



POISONING THE POISONER—Here one of the new chemical killers of poison ivy is being applied with a pressure-spray outfit.

able, when it is understood that touching objects that have in turn touched poison ivy can transfer the poison in sufficient quantity to start the mischief on more-than-ordinarily sensitive skins.

If you pet a dog or cat that has been running through poison ivy, or work with garden tools that have brushed against it, even toss up a tennis ball that some hardy immune person has retrieved out of a patch of the weed, you may start a case of ivy poisoning. Although the smoke from burning poison ivy or poison oak that has been grubbed up and dried cannot cause poisoning, it is apt to contain small bits of unburned leaf or bark material capable of causing blisters.

Proposed remedies for ivy poisoning have been listed literally by the hundreds. They range all the way from juices from various crushed herbs, supposed to be "old Indian remedies," to concentrated solutions of photographer's hypo. No one single treatment appears to be good for everybody, but there is one that has been used for

more than a generation with good success by large numbers of persons known to be sensitive. This is the so-called "iron treatment."

It consists of a five percent solution of ferrous sulfate, or copperas, in a half-and-half mixture of water and alcohol, plus a little glycerin, if desired. In contact with the poison, the iron combines with it to form an insoluble, non-irritating compound.

While this can be sponged onto ivy-poisoned skin after the damage has started, it is still better to use it as a preventive. You just wash it freely over all exposed skin surfaces and let it dry "as is," before you go into places where poison ivy or poison oak is likely to be encountered. Then the poison is immediately contacted by the iron salt when you brush against the plant, and it never gets started. There are a few hyper-sensitive skins that cannot be thus protected, but for a majority of ivy-susceptible persons this solution is a suit of invisible iron armor.

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MEDICINE

May Check Pregnancy III

➤ **EXPECTANT** mothers of the future may be saved from a dangerous, often fatal disease, thanks to a "happy accident" discovery by Dr. Alexander Symeonidis, special research fellow of the National Cancer Institute.

The disease is eclampsia. It accounts for between one-sixth and one-fifth of all maternal deaths in the United States. High

blood pressure, impaired kidney function, abnormal accumulation of fluids in body cavities and convulsions are symptoms of this disease which attacks late in pregnancy and often causes death of the unborn baby as well as the mother.

Injections of a female hormone, progesterone, which is essential to pregnancy, caused symptoms and tissue changes in

rats late in pregnancy that are strikingly similar to those found in human eclampsia, Dr. Symeonidis discovered.

At the time he made this discovery he was investigating the role of the hormone in breast cancer. Whether tumors will also develop in the rats, as expected, is still being investigated.

The accidental discovery of the relation between the hormone and eclampsia, however, is considered a step toward discovery of the cause of this disease which has defied doctors and killed mothers for thousands of years. Once the cause is definitely established, there is hope for more reliable means than now available for curing or preventing the condition.

Dr. Symeonidis believes that the eclampsia in the rats was the result of an unbalanced condition between the ovaries, pituitary gland and placenta induced by high doses of progesterone at a critical stage of late pregnancy. As an alternative, he points out that poisonous substances produced in the damaged placenta might be responsible. Evidence for this theory is the fact that some of the rats recovered after discharging dead embryos and damaged placentas.

The accidental nature of Dr. Symeonidis' discovery, made in the course of cancer research, is somewhat ironic. In a series of experiments in 1936 in Germany he tried unsuccessfully to produce eclampsia in animals.

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MEDICINE

Super-Intensive Treatment Effective for Epileptics

➤ **GOOD** results with a super-intensive treatment of epilepsy were reported by Dr. Tracy Putnam of Los Angeles at the meeting of the American Neurological Association in Atlantic City.

The super-intensive treatment was designed for patients not helped by the usual and less rigorous methods of treatment. Modern drugs, special diets, exercise and other measures fail to control the seizures, commonly called fits, in from 10 to 30 out of every 100 epileptics, Dr. Putnam stated.

In the new treatment, patients were put to sleep with one of the modern sleeping medicines and kept asleep for three to six days. This was supplemented by daily doses of phenytoin or other of the modern anti-epileptic drugs. Glutamic acid, a chemical once reported effective in stimulating intelligence, a special diet and inhalations of carbon dioxide were also given in what Dr. Putnam termed "hyperintensive treatment."

All five patients treated showed some improvement. Two continued to have attacks but had them less often. And they showed improvement in personality. The other three patients have remained free of attacks for periods up to a year.

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