

Poliomyelitis Vaccination Campaign

About 45 million Americans under 40 years of age have received no poliomyelitis vaccine, and 30 million have yet to complete the full schedule of 3 doses.

"These people," Marion B. Folsom, Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, warns, "are needlessly risking disability or even death."

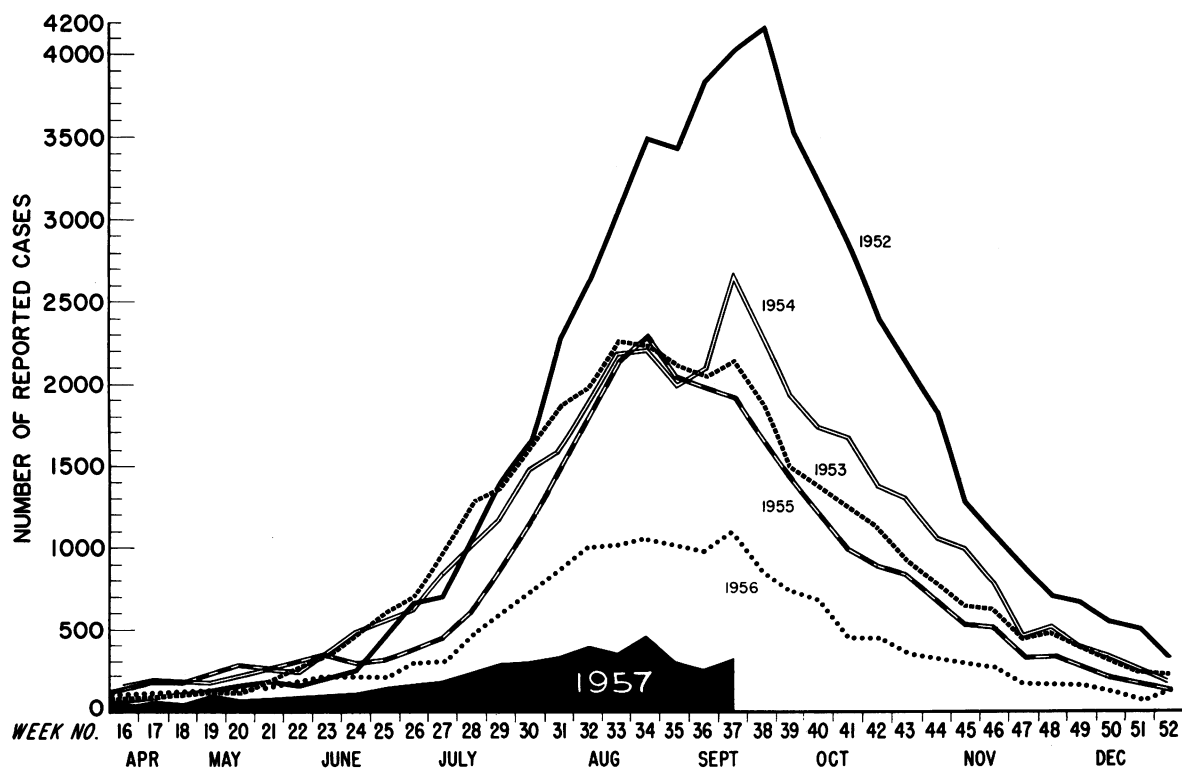
"For many years," Mr. Folsom notes, "this country anxiously sought the means to avert the suffering and anguish caused by poliomyelitis. Today with steadily increasing supplies of Salk vaccine, the means are at hand. If people will use the vaccine available, it is possible to give paralytic poliomyelitis a knockout blow within the next year."

To this end the Public Health Service, the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, the American Medical Association, State and Territorial health officers, and the Advertising Council are all joining in a campaign to urge vaccination of as many persons as possible with the full recommended schedule of three doses.

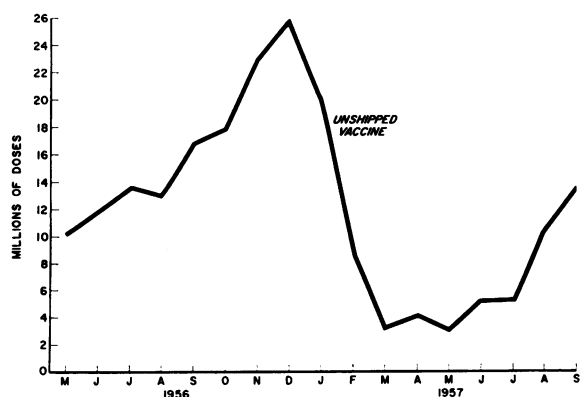
In urging a campaign for vaccination the Secretary pointed out that this is the best time for medical societies, local health departments, schools, industries, and individual citizens and physicians to make sure that everyone who needs protection gets it.

In the fall of 1956 use of the vaccine dropped sharply and supplies piled up in warehouses. By spring the demand rose to such a peak that

Current poliomyelitis incidence in the United States compared with 1952-56



Manufacturers' reports of unshipped vaccine, by month, 1956 and 1957



supplies were short again, and many community and industry vaccination programs had to be postponed.

The following summarizes to October 1957 vaccination effects, production, and use.

Incidence

An 80 percent reduction in paralytic poliomyelitis has occurred in this country since 1955.

During the first 9 months of this year, 1,576 paralytic cases were reported compared with 7,886 cases in 1955, before the widespread use of the Salk vaccine, and 5,241 cases in 1956.

Only 63 cases of paralytic poliomyelitis were reported among the 34 million persons who received 3 shots of vaccine, and not all of these cases have been confirmed.

Although the vaccine is designed to prevent paralytic poliomyelitis, as distinguished from

nonparalytic, the total number of poliomyelitis cases this year also shows a sharp reduction. For the first 9 months of 1957 there were 4,851 cases compared with 21,667 for the same period in 1955 and 12,146 in 1956.

Vaccine Production

More than 215 million cubic centimeters (doses) of vaccine were released for public use between April 1955 and early October 1957. Production is presently 8 to 10 million cubic centimeters a month.

For the first time it now appears possible to have enough vaccine to protect substantially all the population under age 40 before the start of the 1958 season.

Vaccine Use

Of the Nation's 109 million persons under 40 years of age, more than 64 million had received one or more doses of vaccine. Estimates indicate that of the 63 million in the priority group under age 20, 30 million had received all 3 injections, 15 million had 2 injections, 3 million had 1 injection, and 15 million had received no vaccine. Many in the under-20 age group who still need vaccination are preschool children and teen-agers.

Poliomyelitis can and does strike severely at adults. However, of the 46 million persons 20-39 years old only 16 million had been vaccinated: 4 million with 3 doses, 10 million with 2 doses, and 2 million with 1 dose. But 30 million adults had had no vaccine.

New Hazardous Substance Law in Texas

A law prohibiting the sale of any substances containing more than 1 percent of any thallium salt went into effect in Texas on August 22, 1957. The new law also forbids the mixture of poisonous substances with food, unless that food has lost its identity as such and is not likely to be mistaken for it.

Passage of the law followed the death of 15 children who had eaten insecticides containing thallium during the year. In November 1956, a 5-year-old girl in Houston died after eating cookie crumbs treated with such an insecticide.