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Kauai Murine Typhus

Typhus is still with us, especially on Kauai, but all Hawaii islands have reported cases. Philip P. Bruno DO, FACP, and his associates at the Hawaii Department of Health alert us to the ever-present murine typhus.

After five days of chills, fever, aches and pains, a pink macular eruption appears on the trunk and axillary folds, then rapidly spreads to the rest of the body, usually sparing the face, palms and soles. Two of their cases had facial eruptions. The authors emphasize that the occurrence of fever and rashes are suggestive but that the eruptions are nonspecific and may not be present.

It is concluded that Hawaii physicians should be cognizant of widespread murine typhus reservoirs and vectors in our state and maintain a high degree of suspicion for murine typhus in cases of acute undifferentiated febrile illness, especially with unexplained liver enzyme elevations.

The Four Horsemen of the Fractured Hip


As our population ages, more hip and knee replacement procedures are being done. The complication rate from all causes is about 2 percent with mortality about 0.1 percent. Doctors Prentiss, Scoggin and Imoto present an excellent review of the Fat Embolism Syndrome, and Adult Respiratory Distress Syndrome, coma and death – “The Four Horsemen of the Fractured Hip.”

One of our peer reviewers commented, “there has been no mention of the use of hyperbaric oxygen in the Fat Embolism Syndrome. I don’t know any studies addressing this topic which may be worthy of mention.” Since hyperbaric oxygen is now available in Hawaii perhaps this might be considered in future cases of the fat embolism syndrome.

Because, as Gerald Mayfield MD, states in his commentary, “Fat embolism syndrome causing death, especially in the patient undergoing elective reconstructed surgery, is traumatic to all concerned: patient, family and surgeon.” This provocative manuscript should be of interest to the orthopedists, pulmonary medicine specialists, anesthesiologists and indeed to all physicians.

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A Tribute to Ralph Cloward MD



Ralph B. Cloward, MD
Sept. 24, 1908 - Nov. 13, 2000

Dr. Ralph Cloward or “RB” as he was known to his close friends and fellows Rotarians, died on Nov. 13, 2000 at the age of 92. He was a member of the Honolulu Rotary Club for 59 years and was declared a “Rotary Treasure.” He was also a valuable member of the Hawaii Medical Association and a “medical treasure.” Thanks to the Honolulu Rotary Club, we reprint RB Cloward’s Life’s Finest Gifts.

Life’s Finest Gifts

When you get on and you’ve lived a lot
and the blood in your veins isn’t quite so hot
and your eyes are dimmer than what they were
and the page on a book has a misty blur,
strange as the case may seem to be
then is the time you clearly see.

You’ll see yourself as you really are
when you’ve lived a lot and you’ve traveled far;
when your strength gives out and your muscles tire
you’ll see the folly of mad desires;
you’ll see what when your eyes had hid -
the countless trivial things you did.

For often the blindest are youthful eyes;
age must come e’re man grows wise.
Youth makes much of the mountain peaks,
the strife for fame and the goal he seeks,
but age sits down with the setting sun
and enjoys the useful deed he’s done.

You’ll sigh for the friends that were cast aside
with a hasty word or a show of pride,
and you’ll laugh at medals which you prize
because you’ll see them through different eyes.
You’ll understand how little they really meant
for which so much of your strength was spent.

You’ll see as always an old man sees,
that the waves die down with the fading breeze,
and the poms of life never last for long,
the great sink back to the common throng,
but you’ll understand when the struggle ends
that the finest gifts in life are friends!

Ralph B. Cloward