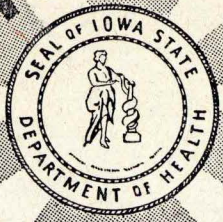


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IOWA STATE
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

EDMUND G. ZIMMERER, M.D., M.P.H., Commissioner
WILLIAM S. BEARDSLEY, Governor

Vol. 7 No.1

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Some Call It 'Day,' Some a 'Week,' But All Note Children's Dental Health

The American Dental Association has set Feb. 1 as the sixth annual National Children's Dental Health Day, but, in order to increase the interest and allow time for more programs and publicity on the theme of children's dental health Iowa has followed the lead of many other states and has extended the observance to a full week, from Feb. 1-8.

Dr. Henshaw Adds To It

This year the slogan of the National Children's Dental Health Week is "Brush Your Teeth Right After You Eat." Dr. Charles H. Henshaw, director of the Division of Dental Hygiene says that, because a toothbrush is not always handy, we should add this to the slogan: "When You Can't Brush, Rinse."

In speaking of the habit of toothbrushing, the American Dental Association says: "The right kind of toothbrush used in the right way at the right time is the most effective home tool for maintaining dental health."

Extensive Study Made

A dental scientist four years ago, in a large-scale study, found that tooth decay could be reduced 50 and 60 per cent by the relatively simple process of brushing and rinsing the teeth immediately after eating.

The study took nearly two years and included nearly 1,000 college students divided into two groups. About one half of the students followed their usual morning-and-evening brushing routine. The others brushed their teeth within 10 minutes after eating, or if that was impossible, rinsed their mouths thoroughly with water.

Results Dramatic

The results were dramatic. A large number of the individuals who cleaned their teeth immediately after eating developed no cavities at all during the two years of the study.

The reason for brushing the teeth after eating is clear. Dental decay, probably the most widespread of all diseases, is started very rapidly in the mouth after eating, particularly after eating sweets.



In the picture above Mrs. Edith Lieurance, dental hygienist in the Des Moines public schools, shows youngsters the proper way to brush their teeth, illustrating the up and down motion of the toothbrush on a plaster model of a set of teeth.

Sugar Causes Acid

From fermentable carbohydrates such as sugar, an acid can be formed on the tooth surfaces within three minutes after the carbohydrates are eaten. The most effective counter-measure is to brush the teeth immediately after eating.

There is no reason why the youngster should not be educated in the right toothbrush habits as soon as all his first teeth have come in, usually by the age of three. If these habits are started at an early age, they will pay tremendous dividends in dental health.

Flat Surface Best

A good toothbrush for a child should have a flat brushing surface, firm bristles

and a head small enough to permit access to all surfaces of the teeth.

In cleaning the teeth, the upper teeth should be brushed downward and the lower teeth should be brushed upward. The bristles should be worked between the teeth. The chewing surface of the side and back teeth should be cleaned with a vibration of the brush!

The history of caries treatment has gone through as many evolutionary stages apparently as the history of the human race itself. Celsus (1st century A.D.) was one of the many down the ages who attempted a prescription to treat toothache. He prescribed poppyseeds with pepper.

Officials Protest Story on Hospital

An article appearing in the current Women's Home Companion entitled "How You Can Double Your Chances Against Cancer" has brought comment from Dr. Edmund G. Zimmerer, state commissioner of health.

In a letter to hospital administrators and chiefs of staffs of Iowa hospitals Dr. Zimmerer says the article "is so misleading as to require some clarification. From its list of "Four Star Hospitals" it would appear that Iowa has no hospitals competent to treat cancer patients. This is wholly untrue and is the result of the ridiculous criteria set up for inclusion in the list which omits not only Iowa hospitals but such well known institutions as the Mayo Clinic, the Lahey Clinic Billings Memorial Hospital and others.

"There are in the state nine tumor clinics approved by the American College of Surgeons," Dr. Zimmerer continues. "Eleven hospitals in the state are approved by the same organization for residencies of which there are 260, some being two and three residencies. Eleven hospitals also, not always the same ones, are approved for interne training by the American Medical Association and 92 internships are available though only 59 or 63 per cent were filled as of Sept. 1, 1953. Unfortunately, no institution offers an organized course for graduate training in surgery, though there is post graduate training in seven other specialties. This is the crux of the matter. We cannot agree that only a teaching hospital has facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of malignancy.

