



Bulletin No. 11
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Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning

MORE DIPHTHERIA

A 14-year-old Anchorage Native traveled to Fairbanks where he visited relatives for a week. He then went to Ft. Yukon where he developed a severe sore throat which cultures revealed was due to toxigenic diphtheria, *mitis* type. The patient was up to date on his immunizations and had received a booster in last November's campaign. He has done well with no signs of serious sequela. Contact culturing revealed two asymptomatic carriers in the patient's Fairbanks family. One of these contacts was an airline stewardess. Further contact culturing has revealed no new cases.

PARALYTIC SHELLFISH POISONING

Three outbreaks of paralytic shellfish poisoning occurred, involving a total of 9 people. All ate clams from unapproved beaches which were subsequently sampled and were found to have extremely high levels of toxin. There were no deaths, although two patients required respiratory support. Widespread publicity resulted to warn of the continued dangers from paralytic shellfish poisoning in Alaska waters.

MEASLES IN SHUNGNAK

We have now received laboratory confirmation of the first measles cases in Alaska since May, 1973. Two cases were imported from Oklahoma with two secondary cases occurring in Shungnak. No further cases have occurred. We attribute containment of the outbreak to the high levels of immunization in the surrounding area, approaching 100%.

MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS

Three more cases of meningococcal meningitis occurred in July. A 45-year-old Native woman, who was a contact of a fatal case in June, developed a Group A infection. A 42 year old Native from Ketchikan became ill, but his cultures were lost before serogrouping was obtained. We are awaiting serogrouping on a three-year-old white girl from Anchorage. Should more cases occur in the alcoholic Native population in Anchorage, we will consider using the new Polysaccharide vaccine in that population.