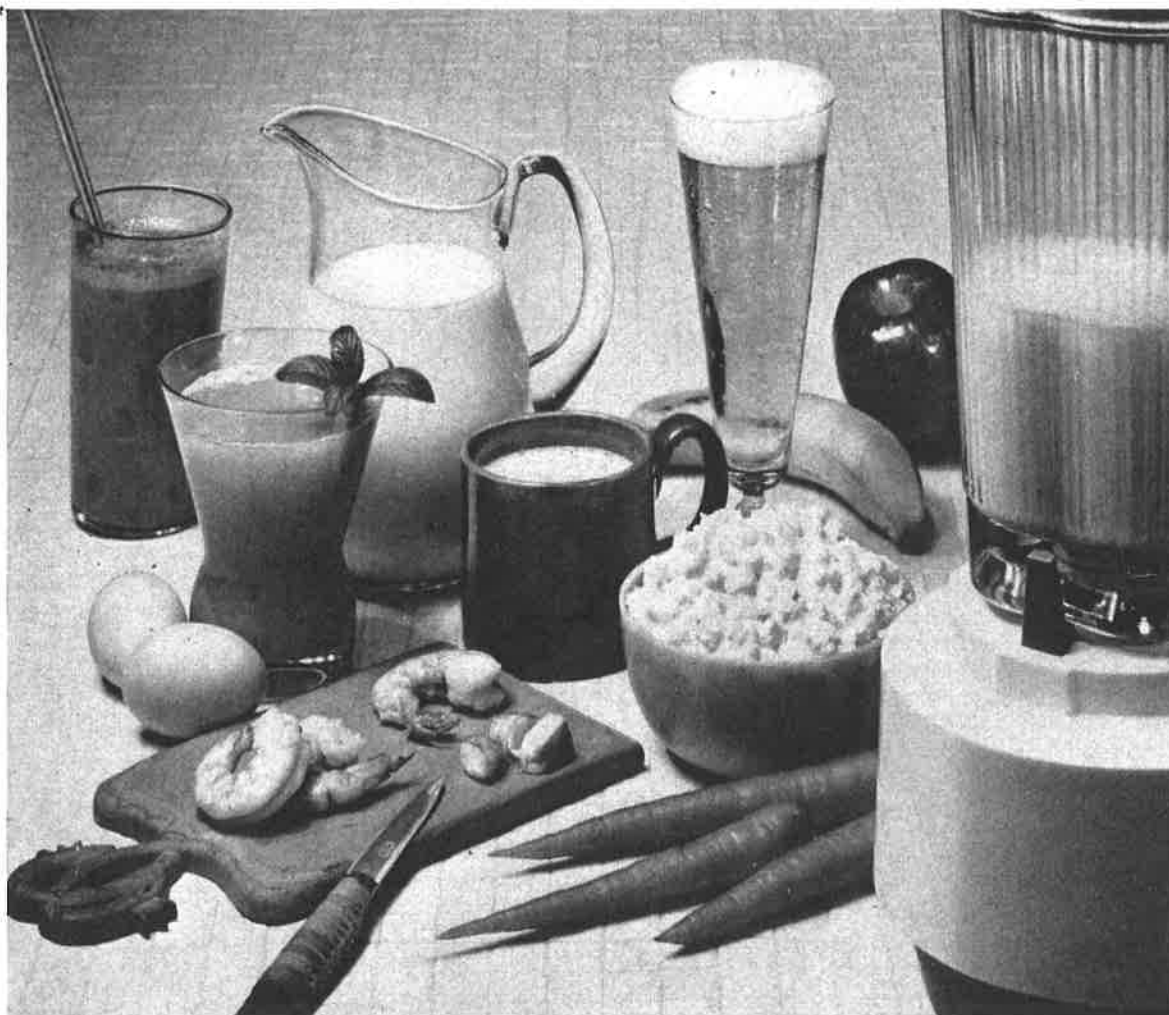


# How to help your patient stick to a full-liquid diet

The secret ingredient in a successful diet is acceptance. With a blender and a little imagination, it's relatively easy to prepare appetizing foods for a full-liquid diet. Strained chicken or shrimp blended with milk makes a good "bisque"—in tomato juice it's "creole." Many patients like cottage cheese beaten into chocolate milk flavored with mint. Strained carrots go well in milk or broth, while strained fruits in fruit juice—garnished with mint or a lemon wedge—are an appealing and satisfying dessert. Liquids should be served in colorful mugs or pretty glasses.



