

November 17, 1958

Dr. D. P. Laugenour
4333 Lemmon
Dallas, Texas

Dear Doctor Laugenour:

I am sending you herewith a sheet on which some of our analytical data were gathered together some time ago. We have had occasion to determine the lead content of the tissues of a number of fatally poisoned children since these data were assembled, and so the results I send you are not complete. They are representative, however.

I call your attention with particular emphasis to the lead content of the brain, on the one hand, and the skeleton, on the other. In clinical lead encephalopathy which resulted fatally, we have never failed to find significantly high levels of lead concentration in the brain, and I have come to regard this as an important feature of the disease. A little while ago we had a case which the clinicians (experienced men) believed to be lead encephalopathy. The brain contained only slightly more lead than does the normal brain. (As I remember it, the finding was 0.14 mg. per 100 grams of fresh brain, but in any case, it was only a little above 0.10, whereas 0.08 mg. per 100 grams is in the upper normal range.) I could not say that this was not a case of lead poisoning, but I expressed serious doubts, on the basis of the analytical evidence. Careful examination of the brain and brain stem disclosed the lesions of poliomyelitis.

In the matter of the findings in the skeleton, the concentration of lead in the bones and the relationship between that in flat ones and that in the long bones, can be correlated with the severity and the duration of the exposure in well documented cases. When, therefore, one has certain findings, he can use these to cut through the obscurity of the history of exposure. Often the facts can be established with every reasonable assurance.

It was a pleasure to see you in Chicago. Let it be soon again.

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Cordially yours,

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Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.

the cases listed.

RAK

*See
all*

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