

Local

Rest and fluids are only prescriptions for mono

By CATHERINE J. THOMAS
Battalion Reporter

So you have a sore throat, fatigue, swollen lymph nodes, a fever and a rash and you feel all-around lousy?

Well, you'd better see a doctor, because those are the symptoms of infectious mononucleosis — mono.

Contrary to its nickname, the kissing disease, infectious mononucleosis is spread more easily and in more ways than if it were only a kissing disease.

A.P. Beutel Health Center's Dr. C.B. Goswick said that mono is a tonsillitis that is simply spread by contact with carriers, usually roommates.

But, he said, "Just casual exposure isn't probably going to give it to you."

Mono is contagious, but not everyone who is exposed to it will develop the symptoms.

"Someone can feel bad and not be contagious, or vice versa," he said. "That's what keeps it going around."

There's nothing that can prevent it, he said. "They (mono patients) usually get over here (the health center) sooner or later" for treatment, he said.

Goswick said even though mono is "a little more prevalent in the winter," there is usually

someone in the health center every day being treated for mononucleosis.

If infectious mononucleosis is diagnosed by a physical examination and a blood test, Goswick said all the doctors can do is recommend physical rest and fluids.

"Medication is of no real value," he said. "Usually they're sick enough at the beginning," Goswick said, to be in the acute stage, which usually lasts five days to a week.

They have "terrible-looking tonsils," and generally feel bad, he said.

During this time Goswick advises patients to get plenty of rest and not to go to class, where their coughing will spread germs.

After the acute stage, Goswick said the patient will usually feel better in the next stage — the convalescent stage — but still must take things easy for a month to six weeks.

He said the patient is less contagious during this period, although there is no "shut-off time."

Goswick said during convalescence the patient is followed up with bloodwork or white blood counts, until they come out negative.

So if you have had mono, or if you get it in the future, there's one good thing that will come of it. Goswick said people who have had mono develop a relative immunity to the disease.

Color blindness 16 times more prevalent in males

By RUTH GRAVES
Battalion Reporter

Each of us perceives colors differently. And, what's more, our differences in perceptions of color may go unnoticed since we learn to associate color names with the things we see.

However, some people, especially males, have color perception problems that are evident because they refer to colors by the wrong names.

About 8 percent of males and 0.5 percent of females have some type of "incomplete color blindness," Dr. Barry Glenn, a Bryan ophthalmologist, said.

Although color perception problems are typically termed "color blindness," few people are actually totally blind to color, he said. "Color weakness" more accurately reflects the problem.

Total color blindness would cause a person to see everything in tones of gray, just like black and white movies.

Although some color weaknesses can be caused by certain illnesses or drugs, the main culprit is heredity, Glenn said.

Color weaknesses are carried by XY chromosomes and are recessive. In other words, the usual pattern of heredity is from father to daughter to son. There is a high

incidence of color weakness in males, so the trait usually bypasses females in the link.

The colors that most people have difficulty seeing accurately are red, green and blue, Glenn said. Weaknesses in identifying colors are usually caught in eye examinations where people are asked to identify a colored number that is surrounded by a different-colored field.

Many people with color weaknesses can correctly identify colors that are isolated; however, when one color surrounds another, color weaknesses can be detected.

The Department of Public Safety gives color tests on original driver's license applications, but these tests only include red, yellow and green, Department of Public Safety representative Pat Dean, said.

If a person can't identify one of those colors, he doesn't automatically fail the test, she said. Instead, tests are given to make sure the person knows the order of the colors on traffic lights.

Although color tests are done in conjunction with routine eye exams, a person may not find out for years that he has a color weakness. He may not have been given a test, or he may have a problem with colors that are not usually included on tests.

For example, Robbie Nohrn, a Texas A&M senior from New Braunfels, didn't know he had a color weakness until last year. In describing a Corps uniform over the phone, he said the uniform shirt was dark brown. His clue that he had a color weakness came when his roommate insisted the shirt was dark green.

As might be expected, problems can arise when trying to color coordinate clothes.

"The hardest thing to do is to get a suit together," Nohrn said. "I get the guys next door to do that."

When driving at night, Nohrn said he can't distinguish white street lights from green traffic lights at a distance.

Naturally, some inconveniences can arise because of color weaknesses. K. T. Graves, a former football coach from Katy, said that if he hadn't seen the officials' red flags as they were thrown, he couldn't have seen them on the ground. Graves has a color weakness with greens and reds.

There is no way to determine if he perceives colors the same way others do, he said, but his weakness is evident when green and red are adjacent.

Color weaknesses can also affect people in their occupations, especially in the armed forces. Although color weaknesses don't stop people from driving, they can keep people from performing such assignments as flying if the weakness is severe.

Color tests are routinely given to personnel as they enter the armed forces. Two tests are usually given, in order to determine the severity of a person's color weakness, said Capt. Bob Hale, an air science instructor at Texas A&M.

People with slight color weaknesses can do some jobs in the service, but other jobs require people who have perfect color vision. For example, missile personnel must be able to distinguish colors because missiles have color-coded controls, Hale said.

Weaknesses with reds and greens are the main force in keeping personnel from doing some jobs, he said.

Although red-green weaknesses are common, Glenn said many people have trouble distinguishing related colors.

TTI says gas mileage helpers usually have little or no effect

By DIANA SULTENFUSS
Battalion Reporter

Gadgets claimed to increase a vehicle's gas mileage usually don't have any effect at all, an assistant research engineer with the Texas Transportation Institute says.

"What you're basically getting is something that doesn't work," Rick Tonda said. "My data indicate that these devices just don't improve gas mileage."

Most of the devices treat the fuel in some manner before it enters the carburetor of the engine, usually heating it, he said.

"All these devices can improve mileage a little," Tonda said. "If you add heat to fuel, you will burn less while the engine is idling. Therefore, if you spend a lot of time idling your engine, you will notice an improvement. But that is only a small portion of most people's driving time."

Tonda said that more than 300 such devices are available now and more than 150 have been tested

by the Environmental Protection Agency or a test facility certified by the EPA. TTI has tested six or seven of these gadgets.

The devices are usually sold by mail through advertisements in newspapers and magazines and may range in price from \$23 to \$300, Tonda said. "Most of them have a lot of hardware which affects the price."

The devices are tested using the Federal Test Procedure, a standard group of tests set by the EPA to be used for each gadget. This is to insure the test results can be compared with some base figures.

The TTI usually does initial testing in a controlled environment using a dynamometer and doesn't take the engine out of the building, Tonda said. The initial testing compares the gas mileage of an engine before and after the device is installed, he said.

If the gadget proves to affect the gas mileage in some way, the device is tested in cars under city

and highway conditions simulated at the facility. These conditions are simulated so the testing will be the same every time.

Tonda said the TTI tries to test the devices on a basis proposed by the EPA. "We try to use engines representative of the current population," he said.

An inventor who has developed a device of this type can contact the EPA to do a free preliminary

analysis. The EPA will inform the inventor whether it has judged the device effective or ineffective. If the inventor wants further testing, the EPA sets a minimum set of evaluations and refers him or her to the nearest of the six testing facilities. The inventor must pay to have further testing done.

There are six or seven testing facilities like the TTI in the United States and a few others used for high-altitude testing.

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