

MEDICINE

Plastic Bags for Blood

► THE U. S. ARMY will soon replace bottles for blood transfusions with plastic bags that pump blood when placed under the shoulder of a wounded man.

This will result in the saving of more lives—those of the medics who often have to expose themselves to enemy fire while holding up bottles to feed blood to the wounded.

It will also save more lives of the wounded by keeping the plastic bag in a safe spot, hidden from the possibility of being shattered by an enemy bullet.

The plastic bags, which have been under careful testing for the past eight months by the Army, Air Force and Navy, offer the added advantages of being unbreakable, disposable and, when empty, taking up only one-sixth of the space now needed for storing bottles.

The Army, first of the services to author-

PHARMACOLOGY

Anti-Malaria Drug Works Against Arthritis

► AN ANTI-MALARIA drug called chloroquine has been found to be 70% effective against rheumatoid arthritis and works in a completely different way from cortisone and its derivatives.

Tests of the drug on arthritic patients were reported by three international research teams headed by Dr. Robert E. Rinehart, Wheeler, Ore., Dr. Arthur W. Bagnall, Vancouver, B. C., and Prof. I. Bruckner, Bucharest, Roumania, to the Ninth International Congress on Rheumatic Diseases meeting in Toronto.

Precautions were taken to conceal the identity of the drug during the trial so that an accurate evaluation could be made without the patient's emotional interference.

"Chloroquine differs from the more spectacular drugs such as cortisone and its derivatives in that it gives no immediate evidence of an anti-inflammatory effect on the joint swelling and pain," Dr. Bagnall said.

It appears to act by attacking the disease process in the body as a whole.

When used over a period of many months it continuously controls arthritic "flare-ups." This action is different from that of cortisone which is effective only while being taken, and once stopped, allows the inflammation in the joints to return.

Other advantages are the lack of medical hazards usually created by prolonged cortisone use. These include the appearance of high blood pressure, diabetes, soft bones, susceptibility to infection and poor functioning of the adrenal glands.

The chloroquine was used in one group of patients for more than four years with no significant side effects except a drug rash in 10% of the group.

The results were good in 70% of Dr. Bagnall's cases and one-half of them now have no symptoms at all, he said.

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ize use of the plastic bags, is currently allowing its bottle supply to dwindle through breakage and other factors, without replacing them.

Use of the bags in combat will eliminate the familiar picture of a wounded man receiving blood from a bottle, hooked up to a rifle stuck into the ground. They are designed to be placed under the shoulder of the wounded man, where the weight of the body forces the blood in the bag to flow at an even rate into the arm.

The National Research Council Committee on Blood and the Department of Defense Ad Hoc Committee on Blood have been supervising tests with the bags for the past eight months at ten U. S. Army hospitals here and abroad.

Pending adoption as a standard item, the Army is currently using the plastic bags in the test hospitals Ft. Carson, Fitzsimons, Letterman, Walter Reed, Beaumont, Madigan and the Brook Army Medical Center in the United States; Tripler Army Hospital in Hawaii; the Medical Laboratory at Landstuhl in Germany; and at the 48th Blood Bank in Tokyo.

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