

MEDICINE

Influenza as Usual

You cannot depend on vaccines to protect you from infection. But antibiotics will save your life if you have complications.

► INFLUENZA situation as usual. Vaccines cannot be relied on for protection. Antibiotic drugs like penicillin will save your life if complicating infections threaten.

That, in brief, is the opinion of leading influenza authorities who gathered at the U. S. National Institutes of Health for the regular meeting of the advisory committee for the United States of the World Health Organization's influenza study program. Included in the group were the Surgeons General of the U. S. Public Health Service, Army, Navy and Air Force. Following the meeting, the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service sent telegrams to all state health officers advising them that:

1. Local epidemics of influenza occur every year at this season in the U. S. Only rarely do they spread widely and none is like the great 1918 pandemic.

2. An extensive influenza epidemic now

exists in England, but it is mild, is not like the 1918 one, and does not mean we will necessarily have a widespread epidemic in the U. S. this year.

3. There is no vaccine against influenza that "we can expect will protect with certainty." The situation calls for continued controlled studies in the hope of producing an efficient vaccine.

4. It is expected that some influenza will appear in the U. S. this year. It will be of the sort we have been having in recent years.

5. "It is recommended that for patients with a severe, influenza-like illness, appropriate antibiotics be used." This is because most deaths during a 'flu epidemic are due to complications from other germs than the 'flu virus, for example, pneumonia. These can in most cases be cured by antibiotics.

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MEDICINE

Imitation Aids Diagnosis

Hobby of physician is to imitate the gestures, postures and facial expressions of patients and then figure out what would produce them.

► IMITATING patients is a good way to find out what's wrong with them, according to Dr. C. M. Cooper.

Dr. Cooper, retired professor of clinical medicine at Stanford University, tells how he discovered a man's kidney stones by imitating the posture the patient took to relieve his pain, how he gained clues to other illnesses by imitating patients' expressions, gait and idiosyncrasies.

Of the man with the kidney stones, who suspected he had gallstones, Dr. Cooper says:

"I asked him to show me the relieving position. He got down on his hands and knees and inclined his body. I did the same, imitating his every movement. The posture I had assumed seemed more calculated to afford some relief in pains of kidney than in those of gallbladder origin."

Later checks with X-ray proved Dr. Cooper was right.

Dr. Cooper began evolving this novel method of diagnosis early in his career after he had been told he was a poor clinical observer. He began dividing up a patient's face into sections, examining each section

individually, so as not to miss anything.

He began to catch expressions on the faces of the patients which had formerly eluded him. If he could not figure out what they meant, he would imitate them before a mirror.

"Then I would realize what inner feeling in me would have called forth such an expression, and therefore the inner feeling that in all probability had induced it in the individual who had exhibited it," Dr. Cooper explains.

From that, it was but a step to imitating the tone, placement and tempo of speaking voices. He also imitated the change in figure, posture and gait and the idiosyncrasies and behavior reactions of his patients.

"In due time," Dr. Cooper says, "induced by revealing experiences with patients, I extended these activities into the imaginative or experimental fields. Thus I would imagine I had a particular symptom or ailment that puzzled me, and then see if I could uncover anything in my past that might cast light upon it; or that I had a patient's crippling impairment for which

he had not been able to evolve a helpful compensatory adjustment; and then try through self experimentation to unearth one for him."

Dr. Cooper wrote of what he calls his "diverting, medically useful, life hobby," in CALIFORNIA MEDICINE (Jan.).

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GENERAL SCIENCE

Chances for 30,000 To Study Abroad

► MORE than 30,000 students and professors of various nations are able to study abroad under the world-wide general interchange of study opportunities, listed in the latest survey report by UNESCO.

Over 12,750 of the study opportunities are related to the United States with one-third providing for U. S. citizens to travel abroad and the rest bringing people to the United States to study. About 1,600 of these are granted by colleges and universities, over 2,250 by educational foundations and private organizations and the rest through government grants.

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VETERINARY MEDICINE

Du Pont Laboratory To Aid Animals

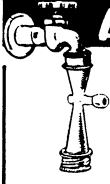
► BETTER MEDICINES and food for animals are expected to result from the new \$2,700,000 laboratory farm announced by Du Pont for completion next year near Newark, Del. Work of the new research installation named for Dr. Charles M. A. Stine, Du Pont chemist now retired, will apply new synthetics to control of bacterial and virus diseases, parasites and insects. Animal nutrition will also be studied.

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Farm output per man-hour is double what it was 40 years ago.

The present main uses of industrial molasses are in alcohol making and cattle feed.

All American silver fox furs are obtained from animals raised in captivity.



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