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05152-00

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SUMMARY OF

ANIMAL INHALATION EXPERIMENTS ON K-Lo

May 13, 1946

The experiment was started fifteen months ago, exposing 100 guinea pigs eight hours daily, six days a week, to atmospheric concentrations of K-Lo varying from 100 to 125 million particles per cubic foot of air.

Acute bacterial pneumonias began to develop after three weeks with such heavy mortality that it seemed unwise to make any replacements by introducing new animals to contract the infection. At first it appeared that perhaps the dust might be responsible for the pneumonia, as the dust, which coated the walls of the rooms, apparently produced a surface impervious to water and condension of moisture was excessive. However, this hypothesis is apparently not valid, for in an adjoining room, housing animals from the same stock but exposed to diatomaceous earth, the incidence of pneumonia was even higher. We are, therefore, forced to conclude that many apparently healthy animals taken from our breeding rooms at the time must have harbored latent infections of the lungs.

Six months after starting the experiment twenty-five new normal guinea pigs, twenty-five guinea pigs infected with attenuated tubercle bacilli, and forty white rats were introduced into the dust room and again acute pneumonias developed in the guinea pigs, but not in the rats. The immunity of the latter suggests that the guinea pigs died from the lighting up

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of latent infections which were then transmitted from one pig to another.

By April of this year 40% of the first 100 pigs, 25% of the second group of 25 normal pigs, and 20% of the 25 tuberculous animals had died of pneumonia. There have been no deaths during the past month and we have just decided to replenish the stock by breeding the apparently resistant survivors. To introduce new stock from outside sources would only invite disaster.

In spite of this unfortunate occurrence, there have been periodic sacrifices of animals not infected with pneumonia to follow the course of the dust reaction and associated infection.

The dust is inhaled in appreciable amounts, although not enough has yet accumulated (12 months) to influence the weight of lung ash appreciably. Analysis of the ash, however, demonstrates its presence. The average values at twelve months for the three major constituents are as follows:

SiO_2	- - -	10.5%
CaO	- - -	2.9
MgO	- - -	3.1

In guinea pigs tissue reaction after fourteen months of exposure is still too slight to be visible except on microscopic examination. Such reaction consists of localized collections of large dust cells packed with particles of K-Lo. The walls of the air spaces about them show a limited amount of chronic inflammation and it is not anticipated that fibrosis will subsequently develop. Reaction in the lymph nodes draining the lungs is minimal. In white rats tissue changes are similar. At the present

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time there is nothing to suggest that reaction comparable to asbestosis or silicosis will ultimately develop.

Associated tuberculous infection has not yet been altered enough to be appreciated grossly. The last two animals sacrificed eight months after infection suggest that there may be some slight tendency for the tubercles to spread. The outcome can only be evaluated as their disease progresses.

We still have twenty-five non-infected guinea pigs now exposed to dust for fifteen months, fourteen more pigs and thirty white rats exposed for almost nine months, and fifteen pigs infected with tubercle bacilli and exposed to dust for nine months. These, together with the anticipated offspring from the breeding animals now in the dust room, should be sufficient for a satisfactory completion of the experiment.

It is my feeling that the exposures should be continued for at least another year, since there is now some question about the effect upon associated tuberculous infection, and we should also be able to affirm with confidence that this dust is not capable of producing fibrosis or other significant reaction in the lungs.