

## **Gonorrhoea - a growing problem -**

The early promise of the immediate postwar period that penicillin was the ideal drug to control gonorrhoea has not been fulfilled. After fifteen years this venereal infection is still widespread, uncontrolled and one of the challenging health problems of the world.

The latest issue of the Bulletin of the World Health Organization<sup>\*</sup> reveals that gonorrhoea not only has held its own, but in some countries has even increased. This failure should be recognized and calls for alertness by health administrations, the Bulletin states.

### **"Teenage Problem :**

The disease is occurring more often than formerly in the 15-19 age group and has become a part of the "teenager" problem in Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States, according to the Bulletin.

Gonorrhoea remains a dangerous disease of women. In spite of the general belief that penicillin treatment has greatly reduced complications, they still occur in ten per cent of cases and two to three per cent of women become sterile. Moreover, there are large reservoirs of undiagnosed infection in women, difficult to deal with because symptoms often are lacking.

### **Difficult to trace :**

The complacency of the public is given as one of the reasons for the present situation. The introduction of the "ideal" drug, penicillin, fostered indifference and carelessness. Consequently many patients are now repeaters. Other important contributory factors are the highly infectious character of the disease and the particularly short incubation period which makes it difficult to trace contracts.

The problem is still more difficult since it is now necessary to use from four to six times as much penicillin to cure gonorrhoea as ten years ago. The possibility that the gonococcus is developing resistance is very real, the Bulletin states, and careful studies are needed to elucidate this matter. As yet there is no internationally agreed methodology for determining the penicillin sensitivity of the gonococcus and the different methods in use have only recently begun to be studied, under the auspices of WHO.

### **Many undetected cases :**

The Bulletin points out that in spite of the increase in gonorrhoea in 15 out of 22 countries studied by WHO, it is certain that the disease is even more common than official statistics indicate. A recent survey in Britain suggested that the true incidence might be at least 15% higher if all cases were reported. In the United States, special surveys have shown that there are probably five to ten times as many

---

<sup>\*</sup> Bulletin of the World Health Organization, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1961.

cases as are reported officially in that country. Even so, statistics place gonorrhoea third and syphilis the fourth most frequent infection among communicable diseases reported in 1959. Only measles, scarlet fever and streptococcal sore throat were higher.

### New approaches to control :

Recent laboratory research has resulted in the identification of biochemical fractions of the gonococcus which have made it possible to develop improved diagnostic procedures (fluorescent antibody techniques). This research may open the way to the production of an immunizing agent. Unless this happens, some investigators think that effective control of gonorrhoea cannot be achieved, especially in some of the large ports of the world where extensive reservoirs of the gonococcus remain.

---

# CORTO-QUINOL

IDOCHLOROXYQUINOLINE 4%

HYDROCORTISONE 1%

anti-inflammatory  
anti-pruritic  
anti-bacterial  
anti-fungal  
anti-allergic



EAST INDIA  
PHARMACEUTICAL  
WORKS LTD., CAL-26.

