



Bulletin No. 22
December 19, 1975
DIPHTHERIA

On December 1, a 40 year old man from Anchorage was discovered to have diphtheria and was hospitalized at Elmendorf. Contact culturing did not reveal any further cases, nor the source of his infection. On December 8, another case of diphtheria was discovered in Chistochina in a nine year old boy. Contact culturing has been done on his close contacts, including his family and the other children in his classroom. These cultures are pending. Both patients are doing well.

Follow-up immunization clinics were held in Anchorage on December 6 for those who needed a primary immunization. People who had never been immunized prior to the November campaign should be encouraged to obtain their second shot at this time. Diphtheria seems to be with us to stay this winter and we expect more cases to occur.

STAPHYLOCOCCAL FOOD POISONING IN BARROW

On November 18, there was an outbreak of gastrointestinal illness at a DEW Line Site just outside of Barrow. Investigation revealed that 12 of the 17 people eating the dinner meal became ill. The disease had an incubation period of two hours to six and a quarter hours. 100% of those ill experienced nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain. 66% experienced severe headaches. All people recovered completely in 48 hours. Large numbers of staphylococcus were cultured from the food and from the stools of the people who were ill. Thawing of frozen food constitutes a major hazard in the development of gastrointestinal illness. In this outbreak, the meat had been allowed to thaw at room temperature for 18 hours prior to its being cooked for the dinner meal. Staphylococcus will not grow and will not elaborate enterotoxin if kept below 40°F.

(Reported by Rod Coker, PHS Sanitarian, Bonnie Livesay, PHN, Dr. Cindy Anderson, Dr. Pete Mias and Dr. Rob Burgess)

TRICHINOSIS IN BARROW

An investigation was made to determine the etiology of the cases of trichinosis which have been confirmed in Barrow. Epidemiologic evidence strongly linked the consumption of raw walrus meat with disease. We have now recovered trichinosis organisms from the walrus meat. Eleven cases have been identified. Control measures have included a large publicity campaign emphasizing the need to adequately cook food to kill the trichinosis organism. In addition, arrangements are being made to provide testing services for any suspect food, particularly walrus.

(Reported by Rod Coker, PHS Sanitarian, Bonnie Livesay, PHN, Dr. Rob Burgess and Dr. Cindy Anderson) 'I

POSTSTREPTOCOCCAL GLOMERULONEPHRITIS

This disease which most of us come in contact with sporadically is now presenting as an epidemic in the Bethel area. The pre-sent 25 cases (all children) are clustered in four villages around Bethel (Akiachuk, Kwethluk, Napakiak, and Napaskiak). The CDC people tell us that the "bad actor" is a strep characterized as NT 14. This organism is presently being seen **all over** the state and thus everyone's suspicion should be up for signs or symptoms of the disease. Though not a reportable disease, we of the CDC (279-9511) would like to hear of any cases.