

Swimmers have the poorest foot arches, but they have the fastest reaction times and the best breath holding times.

What of the man who has led a sedentary life until he has reached middle age? Can he start physical training then and improve his condition? Or is it dangerous for the oldster to begin to be active physically?

Dr. Cureton firmly believes that the middle-aged softy can and, by all means, should begin to exercise.

Mild Exercise Beneficial

He points to the example of a college professor 50 years old. This man did do a little gardening, fishing, canoeing and walking but irregularly and mostly in the summer. He was overweight, had rising blood pressure and sluggish circulation, couldn't sleep well, had weak and painful feet and just didn't feel well.

The pressure of work and responsibility on him was heavy. He was a little afraid he might have a breakdown as had several of his friends. So he consulted Dr. Cureton.

After careful tests and a thorough medical examination, Dr. Cureton recommended the following program:

Walking to and from work, five days a week, about two miles a day.

Home calisthenics twice a day for 10 to 15 minutes.

A daily bath, cool six days a week and a short hot bath once a week. Vigorous towel rubs after each bath.

Golf or a long hike once a week.

Ultraviolet baths three times a week.

Reduction of fried and starchy foods and eating relatively more fruits, vegetables and protein food.

After six months of this program, during which time the professor took no medicine and kept up his full professional load, the tests were repeated.

The professor had lost 28% of his over-all fat and 46% of his abdominal fat. His blood pressure had gone down—20% for the systolic pressure and 41% for the diastolic. His pulse was stronger, a 35% increase in the pressure lying down.

He also reported that he could do more work with less fatigue. He had better endurance.

This shows what the older man can do toward reconditioning himself by working alone and in moderation. It is quite possible, Dr. Cureton comments, that the professor in these six months increased his distance from death.

Classes for physical training of the middle-aged have been tried by Dr. Cureton. Men in classes improve their physical condition, but the changes are not so great as for the individual, when that person is conscientious and keeps up his exercise regularly six or seven days a week.

If more middle-aged people would keep to a regular program of physical exercise, it would lengthen life and cut down the tragic deaths from heart disease in men and women near the prime of life, Dr. Cureton believes.

Science News Letter, July 3, 1954

ASTRONOMY

Volcanic Ash on Mars

► THE DARK markings on the red surface of Mars are drifts of volcanic ash, not vegetation as many have proposed.

Active volcanoes on Mars have been suggested by Dr. Dean B. McLaughlin of the University of Michigan as the most plausible source of material such as is required to make the volcanic drifts. He told the American Astronomical Society meeting in Ann Arbor, Mich., that this idea was based on his analysis of the pattern of prevailing winds that should occur on Mars.

Astronomers all over the world are now training their telescopes on this fascinating planet, now making a very close approach to the earth. On July 2, it came within about 39,800,000 miles of us.

The dark green markings seen on the surface of Mars, Dr. McLaughlin believes, are mostly elongated streaks whose directions closely match those of the strong winds during Martian summers. During other Martian seasons, while the winds will have other directions, they will be so much

weaker that they cannot erase the pattern of drifted ash formed during the summers.

In the dry, oxygen-poor atmosphere of Mars, volcanic ash should be green rather than brown as on earth, he suggested. It has long been known that the dark areas on Mars become greener during the planet's summer, and some theories attribute this to the growth of vegetation.

However, the Michigan astronomer pointed out that this color change is just what would be produced by the greater spread of the green ash by the strong prevailing winds at that season.

Mar's canals, according to Dr. Laughlin, would be long, narrow, ash drifts, or in some cases, volcanic rifts in the planet's crust. According to the astronomer, the conditions on Mars correspond to an early stage in the earth's development, so that the red planet may possibly be one on which oceans have yet to form, and on which life is still to appear.

Science News Letter, July 3, 1954

WHAT MISTAKES IN DRIVING DO YOU MAKE?

CAN you start a wet motor, take curves without rubbing off miles of rubber, get juice from a battery that seems dead, put out a fire beneath the hood, start on ice without spinning the wheels, pull out of a skid without whirling into approaching traffic?

What common mistakes do you make on flooded roads, on icy hills? What do you do when a car darts out at you from a side road? Do you know how to stop a car FASTER when emergency demands you stop on a dime? Do you know how to avoid a sideswipe, pass a truck crawling up a hill, even what to do in that split second you can act when a head-on collision seems inevitable? Do you KNOW what to do or will you do the first thing that comes to mind in that moment of panic?

Are you sure your wife knows what to do—that she can handle the car in any emergency? That your grown-up son or daughter can?

Frank Williams' big new book, *How to Drive—and Stay Alive*, is the practical guide to safeguard anyone who drives from trouble on the road, from expensive delays, from emergencies of any kind—and from Sudden Death.

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