

## MEDICINE

## Cure Scalp Ringworm

➤ RINGWORM of the scalp is on the march again. Whether we shall have another widespread epidemic of this childhood affliction is not known yet. But doctors at the meeting of the American Medical Association in Atlantic City, N. J., reported fresh outbursts of cases within the past two to four months in Chicago, Baltimore and Philadelphia.

This time, however, there may be a new medicine that will cure the condition in as short a time as eight weeks in many cases. Best of all, children will not have to become bald temporarily as has been the case with the chief effective treatment to date, X-rays to the scalp.

The new ringworm medicine was reported by Drs. Eugene S. Bereston and Maurice Sullivan of the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore. It is known so far only by its chemical name, 5-chlorosalicylanilide. It was developed originally as an anti-mildew chemical. It is not yet on the market, and may never be marketed because one or more related chemicals now

under trial may prove even better.

The five-chloro chemical, as the doctors call it, has given best results so far in a group of 13 possible anti-ringworm chemicals studied over a four-year period by the Johns Hopkins group. It cured 50% of the patients in eight weeks and cured 80% in 14 weeks. Next best of the 13 chemicals tested was propylene glycol dipelargonate. This cured 42%. Asterol dihydrochloride, which already has been reported as a ringworm remedy, cured only 40% of the cases in the Hopkins study.

The five-chloro compound comes in the form of an ointment, or salve, on a carbowax base. The child's hair is clipped or cut short and the ointment rubbed over the scalp twice a day by the parents. The scalp is washed once a week. The hair is not pulled out. With some other treatment plans, doctors have advised pulling out hair with tweezers. The five-chloro compound is made by Wallace and Tiernan.

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## MEDICINE

## Relive Past for Alcoholics

➤ REMEMBERING his past life with all of its horrible details and reliving it verbally will help an alcoholic to get over his craving for drink better than trying to forget the past, as his friends may urge.

And psychological treatment, of which recalling the past is a part, will be more effective than any of the long list of drugs including the latest addition, Antabuse.

This, in brief, is the situation with regard to curing alcoholism as reported by Dr. Edward A. Strecker, Philadelphia psychiatrist, to the American Medical Association in Atlantic City, N. J.

Hoping to get over the craving for drink by changing jobs is a vain hope, Dr. Strecker said.

"There are no occupational drydocks," he quipped.

The alcoholic patient, Dr. Strecker said, must understand that the desire to stop drinking must be for his own sake, "a matter of survival, physical and mental."

Remorse over disgrace to his family, however deep, serves no useful curative purpose. Patients who come for treatment under threats of divorce, disinheritance and the like are not good candidates.

The alcoholic under psychological treatment, Dr. Strecker declared, "often comes to understand that his alcoholism is an adult escape mechanism motivated by the emotional immaturity produced in childhood by parental loving dominance, which left him illy equipped to deal with the problems of grown-up interpersonal relationships."

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## MEDICINE

## Frostbite Damages Kidney

➤ SEVERE FROSTBITE can cause kidney damage. Studies showing this for the first time were reported to the American Medical Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J., by Col. Robert B. Lewis, USAF (MC).

Col. Lewis' studies, at the Air Force School of Aviation Medicine, Randolph Air Force Base, Tex., were made on rabbits. He does not know whether any of the hundreds of troops who suffered frostbite in Korea

last winter also suffered kidney damage. Since making his discovery accidentally on the rabbits, he has sent inquiries to military hospitals that handled the frostbite cases from Korea, but has not yet had replies.

The kidney damage is called nephrosis and is damage to the tubules of the kidneys. It is the same as that which comes in cases of severe burns and crush injuries which were frequent among bombed civilians and troops during World War II. Apparently

it is related to the muscle damage in these conditions and in frostbite.

Skin can take freezing better than muscle, Col. Lewis reported. Muscle once frozen never comes back. He showed pictures of rabbit legs that had been subjected to below freezing temperature of 10 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes. With proper treatment the skin recovered from this injury and the legs looked perfectly normal in a week. But when he cut open the legs, he found the muscles had died.

In human cases, he explained, usually only fingers and toes, where there is very little muscle, are frozen. But in one human case, the woman picked up frozen in Chicago last winter, muscle damage like that in the rabbit was found in the leg that had to be amputated.

Best treatment for frostbite, Col. Lewis declared, is the rapid thawing treatment in which the frozen parts are warmed in water at 107.6 degrees Fahrenheit.

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## INVENTION

## Electricity-Conducting Glass Made with Sugar and Heat

➤ A METHOD of making an electrically conducting glass of low resistance brought Richard B. Ellis, Miami, Fla., patent 2,556,616. Rights are assigned to Corning Glass Works, Corning, N. Y. Ordinary glass, as it is well known, is a non-conductor.

This method includes impregnating a submicroscopically porous glass with a solvent of a saccharide, or a water solution of sugar, drying out the solvent, and then firing the glass up to at least 1,200 degrees Centigrade in a non-oxidizing atmosphere. This treatment carbonizes the saccharide or sugar within the pores. At least 4% of the finished product is carbon held within the body of the glass.

Science News Letter, June 23, 1951

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