

Physical examinations

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS FOR EXECUTIVES



OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERIES
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METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

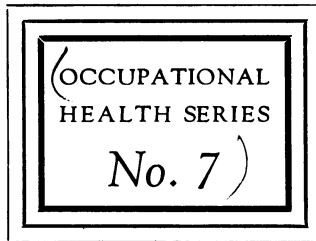
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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERIES



1. *First-Aid Service in Small Plants.*
2. *Physical Examinations in Industry.*
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A Priceless Asset

From the president down, every business executive will agree that protection of his organization's valuable assets is a vital part of his job. What assets does any concern have that are more valuable than the years of experience and know-how of its key men? How can any man give his organization the full benefit of these assets without good health? Yet one nationwide survey of the health of top men in management revealed that only 1 in 9 was found to be in first-class physical shape.

General Motors, International Harvester, Goodyear Rubber, and other major companies are doing something about it. They now urge that their key men, right up through the president, have annual physical examinations at company expense, with results usually confidential between doctor and patient. More than 400 other business organizations have similar programs and are convinced that they pay for themselves many times over in longer life, better health, and higher efficiency for their key men, as well as in immeasurable benefits to the organization itself.

Early Discovery

Executives themselves, many of whom had doubts about such a plan, are now convinced of its worth because of their own experiences. Some who were certain that there was nothing much wrong with their health were glad to have that opinion confirmed. Others benefited by finding out about a potentially dangerous condition early enough to take care of it. One 59-year-old president of a manufacturing company with no specific complaint was considerably surprised to learn that he had a heart condition. "It came as a shock at first," he said, "but I am now convinced that this discovery will add years to my life. With a few adjustments in living and working habits, I am told I can continue actively in business. There are reasons why this is important to our organization for the next

few years. Retirement, when it comes, is not likely to be forced upon me suddenly by ill health—no small consideration to me personally.”

Unnecessary Fears

Often a man benefits immeasurably from having unnecessary fears dispelled by the facts. One 42-year-old sales executive postponed examination until his firm insisted that he participate. For almost five years he had been living in fear that the periodic attacks of stomach pain he suffered from meant cancer. Examination revealed no sign of cancer. Tension was discovered to be the cause of his attacks. “It feels wonderful,” he said, “to know definitely what’s wrong. Now I can try to control the situation, and I *won’t* have to be talked into next year’s visit to the clinic!”

A Cushioned Blow

Sometimes, of course, an examination can disclose a serious physical condition. Even then there is much to be gained for all concerned. The 62-year-old treasurer of one company was found to be suffering from advanced arteriosclerosis. This explained the personality change which had begun to puzzle his fellow-executives and his family.

As a result of the examination, his wife was spared much worry and wonder over why her previously thoughtful and serious-mannered husband had become at times forgetful and other times exuberant. The company was able to avoid the serious consequences of his impaired judgment in business matters. Retirement and medical treatment gave the man himself the best chance for comfort and happiness during the rest of his lifetime.

An Ounce of Prevention

A check-up may show that a man is headed for trouble that can be prevented. One 48-year-old production manager complained of

constant fatigue and shortness of breath. Examination revealed that he was, on the whole, organically sound, but he did show signs of extreme nervous tension, high blood pressure, and a moderate degree of overweight.

In a discussion of his living habits he confessed, "I haven't taken a vacation for the last five years. When I took over production there were so many problems to untangle in all four plants that it's taken all my time and effort just to keep going. My son complains that I never go fishing with him anymore; I just can't seem to find the time for it these days."

The plant physician warned him that the habit of working long hours day after day under tension was likely to lead to a breakdown, and that the longer he continued at his present rate the less work he would be able to do in the long run.

After further discussion he agreed to follow the doctor's advice to lose some weight, to make some decisive changes in his daily routine, to relax over week ends—and to go fishing again.

Six months later he had lost 15 pounds and his blood pressure had dropped. He was rid of that worn-out feeling and said with great satisfaction, "I get more work done now, with far less strain, and we're all enjoying life again. That check-up was just what I needed."

One Thing Is Certain

As these and countless other experiences show, there is everything to gain and nothing to lose in having a regular physical check-up. The results may bring good news and deep satisfaction. Early discovery of a potentially dangerous condition, which at first seems like bad news, can often save a man's life and increase his working years when treatment is begun promptly. The relief of unfounded fears can increase efficiency and ward off real trouble. If serious disease is discovered, life may be prolonged or made more comfortable.

One thing is certain. Any way you look at it, someone benefits—the individual, his family, or the company—usually all three.

How It's Done

Who conducts executive health examinations? Many companies use their own medical departments or company physicians. Others have their key men go to outside clinics—Philadelphia's Benjamin Franklin Clinic, Boston's Lahey Clinic, New York's Life Extension Institute, Detroit's Henry Ford Hospital, Rochester's Mayo Clinic, and similar organizations. In some companies executives may select their own medical examiners, provided the choice is acceptable to the director of the company's health service.

Whatever the arrangements are, most programs have several things in common—

Most programs are voluntary. Executives are, of course, urged to participate and are informed of the value of thorough periodic examinations.

Examinations are very thorough. They include a history, physical examination, electrocardiogram, chest X ray, and a series of blood and other laboratory tests. Special studies are usually made when findings indicate the need for diagnostic procedures that are not ordinarily included in the examination. The time required varies from several hours to several days, depending upon the extent of the examination and the executive's condition.

The company pays the examination fee. Payment is made only for diagnosis, but the total fee may vary with patients' needs. The examining physician offers the executive advice on changes in his living habits that would be beneficial to his health and refers him to his own physician for treatment if that is indicated by the examination results. The findings of the examination are reported to the executive's personal physician.

Results are confidential. Reports are made only to the executive and to his personal physician. They are not released to another company official without the patient's consent. In most companies the responsibility for following through with medical recommendations rests with the executive himself.

Frequency of examination varies. The most common pattern is one of annual examinations. The plans, which vary with age, usually offer more frequent examinations to older executives or those with conditions which warrant check-ups more often.

Whatever the arrangements are, the objective is to protect the health of key men and should have their full cooperation. The chief executive of one organization said that he considered the program a very important function of management. He went on to say, "I am certain that in several instances lives have been saved by it, and in many cases I feel confident that lives have been prolonged"



OTHER METROPOLITAN MATERIAL WHICH MAY INTEREST EXECUTIVES



Diabetes

What Is Your Weight?

What You Should Know About Cancer

Your Heart

