

## MEDICINE

## Vacation Heart Care

➤ TAKE CARE of your heart when you go on vacation or for a long week-end trip to the country. This warning applies especially to city people, desk workers and others who get very little exercise during the winter months and plan to crowd all their tennis playing and other athletic activities into the short vacation season.

Dr. Louis N. Katz, Chicago heart specialist and past president of the American Heart Association, gives this warning to vacation time and week end athletes:

"Your heart, like any other muscle, gets used to the amount of work expected of it daily. Professional athletes can run faster, swim farther, lift heavier weights, and play more rounds of golf than you can because their muscles, including their heart muscle, are trained to 'take it.'

"Almost everyone should take some form of mild exercise; but if you don't ordinarily lift anything heavier than the telephone, or walk farther than the distance from your house to the bus stop, then you should not expect your heart to take kindly to the sudden extra strain of a fast game of tennis.

"No one, if he wants them to last, uses his heart or his car to the very limit of their endurance. It is wise to hold some power in reserve."

Moderate, regular exercise never hurt any man, or woman, another past president of the American Heart Association, Dr. Tinsley R. Harrison of the Medical College of Alabama, at Birmingham, states. But many a person puts too much sudden strain on his heart even apart from vacation and week-end activities.

The chubby man running to make his train or bus in the morning or evening has at least two counts against him, Dr. Harrison points out. "His extra poundage is already putting a strain on his heart; and his frantic dash for the train is calling for all the effort his heart can muster—and maybe more," Dr. Harrison says.

"If his heart is not in perfect condition, sudden exercise like this could cause a heart attack because he may have a heart condition and not know it. Chubby can always catch another train, but he has only one heart—and he ought to take care of it."

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1954 or 1955; and another maximum might be expected about 1958. So the sun's bright disk will probably be relatively clear of large blemishes for at least another four or five years.

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## MEDICINE

## Watch Muscle-Skin Disease as Cancer Sign

➤ SOME PATIENTS may be saved from cancer deaths if doctors look for cancer in patients with the disease of muscles and skin called dermatomyositis, Drs. Arthur C. Curtis, Hoyt C. Blaylock and E. Richard Harrell of University Hospital, Ann Arbor, Mich., declared at a meeting in Chicago of the American Medical Association.

This disease, though uncommon, is not rare. Since 1934, there have been 45 patients with it at the University of Michigan hospital. Of these, eight had cancer which was not discovered until after the skin and muscle symptoms had developed.

Calcium deposits in the muscles which may break through the skin in ugly looking sores, a kind of rash, swelling around the eyes, and muscle weakness and shriveling are among the symptoms of the disease of the eight patients. Six showed improvement in their dermatomyositis soon after X-ray or surgical treatment of their cancers.

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## MEDICINE

## Operation Stops Hiccups

➤ FIVE STEPS to try for stopping hiccups before taking the most radical but most effective one, a nerve crushing operation, were given by Drs. Albert F. Gigot and Paul D. Flynn of the Lahey Clinic, Boston, at a meeting of the American Medical Association in Chicago:

The five steps are:

1. Finger pressure on the eyeballs through closed lids for several minutes, or forced vomiting.
2. Washing out of the stomach to remove any irritant.
3. Intravenous injection of atrophine.
4. Heavy sedation by administration of opiates or barbiturates.
5. Inhalation of carbon dioxide (a popular lay method is breathing in and out of a paper bag, or holding the breath).

Should these treatments fail, the next suggested remedy is the deadening of one or both phrenic nerves by drug injection in order to produce a diaphragmatic paralysis.

The phrenic nerves, of which there are two, regulate the sensation and motion of the diaphragm and the membranes containing the heart and lungs and lining the chest. If this fails to produce permanent relief, the final step is to crush one or both nerves by surgery.

"Clinical experience indicates that a left phrenic nerve crush will stop the majority

of intractable hiccups," the doctors reported.

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## ASTRONOMY

## Few Large Sunspots Expected Within Next Five Years

➤ THERE WILL not be any giant spots on the sun within the next five years or so, if the computations of Dr. I. L. Thomsen of Carter Observatory, Wellington, New Zealand, are correct.

You may be able to see a few pock marks on the sun during the next few years, but none will be easily visible through heavily smoked glass. None will equal in size the giant spot of a year ago, for instance.

Dr. Thomsen's calculations are based on the fact that a period of few sunspots always follows a time of large and numerous spots. Such a cycle usually repeats itself every 11 years.

Giant spots disappear before the mid-time from maximum to minimum of the sunspot cycle, Dr. Thomsen figures. They do not again appear until half-way between the times of minimum and maximum on the upward part of the cycle, he reports.

Sunspot maximum was reached during 1947; minimum is not expected until about

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