

[Banks HS \(1939\)](#). Chemotherapy of meningococcal meningitis. Lancet 2:921-927.

Key passages

CHEMOTHERAPY OF MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS *

A REVIEW OF 147 CONSECUTIVE CASES

BY H. STANLEY BANKS, M.D. Glasg., D.P.H.

MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE PARK HOSPITAL (L.C.C.)

SINCE the publication of a preliminary article on the use of serum and sulphanilamide in acute meningococcal meningitis (Banks 1938) some 55 additional cases have been treated in this hospital by chemotherapy alone. The whole of the material in which chemotherapy has been employed with or without serum may now be usefully reviewed in an attempt to assess the value of sulphanilamide and M. & B. 693. These two drugs were employed without selection, at first in alternate series of cases admitted, and later, when the number in each series became about equal, as far as possible in alternate cases admitted. The M. & B. 693 series is the larger because treatment with this drug had in some cases been started before admission, thus preventing strict alternation. The extended experience of chemotherapy alone provides new data on which a truer estimate of the comparative and auxiliary value of serum in meningococcal meningitis may be formed.

Summary

First, 65 cases of acute meningococcal meningitis were treated with serum in intensive intravenous dosage and sulphanilamide in somewhat varying dosage. There were 8 deaths, a case-fatality rate of 12·3 per cent. for treated cases, 13 complications and 3 known sequelæ (deafness). These figures are exclusive of 6 cases in which treatment could not be applied, and of these 4 were fatal. The gross mortality from the disease during the currency of this series was, therefore, represented by 12 deaths in 71 cases or 16·9 per cent.

Next, 72 cases, comparable to a high degree, were treated by chemotherapy alone in high dosage, 31 with sulphanilamide, 36 with M. & B. 693, and 5 with a combination of both drugs. There was 1 death, giving a case-fatality rate of 1·4 per cent. for treated cases, 6 complications and 2 known sequelæ (deafness). 4 cases, untreated or inadequately treated, and all fatal, were excluded from this series. The gross mortality from the disease during the currency of this series amounted, therefore, to 5 deaths in 76 cases, or 6·6 per cent.

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