

## Sex Hygiene

THIS FILM, PREVIOUSLY CLASSIFIED AS RESTRICTED, IS NOW UNCLASSIFIED.

OFFICIAL TRAINING FILM

No. 8-154

WAR DEPARTMENT

RESTRICTED

PRODUCED BY THE SIGNAL CORPS

IN COLLABORATION WITH THE SURGEON GENERAL

1941

THROUGH COOPERATION OF THE RESEARCH COUNCIL,  
ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES

SEX HYGIENE

\*

“Hey Pete, where you headed?

- Why, the town, sergeant, the town.

- Don't be a mug all your life.

- Who's a mug? You may go for this recreation gig but I got ideas of my own.

So long.”

\*

“Sergeant, as you are probably aware, half a dozen new cases have broken out on camp during the past couple of weeks.

The medical officer has secured (...) of War Department film on venereal diseases. Post this (...) for the soldiers to see the film.

- Yes, sir.”

MEMORANDUM

NO 56.

ALL PERSONNEL OF THIS UNIT WILL ATTEND A SHOWING OF A WAR DEPARTMENT TRAINING FILM ON “SEX HYGIENE” TO BE SHOWN IN THE WAR DEPARTMENT THEATER AT 1:00 P.M. THIS DATE.

JAMES E BROWN

CAPTAIN, C.A.C

COMMANDING.

“Alert

Attention.

(...)

Forward.

(...).”

“The film you're about to witness is presented to you frankly and completely. It tells the story of the problem of venereal diseases in the military service from a medical standpoint.

Obviously this film is shown to you not only for the benefit of your own personal good health but for that of your entire unit. Lights out!”

“As an officer of the Army Medical Corps, I wish to bring your attention to an important phase in the preservation of your health. The Army recognizes the risks present for a large number of men in the satisfaction of their sexual impulse. The greatest risk is that of venereal diseases, acquired during the sexual act. You will ordinarily not contract sexual diseases if there is no sexual act performed. In that respect, continence if not total abstinence is the best of all preventives. However, in the event of contact with a contaminated woman, you must bear in mind that are available to you, through your own medical corps, specific preventives and cures for specific infections.

On that slide, there are many germs that you cannot see with the unaided eye. However, if we look through this microscope, we can see what is meant by a specific germ.

Here is the organism which causes sleeping sickness.

Here is the organism which causes malaria.

And this, the specific germ of gonorrhoea.

This is the specific germ of syphilis.

These germs, if allowed to enter the body either through the skin or through mucus-lined openings, may destroy your life. The mucus-lined openings through which germs may enter your body are: the mouth, the nose and the urethral canal. Even a slight unnoticed skin abrasion may act as an open door for these persistent and evil bacteria.

Some further illustrations are necessary to show you how these germs attack parts of your body. As we go along, let us study the male anatomy. Most men know less about their own bodies than they do about their automobiles.

Here, we have a diagram of the human body, showing those parts with which this discussion is primarily concerned. First from the front, the abdomen, the groins, the penis, the sack or scrotum, the pubic hairs.

Now let us open the front of the belly, surrounded by this black line. Here's what we find: the liver, the stomach, the bowel, the bladder. Note that the penis and scrotum are just below the bladder, on the outside of the belly wall. In order to get a side view of the interior of the body, let us cut this diagram in half. One side of the body is now removed so that we may see the inner parts of the belly in cross section. Let us now examine these inner parts one by one. As we discuss them, we will indicate their proper places and function.

The penis, the foreskin, that part which is removed when a man is circumcised. Inside the belly is the bladder. It is the storing place or reservoir for your water. We now have the tube which carries your water from the bladder to the outside. Notice that it passes through a gland at the bottom of the bladder. This gland is called the prostate. Inside the sack or scrotum are two glands called the testicles or balls. Here, because of the cross section, we see only one of the two identical testicles. Here the rectum, and here the lower spine or backbone. These vulnerable organs may be attacked by one or all of the three types of venereal diseases which are common and of which you have heard. Perhaps they have been referred to by several names.

Syphilis: pox

Gonorrhoea: clap

Chancroid or soft chancre.

Let us now examine the diseases these germs cause.

This diagram will show you that the probability of acquiring syphilis during a man's life is one in ten. This means that by rule of average, if men do not practice care, reasonable self-discipline, they can expect that one man in each ten of their acquaintance will have suffered syphilis in some form during his life. This unfortunate man, the one out of every ten in your acquaintance, has his entire life shortened by 5 years or 18.6 % from the normal. These figures of course apply only to the untreated or improperly treated cases.

