

The Medical Roundup

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Sleeping Pills

When people write to ask me if they should take a sleeping medicine when they need one, I answer, "Yes." If a person has a good sense at all, he will never get a habit, and if he should get to taking several pills a night, he can easily quit taking them.

In all my 57 years of practice, I have seen only a few persons who wound up taking overdoses of barbiturates. And, for every person I have seen taking big doses of barbiturates, there are hundreds who should be taking a sleeping medicine, but are too afraid to take it.

Because of this reluctance to take a sleeping pill many people unwisely wait until one or two o'clock in the morning, and then take either too strong a barbiturate or one with a long action. As a result, when the alarm goes off at seven, the person has a hangover.

When I get back to my hotel after having given an address before a large audience, I am so keyed up that without the help of a sedative I would be unable to sleep until perhaps 2 a.m. I take a sleeping capsule right away—perhaps at 10 o'clock. Then, when I wake at 7, I have no hangover.

If I were to take the favorite barbiturate of most people—phenobarbital—I might feel some dullness in the morning, because this is one of the longest-acting of all the several barbiturates. There are others with much shorter action.

Sometimes, if I take a short-acting drug, and wake fully rested and wide-awake at 3 a.m., then I will have to take either another short-acting drug or a half-dose of the drug I took to get to sleep. Often, at 3 a.m. I must take another capsule if I am to sleep until seven.

Under Heavy Strain
Recently, I saw a very able man who for a long time has been under such heavy business strain that he has lost all power of sleeping, and lies awake nearly all night. His wife said to me, "If he does not soon get some sleep, I fear for his reason." And she was right.

I was impressed, after studying the autobiographies of many persons who had cracked up nervously, (autobiographies which I wrote up in my recently published book, "Minds That Came Back"), by the fact that in several of these cases the mental upset came after six months or more of severe insomnia. If, during this period of sleeplessness, the person could only have gotten his doctor to see the possible danger involved, and if the doctor had been strongly opposed to giving a sleep-maker, or if the doctor had turned the man

over to a psychiatrist who would have put him for a few weeks into a sanatorium where the nurses would have seen to it that he did get his sleep, the fellow would not have "gone over the edge," and would not then have had to spend months in a mental hospital.

Some of my doctor friends brag that they have never given a patient a sleep-maker, and some say that barbiturates are as bad as morphine, but I am sure they are wrong. Rarely in my long life have I seen a bad addiction to barbiturates, and then it was not at all like an addiction to morphine or heroin. When I asked the person to quit taking the barbiturate, he did so easily, but asked, "How am I going to sleep?"

The important thing many of us physicians fail to note is that when we find a person taking half a dozen capsules of some sleeping medicine every night, the person is very often a heavy drinker, or has very little self-discipline; often he is also a chain smoker or a chain coffee drinker and the sort of man who never cares to go to bed until 2 a.m.

Explains Much
If you ask such a person how many martinis he has to take in order to get feeling merry, he may say, "six or seven." This explains much: just as alcohol has lost its effect on him, so have barbiturates and other medicines. To get to sleep he has to take a half-dozen capsules.

In the worst cases of this type, the action of barbiturates is reversed so that they stimulate the brain instead of quieting it. Then the person may have to be hospitalized and given paraldehyde or chloral or possibly one of the antihistamine drugs that make some persons sleepy.

Many drug-resistant people, and especially old people, will go to sleep on a quart or two of beer, or a big glass of port wine.

Over the course of perhaps several years, many middle-aged or elderly persons are pulled down and aged by little dizzy or woozy spells. Each of these "little strokes," as these spells are called, is due to the plugging-up of a small artery in the brain. You may obtain a copy of Dr. Alvarez' booklet on "Little Strokes" by sending 25 cents and a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your request to Dr. Walter C. Alvarez, Dept. MMT, Box 957, Des Moines 4, Iowa.

Animals Also Have Individual Traits
Washington—(UPI)—Individuality is not exclusively a human trait, reports the Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association. One proof: Texas scientists found teetotalers, occasional imbibers and fulltime drunks among chickens offered beer. Also found: gluttons, finicky eaters, athletic types and lazy sottes among rats in similar tests.

