

HEALTH AND SAFETY SECTION**ONLY A MOSQUITO BITE**

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THE NIGHT was uncomfortably warm. Troublesome mosquitoes kept buzzing around and stealing bites whenever an opportunity was offered.

Eleno, a sixth grade boy, was busy preparing his lessons for the next day. Drowsily he tried to concentrate on his work. Suddenly he felt a keen bite on his leg just above the ankle. In a moment it began to itch. Scratch, scratch, scratch went his finger nails on the bitten part.

The itching continued. Eleno kept on with his studying, but occasionally stopped to scratch that place on his leg where the mosquito had bitten him. Not thinking of the danger, he scratched the skin time and again with his dirty nails. Presently the place began to bleed a little.

After studying some more, Eleno went to bed, and, heedless of the mosquito bite,

was soon fast asleep. He slept soundly all night, and did not awake until he heard his mother's voice calling, "Eleno! Eleno! Get up or you will be late for school."

Eleno jumped out of bed and went to the bathroom to take a shower. He felt a tingling sensation in his leg just above the ankle—the leg on which he had scratched the mosquito bite. He looked at the place and noticed that there was a red circle, evidently caused by inflammation, entirely around his leg just above the ankle. The circle was several inches wide. The red line at the top was somewhat irregular, as if the inflammation were moving upward.

Eleno's mother noticed that the boy was looking at his leg. She stopped to examine the inflamed circle. "Better have the school nurse look at that, son," said his mother. "Hurry now, and get ready for breakfast," she continued.

Eleno quickly took his shower and dressed. After breakfast he gaily started for school. He had quite forgotten his mother's suggestion that he show his leg to the school nurse. The inflamed leg didn't bother him much, and he was soon engaged in a game with his schoolmates.

That afternoon Eleno played baseball. After the game was over he went to the school shower room. He looked at his leg, and noticed that the red inflammation had crept up in an irregular line until it was only a few inches below his knee. From that point down to his ankle his leg had an angry, very red appearance.

Eleno then remembered his mother's

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suggestion about seeing the school nurse. Thoroughly frightened, the boy hastily took his shower, dressed, and went to the clinic of the school nurse.

"I don't like the appearance of that leg," said the nurse after she had examined the inflamed part. "We must show it to Dr. Reyes."

It was some time before Dr. Reyes could be located. When he finally came to examine Eleno's leg, the inflammation had spread up almost to the boy's knee.

After a careful examination, Dr. Reyes said to the school nurse, "This is quite serious. The boy's leg is infected. He was probably bitten by a flea or a mosquito and scratched his leg with dirty finger nails. In that way the germs may have been introduced into the tiny wound, and the infection resulted. This boy must be taken to the hospital at once for treatment. If we cannot get the spread of the infection checked, very serious results may follow."

Soon Eleno was in bed in the hospital, and careful medical treatment was started. Injections of an anti-toxin were made in the boy's hip from time to time, and everything possible was done to stop the spread of the infection. This treatment was continued for several days.

Eleno got tired of lying in bed in the hospital, even though his mother spent much of her time at his bedside. In a few days the inflammation in the leg did not have such an angry appearance. The doctor said his leg was getting well.

It was nearly a week before Eleno was permitted to leave the hospital and go back to school. How happy he was to be back at his home and see his classmates!

One evening soon after his return his mother said, "Eleno, you were certainly

fortunate in receiving efficient medical attention for that infection. Otherwise there would have been very serious results. I wonder what caused that infection."

"It was only a mosquito bite," answered Eleno. "A mosquito bite which I scratched with my finger nails. They were probably dirty. I have learned a lesson which I shall never forget."

"Only a mosquito bite!" said his mother. "Yet my boy might have lost his leg, or even his life from only a mosquito bite."

A REVIEW

1. What bit Eleno on the leg?
2. What did he do?
3. What resulted?
4. What did the doctor do to cure Eleno's leg?
5. What have you learned from this story *Only a Mosquito Bite*?
6. Could this story actually happen? (Yes. The writers know personally that these events actually occurred.)
7. Why should a person not scratch bites made by insects?
8. What can be done to relieve itching from the bites of insects? (Ask the school nurse, or a doctor.)
9. Why should you keep your finger nails clean?
10. Why is this story in the *Health and Safety Section* of *The Young Citizen*?
11. Are mosquitoes dangerous?
12. How can you destroy them?
13. Should you sleep under a mosquito net? Why?
14. Name some other insects which are dangerous. (Fleas, bed-bugs, flies, and others.)
15. Should you study hygiene? Why?