

The Medical Roundup

by *Walter Alvarez*

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Varicose Veins

Many people with varicose veins in their legs want to know whether they should be operated on. I cannot tell because I don't know how much trouble they are having with their veins - perhaps pain on walking, or much swelling of the ankles, or perhaps a beginning ulceration on the inner side of the leg just above the ankle. If the veins are not bothering much, and not getting steadily larger and more troublesome, I see no urgency about having an operation. Many a stout woman of 50 has had large veins ever since, after having a child, she had a milk leg. This is due to a phlebitis or inflammation of the lining of a vein, with some plugging-up with a clot of blood. After a while, the clot may get enough holes in it so that the swelling greatly decreases and the person can walk far without pain.

If I had large veins in my legs which were causing me distress or pain or swelling, I would go to a surgeon who has considerable experience in

this field of surgery. He would have particular skill in using tests that would help him decide what should best be done. The common operation done today is called a stripping operation. In this, the diseased veins are separated from the surrounding tissues and pulled out through small holes in the skin. Then the blood goes through the deep veins in the legs. These veins are reinforced and supported by the muscle around them. Experts tell me that they are not at all enthusiastic about trying to plug up the veins by injecting into them some irritating drug that will cause the walls to stick together. Some physicians are afraid of doing harm with this technic.

Emphysema

Many people, and usually men and heavy smokers past middle age, write wanting to know what can be done for their emphysema, which is causing them perhaps to be asthmatic and short of breath. They are often "barrel chested," and the muscles in their neck are contracted, trying to lift the chest wall, up so that as much air as possible will get into the lungs. Sometimes the man has been suspected of having heart disease because he is so short of breath. He may get along fairly well at times, and then perhaps, when he gets a cold, he will be so distressed that each breath will be an effort. Sometimes the man develops an anxious face and a dusky skin - so typical that with his big chest I can recognize his disease when I see him half a block away.

Unfortunately, I cannot outline treatment for him in a column like this because this must vary in different cases. If I had emphysema I would like to be studied and treated for a while by an expert in lung diseases. He might be able to help me a bit. I wouldn't for a minute expect him to cure me, because in emphysema large numbers of the tiny all-essential air-sacs in the lung have ruptured, one into the other, and so the lung is no longer a highly efficient organ for creating the blood. Because the lungs have been seriously damaged, I would not expect anyone to cure me in the sense of giving me a good set of lungs again.

I was reading the other day some statistics that indicated that many a heavy smoker with emphysema could help himself tremendously by throwing away his cigarettes. Heavy smoking usually brings on a chronic bronchitis with a "cigarette cough" and this favors the development of asthma. It is the asthma which causes most of the misery of an emphysematous person. Many men with severe emphysema eventually get so short of breath that they have to give up their work.

Hernia Operations
Some men who have a huge rupture - perhaps one that came after an abdominal operation or that came back after an effort of some surgeon to repair a large rupture in the groin - write to ask me if it is all right for the surgeon to put in a piece of metal screen to re-enforce the tissues. Not being an expert in this field, I can't discuss it in detail. What I know is that metal screens have been used in this way, and hence if I had a hernia and a good surgeon wanted to put in a metal re-enforcement, I would cheerfully take his advice.

Multiple Myeloma
Many people want to know what is multiple myeloma. It is a form of cancer of the bones which often causes a

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Small Worlds Around Us

By Lynn M. Watkins

The Story of A Lazy Little Dog

It was always a source of amazement, later actual concern. The little dog, when taking her frequent naps during the day, assumed the most awkward positions. Often her entire rear section was left hanging off the edge of the pillow, chair or footstool, or whatever she was sleeping on. Her back-section threatened to dislocate itself.

Yet, in spite of it she slept soundly. The most ridiculous position was the suspension of both rear legs, hanging dejectedly, threatening to pull her center of gravity so far back she could fall back to the floor.

Sometimes she assumed the position of a wish-bone; the body sharply curved, the head almost touching her hips and flat on her back; her head turned to one side to keep the body from rolling like a log.

Then To Sleep
She would start to get on a low footstool but stop before her rear legs were on. There she would go to sleep, her back legs partially supporting her. She seemed a creature with two distinct and separate sections, each section at odds with the other.

The family observed there was never a time in which the little dog arranged her rear quarters in what would seem to be a comfortable position.

