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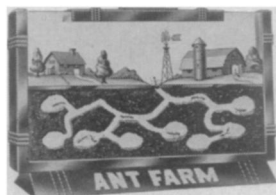
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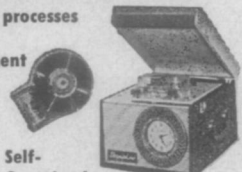
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Science News Letter, June 4, 1960

MEDICINE

Concussion May Result From Changed Brain Fluid

WHAT HAPPENS to the brain when a person is stunned has been determined by two researchers at the University of California Medical Center, Los Angeles.

Dr. Benedict Cassen and Richard Neff of the Laboratory of Nuclear Medicine have explored this type of concussion, which occurs frequently with no discernible evidence of brain tissue damage.

They have obtained evidence that such a slight concussion may occur as a result of temporary changes in the fluid that bathes the brain.

These changes may take place when the permeability of the protective tissue barrier surrounding the brain is altered. Thus substances in the blood plasma, which are of a different composition than the brain fluid, may diffuse into the brain fluid.

Proper functioning of the brain depends on close control of the brain environment, the investigators pointed out. Thus changes in the brain fluid would likely alter brain function.

Radioactive phosphate ions were injected into the bloodstream of mice shortly after they had received not too severe concussions. It was found that the radioactive phosphate increased significantly in the brain fluid and returned to normal as the concussion cleared up.

These results indicated that the brain barrier appeared to be altered to admit more phosphate. Thus the brain fluid's composition was temporarily changed.

Science News Letter, June 4, 1960

MEDICINE

Scarce Blood Fraction Provided Free to Doctors

A SCARCE BLOOD fraction, vaccinia immune globulin (VIG), is being distributed free to doctors by the American National Red Cross to offset complications sometimes arising from smallpox vaccination. The most common infections occur when children with eczema are vaccinated or when eyes are accidentally infected. A prompt use of VIG will prevent loss of vision. The fraction is obtained from the blood of persons recently vaccinated against smallpox.

Science News Letter, June 4, 1960