

Recent Advances in the Control of the Common Cold

By HOWARD W. LUNDY, Dr. P. H.

Department of Bacteriology and Public Health, State College of Washington

Due principally to the work of Dr. A. R. Dochez and his associates at Columbia University it is now generally accepted that the majority of common colds are initiated by a filterable virus. The virus produces an inflammation for several days and as a result of its action certain bacteria that are normally present in the nose and throat are stimulated so that they are able to cause disease.

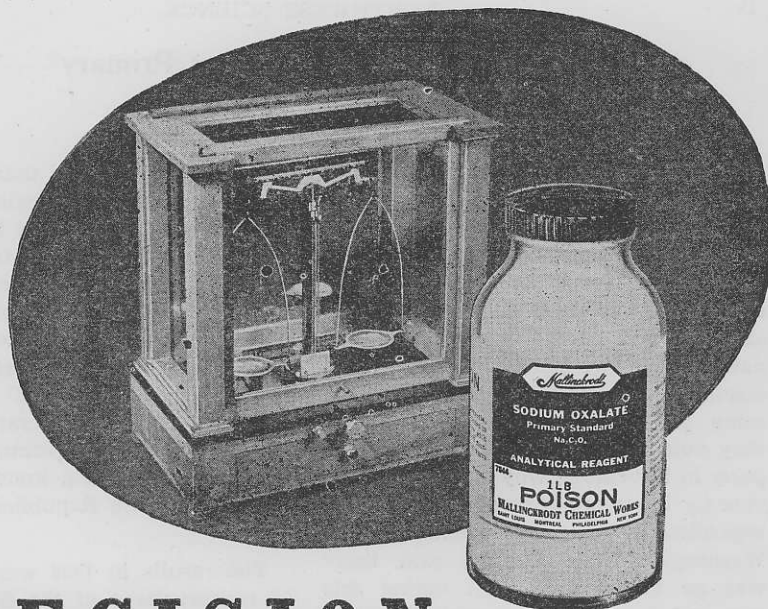
Most of the symptoms of the common cold and all of the complications are caused by these stimulated bacteria but it is the filterable virus which really starts the infection and it is the virus that is most communicable from one person to another. It is believed that most colds are spread from one person to another through coughing, sneezing, kissing and other such close contacts. The most important single procedure in both the treatment of the cold and the prevention of the spread of the disease is for the patient to go to bed as soon as the symptoms appear and to stay there for two days. By doing this he will shorten the disease, avoid complications and will not spread the infection to anyone else.

In an epidemiological survey conducted among school children in Boston the writer found that only 17% of the students who were absent due to a cold recognized that they had had a "contact" as described above. This means that, in most cases, we do not realize when we are being exposed and must depend on those who have the disease not to give it to us.

The importance of droplet infection in the spread of the disease was borne out by results which showed that those children who had colds reported twice as many "contacts" as did those who did not have colds. However, unusual fatigue and prolonged chilling seemed to play a part in producing colds. This study confirmed others in finding that cold vaccines, vitamins and the diet appeared to have no demonstrable effect in preventing colds.

It has been inferred in the literature that certain inclusion bodies occurring in the epithelial cells of the human throat were related to the virus of the common cold. As the result of a two-year study of these bodies in the throats of normal individuals and of those having colds it was concluded by the writer that these inclusion bodies were non-specific and were unrelated to the virus of the common cold. The same conclusions were drawn concerning certain lesions occurring upon the chorio-allantoic membrane of the chick embryo as it was found that these same lesions could be produced artificially as well as when the virus of the common cold was inoculated.

The most promising line of work at the present time seems to be that being carried on by Dr. Dochez. This is the production of a vaccine by growing the virus on chick embryos with the hope of immunizing people against colds just as we now vaccinate against smallpox. Probably more than one strain of the virus will be used in preparing the vaccine.



PRECISION ... in the LABORATORY

Accurately measuring laboratory apparatus is of little value in analytical procedure unless the chemicals employed are free from impurities giving rise to erroneous results. Mallinckrodt Analytical Reagents—each scrupulously refined to meet predetermined standards of purity—are especially designed to facilitate analytical precision. Chemists can depend upon Mallinckrodt A. R. Chemicals because they conform to A. C. S. specifications.

Send for new catalogue of analytical reagents and other chemicals for laboratory use. It contains descriptions of chemicals suitable for every type of analytical work . . . gravimetric, gasometric, colorimetric or titrimetric.



St. Louis

•

Chicago

•

Philadelphia

•

New York

Distributed by

C. M. FASSETT CO., INC.
19-21-23 W. Main Ave.
Spokane, Wash.

SHAW SURGICAL CO.
520 SW 11th Ave., Portland, Oregon

**MALLINCKRODT
CHEMICAL WORKS**