

Problems Often Caused By Hepatitis

In spite of all precautions, infectious hepatitis is a public health problem of worldwide concern, Dr. K. H. Sutherland, county health officer, reported to the Board of Supervisors.

Dr. Sutherland was requested to report on steps being taken to control hepatitis in Los Angeles County on a motion by the board.

The report pointed out that there were 1,195 cases of infectious hepatitis in the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Health Department, which includes all of Los Angeles County except the City of Los Angeles, Long Beach and Pasadena, during the first 10 months of 1961.

Hepatitis is a particularly difficult disease to control for several reasons, Dr. Sutherland indicated.

A person may be a "carrier" of the disease, but have no illness or other symptoms and there is no specific laboratory test that can determine if a person has this kind of infection.

Thus it is possible for an apparently healthy individual to infect others with hepatitis.

NO VACCINE

Also, it has not yet been possible to develop an effective vaccine or immunizing agent against hepatitis.

Gamma globulin, which is available in very limited supply, will give passive resistance against the disease for a period of three to eight weeks after exposure. It is not practical for use on a mass scale.

Control measures being taken against hepatitis by the health department include:

1. Investigation of cases to determine the source.
2. Immunization of persons who have been in close contact with patients with gamma globulin.
3. Protection of drinking water supplies.
4. Prevention of food contamination. Training classes are conducted for foodhandlers and inspection of restaurants and cafes.
5. Special handling of infectious hepatitis cases in hospitals.
6. Use of disposable needles and syringes. The County Health Department uses disposable needles and syringes and Dr. Sutherland

recommends that they be used universally in Los Angeles County in all cases involving hepatitis.

Dr. Sutherland stated that hepatitis can be transmitted by tattooing needles and there is no way to effectively sterilize the needles.

He pointed out that there are no known tattoo parlors within the jurisdiction of the health department and he recommended that none be licensed to operate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Other recommendations in the report include:

1. Continued emphasis on investigation of reported cases and immunization of intimate contacts with gamma globulin.
2. Vigilance to protect drinking water supplies.
3. Continuation and expansion of "food handler classes" programs designed to instruct foodhandlers in the importance of personal hygiene and proper food-handling techniques.
4. Employment of a public health physician whose prime responsibility would be to work with professional staffs of hospitals in maintaining effective measures

'Responsibility' Theme of ECC's County Program

"We Have Responsibilities" was the theme for El Camino College Bill of Rights Week commemorative program at the County Board of Supervisors Hearing Room, room 381, Hall of Administration, this morning.

The special program featured a series of dramatic excerpts and patriotic songs commemorating the 170th Anniversary of the adoption of the Bill of Rights and the 15th annual local observance of Bill of Rights Week, December 9-15. A different high school or college in the county is chosen each year to write, prepare and present the ceremony.

Board of Supervisors Chairman Ernest E. Debs read a special resolution commending the 80 students and teachers of El Camino College for their participa-

tion in the observance.

The young men and women of El Camino College were introduced by Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, within whose Second District the school is located.

Dr. C. C. Trillingham, County Superintendent of Schools delivered closing remarks after the presentation. Also present was

Joe Crail, chairman of the Los Angeles Bill of Rights Commemoration Committee.

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