

To Your Health Epileptics Have Good Job Records

By DR. JOSEPH G. MOLNER

The old belief that adults with epilepsy are more accident-prone or miss work more frequently has been proved to be wrong, according to recent surveys.

"One study," Dr. Harry E. Carnes writes in a publication, *Therapeutic Notes*, "has shown that their safety and attendance records, as well as job attitudes, are better than average."

It's doubtless wise (as he points out) for epileptics not to work at heights or around moving machinery. However, with medications now in use, 80 per cent of epileptics can eliminate or control seizures to such an extent that there is no interference with normal jobs.

It is significant that there are enough epileptic workers to make possible comparative surveys, because for a long time such people had great difficulty in getting jobs, or when they did find employment, they kept their epilepsy a secret.

Today great progress has been made in the old habit of hiding epilepsy. Except in extreme cases, this ailment is no excuse for depriving a person of a chance to earn a living and pursue a normal life.

The change has been long in coming. I remember easily when a few communities started special schools for epileptics. These schools denoted progress because in many places victims of epilepsy weren't even allowed to attend classes.

But now we've gone a step further. These special institutions have been converted to other uses, and the former pupils there now attend regular schools. We're making headway!

Doctor Carnes brings out another valuable point. When epilepsy appears in adult life, prompt and careful diagnosis is urgent. From the age of 18 or 20 up to about 35, its most frequent cause is brain injury; next is the presence of a brain tumor. From 25 to 45 per cent of brain tumor patients will have epileptic seizures.

After the age of 35 the most prevalent causes, in order of frequency, are tumors, head injuries, and hardening of the arteries. After 55, hardening of the arteries ranks first, followed by tumors, and then injuries and other such causes.

The precepts, as I see them, are these: The person who has epilepsy from childhood (or from birth) has an excellent chance of adjusting to normal life provided he makes regular use of medicines now available; second, those who first notice the symptoms in adult life should waste no time in getting expert attention, because with prompt attention many of them can have the trouble corrected.

Twelfth Night Marks End Of Christmas Season

WASHINGTON — The Twelve Days of Christmas come to end on Jan. 6, the traditional time to burn Christmas greens.

Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, is celebrated with many other customs, ceremonies and legends throughout the Christian world, the National Geographic Society says. One of the most beautiful of all Epiphany rituals is the blessing of the Greek sponge divers at Tarpon Springs, Fla. A gold crucifix is cast into the waters to signify the baptism of Christ.

Latin peoples in particular regard Epiphany both as a solemn religious festival and the beginning of the pre-Lenten carnival season.

In the Philippines, Epiphany is the "Feast of the Three Kings," a time when Christmas decorations are taken down and children get a holiday bonus. The young ones call on their godparents to receive special gifts, over and above the Christmas booty.

Mexicans hail the "Arrival of the Three Kings" with fireworks, masked revelry, feasting and candlelight processions.

Epiphany is observed festively all over the country, but it reaches heights of pageantry among southern Indians. The Otomí and Aztec descendants march to the shrine of the miraculous Lord of Chalma, in a valley southwest of Mexico City, in what is probably Mexico's greatest pilgrimage.

In Christian tradition, whatever the form of observance, Epiphany commemorates the manifestation of Jesus as Christ the Savior. The word itself means "appearance."

Three significant events, which supposedly occurred on the same date though in dif-

ferent years, are associated with Epiphany: the visit of the Three Wise Men, or Three Kings, to worship the infant; the descent of the Holy Spirit during Jesus' baptism, and His first miracle, changing water to wine at wedding feast of Cana.

Even primitive Christians seem to have celebrated Epiphany on the Twelfth Day of Christmas. In the Middle Ages, it was the custom to present plays in churches. But solemn observances largely disappeared in the bawdy atmosphere of Elizabethan England, giving way to wassail.

Shakespeare's Twelfth Night reflects the merry mood. The play was probably first presented in a command performance at Whitehall Palace on Jan. 6, 1601, an occasion when Queen Elizabeth entertained a distinguished Italian guest, the Duke of Bracciano.

Twelfth Night revels later declined in popularity, but customs such as feasting and staging masques still survive in parts of England.

In Europe, children disguised as kings roam the streets of Epiphany, singing hymns and carols. In Italy millions of children awake on Epiphany to find their stockings filled with presents from La Befana, the good-hearted crane who takes the place of Santa Claus.

French and Swiss children look forward to a special Twelfth Night pastry, a rich "cake of kings" in which a coin, black bean, or china figures are hidden. Whoever gets the prize is king for the day.

In France, a portion of the Epiphany cake is often set aside as la part de Dieu, or "God's share." It is given to the first poor person who comes to the door.

Ask Andy

Tiny Flukes Are Parasites

Andy sends a complete, 20-volume set of the World Book Encyclopedia to Thomas Carlan, 14, of Bridgeport, Conn., for his question:

What are the animals called flukes?

The tiny flukes are parasites often more deadly than tigers. The animal phylum Platyhelminthes—meaning the flatworms—includes some 8000 species, and the count is far from complete. A few giants measure almost an inch, but most of them are microscopic. All of them are soft-bodied animals without bones, circulatory or breathing systems. They are equipped with suckers or hooks, and some types have both.

The big phylum is divided into three classes. Class I includes the true flatworms, which are free-living water dwellers. The flukes are in Class II, and the tubeworms in Class III, and no member of either of these flatworm classes can make a living for itself. All of them are parasites.

The flukes develop from microscopic eggs through a number of larval stages. The four different stages in the life cycle of a butterfly seem very complex. But some of the flukes pass through half a dozen widely differing stages of development. Some live their whole life cycle in the same host animal. They tend to attack the gill tissues of fish, the skin or internal organs of reptiles and other cold-blooded animals.

We know of some 3,000 different flukes, each with his own life story. Most of them must change from one host to another as they develop from stage to stage. The eggs of one fluke must find a certain snail before they can become larvae, and the larvae must find a certain species of fish in order to reach the next stage of development. The fish and the snail are called intermediate hosts.

The fluke reaches its adult stage in a final host, where it feeds on the special tissue it needs to mature and produce eggs. The final host may be man or some wild or domestic animal. In some countries, whole populations are weakened by liver flukes which are eaten in raw fish. In other countries, human beings and animals are attacked by blood flukes and lung flukes which reach their final hosts through careless sewage or impure water supplies.

The fluke, which needs a number of different hosts, has a very hazardous life, and billions of eggs must be produced in order that a very few reach maturity. At a certain stage, the larvae

must transfer to a new host within a few hours or perish. Each intermediate host must be a certain species of fish, snail or other animal. However, the fluke may not be so choosy about its final host. At this stage, the lung fluke, for example, will attack the lung tissue of man, cattle and other warm-blooded animals.

Andy sends a Hammond's International World Globe to Franklin Cockerill, 10, of Gretna, Neb., for his question:

What is the midnight sun?

We are used to the fact that summer days are longer than winter days. But if we travel south toward the equator, the summer days are not quite so long. If we travel to the north, the summer days are even longer. In the far north, the midsummer sun sets for only a few hours each night.

The midsummer nights get shorter and shorter the farther north we go. In northern Scandinavia, the midsummer sun dips to the horizon and starts to rise again. The sun is in the sky when the clock says it is midnight.

North of the Arctic Circle, the summer sun does not set for long. The midnight sun is in the sky all through the summer season.

Americans eat more than 700,000,000 pounds of fresh snap beans annually.

