

tice trial today and states he has never heard of a warning on Chloromycetin then I would have to say I didn't believe him.

You will find the same thing true with alcohol in motor vehicle accidents. I am sure that you will find most experts will tell you that alcohol is present in 50 percent or greater of people who are killed in motor vehicle accidents if they are drivers, but this doesn't stop people from drinking and driving. This can't happen to me. This is a concept basically ingrained in human motivation. And I think it is one that has to be considered when we are talking about something which occurs 1 in 24,000 times.

Mr. GORDON. But, Dr. Weston, a doctor can't say "This can't happen to me." He is prescribing it for somebody else.

Dr. WESTON. No, this is interesting. I went to 12 doctors in the University of Utah before I left and I said "Do you prescribe Chloromycetin for your children?" And I didn't find one who said yes, they do. On the other hand, in that medical center complex I didn't find any that prescribed Chloromycetin for anybody.

Senator NELSON. You didn't find any physician who prescribed it for anybody?

Dr. WESTON. For anybody for anything at this point, no, sir. This is, of course, in a university setting which is different from what you find in a physician on the street corner, but I couldn't find anyone who thought it was indicated for any condition.

Senator NELSON. Well, that is why it seems to me your explanation isn't really very satisfactory because here are doctors at a university teaching hospital who really know apparently what chloramphenicol is all about, and they don't say "Well, it can't happen to me." So if the doctors who in that setting don't prescribe it, then how do you explain why doctors outside that setting will say "I know what it is all about, but it can't happen to me."

Dr. WESTON. Well, I think you have to understand the spectrum of medical knowledge. At one extreme you have the university setting and at the opposite extreme you have the physician who hardly reads the Journal from one year to the next, practicing medicine, seeing 40 or 50 patients a day in his office and this physician is not going to read much more than the big print in this ad. This is the drug of choice, that is it. He hardly will get to the small print on the second page and I am sure he won't get very far in two paragraphs or a full page in small print like that in an advertisement.

I think this is the crux of the thing. They don't understand what the toxic potentiality is.

Senator NELSON. That is what I was getting at. It is more out of ignorance, then, that it is prescribed, at least in minor infections where it is clearly not indicated and in cases where there is clearly an effective alternative. It must be ignorance rather than feeling, "Well, it only happens 1 in 24,000 times, and therefore, it is not much of a risk," don't you think?

Dr. WESTON. Yes, but this type of ignorance is inexcusable. When I say the doctor can't be held blameless, I mean that I think this type of ignorance today in medical practice is inexcusable. I think a physician has a certain obligation to overcome this degree of ignorance. If he is going to prescribe a drug he has an obligation to his patients