

Letters continued from p. 243

takes as it drains. The local conditions and forces acting on the draining water swamp the extremely small influence from the Coriolis effect. The consequences of the Coriolis effect are far more obvious in larger systems such as cyclones, which rotate counterclockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere. The smallness of the Coriolis effect's influence on draining water, however, does not logically preclude its involvement there or in processes like crystallization. Since no explanation is yet available for the curling crystal phenomenon observed by Fuchs and his colleagues, no one can rule out a possible role for the Coriolis effect. — I. Amato

Out of sight and mind

"Environmental costs of keeping baby dry" (SN: 3/4/89, p.141) clearly illustrates the critical problem of solid waste disposal. However, one of the researcher's suggested alternatives — "flushable disposables" — would only relocate the problem.

The general misconception that sewage collection systems provide a simple disposal solution for anything flushable has been allowed to continue for too long. As any municipality operating a sewage treatment facility knows all too well, the introduction of such materials ultimately leads to expensive cleaning and repair of equipment as well as significantly increasing the sewage sludge that must be disposed — often in a landfill.

Flushable disposables would be even less desirable where conventional septic systems are in use.

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Continued from p. 250

significant. Other researchers suggest low cholesterol is a marker for a protein or some element in the diet that may cause cerebral hemorrhage.

Because scientists have yet to demonstrate that low cholesterol actually causes hemorrhagic stroke, public health messages to Americans are unlikely to change. Adults in the United States have an average blood cholesterol level of 210 mg/dl, and it seems a reasonable goal to reduce that by 20 mg/dl, Blackburn says.

A National Research Council committee agrees. Its March report on diet and health urges Americans to reduce their dietary fat and cholesterol. Having reviewed the data on hemorrhagic stroke, the committee concludes that any risk seems confined to people with a combination of very low cholesterol levels and high blood pressure.

If researchers were indeed to establish a causative link between low cholesterol and cerebral hemorrhage, the next step would be to identify and treat these high-risk individuals, the panel says. For the rest of the U.S. population, it would still be a good idea to work toward reducing cholesterol levels. The result would be a reduction in heart-disease deaths — a benefit that far outweighs any possible risk of low cholesterol, the committee adds. □

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