*A glass of beer  
can add zest  
to a  
patient's diet*



*It takes no time to "whip up" dinner in a blender*

United States Brewers Association, Inc.

For reprints of this and 11 other diet menus, write us at 535 Fifth Avenue, N.Y. 17, N.Y.





DR. CHAUNCEY D. LEAKE: EUDAEMONIC METHOPHRONESIS\*

# MD

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## ALCOHOL AND CIVILIZATION

■ The role of alcohol for pleasure, as a tranquilizer, in diet, in festivities and religious rites throughout history was thoroughly explored last month by a symposium† of experts from various fields gathered together at the University of California in San Francisco. Here are highlights from the subjects discussed:

**Metabolism.** Taken on an empty stomach, alcohol is rapidly absorbed, the maximum concentration in the bloodstream appearing in some 40 to 60 minutes; the simultaneous intake of protein and fat causes a larger delay in the absorption of alcohol than the ingestion of carbohydrates. Wines and beer have a slower absorption rate than pure alcohol.

The maximum daily intake that can be disposed of in 24 hours is approximately 1 pint of whisky or 4 pints of wine or 9 pints of beer, calculated for a person weighing about 140 lb.; lighter persons, dispose of

lesser amounts, heavier ones get rid of more alcohol in the same time. (Dr. Leonard Goldberg, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, Sweden.)

Alcohol principally affects the metabolism of the liver; as long as alcohol is oxidized the utilization of normal nutrients will be depressed by more than 75 per cent. A short depression of the normal hepatic metabolism (occasional social drinking) will have no consequences, but prolonged use of alcohol will alter normal liver function. Alcohol also lowers the level of blood sugar (after a brief rise); many of the symptoms of a "hangover" (dizziness, palpitation, tremor, sweating) may be traced directly to hypoglycemia.

When alcohol is metabolized in the liver for long periods, that organ's normal enzyme equipment is not used and may become degenerated; this would explain the difficulty of restoring an alcoholic to a normal diet. (Dr. Olof A. Forsander, Helsinki, Finland.)

In recent times most of the clinical value of alcohol has been lost. This neglect contrasts remarkably

with the respect for the therapeutic value of wine shown by Hippocrates. In many European countries natural alcoholic beverages have a place in treating those with a decreased desire or ability to take nourishment by mouth, providing a tonic for the appetite that actually supplies an easily metabolized food. A regular ration of alcohol is needed in geriatric hospitals and homes for ailing or aged people, as is normal practice in Europe. In chronic diseases, such as hypertension and cardiac failure, where a low salt diet is required, the use of wine and whisky makes such dull diets acceptable. (Dr. William Dock, State University of New York.)

**Effects.** The effect of alcohol on reflex responses, on reaction times and on all sensory processes seems to depend partly on the concentration of alcohol in the blood and partly on the complexity of the task. Simple reflex responses (e.g. patellar reflex) seem to be made more rapid with low blood alcohol levels in the region below about .05 mg. per cent; generally agreed is that

\*Goodwilled Judgment on Alcohol.

†Symposium: Greek, drink together. Organized by the University's Department of Continuing Education in Medicine and the Health Sciences.

higher doses than this decrease efficiency in all aspects of performance.

But with more complicated responses, behavior begins to deteriorate at very low blood levels; this field includes the ability to discriminate differences in sensory experience, whether in visual acuity, brightness discrimination, color differentiation, recognition of pitch and intensity differences in sounds. With higher levels (.15 mg. per cent) a phenomenon known as "tunnel vision" has been observed, a gradual reduction in the field of vision until the subject seems to be looking through a tube; this phenomenon obviously can have serious effects on driving skill. On test tracks in Britain it was found that experienced drivers with about .04 mg. alcohol in the blood required 30 per cent more time to complete the tests than teetotalers. Movements of the controls, especially of the steering wheel, proved especially sensitive to the effect of alcohol.

Driving performance differences were found to be related to personality differences: the timing responses of typical extroverts were seriously affected, thereby producing a score of high errors after drinking alcohol; introverts showed a marked change both in steering wheel movement and in speed. (Prof. George C. Drew, London University.)

Experiments with animals showed that a moderate consumption of alcohol diminishes their emotional response to a stress that normally evoked grossly disturbed behavior. In humans, skin conductance measurements appear to offer a sensitive and objective gauge of emotional activity. Tests showed that the galvanic skin response (GSR) to stress fell when alcohol was drunk, thus placing alcohol in the role of a tranquilizer. This aspect of alcohol could explain the universal survival of the use of alcohol through millennia of civilization. (Dr. Leon A. Greenberg, Yale University.)