"Iowa has well distributed hospitals with competent—even superior professional personnel with excellent pathological services and adequate facilities for radiology, radium treatment, radioactive isotopes and every modality found useful in cancer therapy. Yet these are omitted from the "Four Star List" because they do not offer post graduate training in surgery. "It is unfortunate" concludes the commissioner, "that a self-styled science writer can set himself up as a judge of surgical competency and hospital standards. The publisher of such articles should be held accountable for disseminating such inaccurate information."

State University of Iowa officials have also objected to the article.

Dr. Norman B. Nelson, dean of the Iowa College of Medicine and director of University Hospitals, said "The worst of this is that our State University Hospitals qualify in every respect when judged by the criteria which the magazine says were employed in selecting the list."

"My concern in protesting this treatment," he continued, "is that our Iowa people who happen to read this story and study the list will become alarmed, thinking that there are no good—or even adequate—hospitals for cancer diagnosis and treatment in the state."

"The people of Iowa should be re-

Join the Parade



NEW FILM

"Born in the White House," 25 minutes; black and white; sound.

This film, published by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, is the story of research of men of medicine in their fight to conquer disease. It is a dramatic episode of their battle against polio, and it tells of the latest developments in research and polio prevention.

It may be obtained for loan by writing the Division of Health Education of the Iowa State Department of Health, State Office Building, Des Moines 19, Iowa.

assured against the implications of this article," Dean Nelson said. "There are numerous fine hospitals in Iowa which are doing a fine job."

LIST RULES OF DENTAL HEALTH

For National Children's Dental Health Week, Feb. 1-8, these simple rules are recommended by dentists to help assure a good start toward life-long dental health for all children:

1. Proper use of the toothbrush immediately after eating.
2. A well-balanced diet low in sweets.
3. Early detection and treatment of dental disease to prevent more serious ills later.
4. Fluoridation of public water supplies as a dental decay preventive or application of sodium fluoride to the child's teeth.

During World War II nearly one-third of all practicing dentists in the U.S. served in the armed forces.

Tooth Brushing, Not the Paste Keeps Teeth Clean, Healthy

Despite claims being made for various so-called "miracle" dentifrices, the best way to prevent tooth decay and to keep teeth clean is still to exert plenty of "elbow grease" and to use the correct cleaning techniques, dentistry professors at the State University of Iowa maintain.

There is no adequate support for claims that certain dentifrices will stop tooth decay, they agree, for these claims are based on inconclusive or inaccurate measurements of dentifrice effectiveness.

Opinions of several members of the Iowa College of Dentistry staff were sought after 25 of the nation's leading dental research scientists recently criticized incomplete or preliminary research reports which have been and are now being exploited by dentifrice manufacturers as the basis for sensational advertising claims for their products. The criticism was expressed at a recent meeting called by the American Dental Association in Chicago.

Dr. George S. Easton, head of the S.U.I. Department of Oral Diagnosis and director of the Dental Infirmary, says that while most toothpastes and powders might be useful as cleaning agents, they do not contain miracle properties which will prevent decay.

"The type of dentifrice used is not important," he says. "Persons who use plain water, salt or bicarbonate of soda may obtain results just as good as those who use specially prepared dentifrices," he adds.

Food particles left in the mouth after eating contribute greatly to tooth decay, so if an individual brushes his teeth after every meal and before going to bed at night he can keep his mouth clear of the wastes which cause decay, says Dr. William G. Goodale, instructor of pedodontia and preventive dentistry.

Another member of the college faculty, Howard V. Meredith, consultant in dental and physical growth of children, says that improper analysis of the results of dentifrice tests and research in therapeutic dentifrices has led to misunderstanding of the values of some toothpastes and powders.

For instance, a claim for a miracle dentifrice might be based on the fact that use of two kinds of toothpaste by two separate groups during a trial period might have resulted in the finding that one group suffered more tooth decay than the group which used the miracle dentifrice. But too frequently, adequate statistical tests have not been made to see that the difference obtained is a genuinely substantial one, Meredith said.

Dentists have come to the realization that more members of their profession should be trained in analysis of research, and many colleges are requiring that graduate students study statistical analysis, he continues. Dr. Meredith

teaches such a course in the S.U.I. College of Dentistry.

