

Vitamin Wise

By **H. R. Hoskins**
DIET CONQUERS PELLAGRA

The discovery of the new world by Columbus was destined to return together with its many rich rewards, another new food, corn, which the Indians introduced to the white explorers. The inhabitants of Europe readily adopted corn as an important dietary item; it was a tasty food that was cheap and easily cultivated.

About 100 years after the journey of Columbus, Europe became alarmed because a new and mysterious disease had appeared on the Continent. This disease became known as pellagra. People who suffered from pellagra exhibited inflammatory skin rashes and ugly sores as well as paralysis. The wave of

incidence of this new malady swept through Spain first and then it spread to Italy and Northern Europe.

Since the early new world explorers originated from Spain, it was suspected that the occurrence of pellagra might be associated with the discovery of the new world and the new food item, corn. Investigators announced that pellagra was definitely due to the ingestion of corn. Many of these researchers held the opinion that the causative factor was a contaminant or impurity which they stated was almost always present in corn.

Confined to Poorer Classes
Whereas, the introduction of the potato in Europe proved a boon in that it brought about a reduction of scurvy, introduction of corn proved a bane in that it was credited with having brought a new and baffling scourge to the European continent.

Because of its low cost, corn was adopted as a standard dietary food for the vast Negro population of America's Southern States. Again following the adoption of the corn diet, pellagra appeared as such a menace in the United States that the United States Public Health Service in 1910 commissioned Dr. Joseph P. Goldberger to investigate the cause of the disease and if possible, to find a cure for it.

During his early study, this investigator observed that pellagra occurred almost entirely among the poorer classes. A thorough investigation disclosed that the disease did not even prevail among the middle class and it was seldom if ever found in the upper classes.

Diet Change Brings Results
These observations led him to suspect that the disease might be related to the diets of the poor people who so universally succumbed to the malady. He instituted his early research in a Mississippi psychopathic insti-

But officials of the institution were not in accord with the theory that pellagra could possibly be caused by a faulty diet.

In their opinion, such reasoning was unsound because they ate the same food as the inmates but they themselves were not afflicted. Goldberger noticed that the heads of the institution received their food trays first and that they invariably selected the choice meat cuts and drank milk with their meals. These were only the dietary differences and if pellagra is associated with diet, its solution must reside in these minor differences

Stream, Not Spray, Best for Bombs, OCD Head States

The next visited an orphanage in Mississippi where an extremely large number of the children were ill with the disease. By changing the diets of these orphans from chiefly corn to one which consisted of milk and eggs in liberal amounts, he succeeded in entirely eradicating pellagra from this institution. To further substantiate his theory that the disease was wholly related to diet, he produced pellagra in voluntary convict subjects by feeding diets of corn, pork, and molasses.

New Food Introduced
More than 50 per cent of the volunteers developed pellagra at the end of six months. Through added research he proved that corn was not directly the causative factor, because he demonstrated that diets could contain corn and not induce the disease provided sufficient amounts of the essential protective foods were also included.

Having succeeded in preventing, inducing and curing the disease, Goldberger returned to the North. Still absorbed in further study, he learned that dogs suffer from a similar malady known as black tongue. This condition, according to the reports could be easily induced in dogs by the feeding of vegetables and no meat. During his investigation in the South, he had also learned that pellagra could be produced in humans by restricting them to vegetable diets.

He was now confident that if black tongue in dogs was the same as pellagra in humans, his diet which had produced pellagra in the convict volunteers should also produce black tongue. The pellagra producing feedings were prepared and fed to the dogs with the expectation the animals would become sick with black tongue. The food though had been modified in one respect, yeast had been added as a health adjunct.

Another Disease Conquered
Yeast had been recognized as a healthful food substance and if the dogs' resistance could be overcome on such a feeding, his theory would be even more dramatically clinched. Much to his amazement, the animals thrived on their diet and did not develop black tongue.

Since the yeast addition must be the protective factor in the diet which guarded against black tongue, Goldberger now suspected that perhaps yeast might also be of therapeutic value for the human in the prevention and cure of pellagra. He returned to the South and succeeded in saving dying pellagra patients by feeding them two ounces of yeast daily. Yeast then became recognized as those mysterious food substances which was endowed with some factor that prevented and cured another one of the heretofore baffling diseases, pellagra.

Even though it was established as early as 1915 that the recommended food regimen of Goldberger could and would eradicate pellagra, 1927 was one of the worst pellagra years in the history of our nation.

Cannot Afford Protection
In that year more deaths were recorded as due to the ravages of pellagra than at any time since the disease had raged uncontrolled prior to and in the early years of Goldberger's research. It is regretted that Goldberger's work and the maximum potentiality of its benefits to our people has been so greatly nullified because of the low economic standards existent in the pellagra areas.

Milk and eggs in liberal

Deciding that the fire caused by an incendiary bomb is more dangerous than splattering of hot metal, the Office of Civilian Defense advises extinguishing the flames with a steady stream of water rather than a spray.

Tests, he added, showed that the scattering fire started by a magnesium and the nitro bomb did more damage with the spray system than the hot metal which erupted from a stream of water.

The department of commerce reports that New Zealand claims to have the lowest infant mortality rate in the world.

amounts prevents pellagra but the disease still rages almost unchecked because the masses just cannot afford these protective foods. Cheap vegetable diets do not give protection. Our government is well aware of the pellagra problem and is attempting to curb the menace by distributing free yeast as a prophylaxis and curative agent.

(NEXT WEEK: How proper food—and that means vitamins—conquers rickets, the scourge of childhood, is graphically told by H. R. Hoskins next week in continuation of his interesting series of articles on "Vitamin Wise.")



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Fictitious Firm Name
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VIRGIL H. ROGERS
State of California (ss)

County of Los Angeles)
ON THIS 29th day of July A. D., 1942, before me, the undersigned, a Notary Public in and for said County and State, residing therein duly commissioned and sworn, personally appeared Lester T. King and Virgil H. Rogers, known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the within Instrument, and acknowledged to me that they executed the same.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and year in this certificate first above written.

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