

News and Notes

PROFESSOR DEAN VISITS K. V. SITE HOSPITAL

Professor A. C. B. Dean, Secretary of the Royal College of Surgeons, Edinburgh visited the Kulsumbai Valika Social Security SITE Hospital and praised the standard of medical care facilities being provided to the secured workers.

The main purpose of his visit was to assess the possibility of extending recognition of the Royal College of Surgeons to the Hospital in ENT and Gynae Departments.

It may be mentioned that the said Hospital is already recognised by the Royal College of Surgeons, England.

The Professor was taken around the different departments of the Hospital including Rehabilitation Centre and Operation Theatres. He was specially impressed by the Kidney Dialysis section and the Casualty Department.

Later, Professor Dean delivered a lecture on 'Endoscopy' with special reference to cancer of the Gastro-Intestinal Tract. The lecture which was illustrated by colour slides was largely attended by doctors and specialists of SESSI.

He was seen off by Mr. A. M. Hameedee, Commissioner SESSI and Dr. A. K. Mangi, the Medical Adviser.

W.H.O. TO START RESEARCH ON TROPICAL DISEASES

The World Health Organisation has identified six tropical diseases for its new research programme, according to W.H.O. sources in Islamabad.

These are malaria, schistosomiasis, filariasis, trypanosomiasis, leishmaniasis and leprosy. The research will outline control methods. The collaborating agencies are World Bank and UN Development Programme (UNDP).

KAWASAKI'S MAY BE GENUINELY NEW DISEASE

Kawasaki syndrome first described in Japan 10 years ago, appears to be a genuinely new disease, not one that was overlooked prior to its discovery.

The incidence of the febrile disorder has steadily climbed in Japan, convincing that country's physicians that it is a new disease entity. Dr Marian E. Melish said at the Second International Congress on Pediatric Dermatology.

In Hawaii, where most US cases have been reported, the incidence has dropped this year after averaging two to three new cases each month through 1978. Kawasaki syndrome occurs predominantly in children of Japanese descent; 75 per cent of Hawaiian cases are from this ethnic group, which makes up only 15 per cent of the state's population.

The disease typically consists of an acute phase lasting 11-14 days and characterized by fever and rash, followed by a sub-acute period during which arthritis, myocarditis, and potentially fatal coronary artery thrombosis may occur.

REPEAT IMPLANTS OF LOW-RISK HEART VALVES TERMED

An aggressive approach to reoperation on patients with previously implanted prosthetic valves is recommended by Stanford University cardiovascular surgeons.

"Reoperation can be done with relatively low risk on properly selected patients to correct hemodynamic and systemic abnormalities prior to the onset of advanced decompensation," Stanford's Dr Stephen J. Rossiter told the meeting of the International Cardiovascular Society, North American chapter.

The conclusion is based on findings of a seven-year-long study conducted by Dr Rossiter and five coinvestigators.

TROPICAL HYPOTHERMIA EMPLOYED

The 1971-78 study covered 232 valvular reoperations performed on 194 patients with previously implanted prosthetic valves, 123 of them mitral and 109 aortic.

Indications for valve reoperation, in order of descending frequency, were periprosthetic leak (62), prosthetic insufficiency (54), systemic indications such as embolic or hemolysis (49), endocarditis (43), and prosthetic stenosis (24).

Dr Rossiter noted that there has been little change in surgical technique throughout the

period of analysis. Cardiac protection is afforded by topical hypothermia, and more recently by cold, aortic-route cardioplegia. Repeat stemography is routine, utilizing the oscillating saw for division of anterior cable of the posterior cable and for lateral adhesiolysis.

NO HUMAN DANGER SEEN IN LOW RATIO OF CALCIUM TO PHOSPHORUS IN DIETS

There is no evidence that diets with a low calcium-to-phosphorus ratio have been shown to cause soft tissue calcification and bone loss in human beings, according to two nutritionists at the University of Wisconsin.

The effect had been seen in laboratory dogs and rats but not in monkeys.

"It has long been believed that a high phosphorus intake results in decreased calcium absorption due to the formation of insoluble salts in the gut," say Hellen M. Linkwiler, and Michael B. Emel.

Based on their review, the nutritionists conclude that high phosphorus intakes do not affect calcium absorption when dietary calcium is low to normal and may have no effect even at high intakes.

