

- 975 Jaundice Due to Lead Poisoning. L. L. Henderson.  
Arch. Int. Med. 89, 967-969 (June 1952).

A report of a case of jaundice due to lead poisoning is presented. The jaundice was apparently hemolytic, probably resulting from increased friability of the erythrocytes, caused by the direct action of lead on the cell surfaces. The intoxication was incurred outside the usual hazardous industries (in painting a house) yet involved prolonged severe exposure to lead in its most dangerous form. With the increasing tendency for the home handy man to attempt all kinds of repair jobs without knowledge of adequate protection, such cases are likely to become more frequent.

-- Author's Summary

- 976 Chronic Mercury Poisoning. P. Burgener and A. Burgener.  
Schweiz. med. Wochschr. 82, 204-210 (Feb. 23, 1952). German.

This account of chronic mercury poisoning is based on the authors' 30 years experience, during which observations were made on 250 workers in a chemical factory where mercury is used as a catalyst in enormous amounts. The progress of many of these patients has been followed for 10 to 20 years. A number of case histories are given to illustrate the difficulties of diagnosis and the damage done by the poison to the nervous system, the digestive system, the kidneys, and the liver. Particular attention is given to the psychic disturbances--the "mercurial neurasthenia"--and to the mercurial tremor which is illustrated by examples of the patients' handwriting. The bad prognosis in the elderly and in all but very early cases is stated.

-- Cond. from Bull. Hyg.

- 977 Eye Changes Following Exposure to Metallic Mercury. S. Locket and I. A. Nazroo. Lancet 262, 528-530 (Mar. 15, 1952).

Among 51 repairers of direct-current electric meters who handled metallic mercury and were examined for eye changes, 12 showed a matt-brown reflex from the anterior lens capsule. This change seems to depend mainly on length of exposure to mercury, and is not related to symptoms of mercury intoxication at the time of examination. In all cases this brown reflex was bilateral and had no effect on visual acuity. No evidence of retrobulbar neuritis was found in any of the 51 workers examined. It is suggested that this colored reflex from the lens could be used as a screening device for atmospheric mercury levels.

-- Authors' Summary