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TO: C. A. D'ALONZO, M.D.
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
N-11400

FROM: C. F. REINHARDT, M.D.

PULMONARY FUNCTION TESTING PROGRAM

In connection with your interest in developing a pulmonary function testing program, the writer visited, on January 13, 1967, Dr. Arthur Du Bois who is a specialist in pulmonary physiology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

Dr. Du Bois made many helpful suggestions regarding the development of a meaningful pulmonary function testing program. We discussed the importance of an adequate history as well as the spirometers available and the advantages and disadvantages of the two major types, the wet and the dry. Dr. Du Bois feels that the water-type spirometer is preferable because over a number of years its volume will remain essentially unchanged while that of the dry type may change due to deterioration of the bellows. However, dry spirometers have been used satisfactorily in many studies and since we are interested in the Pulmonor, a commercially available dry spirometer, I am enclosing a reprint of an article which discusses the pros and cons of this instrument.

He confirmed our previous thoughts about the minimum parameters to be measured; namely, vital capacity, forced expiratory volume (timed vital capacity), and a measure of flow such as the maximum mid-expiratory flow rate and/or the maximum breathing capacity. He also listed numerous references which would be helpful to us.

Dr. Du Bois feels that a pulmonary function testing program in industry will be most beneficial in discovering early abnormal pulmonary function and disease by observing changes in the parameters from the normal or base-line measurements over a period of months or years. He was not enthusiastic about the usefulness of these tests in revealing early pulmonary disease on a pre-employment examination since one series of tests is not sufficiently reliable in establishing a normal versus an abnormal state unless function is greatly impaired, in which case a good history would be as revealing as the tests. However, our chief concern in regard to pre-employment testing is the establishment of a base line for future reference.

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He suggested that there might be certain plant sites where additional testing such as for diffusing capacity would be desirable especially if chemicals were present which might cause a disturbance in diffusing capacity.

The personnel engaged in the study of pulmonary physiology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine are well known for their high quality research in this field of medicine and could serve as a convenient and reliable source for consultation in the future.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY
C. E. REINHARDT

CER/dyb
Enclosure