The ideal calcium-to-phosphorus ratio in the adult diet is 1:1, say the researchers, and 1.5:1 for infants up to six months. The average American consumes about 0.7g calcium per day and 1.5g phosphorus.

"It is unlikely that the ratio is ever as high as 1:1 except for the young infant whose diet is composed mainly of milk," say the nutritionists.

THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF PAP HELD

The annual Scientific Conference of the Pakistan Association of Pathologists was held at King Edward Medical College, Lahore.

The Conference was inaugurated by Dr. Z. A. Hashmi, Education and Scientific Adviser to the Governor of Punjab.

Major General M. I. Burney in his presidential address highlighted the problems faced by the pathologists. He emphasised the need for extending the laboratory facilities to tehsil levels.

Gen. Burney put forth a suggestion from the PAP to submit proposal to PMRC, Pakistan Science Foundation regarding research work in pathology. He urged the government to take an early decision in the cases of scholarships which in many instances are not utilized due to delayed actions and lapse of time.

Dr. Khawaja Iftikhar Ahmed, Secretary, PAP emphasised the need for creating house jobs in clinical pathology which he said would not only provide jobs in hospital laboratories but also more incentives to the young graduates.

WORLD CONGRESS OF PAEDIATRIC CARDIOLOGY

In order to mark the coming of age of paediatric cardiology as a speciality, a World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology will be held in London between 2nd-6th June 1980. The new Wembley Conference Centre has been booked for the event.

Dr. J. E. Edwards (Minneapolis, U.S.A.) will be President of the meeting and Dr. A. S. Nadas (Boston, USA) and Professor G. Brom (Lieden, Netherlands) will be Vice-Presidents. The Secretary General of the meeting is Professor Fergus Macartney.

The Scientific Programme will comprise invited lectures by outstanding international authorities, seminars and free communications. Dr. Jane Somerville is supervising and co-ordinating the programme, which aims to cover all aspects of paediatric cardiology, paediatric cardiac surgery and related disciplines.

A Trade Exhibition, under the direction of Mr. Norman will be mounted in the Hampton Room at the Wembley Centre.

The deadline for submission of abstracts is November 16th 1979. Abstract forms should be obtained from Dr. Jane Somerville, Scientific Secretary, The World Congress of Paediatric Cardiology, National Heart Hospital, Westmoreland Street, London W1M 8BA, England.

A reduced registration is available for registrations received before 1st February 1980. For further information please contact the Secretary General, Professor Fergus Macartney, The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London WC1 3JH.

NEW W.H.O. PUBLICATION

Environmental Health Criteria 11: Myco-

toxins, published under the joint sponsorship of the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organisation, Geneva, World Health Organisation, 1979 (ISBN 92 4 154071 0). 127 pages. Price Sw. fr. 11.-. French edition in preparation.

The ingestion of food containing mycotoxins, the toxic products of microscopic fungi, may have serious adverse health effects in man and in animals. Occasionally, occupational exposure to airborne mycotoxins may also occur.

The present publication contains an evaluation of health risks associated with four classes of mycotoxins: aflatoxins; ochratoxins; zearalenone and trichothecenes.

Each of the classes of mycotoxins described is associated with a different pathology. Aflatoxins are hepatotoxic & hepatocarcinogenic in animals. A positive correlation between high dietary aflatoxin intake and the crude incidence of primary liver cancer has been observed in man in four countries. The primary manifestation of ochratoxin A in animals is nephropathy and it has been suggested that this mycotoxin may be associated with human endemic nephropathy. Although no adverse effects due to zearalenone intake have so far been reported in man, it produces a specific estrogenic syndrome in animals. Trichothecene toxins appear to cause some toxicity in experimental animals.

The findings in this volume are based primarily on nearly 500 original publications listed in the reference section. Following a summary of the major issues and recommendations for further studies, the four classes of mycotoxins are considered separately. Aflatoxins are treated in more detail because more is known about their health effects in man. The chemical properties, methods of analysis, sources and occurrence, metabolism, effects on animals and, where applicable, on man are described for each class of toxins and an evaluation is made of the health risks to man.

In preparing the volume account was taken of comments received from national institutions collaborating with the WHO Environmental Health Criteria Programme, from the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations; the text was finalised by a group of experts under the auspices of WHO.