Changing of the Guard, Walk In Subway Among Experiences

(Editor's Note: Charles (Chuck) A. Moore, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Moore, 1239 Watson dr., Grants Pass, is in London, England, in connection with the Experiment in International Living and Lewis and Clark college, Portland. This is another in a series of dispatches from Moore while he is in England and Europe.)

By CHARLES A. MOORE
Feb. 17: London—Well, so far England is perfect. It is just as cold as the experiment promised, and the people do

all they can to remind me of that fact. After breakfast the Seldons and I climbed in the little maroon car. Some of the streets are so narrow, cars choose to zoom right down the middle.

We called for Douglas, and then sped into town over the Westminster bridge in full view of the Parliament buildings. Somewhere near Trafalgar Square the car stopped and all got out (back into the cold with wind added this time).

To Committee Meeting
Miss Seldon went to a committee meeting. The rest of us proceeded to walk through Trafalgar Square to St. James Palace to view the changing of the guard.

This ancient and honorable ritual of the protectors of the throne has undergone little change since the days of the ancients. There is one thing that has changed. For instance, in the days of old the guard protected the throne and changed ceremoniously at Buckingham Palace only when the Royalty were in residence. Today the Royalty are half way around the world while their guard changed here at St. James Palace.

The ceremony is interesting and impressive. I hope to see it later in the spring at Buckingham when the guards are not wearing their long, dark coats.

One more note on the guards. Doug has lived in London 15 years but had never before seen the ceremony.

Warmer in Subway
Freezing in the wind, we yielded to the sign, "It's warmer in the subway," and descended. Subways, of course, are for walking. Later we reached the underground (subway for riding). The tube took us to New Gate Station (which is just at the bottom of Jerminham road, and the bottom is no figure of speech. This hill is high).

When evening arrived, I gladly received two warm hotwater bottles (to which I will later become addicted) and two warm goodnights as I ascended the stairs. Feb. 18: Jerminham road, as I discovered yesterday, ascends a fairly steep hill. All houses on the road are of three floor, Victorian style. Those on the lower half are separated with two houses to a building. The upper half contains more housing.

The row houses are identical except for small items such as the color or trimming around doors. Thank World War II for one thing. A bomb dropped in next door and leveled several houses. This caused modern flats, large apartment style buildings, to be built next door to my new house. So, to find my house,

all I have to do is walk up, up until the identical row houses housing is interrupted by flats.

Flight of Stairs
The main entrance is up a short flight of stairs and through a door whose top half is stained glass. We even have stained windows of courtiers in the dining room door. The main entrance is not used due to the rearrangement of the house. We enter into the kitchen on the ground floor. No door knobs are found on most outside doors here. Turn the key, push the door open and you are in.

There are three rooms and a hall on the first floor. According to their present uses they are kitchen, breakfast room, and dining room. The hall parallels the stairs. My bedroom on the second floor is immense. It was originally the drawing room. From the third floor we have a terrific view of London.

Normally the Seldons heat two rooms, dining and breakfast rooms. Kitchen and bath receive some heat consideration. I have been told that the average room is 60 degrees. As a result, it is not uncommon to find whole families huddled about the fireplace.

Front Yard Landscaped
The front garden yard, is very small but well landscaped with shrubs and flowers. The back garden plot, 20 feet by 90 feet, is in lawn with flower beds bordering on three sides. Right now the entire garden is covered with snow.

About the Seldons: They are middle-aged, but young in outlook. They are being sweet to me and trying to make me feel at home. One of Miss Seldon's best traits is that she evidently hates tins but likes to cook. Did someone say the English food is bad? It is great. You'll hear no complaints from me.

Mr. Seldon, her brother, comes home about 5:30 from his work at the office of Delta Motel. We have our evening meal at that time. After the meal comes the ritual of washing up. Three is the magic number for this endeavor. One washes up, two dries, and three puts away.

