

as acetylsalicylic acid and penicillin are associated with all varieties of blood diseases but that this association is coincidental and is rarely present if the drugs are given alone. On the other hand, some drugs are predominantly associated with specific blood diseases and often have been found to be the only drugs given to patients who subsequently develop a blood disease. Chloramphenicol is the drug most often associated with pancytopenia; the sulfonamides are most often associated with thrombocytopenia; and the phenothiazines are most often associated with leukopenia. A simple awareness of the potential toxicity of drugs will lead to appropriate examinations and to the establishment of safeguards for the detection and possible prevention of drug-induced blood dyscrasias.

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REGISTRY ON BLOOD DYSCRASIAS

REPORT TO THE COUNCIL*

In 1952, the Council on Drugs became concerned with the problem of hematotoxicosis from the ever-increasing number of therapeutic agents. The Council's former Committee on Research recommended that a Registry on Blood Dyscrasias be formed; and after a 2-year pilot study, the Registry was permanently established. Reports are tabulated for each 6-month period, and the summary tabulation is distributed to medical schools, hospitals, medical societies, and collaborating physicians.

With expansion, the need for a résumé of the tabulated information has become apparent. The reports received by the Registry for the period January 1 to June 30, 1961, were used for this purpose. The information must be considered raw data, since reports are received from many sources and no follow-up is possible.

The résumé is intended to provide concise information regarding common associations between drugs and blood dyscrasias, to acquaint physicians with the existence of the Registry, and to encourage them to report cases of blood dyscrasia in which drugs or other chemicals may be the suspected cause.

RÉSUMÉ OF REPORTS RECEIVED BY REGISTRY ON BLOOD DYSCRASIAS JANUARY 1 TO JUNE 30, 1961

In the period from January 1 to June 30, 1961, 138 new cases of blood diseases suspected of having been caused by drugs or chemicals were reported to the Study Group on Blood Dyscrasias of the American Medical Association. These included cases which were published in the American medical journals during the same period. Forty-eight cases noted in foreign medical journals are reviewed separately.

These findings increase the total number of cases reported since 1955 to 1,504 and the total number of drugs and chemicals reported to be associated with the development of blood dyscrasias to 411. Because of the large number of drugs involved, it has become increasingly difficult to evaluate the data and establish firm etiological relationships between specific drugs and specific blood disorders. However, certain previously unsuspected hematological side effects of drugs may be recognized much earlier if data are gathered from all over the country. Therefore, the Study Group on Blood Dyscrasia feels that it is important to continue to act as a clearinghouse for all suspected instances of hematological side effects which may arise from the use of drugs.

In order to transform the accumulated data into useful information, the Study Group has recommended that a brief analysis of the reported material be prepared. A copy of the complete tabulation is available upon request from the Council on Drugs.

An analysis of the new cases added to the tabulation during the first 6 months of 1961 does not justify any sweeping conclusions or condemnations. The drugs appearing in the tabulation are those which are known to have produced toxic

*The Council has authorized publication of the above report.