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## 15-a-day does not give cancer

By our own Reporter

People who smoke 10 to 15 cigarettes a day are no more likely to get lung cancer than those who do not smoke at all, said Sir Cecil Wakeley, chairman of the Council of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, in London yesterday.

Cancer, he said, developed in injured lung tissue, and to cause such injury a person would have to smoke excessively—more than 20 a day. The biggest single cause of lung cancer was the pollution of the air by diesel exhausts and sulphurous fumes.

Dr R. J. Harris, head of the virus division of the fund, said that although it was true that if people gave up smoking cigarettes 85 per cent of lung cancer would disappear, it could not be said in any particular case that smoking alone was the cause of disease. There were other factors. It did not seem possible to persuade people not to smoke cigarettes—but the problem of air pollution could be tackled.

Sir Cecil and Dr Harris were speaking at a meeting in the fund's research centre in Lincoln's Inn Fields to announce the "Cancer Week" appeal which is to be held from June 16 to 18. The centre, which was completed in 1962, cost £2.5 millions to build, and the fund needs about £750,000 a year to carry on its research.

### No interference

The fund receives no grant from the state and does not want one. Sir Cecil said he felt there could be no Government aid without strings, and the fund's researchers could work better without interference from outside.

Dr Harris said the fund was doing important work on the cause of cancer of the breast and was carrying out studies of hormone excretions. Asked about the claims for a leukaemia cure recently made by the French biologist, M. Gaston Naessens, Dr Harris replied that he was appalled that anyone should want to prosecute him. The claims should be examined, and should not be written off as phoney. At the same time, the history of cancer "cures" suggested that any claim should be regarded with caution.

During the "Cancer Week" appeal, collections will be made from house to house in the London area, and a flag day will be held in London on June 16.

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## AIR POLLUTION WORSE THAN SMOKING

### CANCER EXPERT'S OPINION

Atmospheric pollution is a much more serious business than smoking as far as lung cancer is concerned, Sir Cecil Wakeley, chairman of the council of the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, said yesterday.

He was speaking at a meeting at which plans for their "cancer week" appeal to be held in London from June 16 to 18 were announced.

Cost of research is estimated at £750,000 a year. The fund hopes to raise £40,000 on June 16 by the appeal.

Sir Cecil Wakeley said one of the difficulties was that, unlike many other diseases, cancer could be caused by many different things. It was a "multi-facet" disease. Taking his pipe out of his mouth, he said: "Excessive smoking would injure lung tissue but 'Smoking 10 to 15 cigarettes a day is no more likely to give you cancer than if you did not smoke at all.' Atmospheric pollution, he suggested, was a much more serious business.

### NO SINGLE CAUSE

On the other hand, Dr R. J. Harris, head of the virus division, said: "There is not a shadow of doubt that if people gave up smoking, lung cancer would fall by 85 per cent. If you cannot get people to give up cigarettes, you can help by cleaning the air. Cigarettes are the chief cause, but we do not believe there is a single cause."

The fund recently announced an important step forward in its research on leukaemia. Asked to comment on the claims of M. Gaston Naessens, the French biologist, Dr Harris said:

"I was appalled that anyone should want to prosecute him. I hope his claims will be examined properly. I think we ourselves know the lines on which research should go, but I do not think we would conduct it along those suggested by M. Naessens. The history of cancer 'cures' does not predispose us to take these claims seriously."

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