

[Stuart-Harris CH, Francis AE, Stansfeld JM \(1943\)](#). Patulin in the common cold. *Lancet* 2:684.

Whole Article

PATULIN IN THE COMMON COLD

SIR,—With regard to the papers published in your last issue by Prof. H. Raistrick and his collaborators on the use of patulin in the treatment of the common cold, we wish to record that a laboratory and clinical investigation has been carried out under the auspices of the Director of Pathology, the War Office, on a sample of the substance which was received by courtesy of Professor Raistrick in March, 1943.

We were able to confirm in general the bacteriostatic activity and the lethal dosage for mice found by Surgeon Commander W. A. Hopkins and described in his paper.

A preliminary trial of the use of patulin in the treatment of the common cold was carried out in March, 1943, at a primary training wing, but the results were not convincing. A further trial was begun in August, 1943, at a different primary training wing, and in this trial the method of application was modified to conform with that used by Surgeon Commander Hopkins. One hundred cases were treated during August and September, and alternate cases received patulin and the control solution of phosphate buffer saline. The series was carefully analysed, and the treated and the control groups were found to be closely comparable as regards symptoms, average duration of the cold before treatment, and bacterial flora of the nasal secretion. All cases were afebrile. The proportion of cases which showed clinical improvement was substantially the same in both groups, as was the number of patients who considered that treatment had caused their colds to improve.

We had to conclude that patulin had no demonstrable effect on the course of this series of colds as compared with the natural evolution of the disease. A full report is being prepared and will be submitted to the Director of Pathology, the War Office, in due course.

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