Now let us examine the characteristics of the specific germ which causes syphilis. The microorganism is corkscrew in shape. It may begin its entrance into the body at any point, that is, however, usually on the private parts. The germs bore their way into the skin usually within two hours after sexual intercourse. In a week or more, a hard-rimmed chancre or sore usually forms, most often on the penis. Although it may appear on the lip after kissing contact. By the time the sore has appeared, the germs have been distributed by the blood to every part of the body and may produce serious damage unless they are killed by the injection of the proper drugs. These sores or hard chancres when present, are usually the first sign of a syphilis infection. Many times however, they do not appear and their absence leaves the infected person to a false sense of security. This soldier was fortunate, fortunate since the sore appeared. It was therefore possible for him to seek early treatment. The early discovery and proper treatment of syphilis is vital to any infected person. On the other hand, this man was by no means so lucky, although his appearance is normal. This case is a hard chancre of the throat.

Good morning.

- Good morning, sir.

- Do you mind showing your throat to these men?

- Not at all, sir. Not if it'll help some of these men. Keep them from getting that disease I have, sir.

- Good.

This shows what happens in a syphilis-infected throat.

Before the syphilis germ has had the time to get through the skin and thus cause a chancre, you must take prophylactic, preventive treatment to kill these germs. This treatment should be taken within two hours. The treatment itself will be shown to you later in this film. However, if you have already contracted the disease as shown by this sign, the hard chancre, or by other signs which follow, you should go to a medical officer of your organization at once. He will immediately take specimens to scientifically determine if you actually have syphilis.

In the case of this individual, no hard chancre appeared. The first sign was the rash or breaking out of the skin. This is the so-called secondary stage, in which the manifestations of the disease may be wide spread through the body. The medical officer can differentiate this rash from other skin diseases by making a blood test, by looking for the germs in the skin. Expert medical care such as you are able to get in your own medical department, will yet restore this man to health.

Many cases of syphilis do not show these two early warning signs. They may not be discovered for several years after infection. Also, the warning signs may be so slight that the men disregard them. Thus we find the mental type of case resulting. This chart indicates that the development of insanity many years after infection is ten times higher among those who received no treatment or inferior treatment.

This form of insanity will require continuous treatment, probably for life, and the patient must be kept under guard at all times. The most important facts to remember about the prevention of these tragic cases of syphilis are: first, they can be prevented by taking prophylactic treatment. The treatment should be taken before the germ has had a chance to get through the tissues or as soon as possible. Second, that practically all cases of syphilis are curable if discovered early in the first or chancre stage, thereupon treated. Third, that you can secure proper medical treatment from the Army Medical Corps.

Here again is another sexual menace: the specific germ causing gonorrhoea or clap. It enters the body by the same method as the germs causing syphilis. During sexual intercourse, the sticky matter inside the female organ gets under the foreskin or in the opening of the penis. If the woman has gonorrhoea, this sticky pus-like fluid carries the germ. They stay on or inside

the penis after the intercourse is finished. If these germs are not destroyed early, they will dig in and begin growing.

## ABSCCESS

From a couple of days up to two weeks after these germs begin to bore in, pain and burning will be noted whenever the infected person tries to pass water. He will notice when arising in the morning, that there will be a thick yellow fluid called pus coming from the opening in the head of the penis. Don't attempt to strip down or milk the penis. This is harmful. If you are infected, the pus will come out of itself. This pus carries millions of gonorrhea germs. Under the microscope, these gonococcus germs appear like this. The medical officer will examine all suspected cases carefully to find out if they are infected with those germs. The pus from the penis may get on the hands, the handkerchiefs or towels, and blindness, heart trouble and many other mortal diseases may result when a careless patient carries the infection by his hands to other parts of his own body or those of some innocent persons.

Chancroid, known as blue balls or soft chancre, is another form of venereal disease that can be acquired during sexual intercourse. This diagram will give you a graphic idea of the extent of this virulent disease. The head and shaft of the penis and the skin of the abdomen or scrotum may have several sores. If not treated, they will spread rapidly in size. This case, for example, failed to see a medical officer promptly. These swellings are like boils: when opened, they let out a lot of pus. They take a long time to heal and the permanent scars usually remain.

Any of these complications may result from neglect or from a case treated by so-called "clap doctors". Do not permit yourself to be treated by a quack, or druggist. They will do you more harm than good.

This man is taking not only his own life and sanity in his hands, but is endangering the health of all of his associates by not reporting to his own medical officer for treatment.

A record made by the medical officer who treats you will follow you wherever you are transferred. It'll be used only to keep the medical officers who will treat you informed as to the progress of your case, and as a history of the treatment you have received.

Proper medical care will not only prevent danger to others, but may shorten and prevent complications of the disease in the infected man. A soldier who does not report to the medical officer at once if he suspects he has gonorrhea is in fact very dangerous. He's dangerous to everyone in his unit and to everyone with whom he comes in contact, even in such a way as we have such witnessed.

