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[Goldberger J, Waring CH, Tanner WF \(1923\)](#). Pellagra prevention by diet among inmates. Public Health Reports 38:2361-2368.

Key passages

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PELLAGRA PREVENTION BY DIET AMONG INSTITUTIONAL INMATES.

By JOSEPH GOLDBERGER, C. H. WARING and W. F. TANNER, Surgeons, United States Public Health Service.¹

First year.—The test of the preventive value of diet was begun at two orphanages at Jackson, Miss., in September, 1914, and in two wards of the Georgia State Sanitarium later that same year. These institutions had been endemic foci of the disease for some years. During the spring and summer of 1914, 79 cases of pellagra had been observed among the children of one orphanage and 130 among those of the other. Besides a variable number of cases of pellagra annually admitted as such (see beyond), cases of intramural origin were of frequent occurrence at the sanitarium.

At the orphanages the diet of all the residents, and at the sanitarium that of a group of selected inmates of two wards set aside for the purpose, was modified in several respects, among others in that oatmeal almost entirely replaced grits as the breakfast cereal and the allowance of fresh animal protein foods (milk, meat, and, at the orphanages, eggs) and legumes was greatly increased. The allowance of maize was thus reduced but not abolished. Aside from these modifications in diet and increased watchfulness over the individual eating, all administrative routine and hygienic and sanitary conditions remained unchanged. Furthermore, in order, at the same time, to test the hypothesis of infection, no restrictions were imposed on new admissions by reason of any manifestations of pellagra or of a history of an attack of the disease, and thus association and contact with newly admitted active cases was permitted without hindrance and, from time to time, actually took place, particularly at the sanitarium, the opportunities there being better.

At about the end of the first year following the inauguration of the modified diet, it was found that, at the orphanages, of an aggregate of 172 pellagrins who had completed at least the anniversary date of the 1914 attack under observation, only 1 had showed any evidence of a recurrence, and not a single case developed among an aggregate of 168 nonpellagrins who had been continuously under observation at least one year; and at the sanitarium of an aggregate of 72 pellagrins who had either remained continuously under observation up to October 1, 1915, or, at least, until after the anniversary date of the 1914 attack, not one presented recognizable evidence of a recurrence, although at the same time 47 per cent of a comparable group of 32 pellagrins not receiving the modified diet had recurrent attacks of the disease.

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