The dentists also object to the fact that claims for the so-called therapeutic dentifrices now being offered to the public were actually based on examinations of single teeth or a single tooth surface. Attention must also be given to the condition of all teeth in the mouth if conclusive evidence is to be obtained, they agree.

Whatever dentifrice you use, it's important to use it properly. So Dr. Albert Soucek, head of the S.U.I. Department of Periodontia, gives some pointers on how to prevent decay, whether you use toothpaste, soda or just plain water:

1. Brush teeth within 20 minutes after each meal, and, if possible, before going to bed and upon arising.
2. Brush down on upper teeth, and up on the lowers so that food particles will be removed from between the teeth—brushing across the teeth merely serves to hit the high spots. Try to force the bristles between the teeth.
3. Brush for at least two minutes, preferably longer.
4. Be sure that toothbrush has a chance to dry between brushings. In fact, it's preferable to have more than one brush.
5. Clean the brush after each brushing, holding it under running water.

While this might sound like a typical grade school health chart, the Iowa dentists remind that far too many adults have forgotten such fundamental rules in teeth care.

In Colonial America dentistry received considerable impetus from the arrival from England and France of practitioners familiar with European techniques. Two such immigrants from France were Le Mayeur, and Gardette who began practicing at Philadelphia in 1783 and became dentist to George Washington.

Dr. Walter L. Bierring to Become Master In American College of Physicians

Dr. Walter L. Bierring, former state health commissioner and present director of the Division of Gerontology, Heart, and Chronic Diseases, of the Iowa State Department of Health, will receive a professional honor which has been given to no other Iowan and to only 15 persons in the United States.

E. R. Loveland of Philadelphia, Pa., executive secretary of the American College of Physicians, reported that Dr. Bierring has been selected for a mastership in the College.

Members of the organization are known as fellows.

The title of master is one given to

Nursing Needs in Mental Health Told

The problem of upgrading nursing service in mental institutions in Iowa is so great that it can be solved only by the state's organizing and working as a whole, nurses and attendants from Iowa hospitals for the mentally ill were told at a conference last month at Mount Pleasant.

The conference was sponsored by the Iowa League for Nursing, headed by Miss Thelma Luther, associate director of the Division of Public Health Nursing of the Iowa State Department of Health.

Robert Lappen, chairman of the board of control of state institutions, explained that the board had asked the Division of Nursing of the Iowa State Department of Health, the State University of Iowa College of Nursing, and various nursing associations to cooperate with it in solving nursing problems in the state's hospitals.

Summarizing conclusions reached in four conferences for nursing personnel in Iowa mental institutions which preceded the Mount Pleasant meeting, Lappen said that standard procedures should be set up for all institutions, personnel policies and procedures should be strengthened and increased and greater opportunities should be provided for employment of nurses who have satisfactorily completed the postgraduate course in psychiatric nursing at the SUI college.

Other conference conclusions which Lappen mentioned included the need to continue encouragement of employees of state institutions to take postgraduate work and the recommendation that indoctrination, on-the-job training and advanced courses be provided by each institution, not only for registered nurses, but for all attendants.

Military records show Iowa's youths possess greater degrees of mechanical aptitudes than youths from any other state in the union. In addition, Iowa's literacy of 99.2 per cent is the highest of any state in the nation. These facts mean that Iowans enjoy a more highly developed "way of life."

persons regarded as particularly worthy because of their activities. The board of regents of the organization recently selected Dr. Bierring for the honor.

It will be conferred at the next convocation of the organization in Chicago, Apr. 7.

The college founded the American Board of Internal Medicine in 1936 and Dr. Bierring was selected to administer it as its first chairman-secretary, serving until 1939.

He is also the first Iowan elected president of the American Medical Association and has held many positions in American and foreign medical and public health groups.

Commissioner Extends New Year's Greeting

The expression *Happy New Year* has become trite. Happiness comprises so many factors—peace of mind, contentment, love, wealth, and many more. But principal among them all is health, for without health, peace of mind is difficult of attainment, contentment impossible, love an empty shell and wealth inconsequential. Thus, I can do no better at this season than to wish each and all of our readers and co-workers a *Healthy and A Happy New Year*.

