

April 4, 1940

Dr. Morris Fishbein
Editor
Jr. of the American Medical Association
535 North Dearborn Street
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Doctor Fishbein:

We have been collecting rather extensive literature on the subject of lead poisoning over a period of years, in the course of which time our literature secretary, Miss Nell Conway, has made it a point to accumulate rather extensive information on unusual cases of lead poisoning. Some of the cases which have been reported in the literature may not be authentic as definite cases of intoxication. On the other hand we have given rather critical examination of the literature and I feel sure that Miss Conway has eliminated most of the highly questionable cases from consideration in the paper which she has prepared and which I am offering to you herewith for publication in the Journal.

In my opinion this paper presents the subject quite well and I think it will be useful in calling some of these matters to the attention of physicians in general. I trust you will find it possible to find a place for the publication of this article.

Perhaps I should supplement the statements above by calling attention to the publication in the Journal within fairly recent months of at least two articles on lead poisoning which, in my opinion, should not have been accepted as authentic and suitable for publication in the Journal. I refer here to the article by Horatio B. Williams which appeared in the issue of February 11, 1939, and a recent brief article or rather note of T. K. Rathmell and F. L. Smith in the issue of January 20, 1940. The latter was an especially flagrant example of an inadequately supported supposition which has since been clearly demonstrated to have been in error. I do not submit this paper for the purpose of counteracting the false impression given by the two articles mentioned above as to the dosage of lead compounds which is capable of producing lead intoxication.

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I do think, however, that this article will tend to show that there are a series of unusual circumstances in which lead poisoning can occur in the general population.

Sincerely yours,

RAK:is

Robert A. Kehoe, M.D.