

## MEDICINE

# Modern Social Conditions May Cause Digestive Disorders

## Sturdy Blondes Less Liable to New Illness Than More Excitable Brunettes; Ulcers Linked to Hormones

A NEW kind of sickness, product of modern times but one which rarely affects a sturdy blonde, was described by Drs. Charles W. Mayo and E. G. Wakefield of the Mayo Clinic at the meeting of the American Medical Association.

"Sociologic disorders" is the name the Mayo physicians have coined for this condition. Symptoms are ailments of digestion including the fashionable "colitis."

Basic causes arise from the exacting competitive and machine-like routine which modern man has imposed on himself. They include such things as time clocks, trading at bargain counters and paying bills on the installment plan. Sickness, accident, unexpected loss of money, property or job, death in the family, betrayal of confidence by a friend, migration or change of church, party or occupation may start the trouble.

### Watch Diagnosis

Physicians treating patients with digestive disorders must of course rule out organic disease before making a diagnosis of "sociologic disorder," the Mayo physicians warned. Treating the patient for "colitis" will not help him if he suffers from "sociologic disorder," they said. Cure must be attempted through scientific control of the adverse social conditions.

Advertisements of remedies for auto-intoxication and colitis were criticized as constantly tantalizing the fearful and suggesting "unnecessary care, unhygienic and unphysiologic requirements of the colon."

Discussing causes of sociologic disorders, the Mayo physicians said that one feature of heredity seems important inasmuch as sturdy blondes rarely are troubled with this condition which typically affects the tall slender brunette. Otherwise they find heredity of little importance, going so far as to say:

"It is not true that what man is was foreordained when he got his supply of genes in the germ cells."

Sinus disease starts in infancy and

the first five years of your life were the most important ones for determining whether or not you would be plagued with this ailment, it appears from the report of Dr. W. Walter Wasson of Denver.

Dr. Wasson advises warm air for sinus sufferers. On this point, he said:

"Fresh air with oxygen is desirable and many times necessary, but I doubt if this air should be cold. Patients with chronic sinus disease do better if their sleeping rooms are well ventilated, but ventilated with warm air of the proper humidity."

### Seasonal Sinusitis

This advice on treatment is based on the observation that most young children with sinus disease show a seasonal cycle, their sinuses showing a definite lack of air supply beginning about October and continuing till warm weather returns. Such children, Dr. Wasson believes, would be better off in a warm climate in the winter and attention should be paid to the air in their sleeping rooms.

Discovery that sinus disease starts in infancy was made with X-rays. At birth, Dr. Wasson reported, the sinuses are filled with material which must be removed. This process takes from two to five weeks and the degree of clearing conditions the future development of sinus disease. Children whose sinuses clear promptly have fewer attacks of sinus trouble later in life. If the nose clears on only one side or not at all, sinus trouble usually occurs later.

If the disease develops in infancy it may subside by the fifth birthday, but if it does not, it becomes more definitely established, with changes in the tissues and bones.

The reason that stomach ulcers occur four or five times as often in men as in women is apparently linked to a difference in sex hormones. Doses of one of these hormones which is produced in large quantities in pregnancy cured eight out of fifteen stomach ulcer

patients, Drs. David J. Sandweiss, H. C. Saltstein and A. A. Farbmanx of Detroit reported.

This treatment, however, is not recommended by the Detroit doctors because they feel that it is too experimental for general use. The particular hormone they use is the anterior-pituitary-like hormone known as A. P. L. in medical slang.

Besides relieving ulcer symptoms in these patients, this hormone prevented or healed ulcers produced experimentally in dogs in 70 per cent. of the animals. The reason the doctors do not advocate its use in treatment of patients is because they are not sure yet whether the results are due to the hormone itself, to an impurity in the commercial preparation, or to some yet unidentified substance excreted with this hormone.

### Hormonic Ulcers

Reasons for attributing chronic peptic or stomach ulcers to the pregnancy hormone are as follows:

Only one case of stomach ulcer was found in 70,310 pregnant women at Harper Hospital, Detroit, although plenty of other gastric disorders such as appendicitis and gall bladder disease occurred in these women. Glandular disorders were found in more than half of the female ulcer cases.

Stomach ulcers, although rare in children, occur equally often in girls and boys but in adults are found four or five times more often in the male.

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## ENGINEERING

## Engineering Students Need More Fundamental Studies

LESS slide rule pushing, less plotting of graphs, fewer courses and hence more time for a real basic understanding of engineering principles were urged by speakers at a symposium on engineering education.

Too many students now being graduated in electrical engineering, it was stressed, learn a set of shortcut methods which make them robot thinking machines without having a proper understanding of the underlying principles of mathematics and physics on which all engineering is based. The method of achieving better coordination between these two sciences and electrical engineering was the object of the discussions.

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