

Abstracts

Report of an Epidemic caused by A.P.C. Virus

BY E. BRECKOFF

Dtsch. med. Wschr., 1956, **81**, 1149-1151

This paper describes an epidemic occurring in a German village during the second half of August and September, 1955. Two hundred and forty-one cases were seen by the paediatrician who describes the epidemic but no doubt many more were not referred to him.

Age incidence:—	0 to 2 years, 9%
	3 to 5 years, 20%
	6 to 8 years, 30%
	9 to 11 years, 26%
	10 to 14 years, 18%
	14 to 18 years, 2%

Dr. Breckoff describes a characteristic case as follows:—

Case history. Child aged 12, complained of vomiting, mild pains in the limbs, headache and difficulty in swallowing. The onset was sudden and the temperature was 103°. After a few days the cervical glands became swollen, tender and discrete. The nasal mucosa was swollen but there was no catarrh. The tongue showed central furring which disappeared after a few days and behaved as in scarlatina. The throat was red, the uvula cedematous, there were petechiae of the soft palate, the tonsils were swollen and covered with a dirty grey exudate, as was the pharynx. The changes in the eyes were particularly striking. There was photophobia, the conjunctival vessels were injected and serpiginous, and the surface of the tarsal conjunctiva was roughened and covered with a pseudomembrane. The throat swab was negative. There was no cough, no bronchitis, the spleen and liver were not enlarged. The temperature lasted about seven days and remained constant at 103°. On the eighth day it settled. There was a mild relapse about a fortnight later. The child was not completely well even after eight weeks.

In the other cases symptoms were more or less similar. The incubation period seemed to be one to two days.

Symptomatology. Temperature 102° to 103° lasting one to nine days, average four to five days; fall by lysis. Headache, sometimes pains in limbs; difficulty in swallowing, sometimes diarrhoea and sickness in small children. Some had neck stiffness perhaps due to tender deep cervical glands. The throat was always red and there was sometimes some exudate and petechiae of the soft palate and always injection of the vessels of the mucous membrane of the throat. The tonsils were affected in about half the cases and were often covered with exudate. The cervical glands were always discretely enlarged and tender. The tongue was always furred centrally. Most children found it difficult to breathe through the nose owing to swelling of the nasal mucosa. Occasionally there was epistaxis. The eye changes were constant, starting at the lateral end of the lower lid: one-fifth of the cases

had a conjunctival discharge and all had roughening of the tarsal conjunctiva. Earache was common and the vessels of the ear drums were often congested: diminution of hearing persisted in some cases into the convalescent stage. The liver and spleen were never enlarged.

In ten cases blood-counts were done and these showed W.B.C.'s. 4 to 8,000, polymorphs 60 per cent., lymphocytes 30 per cent.

Sera from a few cases were sent to America and found to give a positive reaction to A.P.C. virus.

Treatment was symptomatic, sulphonamides and penicillin did not help. Relapses were very common. Convalescence was prolonged. There were no deaths.

Diagnosis in General Practice

BY N. R. BRAUN

Dtsch. med. Wschr., 1956, **81**, 1236-1238

Dr. Braun describes the first day of a newly qualified practitioner doing his first locum in general practice. He emphasises the difficulties confronting this unfortunate young man trying to apply his hospital training to a surgery full of patients complaining of a large assortment of ailments. He deplores the lack of any specific training for general practice in the Austrian teaching hospitals and describes the system of trainee assistantships in this country, suggesting that it should be adopted in Austria to break in the young general practitioner more gently.

He gives much sound advice to the young practitioner entering practice such as is to be found in most books of general practice.

Epidemic Vomiting

BY ERNST WIESNER

Wien. klin. Wschr., 1956, **68**, 393-397

This article reviews the literature on epidemic vomiting and gives details of an epidemic involving 20 children and 3 adults. It lasted for about four weeks and did not differ significantly from epidemic described in this country. The author suggests that it may be due to a neurotropic (not an enterotropic) virus. The incubation period seemed to be one to two days. Stools were negative for Coxsackie virus.