

MEDICINE

Hope for Heart Patients

Two anti-blood clotting chemicals, heparin and dicumarol, have been found to relieve the patient's heart condition and save lives.

► STRIKING improvement in the outlook for patients with a common form of heart disease comes from the use of two modern anti-blood clotting chemicals: heparin and dicumarol.

This is the verdict of a committee of the American Heart Association after reviewing the evidence in 800 cases. It is a verdict many physicians have been awaiting before daring to use the drugs for their own patients.

The committee's report was presented by its chairman, Dr. Irving S. Wright of New York, at the association's meeting in Chicago.

Treatment with these drugs, the committee recommends, "should be used in all cases of coronary thrombosis with myocardial infarction" unless there is a definite reason against it. A tendency to bleeding or hemorrhage would be one such reason.

Coronary thrombosis is the kind of heart disease in which one of the arteries of the heart muscle is plugged usually by a blood clot. Myocardial infarction is the damage to the part of the heart muscle that is not getting enough blood because of the artery stoppage.

The death rate and the number of complications in the way of repeated attacks of thrombosis during the first six weeks after an attack are "markedly lower" in patients treated with the anti-clotting chemicals than in patients treated by conventional means without these chemicals, the committee found.

The 800 patients in the study were under the care of 18 collaborating physicians in 16 different hospitals throughout the country. About half of them, those entering the hospital on the odd days of the month, received the anti-clotting chemicals. The others, entering on even days of the month, were given conventional treatment only. Age, sex and heart condition of patients in each group was about the same.

The chemicals act to relieve the heart condition by slowing the rate at which the blood clots. In using them, tests should be made daily to determine the clotting time of the blood. This precaution guards against giving too much of the chemicals, which might cause hemorrhage, and also is important for

guiding the physician to give enough to help the patient.

The greatest saving of lives occurred in patients over 60 years, the committee found. But the treatment is valuable for younger patients in reducing the number of further attacks.

Science News Letter, June 26, 1948

PUBLIC HEALTH

Increase in Death Rate Is Predicted for 1975

► AN increase in the death rate during the next 25 years is predicted by statisticians of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

By 1975 we shall have at least one and maybe four more deaths per 1,000 population each year than the present 10 per 1,000.

But the average American will be living longer than he does now, the statisticians figure. It is this increased life span, they explain, that will increase the death rate.

An increase in the average length of life means that there will be a larger proportion of older people in the population. This in turn will lead to a larger number of deaths per 1,000 population.

"If the present death rate of about 10 per 1,000 continued," the statisticians point out, "it would ultimately result in an average lifetime of 100 years. In the present state of our knowledge, to expect that the average person will live that long would be to indulge in wishful thinking."

"Actually, the average length of life in the United States is now close to 67 years. In a stationary population, the death rate corresponding to this figure would be about 15 per 1,000, a figure half again that currently being experienced."

Science News Letter, June 26, 1948

PSYCHOLOGY

Propaganda Can Change Your Mind on Voting

► YOU may know how you will want to vote next November, or think you know, but propaganda can change your mind.

Studies made at a men's college last fall and reported in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* reveal the importance of propaganda in voting. Opinions on an important campus issue at the time—subsidization of athletes—were shifted 46% by campaign leaflets.

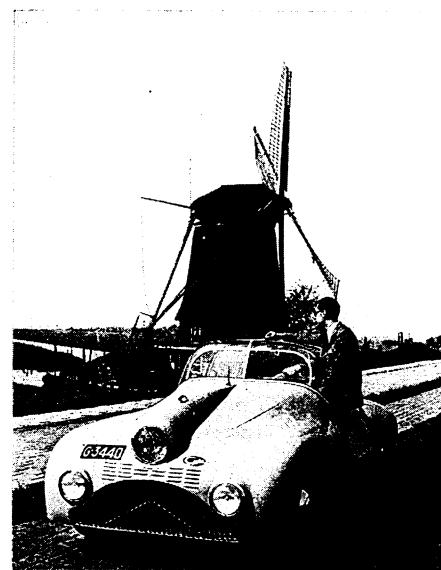
Few people could be induced to change from a "yes" to a "no," most of the shift was toward a neutral point of view. People, it seems do not like to do a mental "about face," though they can be influenced to change their minds one step at a time.

R. W. Dietsch, Cleveland, Ohio, and Herbert Gurnee of Arizona State College, who conducted the survey, found that the majority of the students were strongly in favor of subsidization before leaflets which argued against it were distributed.

A vote taken later showed that support of the position was weakened, with a large swing being made to a neutral position.

The propaganda worked best with one leaflet. Series of three and then of five leaflets were also used. There was little change after the first series and even less after the second. The heavier propaganda proved to be worth neither the trouble nor the expense.

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DUTCH POST-WAR CAR—First since the war, the "Gatso" can travel, by use of extra gas tanks, 900 miles on one load of gas. Claimed to do "105 m.p.h.," the mileage secret is in overdrive and clever gear ratio. It is streamlined with a plastic top which is removable and sells for the equivalent of \$4,200.