

REFERENCE PAPERS

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CANADIAN ARMY MEDICAL RESEARCH

One of the least publicized directorates of the Canadian Army is the Directorate of Medical Services, which has initiated and conducted a great deal of medical research on problems particularly related to the needs of fighting men. Much of this has been organized through an Associate Committee on Army Medical Research, comprised not only of army men, but of scientists from civilian institutions as well as from the National Research Council. The Council has provided facilities, and both private and military hospitals have co-operated.

From studies inaugurated by this Committee, some new discoveries of civilian as well as military importance have resulted. Information about many of them cannot be released at present, but three of them of permanent significance have been chosen for description in this REFERENCE PAPER. It is hoped that others now under investigation will be described in future REFERENCE PAPERS.

IMPREGNATED BANDAGES

Discovered accidentally during the Spanish Civil War, the encasing of infected wounds and fractures in plaster casts has now become standard practice; but there has always been a serious disadvantage to this procedure - the foul odor emanating from the wound.

For more than six months a Canadian Army scientist working with the National Research Council prepared various kinds of bandage impregnated with substances that would provide absorption, with the idea of using these bandages by winding them right into the plaster cast.

Eventually he developed a formula that combined carbon and micronized silica. Bandages are impregnated with this formula and then wound into the plaster bandage. In its first test in a Canadian military hospital it worked successfully, as reported by the medical officer who tried it out. He said:

"These cases before application of the deodorant had previously been treated by plaster alone, and the odor was very disagreeable, especially to the patient himself. When the deodorant bandage was used, practically all odor disappeared."

The impregnated bandage has already been distributed to active combat areas for trial in the field.

VITAMIN C FOR ISOLATED AND FAMINE AREAS

Scientists all over the world have increased their efforts to find some cheap, reliable method of supplementing nutritionally poor diets with needed vitamins. The needs of troops stationed in isolated