

I would say no more than maybe 10 percent of the people receiving the drug should have had it. I think Dr. Best in one of his articles takes this thing up and you might ask Dr. Best for a better—or best—answer to this.

Senator NELSON. But, it is your belief or guess that of the some 3,500,000 or so who do receive the drug each year only about 10 percent should have received it?

Dr. DAMESHEK. I would think so, but I must confess that this is not a very—it is a guess. That is about it. And, if you want to say educated, all right. I am agreeable to that.

Senator NELSON. Pardon me. I did not understand that.

Dr. DAMESHEK. If you want to say “educated” in front of a guess, that is all right.

Senator NELSON. Doctor, I have here two package inserts on chloramphenicol, in this case Chloromycetin. One of them is a package insert that is used in this country now and one is a package insert that is used in Great Britain. I would like to have one of the staff show these to you and get your comment as to the adequacy of the warning notices on these package inserts and then submit them for the record.

Dr. DAMESHEK. Yes. The warning in the packet for use in this country is, I think, a pretty good warning. It is a direct outgrowth of an ad hoc committee of which I am a member, I think a committee of the National Academy of Sciences, or the National Science Foundation, and we had a meeting, I think, in 1952, and another meeting in, I think, around 1959, and we practically wrote this thing and it was accepted by the pharmaceutical house, Parke, Davis & Co., and it reads as follows, if I may read it:

Serious and even fatal blood dyscrasias (aplastic anemia, hypoplastic anemia, thrombocytopenia, granulocytopenia) are known to occur after the administration of chloramphenicol. Blood dyscrasias—

Abnormalities of the blood—

have occurred after short-term and with prolonged therapy with this drug. Bearing in mind the possibility that such reactions may occur, chloramphenicol should be used only for serious infections caused by organisms which are susceptible to its antibacterial effects. Chloramphenicol should not be used when other less potentially dangerous agents will be effective, or in the treatment of trivial infections such as colds, influenza, viral infections of the throat, or as a prophylactic agent.

And then, it says something about precautions:

It is essential that adequate blood studies be made during treatment with the drug. While blood studies may detect early peripheral blood changes, before they become irreversible, such studies cannot be relied upon to detect bone marrow depression prior to development of aplastic anemia.

I think that is a very good statement.

Mr. GORDON. Dr. Dameshek, does the ordinary practicing doctor read it and remember what it says?

Dr. DAMESHEK. Now, now look, I cannot look into the minds of ordinary practicing physicians. There are no such things as “ordinary” practicing physicians in our country. There are practicing physicians and they are all people who have had an adequate training, it is hoped, and have passed all the various boards, it is hoped, and so on, and they