

## BUGS AND BUGABOOS

It may seem strange to say in the second half of the 20th century, when most people see them only in zoos, that tigers are one of the dangers faced by servicemen in the Republic of Vietnam. But, for men on patrol in the upland jungles they still represent a threat, along with wild oxen, buffalo, elephants, panthers, and a variety of poisonous snakes.

Small animals of all types are also found in the jungle areas of the country, and while some may make amusing pets, remember that many animals carry rabies, a disease which is widespread in Southeast Asia. Since it may be transmitted to



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With guards posted, Army men get a quick trim near combat zone.

humans by all types of warm-blooded animals, every bite should be promptly reported and—if possible—the animal captured for observation.

However, far more dangerous for the average serviceman in Vietnam are simple diseases which can be avoided only by personal care.

Malaria, the germs of which are carried by one of the smallest of insects, the mosquito, can cause a lifetime of suffering. To protect yourself from this disease, as well as another disabling disease, encephalitis, follow two simple rules:

- Take your anti-malaria pill every week without fail.

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• Sleep under a mosquito net, no matter how hot and inconvenient it is.

3 The combination of heat, humidity, and dirt can cause infection in small cuts and abrasions within hours unless they are promptly cleaned, treated, and bandaged. In this matter, leeches are a particular problem since they secrete an anti-coagulant which delays blood clotting and leaves an open wound when they are removed. Always clean and bandage such wounds immediately.

4 For protection against fungus infections, take daily baths if possible, change clothing frequently, and use foot and body powder liberally.

2 In local restaurants choose foods which have been well cooked and which are served hot, and for dessert, a fruit which can be peeled just before eating.

Avoid drinking local water unless you have purified it or it has been boiled for at least 20 minutes. The same advice goes for ice—do not use it in your drinks if it has been made from local water.

4 Keep your shot record up to date, both for your own health protection and because it is a very important item when it comes time for you to take your R&R trip.

Last but not least, in the event of illness or infection, seek medical treatment immediately instead of trying to doctor yourself.

## SOME USEFUL INFORMATION

### Time

If you decide to telephone your family from Vietnam it is important to know that the country is 13 hours ahead of

ITEM: Malaria prophylaxis is still very important even in dry season operations.

DISCUSSION: Even though the dry season has begun and water is scarce for the breeding of mosquitoes, malaria prophylaxis has to be continued. As operations expand into the northern regions of the 25th Infantry Division's Tactical Area of Operations, the daily use of dapsone tablets has become necessary in order to protect the troops from falciparum malaria. The weekly use of chloroquine-primaquine tablets are still

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necessarily taken to prevent vivax malaria.

OBSERVATION: Personal preventive measures must be constantly re-emphasized by the surgeon and his commander. Sleeves should be rolled down at night and the tropical head net should be used properly. Use of insect repellants, insecticide sprays, and the mosquito net will be advantageous.

ITEM: Dermatologic disorders of the feet continue to provide a great number of sick calls and produce considerable non-effectiveness.

DISCUSSION: The rotational system of stocking drying developed during the Korean Conflict can be used to great advantage in Vietnam. An extra pair of stocking is used so that one pair may be rotated as needed, being strapped onto one's steel helmet, exposed to sun and air, where they may quickly dry.

OBSERVATION: The rotational system commented on above has been observed in the field here in Vietnam and has been found to be extremely effective. If the stockings are changed daily while in the field and the feet kept as dry as possible, many foot problems will be alleviated.