

To Your Health

There Are All Kinds Of Hernias

By DR. JOSEPH G. MOLNER

Dear Doctor Molner: I always thought only men could have hernias. My aunt was operated on for a tumor about a year ago. Recently on her check-up the doctor told her she has a hernia, but not to worry about it if it does not give her pain, and that it may never require surgery. Is that true?—A.H.C.

Certainly it's true. And, no, hernia is by no means limited to men.

A hernia is a weakened place or gap in some bodily wall, into which some other organ may push through, or threaten to do so.

There are, in fact, all kinds of hernias, but by and large we think of a hernia as being one of the bowel—a gap in the abdominal wall through which a portion of the bowel can force its way.

Men, because of their physiology, have some comparatively weak points in the groin, and it is there that a strain or injury can cause a hernia. Women do not have these weak points and hence are little troubled.

Hernias occur elsewhere. An umbilical hernia is one example. Another is a hiatal hernia, or flow in the diaphragm at the point at which the gullet passes through.

Still another is called an incisional hernia, meaning one that has developed at or near the incision of an operation. This type is mentioned in today's letter. Often it requires nothing more than simple support, such as a corset or a girdle.

Some hernias are of scant importance; others, if not corrected, can become intensely dangerous. This applies particularly to those in the groin. A portion of the bowel can be gradually forced through the gap and become "strangulated"—it is pinched off by the small gap through which it has worked its way.

When this happens, it is an emergency of the most dire sort, and must be relieved without an instant's delay. That is why so many doctors urge that hernias (depending on their location and extent) be corrected surgically before they seem to the patient to be of any great annoyance. This sort of hernia, in short, can be easily repaired. However, if correction is put off too long, the hernia may become strangulated and urgent measures will be needed to save the patient's life. (The strangulation is also agonizingly painful.)

Such a complication is much less likely to occur in an incisional hernia, or in a hernia higher in the abdominal wall. So your aunt is quite safe in doing exactly as her doctor suggests: Not to worry about it. ©1962 New York Herald Tribune Inc.

Jordan's Journey

The River Jordan twists and loops 200 miles in making its 65-mile journey down a valley between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea.

Yellowstone: Peerless Park

Andy sends a complete, 20-volume set of the World Book Encyclopedia to Melinda Austrey, age 14, Shawnee, Okla. for her question: How big is Yellowstone National Park?

The icy crown of Everest, highest peak in the world, is about 29,000 feet above the level of the sea. But these bare figures are lost in awe when we see the mighty mountain, or even a picture or movie of its tremendous bulk. The Pacific, world's largest ocean, covers an area of almost 64 million square miles. But we must voyage across it to grasp its tremendous scope—and then we realize that the bald tape-measure figures tell us very little.

We can estimate the exact area of Yellowstone National Park and figure the height of all its peaks. But when we visit the place, we leave the everyday world behind us and the bare facts of its size are lost in wonder. Crowded into this region there is a greater variety of splendid scenery and more natural wonders than any similar area on earth.

The great park, which belongs to all of us, is equal in area to about half the land area of about three times the area covered by the small state of Rhode Island. In plain figures, our scenic wonderland has an area of about 3,471½ square miles—but this is one of very few plain facts about Yellowstone National Park—the rest is glamor.

A tourist can drive the 150 miles of highway running through the park in an after-

noon. The park bus takes two days to give you a guided tour along this route with short pauses at countless outstanding wonders. You can walk or ride horseback along miles of trails, stopping to picnic, to camp or just to gape where you please.

The roads and trails, the regions touched by human hands take up only one-tenth of the great park. Nine-tenths of the region is primeval, left in the wild state just as it was created. Our national parks are set up to preserve the primeval qualities of outstanding regions. For this reason, there are laws which forbid the destruction of any native plant or animal life.

