

HOW TO DODGE LOCKJAW ON THE FOURTH

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There are three ways to avoid the lockjaw that reaps its annual harvest after the Fourth of July.

One way is by not using explosives on "the day we celebrate."

Another is by cutting open widely the wound and cauterizing every nook and cranny of it to its utmost recesses with carbolic acid.

The best method of all is by injecting lockjaw antitoxin into the tissues **IMMEDIATELY.**

Tetanus antitoxin is an absolutely certain preventive if the patient is inoculated within one or two hours after the injury has occurred. It de-



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stroy the toxins or poisons that are spread through the system by the tetanus bacilli, and which, if unchecked, paralyze the nerves and stiffen the joints of spine and jaw until death results.

No other virulent organism is more widely distributed in nature than the tetanus germ. It is found in the litter of every barnyard and in the dust of every city street. The prongs of every pitchfork harbor it and it is in the earth of every field and flower garden. It has been found in dirty clothes, on shoe soles, in gutters, on the surface of fruit, on pocket knives and even in sea water.

But this bacillus, though well-nigh

omnipresent, is far from vigorous.

Sunlight and fresh air are its chief enemies. It is also easily killed by most of the common antiseptics.

When the bacilli are introduced into the wound, the body makes an effort to combat them and prevent their entrance into the blood-stream.

If the wound is an open one, into which light and air may enter, the bacilli are killed soon and their dead bodies are expelled.

But in case the bacilli happens to get into a deep or ragged wound, they increase rapidly and begin to send their toxins into all parts of the body.

This is what often happens on the Fourth of July when some kuckless small boy wounds himself with a toy pistol. The powder makes a ragged, confused wound and drives into its depths the tetanus bacilli that happen to be living upon his hand.

Instead of sending for a doctor and having the wound properly washed and dressed, the boy's mother binds it up herself, perhaps with a dirty rag—and tells him to stop crying. This means that the lockjaw germs are left where the powder forced them—deep down in the lacerated tissue, among dead and dying skin cells and cut off from all light and air.

Protected thus, and living under conditions ideally adapted to their welfare, the bacilli begin to multiply and poison the nervous system.

Such a wound should always be cleaned thoroughly with carbolic acid and watched daily. This can be done only by an experienced physician.

And then tetanus antitoxin should be injected into the patient's veins to kill the poisons as fast as they are given off by the bacilli.

If this is done when the wound occurs, the patient recovers. If delayed until lockjaw symptoms appear, antitoxin is of little help.

An amount just sufficient to cou-