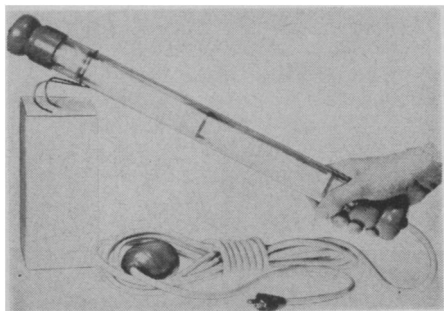


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MEDICINE

Heart Attack Terms Confuse the Layman

► PUBLIC INTEREST in the meaning of heart attacks is heightened by the chest pains of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower. The variety of "cardiovascular" diseases is so great that the average layman is confused by terms such as hardening of the arteries, myocardial infarction and angina pectoris.

Arteriosclerosis is the broad term for hardening of the arteries. It is a generic term including conditions that cause the artery walls to become thick and hard, thus losing their normal elasticity.

In atherosclerosis the inner layer of the artery wall is made thick and irregular by deposits of a fatty substance. By clogging the arteries with deposits called atheromata, atherosclerosis decreases the diameter of the internal channel of the vessel. "Insufficiency" results when not enough blood can get through the channel.

Angina pectoris literally means chest pain. This is what Gen. Eisenhower's physicians said was the cause of his difficulty. He had acute coronary insufficiency in their opinion, which progressed to myocardial infarction.

They placed the General in a "cardiac bed" as a preventive measure, treating him as though he had a full-blown heart attack. This would include either coronary thrombosis (in which a clot is formed in a branch of one of the arteries conducting blood to the heart muscle), myocardial infarction (the damaging or death of the heart muscles, or myocardium, the result of a reduction in the blood supply reaching that area).

The Public Health Service of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare has a handbook of "Heart Terms" that can be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., at 30¢ per copy or \$22.50 per 100. Single copies may be ordered from Heart Information Center, National Heart Institute, Bethesda, Md. 20014.

• Science News Letter, 22:340 November 27, 1965

MEDICINE

Accidents Injuring Liver Are Frequently Fatal

► INCREASED TRAFFIC accidents have increased the number of liver injuries in Sweden, and every third person so injured died, a doctor's thesis revealed.

Dr. Gustav Hellstrom, who presented his thesis at the Academic Hospital in Uppsala, found that various forms of anatomical disturbances resulted from liver injuries.

Examining a dog with a damaged liver, Dr. Hellstrom found that a pressure pulse builds up on the injured spot and continues to spread throughout the body. There was evidence of this in the main artery of the heart as well as in other places. The heart intermittently registered extra beats and beat slower when the blood pressure dropped.

An enzyme called the transaminase increased in relation to the size of the injury, a discovery that could lead to a more rapid diagnosis of liver injuries and their extent.

• Science News Letter, 22:340 November 27, 1965

Questions

ASTRONOMY—What, probably, is the approximate surface temperature of Venus? p. 346.

BIOTECHNOLOGY—What new technique has been developed for massaging the heart in cases of heart failure? p. 345.

CHEMISTRY—Where is the alkaloid maculine, recently synthesized using ultraviolet light, found in nature? p. 339.

ICHTHYOLOGY—Where are the fertilized eggs of the female Tilapia fish carried until they are hatched? p. 344.

INVENTION—What are the advantages of a low-temperature system for carrying electricity? p. 342.

MEDICINE—What new technique has been used to clear the arteries of patients suffering from atherosclerosis? p. 341.

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