

In Reply Refer
to No.

NAVAL SUPPLY DEPOT
Spokane, Washington

April 30, 1944

My dear Admiral:

Mr. William C. Rast of the Peda-Spray Company of Seattle has asked me to give you a few observations upon the performance of the Peda-Spray appliance under actual service conditions; which I am glad to do.

I was medical officer of the Receiving Station, P.S.N.Y., Bremerton during the first relatively large scale trial of the Peda-Spray under the conditions for which it was designed.

Ring-worm foot infections, as you know, have become so widespread as to present a problem that is practically universal wherever any sizeable groups of men are concentrated.

As an individual problem this infection can be, and usually is, a relatively simple matter. Treated individually, with proper understanding of its etiology, prophylaxis, etc., it presents few difficulties. In the barracks and on board the larger ships, especially in warm weather, it assumes a very different role, often becoming extremely troublesome and resulting in numerous incapacitations from the secondary infections that so commonly occur.

In large groups with a shifting personnel or wherever working parties, training courses or dispersion of the command render individual inspections and care difficult or impossible (receiving stations, training stations, large vessels on combat duty, etc.) this infection can not be therapeutically treated with satisfactory results. It then ceases to be a simple dermatological problem and often becomes a rather complex emergency in which the degree of cooperation possible under the exigencies of service conditions, the widespread lack of knowledge of the etiology of this infection and the usual psychological considerations always presented by sizeable groups play important parts.

Individual interest in the subject is in the direct proportion to the amount of individual discomfort experienced. Individual cooperation based primarily upon the welfare of the command as a whole is therefore practically non-existent for any sustained period, with the result that the largest group of carriers and mildly infected escape detection and treatment.

The long popular, and under many circumstances, successful thiosulphate foot bath is no longer available due to inability to obtain this drug. This method of prophylaxis did not, however, prove satisfactory under many circumstances (receiving barracks, training camps, etc.) due to the antipathy of the average man for its use after its appearance had become unpleasant from the turbidity of soapy water dilutions. The constantly changing concentrations resulting from bath water dilutions also rendered its value questionable for more than short periods and its full effectiveness paralleled the upkeep attention received; which in the experience of most was usually limited.

No other satisfactory chemical has been discovered for foot bath use. The effective antiseptics are either too poisonous to distribute at large or too unpleasant in odor or color to induce satisfactory generalized use.

The Peda-Spray overcame many of the objections cited and after more than a year under my observation continued to fulfill the claims made for it by the Peda-Spray Company.

It is effective largely because there is little difficulty in getting the personnel to use it. It is pleasant to use and there is not the psychological barrier of attempting to induce the use of an apparently dirty foot bath.

We found that the models supplied to us (now I understand changed) stood constant usage well and had an estimated life without major repair of at least two years. We found these models delivered good service and worked well with proper upkeep - and I stress that last. The machines require little care, but they do need that little.

These machines will furnish satisfactory prophylaxis against ring-worm of the feet under conditions that will almost certainly prove otherwise decidedly unsatisfactory.

Very respectfully,

R.B. Miller
Comdr. (MC), U.S.N.

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