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MEDICAL PROFESSION "STAMPEDED"

"False Belief" In Cigaret-Lung Cancer Link Cited By VA Doctor

SAN MATEO, Calif. (UPI)—The medical profession may have been "stamped into a false belief" that cigarette smoking is the principal cause of lung cancer, according to a U. S. Veterans Administration official.

Dr. Leroy Hyde, a non-smoker himself, said yesterday that he, cases of lung cancer as chief of the pulmonary disease division of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Long Beach, Calif.

His views on the principal cause ran counter to those of the American Cancer Society and the U. S. Surgeon General. They have designated cigarettes as the main cause of lung cancer.

"This may well have been a case where the medical profession has been stamped into a false belief," Hyde said. "It seems to

me to be a case of mass hysteria where the medical profession is being utilized by people who have an emotional involvement."

He did not specify who the people with "an emotional involvement" were.

Trend Cited

"In England, it has been shown that lung cancer mortality among men in the two highest social classes is significantly less than for other classes," Hyde said. "The same trend has been noted by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in this country."

He said higher than average mortality lung cancer rates have been noted in painters, roofers, carpenters, tinmiths and electricians, suggesting the possibility of industrial poisons.

Hyde also blamed genetic factors and a "large number of significant psychologic variables between smokers and non-smokers."

PRESS TELEGRAM
Long Beach, California
March 27, 1963

Doctor Sees No Cancer, Smoking Link

By BEN ZINSER
Medical-Science Editor

A Long Beach physician said today scientists have failed to prove that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer.

Dr. Leroy Hyde added that doctors would do well to keep an open mind on the subject.

He also suggested less emotional bias and more objective scientific observation might be more productive in the matter of lung cancer.

DR. HYDE'S report, already delivered to local medical groups and soon to be published in a medical journal, has jolted medical circles.

Significance of the report is that Dr. Hyde is chief of the pulmonary disease service of Long Beach Veterans Administration Hospital—a facility believed to see as many lung-cancer victims as any other hospital in the world.

Dr. Hyde said his observations are not based on his own research but rather on a review of reports in medical literature.

HE WILL give a detailed report on his stand at the

annual meeting of the California Thoracic Society in San Mateo April 4.

Dr. Hyde, an internal medicine and chest specialist, is not a smoker himself nor is he an advocate of smoking.

In fact, he strongly advises against cigarette smoking.

"There is no doubt that cigarette smoking may be harmful for certain persons, such as those with pulmonary emphysema, bronchial asthma and anybody who coughs," he said.

ALTHOUGH there has been a "virtual flood of literature" associating cigarette smoking with lung cancer, scientists must explain numerous other research findings before they can prove a cause-and-effect relation between cigarettes and cancer, Dr. Hyde asserted.

Some of the findings which he says many scientists have ignored:

The reports of Dr. Joseph Berkson, Mayo Clinic biostatistician, and R. A. Fisher, famous British statistician, which question the statistical validity of medical literature dealing with the cigarette-cancer link.

Studies which show death rates for lung cancer among city dwellers are higher than among comparable rural groups, smoking habits notwithstanding.

Research which shows lung-cancer death rates are higher among painters, roofers, carpenters, tinmiths and electricians—suggesting the possibility of industrial poisons.

U. S. Public Health Service reports which emphasize the significance of air pollution.

Reports which show lung cancer has developed spontaneously in nonsmoking animals.

Statistics which show lung cancer has increased tremendously even in countries where cigarette consumption has been fairly stationary—as in Germany, Austria, Turkey, Japan.

The production of lung cancer in laboratory animals using human viruses.

Statistics which show those who inhale cigarette smoke have a lower incidence of lung cancer than do those who smoke but do not inhale.

A decline in rate of increase of lung-cancer deaths in the face of a steady increase in cigarette smoking.

The finding that lung cancer is twice as common in British men as among American men, even though cigarette consumption is half as great in England as here.

The fact that heavy smokers don't contract lung cancer any earlier than light smokers do.

Dr. Hyde also remarked on the many differences between smokers and nonsmokers.

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