

## An Outbreak of Gastrointestinal Disease at the RTAFB Udorn, Thailand

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**OBJECTIVE:** To investigate an outbreak of gastrointestinal disease at the RTAFB, Udorn, Thailand.

**DESCRIPTION:** A three day epidemiological consultation took place in November, 1972 at the RTAF Base at Udorn. This visit was prompted by the admission to the 432nd USAF Hospital of six acutely ill patients, USAF personnel, with symptoms of chills, fever, abdominal pain, and diarrhea.

An initial survey showed an increase in both the number of out-patient visits and in the number of hospital admissions for gastrointestinal problems with the above symptoms. Consequently attack rates were calculated for the various units on post, and the hospital admission rate by unit was determined. The unit with the highest admission rate and second highest attack rate was subjected to a chunk sampling. Although several members of the unit complained of malaise and diarrhea, the carrier rate for enteric pathogenic organisms based on rectal swabs was zero.

In four of the hospitalized patients, *Shigella sonnei* organisms were cultured from stool specimens. Extensive questioning of these four individuals failed to reveal any common food or water source history.

**SUMMARY:** While a fecal-oral mode of transmission was hypothesized, no particular defect in sanitary practice was found in spite of extensive examination of food handlers, mess halls, and water points.

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