

MEDICINE

# Streptomycin Results Good

**Hundreds of lives saved in first year's experimental use in treatment of tuberculosis. Not good for pulmonary type, which is most common.**

► A YEAR'S experimentation with streptomycin therapy in tuberculosis has produced some "remarkable" results at Battey State hospital in Rome, Ga. The 650 patients treated are believed to constitute the largest group of tuberculosis patients to take the earthmold drug at any sanatorium in the United States.

"There is no doubt that streptomycin has saved and prolonged hundreds of lives," Dr. Rufus F. Payne, superintendent of the hospital, reported.

Of the 650 started on treatment, 523 have finished. Only 28 died. Of these, 26 were considered hopeless—the drug was given to relieve pain—so only two of these deaths represent failures of streptomycin.

But here is even more convincing evidence: Of the 523 patients treated, 106 have been discharged from the hospital, 90 of them improved, only 16 unimproved. Of the 106, doctors called 101 "far advanced" cases when the treatment was started.

And finally: 32 of those discharged, and now living normal lives at home, had been considered "absolutely hopeless" when admitted to the hospital!

Here are some of the facts established in the study:

1. The "new lesion" is the one which responds best.

2. The "biggest disappointment" is that the most common type of tuberculosis, pulmonary, shows the least response to the drug. Fortunately, Dr. Payne pointed out, there are other treatments for lung tuberculosis.

3. The "nicest thing" about streptomycin is that it works best on the types of cases for which doctors have never had any specific treatment.

4. This study has determined that half a gram per day is the best dose. Previously, one gram or 1.8 grams was the usual dosage. The patient is much less likely to become resistant at the lower dose, Dr. Payne said.

One of the most dramatic responses to streptomycin therapy has been miliary tuberculosis. This is a form spread by the blood stream into every organ of

the body. Normally, it's 100% fatal. Dr. Payne has tried it in about 25 cases, with apparent cures in more than three-fourths of them.

Meningitis is another complication bringing certain death. Thirteen cases have been treated at Battey, and seven of them are living. Two have survived more than a year, and are clinically well.

Kidney tuberculosis is one of the most painful forms. Surgery was the only treatment. Now streptomycin has been found to relieve the pain in at least 90% of the cases. It is hoped that 50% or more will experience permanent results.

Almost "miraculous" is the way Dr. Payne described the response in tuberculous laryngitis, another extremely painful form.

"Patients have been enabled to talk in normal tones, even though they had not spoken except in a whisper for three years," he said. "We have other patients who have not been able to swallow small

amounts of water. Within three weeks after they started taking streptomycin, they were eating a normal diet, completely free of pain."

Of the 650 patients treated so far, 388 have received their streptomycin without cost, thanks to a fund raised last year by public subscription. The appeal was made entirely through the newspapers, without one penny being spent for campaign expenses. The goal was \$75,000, but Georgains contributed \$111,815.

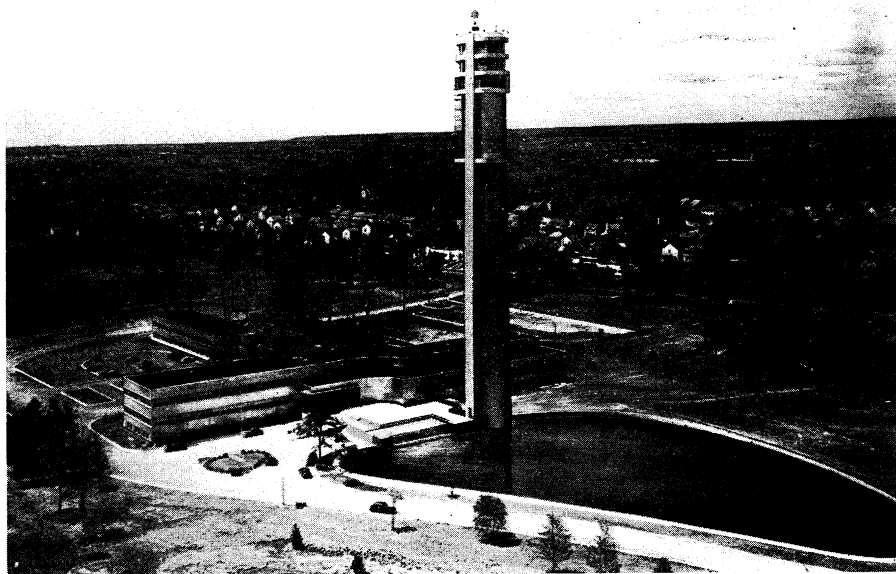
*Science News Letter, May 29, 1948*

RADAR

## Two-Color Screens For Radar Scanners

► TWO-COLOR viewing screens, for use with radar scanning equipment to control aircraft traffic approaching airports, were revealed at the opening of the new 300-foot aluminum-sheathed tower for microwave experiments at Federal Telecommunication Laboratories, in Nutley, N. J.

An improved radar device to measure distances from moving planes to fixed ground beacons was also revealed. These are but two of important achievements here at the laboratories. The first is part of a navigation system being developed under contract with the Watson Laboratories of the Air Materiel Command, Red Bank, N. J. The second



**TWO-COLOR RADAR**—One of the projects being experimented with in this microwave laboratory tower at Nutley, N. J.