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Bread Called Cause Of Some Skin Ills

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FORT WORTH, Texas.—Dr. Arthur G. Schoch of Dallas told Texas family doctors here Wednesday that he has successfully treated many skin-disease patients by removing bread from their diet—and others, by removing milk.

The dermatologist spoke at the sixth annual meeting of the Texas Academy of General Practice in Will Rogers Memorial Stadium.

He reported that many of his patients with severe chronic skin disease had improved markedly within a few weeks after they quit eating bread and —chemically treated flour.

“On the hypothetical assumption that bread and flour, as consumed in this country, contain one or more noxious (injurious) products that could be a major or contributing cause of illness, we are continuing our investigations along this line.”

The milk was banned for patients suffering from penicillin reaction, said Dr. Schoch.

Another speaker, Dr. Vernon S. Knight of Nashville, Tenn., first brought up the subject of penicillin in milk.

“In this country, a significant amount of milk now contains penicillin in measurable amounts,” said Dr. Knight. “I believe that some of the hives we see these days may be caused by penicillin

consumed in milk.”

Dr. Schoch confirmed that he had treated a number of patients suffering from “perpetuation of penicillin reaction” by removing milk from their diets.

How does penicillin get into milk?

The veterinarian puts it there indirectly, said Dr. Schoch, by injecting penicillin into infected udders of dairy cows.

This treatment cures the infection quickly but the cows continue to excrete penicillin in milk for 14 days, he said.

So widespread is this practice, said Dr. Schoch, that much of the milk consumed over the country contains penicillin. Unless you happen to be sensitive to penicillin, it is nothing to worry about.

Dr. Schoch recalled a Wisconsin cheese maker who purchased a lot of milk which contained so much penicillin that it wouldn't turn sour—and hence wouldn't make cheese.

Getting back to the sickness caused by bread, which was the topic of Dr. Schoch's talk, he explained that the trouble comes from the interaction of flour-refining chemicals and the protein of wheat.

For 25 years or more prior to 1947, he said, nitrogen trichloride was the primary maturing agent used by millers of white flour.

Along about 1947 said Dr. Schoch, it was shown that this agent produced convulsions and death in

dogs, and Federal Food and Drug Commissioner B. P. Dunbar recommended a reduction in the use of this chemical “to a minimum.”

In its place, he said, chlorine dioxide is now the commonly used maturing and bleaching agent for commercial flours.

Chlorine dioxide has been demonstrated not to have the same harmful effects in dogs as had the nitrogen trichloride.

However, continued Dr. Schoch, in England recently in a human case of widespread dermatitis coupled with profound mental depression, the causative agent was found to be bread made from flour treated with nitrogen trichloride—and also bread made from flour treated with chlorine dioxide. In this patient, one chemical was as harmful as the other.

Dr. Schoch said that in his own practice, patients with one skin disease in particular have shown improvement when they leave off bread, the disease is chronic systemic lupus erythematosus.

In an interview, Dr. Schoch said store-bought whole-wheat breads contain less of the maturing chemicals than white breads, but that all commercial breads have some.

The 3-day meeting closed Wednesday with the final registration figure of 1,333, including 485 members of TAGP, 101 other doctors, 310 wives, 301 exhibitors and 136 other guests.

(Other poisons can produce this reaction. Hydralazine caused lupus erythematosus in several patients. See Yearbook of Medicine, 1955-56 edition, Page 97.)

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