ENROLLMENT UP
Monmouth—(UPI)—Spring enrollment at Oregon College of Education totaled 1,224. Registrar Jack D. Morton announced today. The figure is a 12.2 per cent increase over spring term a year ago.

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New Tube Tester Has Built-in Conscience

Louisville, Ky. — (UPI) — A \$400,000 tube tester built here for a Connecticut electronics plant has a built-in conscience. When the unit, built by Votator division of Chemtron corporation, short-circuits its 30,000-volt power supply to avoid damaging costly high-frequency tubes being tested, a special device prevents power surges from bothering the neighbors' electricity by clearing the fault quicked than an eye-blink.

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Your Money's Worth

By SYLVIA PORTER
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NEW \$1 BILL
The \$1 bill in your pocket will be redesigned in its first major overhaul in more than a quarter-century if this Congress passes legislation to cut the link between silver and our paper currency—and insiders believe the prospects for the law are bright since the House Banking Committee voted 18 to 1 for the move early this month.

Only twice in this century have there been significant changes in our currency: in 1929, when the size of our paper currency was reduced and in 1935 when the \$1 bill was redesigned to carry the eye-topped pyramid on the reverse side of the Great Seal along with Latin inscriptions from Virgil's Aeneid. (The addition of "In God We Trust" to the \$1 bill in 1957 was a minor thing.)

Now would come the third important change—a switch from \$1 silver certificates to gold-backed Federal Reserve notes. Here's the story and the background for it.

First, take out a \$1 bill from your pocket, look at the inscription "silver certificate" at the top, the words "one dollar in silver payable to the bearer on demand" at the bottom. These words mean you can redeem your bill at the Treasury for silver and today over \$1.5 billion of our outstanding \$1 bills are silver certificates.

Under the proposed law, these notations would be struck from all \$1 bills and other "distinguishing features" to identify the new notes would be added. The portrait of George Washington would not be changed nor would the size, shape or color of the \$1 bill. But there would be a new design—the Treasury has prepared four hand-tooled models to give Treasury Secretary Dillon a choice—and over the next 10 years, all the \$1 bills now in circulation would be retired and replaced with the new Federal Reserve notes.

Why this switch? The answer is that the Treasury's supply of silver has been shrinking at a fast rate, as it has needed increasing amounts of the metal to make coins—dimes, quarters, half-dollars—and an acute shortage of silver is on the horizon. The Treasury has on hand today less than \$1.6 billion of silver to back the \$1.5 billion of \$1 bill silver certificates in circulation—enough for now but not for later.

At the same time, the market price of silver has been soaring, has gone above \$1.27 an ounce under pressure of mounting demands. If the silver price rose above the established monetary price of \$1.29 an ounce—less than 2 cents over the current market price—it actually might become profitable to melt down coins for their silver content.

"We simply cannot allow such a situation to develop," Dillon warned the House Banking Committee before it voted to permit the Treasury to switch from silver certificates to Federal Reserve notes. "Obviously the public must have an adequate supply of dollar bills which is not subject to being constantly diminished as bills are turned in for their silver value. And it must have a supply of subsidiary coins which are not apt constantly to be melted down for their silver value."

Already, coins are in seriously short supply in several areas, according to a recent survey for the Treasury by Boston's Arthur D. Little Co. The shortage at Christmas shopping time was widespread and it is re-occurring because businessmen are hoarding coins to protect themselves against shortage, suburban shopping centers are slowing down the rapid circulation of coins, vending machines tie up large quantities for long periods, coin collectors these days are collecting rolls, not just individual coins.

To cover these shortages, the mint must hike production from 3.5 billion coins last year to 4.1 billion this year and eventually to 9.6 billion by 1980, according to the A.D. Little survey. And to get the silver for the dimes, quarters, half-dollars, says Dillon, it is "vital" that the mint be able to use the metal now required to back the silver certificates. This silver would supply the mint's needs for about 15 years.

The odds are excellent that the legislation will go through—and that means a newly-designed, gold-backed \$1 bill in your pocket.

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