

# behavioral sciences

## SLEEP RESEARCH

### Grinders cleared on mental health

Nocturnal teeth grinders may rest in peace—they apparently have no more emotional troubles than anyone else.

This note of comfort for people who grind their teeth during sleep comes from the University of Chicago where 40 grinders were studied in all-night sessions at the clinical research center.

According to psychological tests, grinders and non-grinders do not differ in mental health.

On the other hand, the research so far gives no explanation why one out of 20 adults and three out of 20 children grind their teeth at night, sometimes applying enormous pressures up to 100 pounds, on gums and teeth.

Even when the research, headed by professor of psychiatry Dr. Georges R. Reding and dental professor Dr. John E. Robinson Jr., focused on dreams, no easy answers developed. Subjects awakened in the midst of dreams or during grinding sessions were asked to report dreams or thoughts. And contrary to previous reports, teeth grinding did not normally occur during the dream cycles.

## HALLUCINOGENS

### TV lowers the boom

The lid is down on hallucinogens, including LSD, so far as television is concerned.

The TV code on narcotics has been amended to include hallucinogenic drugs.

New language, approved by the National Association of Broadcasters TV Board, states that use of these drugs should not be shown as desirable or socially acceptable.

## EPILEPSY

### The dangerous years

Four critical periods in the epileptic's life occur at ages of 6, 14, 35 and 60, according to neuro-physiologist Dr. John Hughes of Northwestern University.

Dr. Hughes found that brain waves are most likely to show epileptic patterns during these years, possibly because they represent periods of major change in the lives of most people.

At six, the child first enters school, says Dr. Hughes. At 14, he enters puberty and adolescence. Around 35, he experiences a peak in the struggle to succeed, often accompanied by soul-searching on his course in life. And at 60, he faces the prospect of retirement.

These explanations are theoretical; however Dr. Hughes has pinpointed the epileptic's danger years by a study of the brain-wave patterns of 1,355 epileptics.

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# medical sciences

## OTOLOGY

### Ear harm seen in rock 'n' roll

The delicate nerve endings of the internal ear can be harmed by the noise of blasting rock 'n' roll bands.

Dr. George T. Singleton of Gainesville, Fla., who is the father of a 14-year-old girl, as well as chairman of the division of otolaryngology at the University of Florida College of Medicine, points out that when the noise reaches 100 decibels "you begin to feel your clothes vibrate."

The MEDICAL TRIBUNE of Feb. 19 quotes Dr. Singleton as saying "you can't expect chaperons to carry sound meters," and has undertaken to find a practical way of determining when the noise at a teenybopper's party reaches a hazardous point.

The average teenybopper, listening to a band hooked to amplifiers, is exposed to as much noise as an artilleryman or a foundry worker, Dr. Singleton says. But the great difficulty in convincing the youngsters that this is harmful lies in the fact that they want to "feel embalmed," or sort of numb. Ninety decibels are admitted to be a safe level, but noise peaks at 120 decibels in front of the rock band where most swingers prefer to spend the evening, and at 106 decibels at the center of the dance floor.

Dr. Singleton says the intensity of sound in front of a rock band can cause a temporary hearing loss and, with repeated exposure, actually damage the inner ear.

## DOSAGE

### Cortisone every other day

The moon-faced appearance of those who have been taking prednisone in fairly large doses every day can be lessened or avoided if a smaller dose is given every other day, a professor and a medical student report in the Feb. 22 issue of THE NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE. Other side effects are also lessened, and in some cases, at least the benefits are equally good.

Ten patients were given alternate-day corticosteroid treatment for kidney involvements by Dr. George L. Ackerman and Charles M. Nolan of the Arkansas University Medical Center in Little Rock

All 10 were adult. The mean dosage was 75 milligrams every other day.

A second group was composed of eight patients receiving prednisone daily for various ailments, who were paired with a control group of 10 healthy men.

Results showed that giving smaller doses every other day suppressed the person's own adrenal-gland function less than the daily larger doses. Also noticed was the fact that by administering the dosage at 8 a.m., blood levels of the corticosteroid could be made to mimic the normal daily variation in blood levels. Although high levels were reached, they were transient, so that the sustained elevation with its side effects could be avoided.