

Health officials say venereal disease is serious

AS 1876
Both houses of the legislature this week passed a bill appropriate \$40,000 to complete Agricultural and Mechanical College at Bryan. Debate in the Senate was extensive. One of the influential arguments for passage was the necessity of refunding \$100,000 to the federal government. The total sum of \$40,000 was not appropriated.

The condition between Eagle Pass is criticized by Captain McNelly, arrived here Monday with charges he arrested in Atascosa. More than a hundred outlaws from different sections have in it and hold the reins of power. The law is trampled upon and officers are powerless. The judge of Maverick does not sleep in his own house. King's band take property from him in daylight, and they dare assist or attempt to recover it.

LANCHE COUNTY — A change is going actively on. Mr. Green, formerly of Waco, has a car which averages 350 miles per day.

CHRISTI — Since the first of January there have been 10 bags of wool shipped from Christi, weighing 1,494,063 lbs. Wool dealers in town say amount of wool on hand and un-dressed totals 519,577 pounds. Receipts total 2,013,640 lbs. It is estimated that not more than two thirds of the spring has been received here.

COMAL COUNTY — There was a general prejudice and a very general fear that the death penalty be imposed on a man named Ferrel who was found guilty of murder in the first degree and sentenced to the penitentiary for 25 years. Had he been Scroggins, whom he no doubt would have killed, nobody would have hesitated to kill, but his killing a child caused the most intense indignation.

VESTON — Among the good things of these Centennial times are — that no barber shop charges more than 15 cents for a haircut, and beer has gone down to 25 cents per glass.

SAN ANTONIO — The latest thing is a twenty-cent coin. The size is such that a two-bit piece that can barely detect the difference. We can't understand why we were gotten up. Certainly not to facilitate in making change, for we are dimes and half-dimes for the purpose. The issuance of this coin will be annoying to all users in particular.

SAN ANTONIO — Calico is extremely cheap in San Antonio, 25 cents to the dollar, and merchants in place of brown paper for wrapping purposes.

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Many people think having gonorrhea is about as serious as having a cold. They know all they need to cure "the clap," as gonorrhea is commonly called, is a shot of antibiotics from their private physician or local health clinic.

But recent research has shown that gonorrhea is a very dangerous disease. Texas Department of Health Resources (TDHR) officials say.

Women, in particular, can contract and spread this sexually transmitted disease without even knowing it. 80% of gonorrhea-infected females do not experience early symptoms; there usually are no outward signs until the disease has caused serious complications. Recent studies have shown that many males infected with gonorrhea also may be symptomless.

Gonorrhea is still on the rise in Texas. According to statistics released by the Department of Health Resources, November, 1975, the disease showed the largest number of cases ever reported in a single month. A total of 76,486 gonorrhea cases were reported in Texas in 1975 — an 8% increase over the previous year.

These figures may be only a small part of the picture. TDHR officials estimate that as few as one case in every five is reported.

Gonorrhea is a bacterial infection that initially attacks the sex organs, rectum, eyes and, sometimes, throat. The mucous membranes of these organs are ideal for proliferation of this type of bacteria. Gonorrhea is transmitted by sexual or close body contact.

In females who have no early symptoms and go untreated, gonorrhea may spread through the reproductive tract causing "pelvic inflammatory disease" (PID). PID may cause Fallopian tube scarring that can make pregnancy difficult or impossible and increases the chance of miscarriage.

PID appears to be increasing significantly in metropolitan communities. TDHR officials estimate

that 17,000 hospital admissions in Texas in 1974 were attributable to PID. They suspect that about 400 girls in Texas are absent from school every day because of this painful, late complication of gonorrhea.

In males the symptoms are usually a yellowish discharge from the penis from three to five days after exposure to the disease.

In addition to sterility, gonorrhea can cause heart disease, crippling arthritis, and blindness.

Because gonorrhea is difficult to detect in women, TDHR officials are encouraging physicians to screen their female patients for the disease — especially those between the ages of 15 and 29. The test is quick, reliable, and no more complicated than a routine Pap smear. Young, at-risk women can request the test from their doctor or at a local health department VD clinic, family planning clinic or "free clinic." The majority of female gonorrhea cases in Texas last year were found via this screening procedure.

It is important to establish that the gonorrhea patient has been cured following treatment. Studies indicate that 15-20% of patients re-screened four to six weeks after treatment are re-infected with the disease.

The only way to confirm cure is to repeat the initial diagnostic test until two successive negative cultures have been obtained. Sites for post-treatment follow-up culturing should include the cervix and rectum in women, urethra in heterosexual men, and urethra and rectum in homosexual and bisexual men.

TDHR officials stress the importance of post-treatment follow-up tests and the need to refer sex partners for medical examination.

Another major venereal disease, syphilis, is also increasing in Texas. According to Department of Health Resources statistics, there were 1,579 cases of infectious syphilis reported in 1975 — a 12% increase over the previous year.

This increase in infectious syphilis, the first in 5 years, is probably due to changes in the VD control program, TDHR officials say. They cite a better working relationship with the homosexual communities as a significant factor. 39% of the


syphilis-infected males in Texas last year named at least one same-sex contact.

Symptoms of syphilis may include a painless sore on the sex organs, rectum, or mouth about 10-90 days after sexual or close body contact with an infected person. A rash, sore throat, headache, slight fever, or falling hair may appear three to six months after the initial sore.

But syphilis, like gonorrhea, is dangerously deceptive. Symptoms may go unnoticed and will disappear without treatment, but the disease-producing organisms remain in the body and may cause lasting damage. Untreated syphilis can cause insanity, paralysis, blindness, deafness, heart defects, and death.

For the prevention of venereal diseases, the condom or "rubber" is the most reliable if used correctly. Other methods include vaginal foams, thorough cleansing of male and female genital areas, and urination after intercourse.

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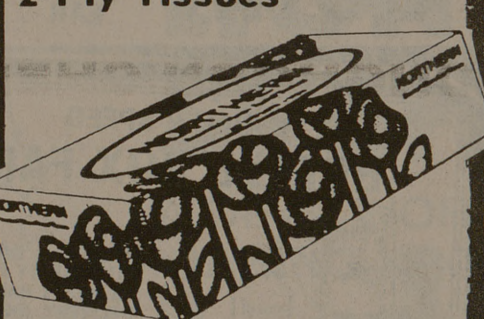


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