Careful explanation has been given you of the venereal diseases to which you may be exposed. I have also explained to you the proper method of prevention and cure. Do not think that you are the lucky one to go on unscathed. Germs know no distinction between one man and another.

I will now show you how you can avoid getting any of these diseases in the first place. If you have sexual intercourse, there are two things you must do. First, keep something between you and the germs of venereal disease by using a good rubber. They should be purchased preferably from an army post exchange, or, if this is impossible, from a reliable drugstore. Rubber prophylactic should be free from holes, blisters, air bubbles and all other defects in material or workmanship. Test it carefully. Inflate it with air as you would a toy balloon until

the rubber is fully extended. Look for any signs of escaping air. It may be further tested by filling it with two cups of water and noting if any oozing is present. Roll it up, place a little of the lubricant from the tube in your packet on the inside, roll it onto the penis as shown by this scene. The rest of the lubricant should be smeared on the outside of the rubber after it is on. This prevents tearing and helps protect against disease in case the rubber should break. When you are through, unroll the rubber. If the woman has gonorrhea or syphilis, as she probably has, there will be millions of the germs on the rubber, on the hand that removed it and on the surfaces surrounding the penis.

You must now do these things as quickly as possible. First, urinate, pass your water. Second, wash your hands, your penis and the surrounding skin and hair thoroughly with soap and water. Third, get to the nearest prophylactic station for a treatment. Every minute is important. There is no sure method of preventing venereal disease if you expose yourself to it. These methods will prevent most infections if taken soon enough and performed thoroughly enough. You can secure proper prophylactic treatment under the supervision of a trained medical soldier. Get a copy of the prophylactic slip and keep it so you will have a record of your treatment. The medical department soldier who witnessed your treatment will sign your slip.

Proper prophylactic treatment is given as follows. First, scrub the belly and private parts thoroughly with soap as we see here. Then rinse the soap off with water and wash the parts with bichloride mercury solution. Then the (...) medicine is placed in a special syringe, the tip of which is set into the head of the penis and the medicine is forced gently into the urethra. You will recall that this is where the gonorrhea germs first started their trouble. Second, the head of the penis is clamped like this and the medicine is held there for at least 5 minutes to ensure that all possible germs are reached by the medicine. Third, rub the salve (mercury ointment) over the private parts, the upper part of the legs and also the stomach. This is to prevent syphilis or hard chancre. You must grease yourself all around the private parts, for the woman might have had a sore on her stomach or legs as well as her private parts. Use a piece of paper inside your underwear to keep the salve from your outer clothes.

In view of what we have seen and talked of here, I'm sure it is easy for you to understand how important it is for your own sake to take treatment as soon as possible after your sexual intercourse. Do not allow the germs to get so far inside the body. It'll be hard for our medicine and treatment to reach and kill them. At your army hospital, you can secure the best possible prophylaxis and treatment. Army hospitals have the latest equipment and use the latest drugs. You cannot secure better treatment elsewhere regardless of the price you might pay. The medical officers who treat you are well-trained and must present evidence of high professional qualifications before they are commissioned. Their service to the army men is free.

Even if you have already had a venereal disease, the advice you have just heard is sound because, unlike some diseases, you may contract a venereal disease any time that you are exposed. Do not rely on tips from anyone as to how to treat venereal diseases. You now know the real facts. If you suspect that you have a venereal disease, report to your first sergeant or charge of quarters and have your name entered on the sick book.

In closing, let me emphasize, it is extremely important that you do not go on a drinking party and allow yourself to become so drunk that you get careless. Drunkenness is responsible for much venereal disease since a drunken soldier loses his judgment and becomes a victim through his own failure to take the precautions recommended to him by the Medical Corps of the United States Army.

Men, you are a part of the greatest army in the world. To become soldiers in the first place, you had to have a strong body, health and common sense. The purpose of this film has been to show you how to keep your health, preserve your body and to help maintain the great *esprit de corps* of your organization. It is hoped that you will use your good common sense and continue to be good soldiers and citizens in the service of your country.”

DO NOT BE SO WEAK AS TO LET SOME IGNORANT INDIVIDUAL PERSUADE YOU THAT YOU MUST SEEK SEX RELATIONS TO BE A GOOD SPORT. IF YOU FOLLOW HIS ADVICE, YOU ARE ONLY BEING A FOOL.

WILL POWER AND CONTROL ARE DEVELOPED BY KEEPING A HEALTHY MIND AND A CLEAN BODY. THOSE ESSENTIALS ARE REQUIRED IN MEETING THE MANY PROBLEMS OF LIFE, IN PROTECTING THE HEALTH OF YOUR WIFE AND THE CHILDREN WHOM YOU EXPECT TO BE A PART OF YOUR FUTURE, AND IN SERVING YOUR COUNTRY TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY.

THE END

Transcript: Laetitia Serris