

November 10, 1964

Dr. R. T. Johnstone
Breckman Building
520 West 7th Street
Los Angeles, California

Dear Rod:

I always like an opportunity to correspond with you and I hope this letter finds you in good health and good spirits. I think I read somewhere that you had undertaken new responsibilities in connection with California industry; I hope this is proving to be very satisfying and perhaps exciting.

A review of an article on chelating agents was recently given to me to make comments on before publication and in it I saw you quoted. I have reference to the fact that you are said to believe that there is no place for the use of calcium sodium EDTA in the treatment of lead poisoning. I want to take mild leave with you on this point. Treatment of a young man with acute lead poisoning, who has his whole work life ahead of him, seems to me to be a very important example of clinical value of prompt and careful use of EDTA. One can reverse very quickly evidence of acute toxicity and by judicious use at intervals of the drug well within the safe dose limits can decrease the body burden of lead remarkably. Thus, such a man does not have to spend a great deal of time off duty nor does he have to change his work completely. This is becoming a somewhat important point, if true, in this area where there is a lot of building of highways and, as a result, structural steel workers are exposed in many ways to toxic lead compounds. I am sure this must also be true in other parts of the country.

In addition, it has been most helpful in my experience in ruling out lead poison individuals who are

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complaining of vague symptoms. After single diagnostic dose of Ca EDTA one can discover that there is, or there is not, a body burden that has to be considered potentially harmful. Such knowledge may be used both treatment and in advice to the worker and the industry as to whether the man can be returned to work if there is to be continuing lead exposure.

Do let me know your best thoughts on this so I can be sure I am quoting you correctly. I continue in my daily interests in this fascinating field of man-made diseases.

Doesn't anything ever bring you to this part of the world? With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

Harriet L. Hardy

HLH:ma