



# Old Enemy Smallpox Reappears

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County Health Officer

One of man's most ancient and almost forgotten enemies is reappearing in the world, riding in one of man's most modern and highly developed technologic inventions.

Smallpox—for a long time considered by "civilized" countries as almost inconsequential, so near was it to total eradication—has recently broken out in such unlikely places as England, Sweden, West Germany. It comes initially as a hitch-hiker in the company of some unsuspecting traveler on a globe-circling supersonic jet airplane.

Death statistics from around the world are beginning to indicate a distinct rise in the number of people afflicted by smallpox. Nearly twice as many are reported to have died from the disease in 1963 as in 1962.

THE FACT that smallpox has been rare in the U. S. for decades has led to neglect of vaccination in many instances. It is estimated that at least three-fourths of our population do not have adequate protection against this disease.

An ever-present threat exists in that the virus of smallpox can be transmitted from an infected individual to others before any signs of the disease could appear. So highly infectious is this disease that, as an official of the American Medical Association has warned, one infected person could possibly touch off a hundred cases before it is even known the disease is in the country.

This year and next, many foreign visitors will mingle with U. S. citizens at the World's Fair as well as at other points of interest throughout this country.

DESPITE the constant vigilance of public health officials, it is possible for recently infected persons from overseas to infect susceptible individuals here. An international vaccination certificate testifying that the bearer has been vaccinated against smallpox is required of all persons entering the United States; but unfortunately this certificate cannot always be relied upon to guarantee that the individual has been completely immunized against the disease.

Because of the seriousness with which this threat is regarded, the California Conference of Local Health Officers advocates vaccination of the American people of all ages at regular intervals, selective vaccination at more frequent intervals for persons whose work or activities bring them greater than average risk of exposure, and surveillance by health agencies of the immunity levels in the population.

ALTHOUGH NO case of smallpox has occurred in Los Angeles County since 1940, the volume of overseas air traffic here makes it especially important that the people of this area protect themselves against smallpox.

Routine infant vaccination, generally done at about three months of age, does not provide immunity against the disease in later years. Revaccination is recommended before the child starts to school and thereafter through adulthood about every five years. This protection may be received from the family physician at a local health department clinic.

A leaflet on smallpox will be mailed to anyone who sends a written request to the Division of Health Education, Los Angeles County Health Department, 220 No. Broadway, L. A. 12.

## Bicyclist Hurt In Collision

A 14 year old bicyclist suffered minor injuries Sunday when his bicycle was involved in a collision with a car at Palos Verdes Boulevard and Calle Mayor.

Taken by ambulance to Little Company of Mary Hospital was Kerry Dee Greathouse, 14, of Sherman Oaks. Driver of the car was Fran-tisek Sednicka, 49, of 334 Via Colusa, police said. The accident occurred about 4:20 p.m.

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