

The Medical Roundup

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Is Too Much Sun Good for the Skin

Every time I see people al-
most naked in the sun trying to
get as tanred as possible, I am



Walter Alvarez
southern farmer.

I have just been reading an
subject by Dr. W. Harvey Cal-
aniss Jr., of the University of
Virginia. As he says, skin that
for years has been heavily ex-
posed to the sun is likely to
show many keratoses, or little
wartlike nodules which sometimes
can serve as starting points for
cancer. In another article I was
reading, Dr. Otto C. Stegmaler,
of Moline, Illinois, wrote that
sunlight is one of the main
causes of cancer of the skin.
Such cancers are much more
common in the ranchers of the
Southwest than among the farm-
ers of Maine—where the rays of
the sun are less powerful.

For persons whose skin is ab-
normally sensitive to the sun,
Dr. Stegmaler recommends the
use of a cream containing para-
aminobenzoic acid. This filters
out some of the more destructive
rays of the sunlight.

There is a rare inherited dis-
ease called porphyria in which
the skin of the face and neck is
likely to be scarred from repeated
small ulcerations due to ex-
posure to the sun. These people oft-
en suffer from much nervous-
ness and abdominal pain. Their
troubles are greatly aggravated
if they take a barbiturate of any
kind. One of the best tests for
this disease is to let the urine
stand in the sun. It will then de-
velop a reddish or purplish col-
or. It is well that a person know
that he has porphyria because
then he will avoid operations
and especially an operation in
which sodium pentothal is used.
In these cases the use of this
drug can bring death.

Good Arteries in Oldest Man
I read that Javier Pereira, the
Indian who was brought up from
Colombia because, supposedly,
he is the oldest man living, has
excellent arteries, and a per-
fectly normal blood pressure of
118 mm. systolic and 56 mm. di-
astolic. His blood cholesterol

was 155 mgs., which is unusually
good. Apparently his diet has al-
ways consisted mainly of carbo-
hydrates or starches and sugar.
Evidently, he didn't get much
meat or fish.

The impression I get from this
report is the one I get from
many others in the literature
which suggests that we humans
do not have to get hardening of
the arteries, high blood pressure,
and other degenerative diseases
simply because we are growing
old. Some of us were born with
such marked immunity to these
troubles that we can live until
80 or 90 without them.

Every so often I read that a
hale and hearty old man of 85,
when asked by reporters as to
the secret of his longevity, sug-
gests that it was due to his hav-
ing smoked a pipe all day and
every day since he was 12. This
doesn't mean that tobacco is
good for everyone. As we doc-
tors see it, all this means is that
this particular man had a tre-
mendous resistance to the often-
harmful effects of tobacco.

Changes in Menstruation
Probably most physicians with
a good memory could tell of
young women they had seen
who, because of some great men-
tal shock, such as witnessing a
murder or the sudden death of a
beloved husband, stopped men-
struating, perhaps for the rest
of their days. Others, under the
influence of an unhappy mar-
riage, have changed their cycle
from perhaps 28 days to 23 days.
Now, I read that Drs. Vincent J.
de Feo, of Baltimore, and S.R.
M. Reynolds, of Chicago, have
found that large doses of reser-
pine can considerably delay ovu-
lation and menstruation in wom-
en. Presumably this is due to
the tranquilizing effect of this
drug on the woman's brain.

U.S. Physicians Visit Russia
Very hopeful is the fact that
recently a group of distinguished
American physicians were able
to visit Russia and see every-
thing they wanted to see about
Russian medicine. Dr. Paul Dud-
ley White was studying the work
of the Russian heart specialists,
Dr. Howard Rusk was studying
their methods of rehabilitating
people, and Dr. Ancel Keys was
studying blood cholesterol and
the influence of diet on heart
disease.

Dr. Alvarez hopes his readers
will understand that it would be
impossible for him to answer re-
quests for information or to at-
tempt to diagnose by mail.

(Released by The Register and
Tribune Syndicate, 1956.)

AN UNINVITED VISITOR
Detroit —UPI— Two-year old
Barney Boswell wasn't half as
frightened as the motorist who
crashed his car into the young-
ster's bedroom while he was
taking a post-Thanksgiving din-
ner nap. Police still are looking
for the driver who jumped out
of his car and ran out the front
door of the house after the crash.

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STRONG CRITICISM of Hungary's puppet government
for refusing to allow United Nations observers to make
on-the-spot check of conditions in that nation is voiced
by India's V. Krishna Menon during conversation with
Imre Horvath (left), Hungary's foreign minister at United
Nations' headquarters in New York. (International)

Quotes From the News

By UNITED PRESS

Ottawa, Ont. — Former NATO Commander Gen. Alfred M.
Gruenther on growing Western strength:
With addition of Germany's NATO contribution, "we will be
able to defend all of Europe."

London—A. J. Speakman, deputy director of the British Pro-
ductivity council, on laziness:
"I have seen men completely exhausted at the end of an eight-
hour day by the exertion of avoiding work."

United Nations, N.Y.—French Foreign Minister Christian Pi-
neau in the General Assembly's foreign policy debate:
"It would no doubt be insulting to France and England to com-
pare them with Russia, but it would be even more insulting to
Hungary to compare it with Egypt."

Vatican City—Pope Pius XII in a message to Catholic athletes
at the Olympic games in Melbourne:
"It is up to you, beloved children, to show during the Olympics
that sport, without losing anything of the technical value, is a
school of energy and self-control aimed at the intellectual and
moral enhancement of souls."

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