

## VOLUNTEER CANCER TESTS ADDED TO EMPLOYEE PHYSICAL EXAM

Two new tests for detection of cancer have been added to the routine physical examination given to all employees by the medical department. These tests will be given at the request of the employee being examined on a volunteer basis.

One test involves a procto sigmoidoscopic examination for cancer of the rectum. This is a simple relatively painless procedure where the rectum and some of the sigmoid colon are observed through a tube for presence of polyps and early cancers.

The medical profession rates this as one of the most valuable tests for cancer detection. Many plant employees have already had this exam on the advice of the medical department because of family history or because of some internal signs which needed further examination.

A second test is a chemical test for hidden traces of blood in the stool.

Although this test is not specific for cancer, it can detect intermittent bleeding, one of the most important early signs of colo-rectal cancer. It can also reveal other gastrointestinal disorders such as ulcer, enteritis or diverticulitis which may show the same symptom and can be better treated if detected early.

These new tests are part of a plant health program to increase the thoroughness of and facilities for the routine physical examination to make it as complete as possible outside a hospital.

The medical department stresses importance of a routine physical examination. Dr. Lister, Plant Physician cites, "The body is not always a good indicator of what might be wrong with your health. If you wait for symptoms to develop before you analyze the cause, you usually wait too long for effective treatment or cure."

"This is especially true with cancer. It's one of the most devastating types of illnesses accounting for much disability and deaths. In spite of new forms of treatment and medicines, there is no substitute for early detection."

"Up to now, the routine examination may suggest presence of cancer through weight loss without effort, pain patterns, blood loss from anywhere, growths or lumps on the body, etc. The employee-Dr. interview and the physical itself uncovers some of these symptoms. With females, breast and pelvic examinations and the pap smear are indicators. (These have been available to female employees on a voluntary basis.) The rectal examination is the only way to examine the prostate gland which harbours cancer in men."

"All the accumulated tests just mentioned, performed at the time of examination, are designed to look for problems of a vital or malignant nature. The two new procedures add great value to the overall search since cancer of the colon, best detected by these new techniques, is the most common starting point of cancer in humans."

### PROCTOSCOPIC AND OCCULT BLOOD TEST HELP RID CANCER

Taken from article in Internal Medicine News, 7/15/75 issue.

- If cancer of the pancreas is not considered, 45% of gastrointestinal tract cancers occur in the lower bowel, an area which can be examined with the proctoscope for both screening and diagnosis . . .
- Cancers of the upper bowel area can be detected by screening for occult blood . . . \*
- The risk of death and the need for colostomy can virtually be eliminated by annual proctoscopic examination and by the removal of polyps . . .

- Use of present-day methods and knowledge could significantly lower morbidity and mortality from lower gastrointestinal tract cancer, and this may also be true for upper gastrointestinal tract tumors if occult blood tests are used . . .

\* hidden blood.



"That isn't what the doctor meant when he said to bring in a stool specimen."