

New Facts About The Elderly

By HERMAN N. BUNDESEN, M.D.
IT is a safe bet that most people never realize the great amount of labor medical science must devote, not to disease, but simply to find out how the body functions in health. And yet, when you come to think about it, what could be more necessary, for, unless we know the normal, how can we estimate the changes which illness brings about?

Take the matter of body temperature, for instance. Today, we all know that the normal temperature is 98.6 degrees and that there may be a perfectly normal variation of 1.8 degrees during the course of the day, with the lowest readings in the early morning and the highest in the late afternoon. But these facts were not pulled out of the air; they were established by a long and painstaking piece of research undertaken by an English physician named Davy just about 100 years ago.

Helpful Results

Today another English physician, Dr. Trevor H. Howell, has completed another such service, and one whose results will be just as helpful. Knowing that for many years there has been some dispute as to the normal body temperature of elderly people, Dr. Howell set out to find just how much it might differ from that of adults in their prime. In all, more than 326 old men, ranging in age from 65 to 93, were studied. All were up and about and not in need of medical treatment or suffering from any illness. Temperature readings were taken over a period of a year.

In taking the temperatures, he used a thermometer certified to register within one-half a minute, and the thermometer was kept in place for this time.

Lowest Point

He found that in many instances in elderly persons, the body temperature did not reach 98 degrees, which was the lowest point the thermometer would register when the temperature was taken under these conditions. He thus concluded that temperatures taken this way are not accurate.

Some doctors think that in elderly persons the thermometer should be kept in place for ten minutes to get a correct reading. However, few see elderly people could hold a thermometer in place for more than five minutes.

Of course, the temperature may be taken in the rectum or in the armpit. In the patient studied by Dr. Howell, about the same number of mouth and armpit temperatures were determined. He took readings lasting one, three and five minutes, and he found that if the thermometer was left in place for five minutes, the readings were more than a degree higher on the average than when the thermometer was left in place for a shorter time.

It was found that there was a variation in mouth temperatures varying from 98.2 degrees to 102 degrees, and in armpit temperatures from 95 degrees to 98.4 degrees.

In general it was learned that the temperatures of these elderly people were somewhat lower than those found in younger adults. Furthermore, the variation in temperature or the range of normal temperatures is much greater than in young adults. Thus, when the temperature is taken in an elderly person, before interpreting its meaning, these facts concerning variation in body temperature must be kept in mind.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

E. F. B.: Is mastitis dangerous? Is operation advised?

Answer: Mastitis means inflammation of the breast. The condition, as a rule, is not dangerous. Operation may be needed in some cases. In others, treatment with certain gland extracts and the application of heat may be helpful.

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Vegetable Dish Keys Light Meal



Fresh vegetables baked with cheese sauce, garnished with stuffed eggs, make a substantial main course.

By GAYNOR MADDOX

For luncheon, or for a light dinner, combine vegetables and cheese into a baked main dish.

Vegetable Garden Special

(Serves 6)

Twelve small new potatoes, 1 cup green onions, cut in 1/2-inch pieces; 2 cups fresh peas, 3 tablespoons butter or margarine, 3 tablespoons flour, 1-1/2 teaspoons salt, 1-1/2 teaspoon pepper, 1-1/2 cups milk, 1 cup grated cheddar cheese (4 ounces).

Pare potatoes and cook for about 15 minutes. Add green onions and peas to potatoes; continue cooking about 15 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Arrange vegetables in well-greased heat-resistant glass 1-1/2-quart baking dish. Melt butter in top of salt and pepper. Add milk; cook over low heat until mixture is thickened and no starchy taste remains, or for about 20 minutes. Stir in grated cheese until it is melted. Pour sauce over vegetables in baking dish. Bake in

moderate oven (350 degrees F.) about 15 minutes. Serve with deviled egg salad and vegetable relish.

Vegetable Garden Special

(Serves 6)

One medium-sized eggplant, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon water, 1 teaspoon salt, 3-4 cup dry bread crumbs, 1-2 cup milk, 1 cup grated cheddar cheese (4 ounces).

Pare eggplant into thin slices and peel. Beat egg slightly with water and add salt. Dip eggplant in egg and then bread crumbs; fry in hot skillet in part of fat. Add fat from time to time as needed. Keep slices of fried eggplant hot by placing on a pre-heated 15-inch heat-resistant glass platter.

Chesse Sauce: One can mushroom soup (10 ounces), 1-2 cup water, 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese.

Heat soup and water together in a saucepan. Add cheese and cook until melted, stirring constantly.

Serve eggplant on glass platter, accompanied with hot cheese sauce over vegetables.

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moderate oven (350 degrees F.) about 15 minutes. Serve with deviled egg salad and vegetable relish.

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