

In all hospitals several drugs within a given category were often prescribed for an individual. Individual patients received as many as 12 antibiotics, seven analgesics, six diuretics, five hypnotics, seven laxatives, six tranquilizers, and 11 vitamin preparations.

Table 6 shows the use of drug categories in different age groups. The data are expressed as a ratio of the observed (actual number of times the drug category was given) to the expected (number of times the drug category would have been given if the drug categories were equally distributed in each age group). In the adult hospitals drugs were prescribed most often for those over 55 years of age. Particularly striking were the ratios in the following categories: cardiac stimulants (70:16), diuretics (58:31), and vitamins (81:49). Hypnotics, anticholinergics, and analgesics were given more often to patients in the middle-age groups. The youngest age group (0 to 15) presents higher observed than expected figures in decongestants (43:32), antibiotics (65:60), and anticholinergics (68:60).

TABLE 6.—USE OF DRUG CATEGORIES IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS¹

Proximum.....	Age group, year			
	<15 0.2507	16-40 0.2273	41-54 0.1481	>55 0.3739
Analgesics.....	23/95.8	109/86.8	84/56.6	166/142.8
Antacids.....	5/23.6	20/21.4	18/13.9	50/35.1
Antibiotics.....	65/60.4	34/54.8	34/35.7	108/90.1
Antidiabetics.....	2/12.5	2/11.4	7/7.4	39/18.7
Antiemetics.....	2/22.8	22/20.7	18/13.5	49/34
Anticholinergics.....	68/59.9	71/54.3	37/35.4	63/89.4
Antihistamines.....	15/25.1	16/22.7	16/14.8	53/37.4
Antiseptics.....	6/10.5	7/9.5	8/6.2	21/15.7
Cardiac stimulants.....	6/23.3	3/21.2	14/13.8	70/34.8
Corticosteroids.....	12/16	6/14.5	10/9.5	36/23.6
Decongestants.....	43/31.6	10/28.6	16/18.7	57/47.1
Diuretics.....	6/20.6	2/18.6	16/12.1	58/30.7
Expectorants.....	12/19.1	9/17.3	15/11.3	40/28.4
Hematinics.....	6/19.1	1/17.3	5/11.3	30/28.4
Hypnotics.....	68/129.6	137/117.5	94/76.6	218/193.3
Laxatives.....	22/89.2	82/80.9	68/52.7	184/133.1
Ointments.....	4/13	8/11.8	4/7.7	36/19.4
Tranquilizers.....	10/23.3	17/21.1	15/13.8	51/34.8
Vitamins.....	21/33.1	9/30	21/19.5	81/49.4
Vasopressors.....	0/8	2/7.3	6/4.7	24/12

¹ The data are expressed as a ratio of the observed (actual number of times the drug category was given) to the expected (number of times the drug category would have been given if the drug categories were equally distributed in each age group).

Table 7 presents the different drug categories prescribed for male and female patients. The form of this table is similar to Table 6, i.e. observed figures are compared with expected (number of times the drug category would have been given if equally distributed by sex). In 15 of 20 categories orders were written more frequently for the female than for the male patients. Bronchodilators, expectorants, cardiac stimulants, hypnotics, and laxatives were used more often in males.

TABLE 7.—DRUG CATEGORY ORDER DISTRIBUTION IN MALE AND FEMALE PATIENTS¹

Proximum.....	Males 0.570	Females 0.430
Analgesics.....	95/120	117/92
Antacids.....	4/6	6/4
Antibiotics.....	68/76	65/57
Antidiabetics.....	10/11	10/9
Antiemetics.....	6/8	8/6
Anticholinergics.....	8/9	8/7
Antihistamines.....	3/6	8/5
Antiseptics.....	3/5	5/3
Cardiac stimulants.....	10/10	8/8
Corticosteroids.....	8/9	8/7
Decongestants and bronchodilators.....	31/27	17/21
Diuretics.....	12/17	18/13
Expectorants.....	12/10	5/7
Hematinics.....	2/5	6/3
Hypnotics-sedatives.....	119/114	80/85
Laxatives and stool softeners.....	68/69	53/52
Ointments.....	6/10	11/7
Tranquilizers.....	12/16	16/12
Vasopressors.....	1/3	4/2
Vitamins.....	14/27	34/21
Total number of patients (682).....	385	297

¹ The data are expressed as a ratio of the observed (actual number of times the drug category was given) to the expected (number of times the drug category would have been given if the drug categories were distributed equally by sex).