

CORTICOSTEROIDS IN TUBERCULOID REACTIONS

TO THE EDITOR:

With reference to the report in *THE JOURNAL* by Lewis, Khin and Edwards on the use of cortisone in the treatment of reactional condi-

tions in tuberculoid leprosy [**25** (1957) 213-216], I think it would be of interest to make known my own conclusions on that subject as published in *Semana Médica* **111** 9 (1957) 313, and *Leprologia* **2** (1957) 47. The summary in the latter publication is as follows:

Tuberculoid lepra reaction, which is a specific hyperergic abnormal reaction to the Hansen bacillus, is not beneficial for the course of the disease even when not accompanied by general symptoms, and it should therefore be suppressed. The condition may be followed by marked cutaneous cicatrices and atrophies, and in the nerves there may be irreparable damage. The author relates his experience in a few cases in which treatment with prednisone brought about rapid clinical and histologic involution of the reactional condition. The association of prednisone and the sulfones seems to potentiate the action of the latter drug on the specific granuloma, hastening its resorption. In cases in which the reactional phenomenon is probably induced by the sulfones themselves, prednisone therapy not only increases tolerance to those drugs but also permits their simultaneous administration, with benefit to the course of the disease. Control of the reaction was accomplished in a very short time, and there were no accidents from the use of the hormone in the dose employed.

As can be seen, prednisone seems to be more encouraging than cortisone in the treatment of this type of reaction. The opinion expressed has been verified by the findings in the follow-up of my patients, and more recent experiences.

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