About four-fifths of the park is covered with native forest, tall trunks that climb up the many mountain slopes and cluster in the rocky gorges. There are also patches of grassy meadow, carpeted in certain seasons with colorful wild flowers. There are prairie regions, furry with sagebrush and sometimes decked with gaudy prairie flowers. There are gorges, waterfalls, rivers and lakes. There are dramatic geysers and hot springs with colored basins. And the whole

Andy awards each day a full set of the World Book Encyclopedia for the first question he selects to answer. When a second question is answered a large world globe or atlas is awarded. Questions are accepted from teen-age or less-than-teen-age readers. They should be addressed to the Register-Guard, 975 High St., Eugene. Andy prefers that questions be written on postcards, rather than in letter form.

region teems with wild life. The animals are less timid than elsewhere because they seem to sense that here it is safe for them to let us pause and admire them.

Millions of people, as always, are planning to visit the biggest and the oldest of our parks this summer. As a vacation spot, it has the magic of restful calm and exciting beauty. For a family, the best and least expensive plan is to camp there on one of the many areas set aside for this purpose. Because of its northern latitude and high altitude, the wonderful region is open for campers only from June to September—just right for summer vacations.

Andy sends a Hammond's Library World Atlas to Bill Morgan, age 10, of Rexdale, Ontario, for his question:

How much of the world is under water?

From an orbit high above the Pacific, our world looks as if it is completely under water, for this vast ocean covers almost half of the globe. The Atlantic Ocean also covers a large area of the big globe. Then there are the Indian and Arctic Oceans, plus countless smaller seas.

All these ocean waters are linked together, making islands of the large and small land areas. Together, the sea waters cover almost 71 per cent of the globe. Rivers, lakes and swampy regions like the Everglades cover perhaps another one per cent of the surface of the earth. So we can estimate that about 72 per cent of our world is under water.

Butterflies Depend Upon Their Gaudy Colors for Survival

The vivid colors of butterflies are useful as well as beautiful. Distinctive hues help some species to survive.

The familiar orange-and-black monarch butterflies flitting about on a bright spring day are a delight to the eye, but a warning to birds and other predators. Distasteful to its natural enemies, the monarch flaunts its colors to make sure of recognition, the National Geographic Society says.

Inedible, or "protected," butterflies seem to know the value of repetition in such "keep off" signs.

Unatable species share strikingly similar patterns, though they may be from widely different genera and families. The uniform patterns doubtless simplify the learning process for predators. If each protected butterfly had a different pattern, it would be difficult for most predators to learn them all, and many butterflies would die before their enemies mastered the code.

Predators are emphatic in their dislike for bad-tasting butterflies. The gaudy Heliconius erato of tropical America is generally scorned. A frog that mistakenly snapped an erato gaged, spat it out, and shook its head back and forth. A pet monkey picked up an erato, sniffed the butterfly, made a wry face, dropped it, and spent several minutes scrubbing at its hands.

Many edible butterflies mimic protected species. The Viceroy, for example, is a tasty

morsel for birds, but it copies the unsavory monarch's coloring so well that birds usually ignore it. The chief flaw in the mimicry is a black line across the Viceroy's hind wing. Occasionally a specimen is seen without the stripe, suggesting that it may gradually disappear from all Viceroys.

Sometimes only the female imitates an inedible species. In many regions, the female African Swallowtail is so unlike the male that it took careful study to prove the two sexes were the same species.

In nature's scheme, mimics never should be as common as their models, for if enough imitators are caught, the predators would learn they are edible.

Mimics often fly in the shade where their slight differences are not obvious. Many butterflies also copy natural objects, such as dead leaves, twigs, barks, and rocks. Varieties of an English moth vary in color to match the rocks each prefers to alight on.

Tropical butterflies benefit from "flash coloration." At rest, the insects fold their hind wings beneath dull front wings. When disturbed, they take flight, exposing brilliant rear wings.

Butterfly color may be a factor in courtship. Entomologist Jocelyn Crane described in the National Geographic an experiment in which she painted out the distinctive red patches on the black wings of an erato. The paint job turned a popular female into a scorned wallflower.