There is considerable evidence that neolithic man, when he turned from hunting to agriculture, used crops for alcoholic fermentation; comparative ethnologic studies of many cultures have revealed that man has nearly always imbibed alcohol in times of stress.

In experiments with cats it was shown that alcohol protected the animals from the neurotogenic effects of stress and conflict; when not thus protected they developed "experimental neuroses," which in turn

could be mitigated by alcohol and led to addiction in about half the animals tested. (Dr. J. H. Masserman, Northwestern U.)

**Mores Patterns.** Colleges that enforce prohibition of drinking have relatively fewer students who use alcohol than colleges without restrictions, but the restricted students who do drink are more frequent and heavier imbibers. (Dr. Robert Straus, Kentucky U.)

When the use of alcohol should be considered a medical or psychiatric problem depends largely on cultural values, i.e. the relative drinking patterns of cocktail parties among the rich and boozing on Skid Row. In psychiatric diseases it has been found that the abuse of alcohol is present in more than 40 per cent of epileptics and traumatic neuroses, very common among arteriosclerotics, much less so among schizophrenics, hysterics and manic-depressives; the meaning of these correlations remains unclear. Most psychodynamic studies have found that the paramount underlying motivational factor in alcoholism is the oral-incorporative urge, the trend to return to the earliest form of gratification in nursing. (Dr. Franz Alexander, Mount Sinai Hospital, Los Angeles, Calif.)

The ubiquitous cocktail hour in modern society acts as an interlude between a person's participation in the large society of business or the supermarket, and the small society of the family. During the day many men eat light lunches, thereby reaching the end of the day in a state of psychologic and physiologic starvation, with tenseness and hypoglycemia; the cocktail hour helps to restore them to more normal levels. (Dr. Giorgio Lolli, International Center for Psychodietetics.) \*

Guest speaker Dr. Chauncey D. Leak, president of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine, gave a historical review of the use of alcohol, noted that in modern high-pressure civilization alcohol at the end of a grueling day might have a civilizing effect on overwrought husbands who sought peace at home. Said he: "A couple of drinks perform wonders in helping husbands and wives to feel more tolerant and understanding of each other."

**Consensus of symposium:** alcohol helps to enhance the pleasures and reduce the stresses of civilization.

\*At the Symposium's official reception, dinner was preceded by champagne, accompanied by wine, both Californian.

## CARDIOLOGY

### Canadian Heart Facts

Evidence that dietary fat may influence clot formation in the bloodstream was presented to joint annual meeting of the National Heart Foundation and the Canadian Heart Association, in Vancouver last month.

Dr. J. F. Mustard (Toronto U.) described how patients were given three types of diets: one high in egg yolk and dairy fat, the second high in vegetable fat, the third low in fat. Blood platelets were tagged with a radioactive substance to follow their survival and turnover.

Tests showed that platelets survived longest in the low fat diet, shortest in the egg yolk and fat diet; an intermediate survival rate was established by the vegetable fat diet. In animal experiments (pigs) the amount of thrombus formed by the platelets was higher in those receiving the lard and egg yolk diets. Here are other points of interest:

Using a miniaturized electrocardiographic amplifier it has been shown that there is a correlation between the minute ventilation volume, oxygen consumption and the heart rate curves, before, during and after exercise on a treadmill; an important difference found is that a trained athlete's heart requires less time to reach a peak heart rate than that of a normal subject. (Dr. J. E. Merriman and colleagues, Saskatchewan U.)

Coronary disease patients between 40 and 60 years old were found to have a significantly higher viscosity in their whole blood and plasma; the consequent reduction in the volume and velocity of blood flow could affect the elasticity and diameter of blood vessels. (Drs. George A. Mayer and W. Ford Cornell, Queen's U.)

Dr. Paul David, chairman of the National Medical Advisory Committee of the Foundation, told the gathering that four out of five children born with heart defects could be cured or improved; rheumatic fever, through a more aggressive prophylactic program, could be almost entirely eliminated. Causative factors in atherosclerosis, such as the lack of exercise, were now being most carefully studied. The Foundation expected to spend more than a million dollars on research and education next year.

In 1960 some 70,000 Canadians died from heart disease, representing one of every two deaths; heart disease was responsible for 48 per cent of deaths of men between 25 and 65.



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