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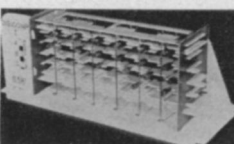
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MEDICINE

Creating Brain Lesions Reduces Mental Illness

➤ **VICTIMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS** and their families may be spared unnecessary anguish and expense because of a newly adapted technique in brain surgery.

Neurosurgeons at Harvard University Medical School have found that suffering among patients who had been ill for a period of three to 18 years was reduced by creating lesions in a specific area of the frontal lobe of the brain, known as the cingulate gyrus.

During the past 20 months, 11 patients, who previously did not respond to electroshock or other psychiatric treatment, had electric needles introduced in the brain to create these lesions.

No complications developed after treatment, and doctors have judged results as "good" in five cases, "fair" in three and "failures" in three others.

Among those successfully treated are four persons, previously totally disabled, who have been restored to normal, useful activity.

The treatment, known as a cingulotomy, was originally used as a method for treating intractable pain in certain diseases.

Because of the absence of complications, it is believed the method has a great advantage over the seldom-used frontal lobotomy that produced disabling decreases in intellectual and emotional functions in some cases.

Dr. H. Thomas Ballantine Jr., with Drs. Walter L. Cassidy and Norris B. Flanagan, who presented the report to the annual meeting of the American Academy of Neurological Surgery in Miami, now plan to determine the most favorable sites for the cingulate lesions and the exact optimal size of the area to be destroyed.

• Science News Letter, 86:340 November 28, 1964

PUBLIC HEALTH

Two Drugs May Cause Fatal Blood Disorder

➤ **TWO FEVER** and pain-relieving drugs are causing a fatal blood disorder in some patients.

The Food and Drug Administration and the American Medical Association report that the two drugs, aminopyrine and dipyrone, closely related compounds which have been widely used for treatment for many years, have caused fatal agranulocytosis. Deaths have been reported after short-term, intermittent and long-term administration.

Label changes restricting the recommended uses for the drugs based on case reports collected by the AMA and on recommendations of a special committee of medical experts, have been announced by FDA. The statement: "Warning—this drug may cause fatal agranulocytosis," will be required to appear on labels of both drugs.

The FDA also suggested that aminopyrine and dipyrone be restricted to use "only in those conditions in which it is specifically indicated and in which other less toxic drugs have proved ineffective or are not tolerated."

• Science News Letter, 86:340 November 28, 1964

Questions

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