The family concurred in the idea that the dog certainly lacked coordination, for some unknown reason. She might even be afflicted by a partial paralysis or at least lacked muscular control of the back section of her body. They decided to take the dog to a veterinarian. The complete and thorough examination however, failed to find any organic or other trouble. During the inspection of her person the little dog left one leg hanging dejectedly from one side of the examination table.

'Just Lazy'
"Nothing wrong," said the vet. "Perhaps she is just lazy. Maybe," the doctor mused, "she is conscious of the attention she is receiving, so she is playing it up for all it's worth."

great deal of pain and disability. Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be any really curative treatment for it. If I had it, I would probably rely mainly on a drug like methadone - a synthetic morphine-like drug which might keep my pain under fair control.

Dr. Alvarez' booklet on allergy and asthma may be obtained by sending 25 cents and a large, stamped, self-addressed envelope with your request to Dr. Walter C. Alvarez, Dept. MMT, The Register and Tribune Syndicate, Box 957, Des Moines 4, Iowa. (Released by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1959)

Toastmasters Meet At Jackson Hotel

James Foster was toastmaster for the evening at a meeting of Medford Toastmasters Monday at the Jackson hotel. Speech topics were given each member by the man sitting next to him. Sherman Holt evaluated the topics. Five minute speeches were given by Dr. John T. Weisel, who spoke on "Sun bathers, armories and old age;" Otto Kennasto, "30 pieces of silver"; and Cliff Oulette, "Edison's Invention."

Dr. Jack Welch evaluated Weisel's speech; Dan Hull, Kennasto's; and a guest, Charles Dean, Oulette's.

Dwight Wilson was general evaluator for the evening. Bill Barker also was a guest.

Batzer Bids Low On Warehouse

Batzer Construction company submitted the apparent low bid for construction of a maintenance shop building for the Medford school district. Bids were opened and taken under consideration by the school board Tuesday.

Batzer bid \$72,252 for a masonry construction building to house the district's bus repair shop and warehouse near the Jackson school. Other bids were received from Don Jacobs Construction company, \$73,195; Harold W. Salter, \$74,384; Bessonette Construction company, \$76,558; Stanley G. Parrish, \$78,780; and Wiley company, \$80,300.

The warehouse and shop building is the final structure planned under the two-year building program approved by the voters. The program included two new elementary schools, additions to other schools including the high school, and renovation work in some schools.

William Barker was named chairman of the school board at Tuesday's meeting and Edward Branchfield was selected vice chairman. Frank Bash, former chairman, who was reelected to the board this year, was accepted as a new member.

REPUGNANT TO 'EGGHEAD'
Chicago - (UPI) - Scholastic Magazine said a poll of 5,000 high school students showed that it made one-third of them mad to be called "egghead." Second worst word to call the polled students is "spend-thrift," the magazine said, but that only gets up the dander of 11 per cent.

Half-Size Favorite



by *Marian Martin*

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Armed Services OK's Nomination Of James Stewart

BOWLING CLASSROOM
Chicago - (UPI) - Russian visitors to the American National Exhibition in Moscow this summer will have an opportunity to try out the latest in classroom furniture while they learn about bowling.

The exhibit is being sent to Moscow by the Brunswick-Balke-Collender company, which will supply the furniture as well as a film in which champion bowler Don Carter will explain the fine points of the game.

Washington - (UPI) - The Senate Armed Services Committee has approved the long-delayed nomination of movie star James Stewart to be a brigadier general in the Air Forces Reserve.

Approval came only after the Pentagon changed his mobilization assignment to a desk job.

Chairman Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.) said the committee was unanimous in approving the reserve promotion after it was disclosed that the World War II bomber pilot would be assigned to public relations,

in any mobilization emergency, rather than to the Strategic Air Command's 15th Air Force as chief of staff.

Smooth Sailing
Sen. Margaret Chase Smith (R-Maine), who led the delaying action against the Stewart promotion, was present at the session. The unanimous action indicated smooth sailing when the appointment goes before the Senate next Tuesday.

Stewart's nomination, first sent to the Congress in February, 1957, was approved at a 2 1/2-hour committee session

which dealt almost entirely with reserve promotions. Among the approved promotions was one which would make Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) a brigadier general in the Air Force Reserve.

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