

anemia has developed from the use of the drug chloramphenicol, what percentage of those cases were fatal?

Dr. DAMESHEK. I would say something like 75 percent.

Senator NELSON. 75 percent?

Dr. DAMESHEK. Yes. I have seen mainly the severe cases.

Senator NELSON. One can live certain periods of time, I take it, then, with aplastic anemia depending upon the degree of inhibition of production of blood cells that has resulted.

Dr. DAMESHEK. Yes; and depending also upon the amount of treatment, notably the use of transfusions, because if the individual develops lack of blood, lack of red cells, this can be substituted by the use of transfusions, at least to some extent.

Senator NELSON. And what is the patient's condition even though he continues to live?

Dr. DAMESHEK. Well, as a result of the aplastic anemia, the individual becomes incapacitated as a rule. He cannot work, he cannot do his usual work. He is usually anemic. What is more, he is very apt to pick up infections because his white cell count is low. And the normal white cells which control infections are no longer there.

He is apt to bleed from his nose, his gums, get black and blue marks and bleed internally because he has very few platelets which control bleeding. So that he is in a rather bad way.

Now, in most instances the entire marrow shows reactions to the drug and thus all the elements of the blood are affected, leading to aplastic anemia which is frequently fatal. Overt or serious aplastic anemia develops only rarely in the wake of Chloromycetin therapy.

Now, how rarely it develops is by no means known. We have no exact statistics on this subject at all. There is no need, there is no requirement about reporting drug reactions at this time.

Senator NELSON. No requirement at all in the law?

Dr. DAMESHEK. No. No requirement as far as I know in any State, municipal, or governmental law regarding the reporting of severe reactions or drug reactions.

Senator NELSON. To depart from your testimony, would it be feasible at least, to have a reporting system developed by all the hospitals? Would it be useful?

Dr. DAMESHEK. Oh, I think it would. I see no great difficulties involved in that. If every hospital reported every case of aplastic anemia, and of every severe reaction to a drug or every severe possible or probable reaction to a drug, I think that would be quite feasible. I see no objection to that.

Senator NELSON. You would apply that to all serious reactions to all drugs?

Dr. DAMESHEK. All serious reactions; yes, I would. I think it would be a very valuable educational thing to have and very valuable thing to have in general.

Senator NELSON. If that were done by the hospitals, where would the best place be for the information to be accumulated so that it could be properly evaluated and disseminated?

Dr. DAMESHEK. Well, I can see the possibility of the patient having a probable or well-defined reaction to a drug reported to the admin-