

HAPPINESS THROUGH HEALTH

By: Otto McClavin

KISSING MAY SPREAD DENTAL DISEASES:

Kissing can spread germs that cause cavities, bleeding gums, and pyorrhea, according to Dr. Paul Keyes, a scientist from the National Institute of Dental Research. "There are reasons to believe that dental diseases can be transmitted from person to person," he reported at a meeting in New York recently.

Dr. Keyes told of mothers with advanced cases of phorrhea—loose teeth in infected sockets—whose children were found to have an alarming number of the suspected disease-causing bacteria in their mouths.

"Because the micro-organism involved in dental diseases are probably transmitted from person to person, whenever possible we examine other members in a family and other persons with whom a patient is likely to be intimate—boyfriend, girlfriend."

The germ theory of dental illness may surprise lots of dentists. Up until now most have believed that conditions they treat largely are the result of improper brushing, too many sweets, deficient defense mechanisms and tartar.

TEST DETECTS LUNG CANCER BEFORE USUAL SIGNS APPEAR:

A team of doctors recently reported a new test for detecting lung cancer before the usual physical evidence appears. The test, reported by University Hospitals of Cleveland and Medical College of Wisconsin physicians, is based on the fact that complex body proteins called immunoglobulins -IGA- often reflect the body's attempts to respond to various diseases.

The study involved examination of IGA levels in secretion from a diseased lung and a normal lung in the same individuals. The teams reported that great variations found in IGA levels between the two lungs of an individual indicated various diseases.

Patients with tuberculosis showed lower than normal IGA levels in their diseased lung while patients with one of three types of lung cancer showed IGA levels two to six times higher in affected lungs.

"The elevated IGA levels are both significant and absolute, because they compare the two lungs of the same individual, with the unaffected lung used as a control," said Dr. Mark A. Mandel, of University Hospitals.

"Since each patient is his own control, the usual individual variations in response to environmental factors are minimized."

The research was done on 58 patients hospitalized at Milwaukee County General Hospital or Wood Veterans Administration Hospital in Milwaukee.

SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF WOMEN PHYSICIANS DO HOUSEWORK TOO:

Three of four women physicians surveyed in the Detroit area said they took care of all their families' cooking, shopping, child care and money management in addition to their patients' health.

The survey, reported recently in the Journal of the American Medical Association, also indicated that women physicians earned less than their male counterparts and rarely held high-status positions in their profession.

Dr. Marilyn Heins of the Wayne State University School of Medicine and Sue Smock of the school's Center for Urban Studies surveyed 87 Detroit-area women who had been trained as doctors. Two-thirds of the women said, however, that they did domestic help one or two days a week to assist with laundry and cleaning chores. The remaining third said they did all their own housework.

The average family income among women doctors, most of whom have working husbands, was lower than the average family income of male doctors, few of whom had working wives, the study said. Forty-three percent of the women doctors are married to doctors.

"I don't think there's any question that there is sex discrimination in medicine," Dr. Heins said.

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She said the survey findings contradicted an assumption held by some medical educators that training women for the profession was a waste of time because they tended to leave to care for their families. The study indicated that 84 percent of the women were doing medical work and 90 percent were working full-time at some job.

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