

Consumers want food that's chemical free

DR. GOTT



PETER GOTT, M.D.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I recently read an article about the chemical daminazide, or Alar, that is used in preserving apples and other fruit. This was very disturbing to me. I am an apple-a-day person and always encourage my friends to eat them. Eating apples year-round means buying shipped-in apples during out-of-season months. If I ask my grocer if his apples have been treated, how can I rely on his answer? I feel the information should be made available to consumers so we can decide if we want to buy treated products or not.

DEAR READER: I am sure that many readers are aware of the publicity surrounding the release of a report by the National Resources Defense Council, a private environmental group with offices in several cities. The report showed that young children, who customarily consume far more apple juice and fruit than do adults, are at greater risk of developing health problems from pesticide residues.

You can join Mothers and Others for Pesticide Limits by contributing as little as \$15. The organization has published a worthwhile book, called "For Our Kids' Sake," that addresses the pesticide problem in readable and understandable terms. The book is available for \$7.95 (prepaid) by writing Mothers and Others, P.O. Box 96641G, Washington, DC 20090.

The issue of pesticide residue affects us all. We are entitled to pesticide-free food in our shops and supermarkets. National organizations, such as Mothers and Others, can bring about reform through consumer pressure, if they receive public support. Join the Mothers and Others campaign, send your tax-deductible contribution and order the book. You will help benefit our children and, at the same time, gain greater information about the dangers of pesticide-treated food.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I'm scheduled for a CT scan of the head soon. Please provide a simple, direct comparison of the amount of radiation received in a CT scan as compared to dental X-rays.

DEAR READER: Radiation doses from X-ray examination are measured in Radiation Absorbed Dose (rad) or rem. The two units are nearly equivalent for practical purposes.

Whole mouth dental X-rays produce 10 to 30 millirems. CT (computed tomography) scans produce 2,000 to 6,000 millirems.

Although the actual calculation of the doses may vary (because of shielding and efficiency of X-ray machines) and the units of measurement are highly technical, you can see that a CT scan involves much more radiation exposure than do dental X-rays. Of course, the two types of examination are used for different purposes.

The CT scan gives far more information because more tissue is examined and the pictures are more detailed.

DEAR DR. GOTT: My orthopedist has prescribed an anti-inflammatory drug and rest for an enlarged disc. Will the disc shrink back to normal so I can resume regular activity?

DEAR READER: Tissue enlarges when it is inflamed. Therefore, if you have symptoms from an enlarged spinal disc pressing on a nerve, anti-inflammatory drugs may help you to return to normal. However, in my experience, disc pain is usually due to herniation of the disc, a washer-like structure that separates the spinal bones. Thus, anti-inflammatory medicine is usually not effective.

Conventional therapy — such as spinal manipulation, special exercises, physical therapy, rest and (when necessary) surgery to repair the disc — seem to produce better re-

sults. Your best bet is to try your doctor's treatment and reserve the additional therapy for later, if the medicine doesn't work.

DEAR DR. GOTT: I'm a 59-year-old female with osteo and rheumatoid arthritis. I'm on Anaprox and Flexeril (to help me sleep). Because of the severity of the pain, my next step is gold injections. What can I expect regarding relief and side effects?

DEAR READER: For patients with rheumatoid arthritis who do not respond to the wide variety of prescription anti-inflammatory medicines, gold is a reasonable next step.

The action of gold in relieving swelling, pain and joint destruction is unknown. In many patients, gold therapy is extremely effective. However, to a degree, its effectiveness is counterbalanced by its side effects.

