren helped the District of Columbia Radio Club set up the flights.

The flights were tracked by a sighting scope, built by electronics engineer Carlton C. Middlebrook from surplus parts, and by radar. Mr. Hill's plane made two other flights of 11,940 and 12,960 feet. Three other fliers broke the Soviet altitude record. Walter A. Good of Kensington, Md., soared his plane to 10,080 feet; Bill Northrup of the Delaware club reached 7,420 feet with his model; and Howard McEntee of the New Jersey club reached 9,320 feet.

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SPACE

Environment Simulator Under Construction

See Front Cover

► ARTIFICIAL SUN will shine in a huge, 58-foot high chamber, at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md.

The solar simulator will be a significant feature of a complete Space Environment Simulator. Components of the sun system will rest on the support structures shown on the front cover.

Simulating the sun's rays as they appear in space will be achieved with 127 high energy, mercury-xenon lamps and optical assemblies installed in the dome of the chamber. Systems of lenses and reflectors will imitate the sun by making the artificial radiation run in parallel rays.

The chamber, designed by the Honeywell California Ordnance Center, Los Angeles, will hold large spacecraft for testing. It will simulate the effects of intense sunlight and heat on exposed portions of a satellite and of extreme dark and cold on shaded portions.

The Space Environment Simulator, scheduled for November completion, will be coupled with a chamber, now in operation, designed to test mechanical spacecraft performance.

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Fremont Davis

RECORD BREAKER—Congratulations are given by John Worth, president of the Academy of Model Aeronautics, to Maynard Hill of Silver Spring, Md., just after his model broke the Soviet-held altitude record. Mr. Hill broke this record three times in the contest. Tommy McCraw, who kept the log of the altitude flights, holds the sign indicating height.