

MEDICINE

Monday Morning Seen As Cause for "Colds"

► SUGGESTION is probably a more powerful cause of "runny" noses than any virus yet discovered, Dr. Robert J. Huebner, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Bethesda, Md., reports.

The common cold is widely blamed on virus infections but psychological tests have shown the more gullible a person is, the more apt he is to complain of upper respiratory illness, Dr. Huebner says.

The symptoms of the common cold have occurred in many volunteers whether or not they received virus-containing or virus-free materials.

Well-controlled studies of protective vaccines and antihistamines have revealed a surprising fact. Harmless control materials seemed to perform just as well as the supposedly active materials being tested. Also, at least half the cold sufferers reported a change for the better or a complete cure even if they had only received a sugar pill when they thought they were getting something else.

As a father of six school age children, Dr. Huebner reports he could not escape the feeling that there was a definite association of "colds" with Monday mornings. It is difficult to think of viruses behaving in such an illogical manner, he reports in the journal *Public Health Reports* (May).

Science News Letter, July 20, 1957

Do You Know?

An estimated 85% to 90% of the molybdenum consumed in recent years went into iron alloys.

For every dollar the American people spend on food products, eight cents represents commercial transportation.

Nematodes are small threadlike creatures which live on or in the small feeding roots of a wide range of host plants, including small fruits.

High priests of several South American Indian tribes chewed leaves from the coca plant, which contains the anesthetic, cocaine, and spat the juice on a patient's body where an operation had to be performed.

About 90% of the 90,000,000 persons who use swimming facilities each year swim very poorly or not at all.

Aerial color photography is now being used to make high-altitude pictures of mountainous and jungle regions in South America to give direct clues to mineral deposits.

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