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Bulletin No. 8

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Measles And Rubella: Still Not In Alaska

Since January 1975, 21 suspected cases of measles or rubella were reported. All were investigated and most had serologic and/or viral studies. NO measles or rubella were confirmed. Alaska now has had over two years without measles and 1½ years without rubella.

If you suspect a case of measles or rubella, please call us immediately, 272-7534, (Anchorage) and we will attempt to confirm the diagnosis with serologic or viral studies.

Virus Watch

During March the Virology-Rabies Laboratory in Fairbanks isolated the following viruses: Parainfluenza, type III, Adenovirus, types 2 and 6, Echovirus type 31, and influenza A, Port Chalmers. Specimens were from Bethel, Anchorage and Trans-Alaska Pipeline Camps.

A New Pediatric Disease

What may be a new disease has been afflicting infants and young children in Japan since 1960. It is an acute, febrile, mucocutaneous condition accompanied by swelling of cervical lymph nodes (tentatively called mucocutaneous lymph node syndrome, MLNS). It may be misdiagnosed as scarlet fever, the Stevens-Johnson syndrome, or infantile periarteritis nodosa. The disease is now known to be widely occurring all over Japan with increasing incidence each year. More than 6,000 cases have been reported as of 1973. One to two percent of the patients reported died suddenly of cardiac failure. All the autopsies showed infantile periarteritis nodosa-like arteritis accompanied by coronary thrombosis and aneurysm. Some of the surviving cases have been shown to have similar changes. These findings lead us to believe that this clinical picture is a new clinical entity. Recently, rickettsia-like bodies were found by electron microscopy in biopsy specimens from the skin and lymph nodes of the patients.

Because of increasing travel between Anchorage and Japan, physicians in Alaska should be aware of the above disease. Suspect cases should be reported to the medical epidemiologist (Dr. Mickey Eisenberg, 272-7534, Anchorage).

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