

Why is it that there is no real public knowledge of the danger of cancer and the only means of its cure?

PHYSICIANS MUST NOT ADVERTISE.

I am afraid that the blame for much of this lack of information must be laid at the door of the physician himself. The binding code against advertising affects the honorable man—not the quack. The source of the medical knowledge of the masses to-day is still the charlatan and his newspaper advertisements, and it is time, indeed, that the public receive accurate information from those who know the situation.

The remarkable fall in the death rate from tuberculosis during the last few years is due to the widespread publicity given by physicians, both as individuals and as members of the Association for the Study of Tuberculosis, to this simple fact: that the disease can easily be cured, if taken in time. Similar campaigns of publicity have been carried out by the life insurance companies and the mutual benefit societies, with equal success. The cure of tuberculosis, however, is a relatively simple matter, requiring chiefly rest, good food and fresh air; the cure of cancer, on the other hand, is, unfortunately, more difficult.

Cancer is a disease which, especially when it is internal, is often hard to recognize, and, moreover, it is one which requires immediate action if good results are to follow. This immediate action, in the vast majority of cases, is recourse to operation by highly trained and skilled specialists.

To some people the words "highly trained" and "skilled specialists" bring chiefly the thought of a heavy bill; but it must be remembered that in hundreds of hospitals and dispensaries throughout the land, especially in the larger cities, the advice of such specialists can be obtained on the payment of a merely nominal fee, and that at any price the services of a man who knows are less expensive in the end than those of a quack.

THE BEGINNING OF PUBLIC EDUCATION.

A beginning in public education about cancer has, indeed, been made by the American Society for the Control of Cancer, an organization formed to spread accurate and authentic knowledge concerning the disease among both physicians and the public; such, for instance, as the fact that in England cancer is the most frequent cause of death among women after the age of forty-five; that in the United States one man in fourteen and one woman in eight over forty years of age die of the disease; that, if taken at the beginning, the majority of cases of cancer are curable; that the only cure is the removal of every vestige of the disease; and that the only sure way of accomplishing this is by a surgical operation.