

torum, which was brought by Mr. Dodd from Argentine in March, 1925.

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COMMONWEALTH COUNCIL FOR
SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH,
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REPORTS

THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC¹

WHEN influenza is prevalent or is believed to be approaching a community during the course of an epidemic it is advisable to take advantage of the public interest and concern, and by emphasizing anew those public precautions and practices of personal hygiene upon which the prevention of communicable affections of the upper respiratory tract depend.

Measures for precaution fall naturally under those of a communal or administrative character and those which apply to the individual.

- 1—Efforts should be made to reduce the opportunities of direct-contact infection by avoiding crowds.
- 2—Schools or colleges should not be closed wherever adequate medical and nursing supervision is available, and provision is made for the prompt exclusion of all persons showing suspicious catarrhal symptoms, especially when these are associated with a rise in temperature.
- 3—The reopening of boarding schools and colleges after vacations should not be encouraged in the presence of epidemic influenza unless there are generous accommodations for the bed care of those who may be attacked.
- 4—While the general closing of places of public assemblage is to be deprecated, there may be local conditions justifying such action at the discretion of the local health authorities.
- 5—In groups which can be brought under daily professional inspection the isolation of early and suspicious cases of acute respiratory tract infection, particularly when these are accompanied by rise in temperature, may result in delaying the spread of the disease.
- 6—In isolated communities and in institutions infection may be delayed and sometimes be avoided by the strict exclusion of visitors.
- 7—The person and sickroom of infected individuals must be considered a definite focus of infection, and visits to such persons or premises should be avoided by all persons except the necessary medical and other attendants.

When influenza prevails or threatens, information on the subject of cleanly personal habits and personal hygiene should be spread widely, particularly with regard to the following points:

- 1—Avoidance of all uncovered acts as coughing, loud talking, sneezing or spitting.

¹ Report of the Committee on Preventative Measures of the Public Health Service.

- 2—Special emphasis upon the need of washing the hands frequently, more especially before eating; unclean articles and fingers should be kept out of the mouth and nose. This advice is particularly applicable to all persons in attendance upon the sick.

- 3—Avoidance of exposure, fatigue and any bodily excess.

- 4—Persons in good health should continue in their normal manner of life.

It would seem advisable that in the presence of influenza or upper respiratory infections individuals should make more than the ordinary effort to increase well-being. This may be obtained by:

- 1—Securing adequate sleep and rest (eight to ten hours' sleep every night with windows open, but under enough covering to keep warm).
- 2—Eating a moderate, mixed diet and partaking freely, at regular periods, of pure water (six or eight glasses daily).
- 3—Wearing clothing to suit the environment, particularly clothing which prevents chilling of the body surfaces and which keeps the body dry.
- 4—Avoiding people with colds, especially those who are sneezing or coughing. There is more danger from contact with those just beginning to feel sick than from those ill enough to be confined in bed.
- 5—Keeping out of crowds as far as possible, especially crowds in closed places.
- 6—Avoiding the use of common towels, wash basins, glasses, eating utensils and toilet articles.
- 7—Washing the hands thoroughly before eating.
- 8—Avoiding the use of so-called preventatives. Vaccines, sera and advertised preventatives seem to be of no value and may be harmful in this disease.
- 9—Avoiding alcohol and stimulants of all sorts.

TO PREVENT SERIOUS ILLNESS

- 1—If you have a cold, feel bad, or are feverish, go to bed at once, cover up warmly and have the windows open; send for a physician and follow his instructions.
- 2—Do not take any so-called cures. There is no specific cure for this disease.
- 3—If you can not get a doctor, remain in bed, eat a simple diet, take plenty of fluids, such as water, fruit juices, milk bouillon, hot soups, at frequent intervals. Use a mild cathartic, if constipated.
- 4—Remember the most important measure of preventing pneumonia or other serious complication is to remain in bed until all symptoms have disappeared, and then, under the physician's advice, to return very gradually to your usual activities, being sure to rest before you get tired.

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