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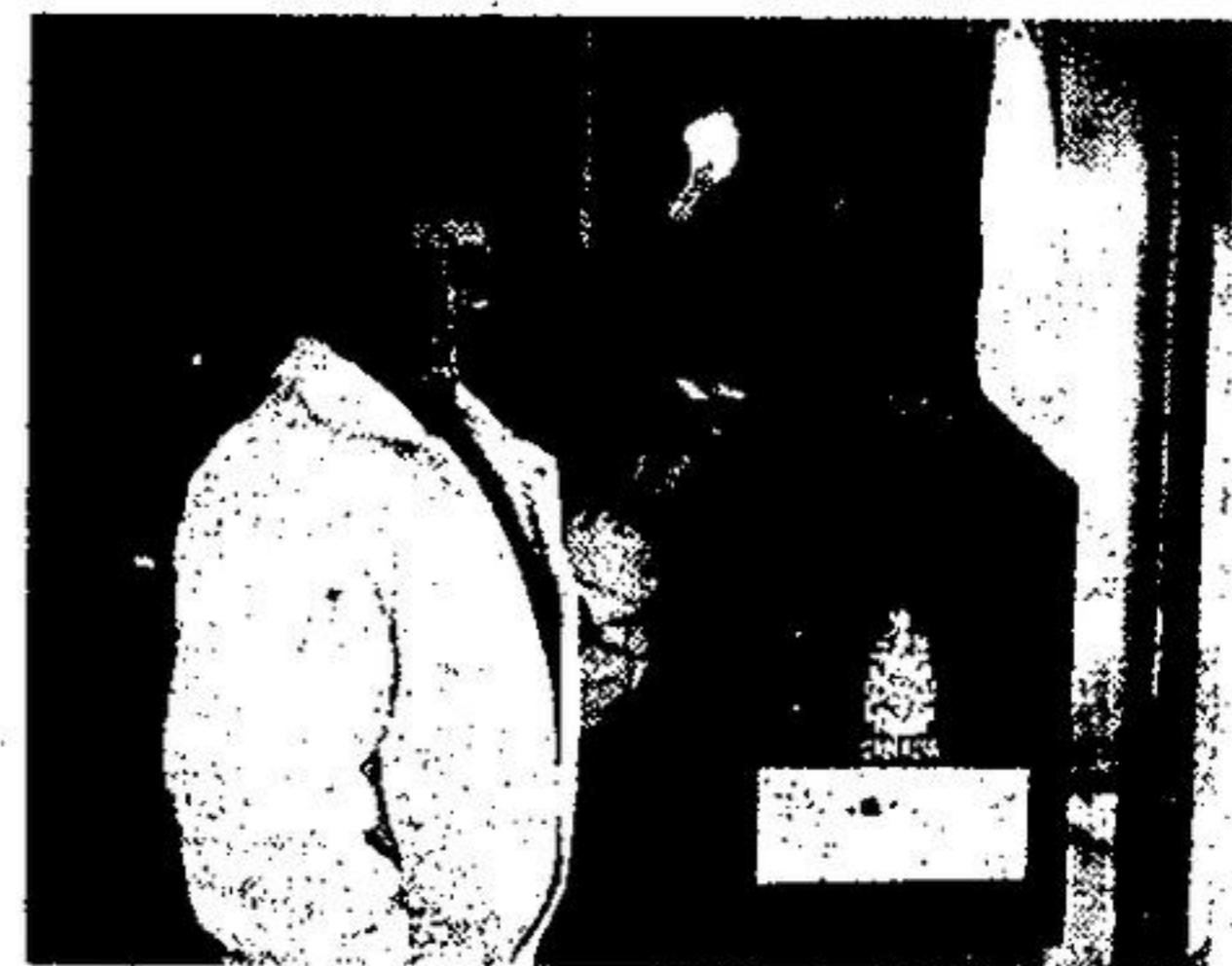
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"IT'S A DEFINITE ADVANTAGE FOR US."
Jeff Scott, businessman,
Alma, Ontario

Retail Postal Outlets across the country offer Canada Post customers more access to postal products and services. On average, hours of postal service operation have more than doubled in communities where service has changed from a post office to a Retail Postal Outlet operated by local business. Thousands of rural Canadians can now purchase stamps or pick up mail in the evening or on weekends.

"WE ARE VERY PLEASED WITH THE SERVICE HERE."
Margaret Rickert, Area Councillor,
Alma, Ontario



Councillor Margaret Rickert says the Retail Postal Outlet established in her town, when postal services were converted to a local business, has had a positive impact on the community.

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