

No changes in staffing pattern have been made, and the level of experience of the staff directly concerned with patient care has been similar during each of these years. During this period, any patient reaching the hospital with a detectable heart beat, regardless of the need for respiratory assistance has been included.

The contrast between 1964 and 1965 is apparent. Fourteen deaths occurred among 99 patients treated during 1964, while only three deaths occurred among 91 patients treated during 1965. If one uses standard techniques to calculate the probability of the difference between these years occurring by chance alone, $\chi^2=6.74$; $p<0.01$. Furthermore, if one examines the trend over the years as is illustrated in figures 1 and 2, it is apparent that clustering of both cases and deaths occurs during several intervals over these years. It is also apparent that a substantial influx of patients occurred during the weeks immediately subsequent to the influenza outbreak in late February of 1966.

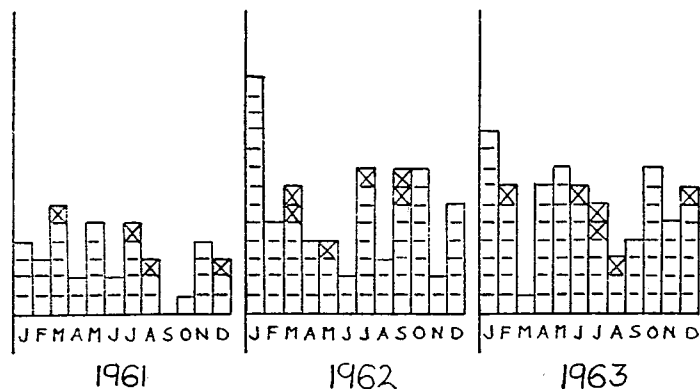


FIGURE 1. Meningococcal disease, Los Angeles County General Hospital.

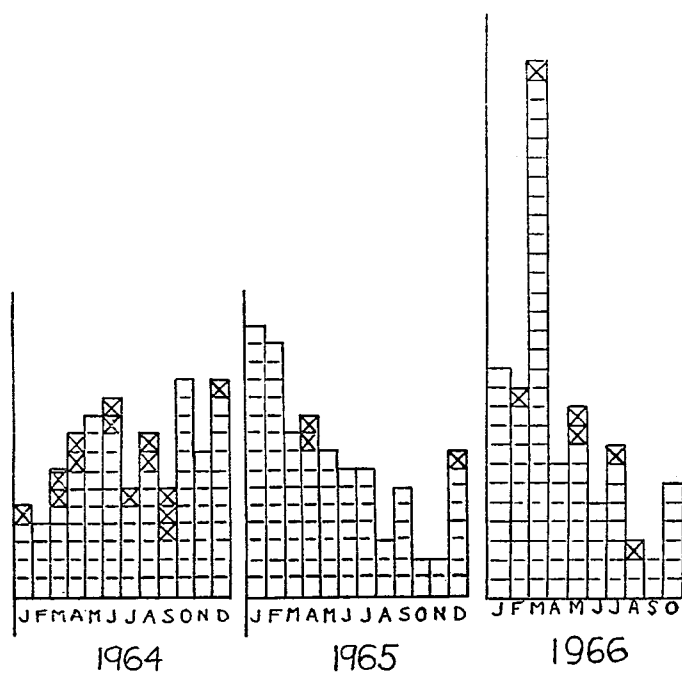


FIGURE 2.—Meningococcal disease, Los Angeles County General Hospital.