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Highlights from our archives

Muscle contraction is a normal reaction to stress

Man's anticipation and expectations can lead to stress and anxiety with associated muscle spasm

Safe, effective



This advertisement for a well known tranquiliser ran in the 26 August 1978 issue of the MJA. Were they trying to get women to relax before their men's "anticipation and expectation" became too much, or is this naked woman just a representative of "mankind"? The answer is lost in the mists of time.

On the effects of war on medical research

[These] were not 10 ordinary years.

In some respects the war provided stimulation and material that might have been impossible under other circumstances.

It also placed in the hands of the authorities an almost unlimited supply of men to do the work.

In this way the fascination of research work reached a greater number than would have been the case had there been no war.

On the other hand the abnormal years involved certain grave disadvantages to the steady progress of medical research.

In the first place the financial stringency restricted the support that the public could provide out of consolidated revenue.

For a time it probably reduced the size of those munificent gifts that wise rich men make to scientific research.

And it stemmed the movement for a time in the direction of creating lucrative careers for men and women with genius for research.

Then it diverted the work of many from hygiene

and preventive medicine of peace time to that connected with special problems in preventive and curative medicine rendered necessary by the disaster of war.

It is true that many of the war problems in hygiene can be applied to ordinary life conditions and in consequence the war may have hastened progress under the impetus of necessity.

But other problems have fortunately little application to civil life and the need to push aside other work in order that these war inquiries might be prosecuted, has not been advantageous.

Lastly a great deal of work has been carried out rapidly in the full light of the public gaze. It is not impossible that some of the investigators have sought a short cut to eminence.

The result of hurried work and forced results is that it is unreliable and soon has to be disregarded.

There are no short cuts in science. Every step must be taken deliberately and in proper order.

Editorial, 1 March 1924 (edited extract)



Lost genius

Gordon Clunes Mackay Mathison was revered as "one fitted by personality, knowledge, judgement, energy and originality to become a true leader in medical science". A University of Melbourne graduate (1905),

he was named as the first director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research. He died on 18 May 1915, from wounds received in the Battle of Gallipoli, before he could take up the position.

Sanofi-Aventis
Vivaxim
p60 (to come)