

Appendicitis ought to be, as Dr. Reginald Fitz of Boston points out, "a disease easily diagnosed, of no great danger, and when recognized early and submitted to proper treatment, readily amenable to cure."

Improper use of laxatives and delay in removing the inflamed appendix seem to be the chief factors that keep the appendicitis death rate up. On the laxative subject, Dr. J. O. Bower of Philadelphia is authority for the statement that between 1918 and 1935 "248,000 . . . have been literally slaughtered with laxatives."

Dr. Fitz cited figures from Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston showing that of 65 patients who died of appendicitis, 74 per cent. had taken some sort of cathartic before entering the hospital, whereas of 100 patients who recovered, only 51 per cent. had taken a laxative.

The same cases also showed the effect of delay in having the appendix removed. None of the patients who died was operated on within 12 hours and only 11 per cent. within 24 hours of the onset of acute abdominal pain or bellyache. Of the patients who recovered, 8 per cent. were operated on within 12 hours and 25 per cent. within 48 hours of the onset of pain.

If the abdominal pain or bellyache lasts over four hours it is probably serious. Authoritative advice in such cases is: Call a doctor, do not eat or drink, do not take laxatives or cathartics.

Sometimes appendicitis follows a blow on the abdomen. Doctors are not agreed whether in such cases the blow was the sole cause or whether it precipitated an attack in a previously inflamed appendix. The important point is that such cases of appendicitis are unusually severe and demand immediate surgical attention.

RECREATION INTERESTS AND AGE

Church-going still leads as a leisure-

time activity, if a sample of the Missouri population may be considered as typical of Americans in general.

And church-going is one of the few interests that do not fall off with increasing age, according to a survey conducted by Dr. Eugene S. Briggs, of Phillips University, Enid, Okla., and reported to *School and Society*.

Old age and increasing enforced leisure seem inevitable, unless one is to escape through death. Yet it is surprising how many of our recreational interests are those that do not appeal to the aged.

Even the movies fail to hold the elderly, those who never attend increasing steadily from 18 per cent. at 20 years to 50 per cent. at 40 years, 72 per cent. at 60 years and 100 per cent. at 90 years, Dr. Briggs found.

Card playing, dancing, radio listening and even the entertaining of friends lose interest as we grow older, it seems.

Age does not affect concert or lecture attendance.

Hobbies are enjoyed by only 39 per cent. of adults, but appeal particularly to men and women between 65 and 75 years of age, 95 per cent. of whom ride a hobby. Hobbies hold the better educated and the city dweller, Dr. Briggs discovered.

Athletic sports are not participated in much by adults, even if horse shoes are included, Dr. Briggs said. Only one in ten country folks play athletic games as often as once or twice a week. Here again the interest wanes with increasing age.

Of all adults who read newspapers, 40 per cent. find recreation in so doing. A similar percentage find recreation in reading magazines.

Books are not very popular, for 60 per cent. have read no books in the past six months. And if you think that books are neglected only by those remote from libraries, you are due for a surprise. The greatest number of non-readers of books were born in the city.