Health is not a gift that can be bestowed by a benevolent government or any other human agency. It is something that must be achieved and involves some cost in effort and money. We may be truly grateful that on the whole, Iowa has enjoyed, with the exception of a mild epidemic of poliomyelitis, a year of comparative good health. Yet, we must not be too smug in our complacency, for despite the general situation, there are among our friends, neighbors and fellow citizens in Iowa some hundreds who are not so fortunate as we; the victims of cancer, heart disease, arthritis, diabetes and other debilitating or crippling diseases, some of which are preventable. Nor is our conquest of the communicable diseases complete. Tuberculosis is by no means conquered and there was an increase in venereal disease during the past year. Many of these victims could be helped to a speedy return, to a useful place in society, and lives which are needlessly sacrificed could sometimes be saved by the application of modern medical and health services. These the sick and, especially the sick-poor, are all part of our community, our neighbors and brothers who must be of concern to us.

Public health is after all the sum of the individual health of the community and public health is good or bad in proportion to the number of sick we find in the community. As the name implies, public health is a mutual undertaking—mutual in its obligations as well as in its benefits. Hence, each of us, whether we are professionally trained or merely laymen medically, have a duty to promote health, either through our own efforts or in cooperation with health authorities. It is an obligation which can not be delegated to anyone else.

Obviously, with limited personnel and funds, it is impossible for any agency to cover completely an area as large as a State. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the citizens to scrutinize the public health facilities of his community, to become acquainted with its needs and to initiate or support such activities as will provide for at least such basic protective measures as a good water supply, adequate sewage and waste disposal, good housing, immunization programs and the like.

Local boards of health are invested with the same legal powers as the state department in their communities but the state department, through its various divisions is always ready and willing to provide counsel and assistance to such boards in the performance of their duties.

Health is a community asset worth the expenditure of time, effort and money. Indeed, the prevention of disease is much less costly than epidemics or sporadic illness. Even our self-interest demands that we be our brother's keeper in the protection of his health.

May I hope, then, that the State Department of Health will receive during the coming year the same measure of public confidence and support that it has enjoyed in the past to the end that the people of Iowa may have a truly *Healthy and Happy New Year*.

Edmund G. Zimmerer, M.D., M.P.H.
State Commissioner of Health

Dentists Plan TV Show On Child Dentistry

The Iowa State Medical Society has given time to the Des Moines District Dental Society for a special half-hour television program on Child Dentistry on station WOI-TV, Ames, at 8 p.m. Feb. 5. The dental program will be one in a weekly series of the Iowa State Medical Society entitled "To Your Health." Dr. M. K. Aronow and Dr. M. D. Bean, both Des Moines dentists and specialists in child dentistry, will appear on the program.

In 1940 there were only 1.5 female dentists for each 100 male practitioners; but in 1950 there were about 2.9 to 100.

Survey Tells Story Of U.S., Fluorine

"The movement to put fluoride in drinking water to reduce tooth decay is gaining speed. But so is its opposition," according to a recent newspaper article of a nationwide Associated Press survey.

"Nearly one of every eight Americans now is drinking fluoridated water, by American Dental Association tally," the article said.

"Fluorides have been added to water for 15,578,000 persons in 837 communities—more than half starting it in the last two years. Another 3,750,000 drink water naturally containing effective amounts of fluorides.

"At least 120 other communities are planning to fluoridate, including Philadelphia, and Cleveland, Ohio. Scores of other towns are debating it.

"It is hailed by official health bodies as perfectly safe, and a great public health measure against the nation's most widespread disease, tooth decay.

"Among opponents, some say it isn't proven absolutely safe. Others say it might cause serious disease. Some call it 'rat poison.' Some oppose it on religious grounds.

"The American Dental Association count lists 837 communities in 43 states and Washington, D. C., now fluoridating. It reports 1,029 communities which naturally have seven-tenths to two parts per million of fluoride.

"Populationwise, nearly 12 per cent of the people have fluoridated water in what is considered desirable amounts."

Some towns have voted for it, some against it, and some have had suits brought up challenging constitutionality, the article pointed out. It noted that all suits were denied by circuit or county courts, and appealed.

"In Cleveland, a common pleas court judge dismissed a taxpayer's suit charging unconstitutionality and medical experimentation.

"The judge held 'the right to religious freedom is not beyond all interference by the state,' pointing out the state can compel parents to send children to school though it may be contrary to their religious tenets, and saying the evidence 'indicates no likelihood that personal injury will result from the consumption of fluoridated water.'"

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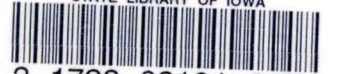
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