

Mills

file

April 2, 1976

Mr. M. H. Mills
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Dear Mr. Mills:

I received your letter some time ago, but at that point I was confined to bed with an illness. My recuperation has been long drawn out, but I am considerably better at this time. I am sorry I was unable to answer your letter before now.

With reference to your question about alternative techniques between x-ray and endoscopy and their relative value, my comment is as follows. X-ray and endoscopy are not competitive as diagnostic methods. They are supplementary. X-rays are black and white shadows. Endoscopy shows living tissues and physiology. More importantly, one method will give the kind of information very frequently which is not available by the other method. The cost of both methods may be considerable, but so is the total cost of medical diagnosis and care. Cost reduction by attempting to substitute x-ray for endoscopy would be counterproductive in my opinion for a long, long time. It would be just as logical to substitute either of these techniques for blood chemistry. The advancement of technology will not be stopped in our culture, although far less technically advanced methods may be just as good in many instances.

Most of the controlled studies between x-ray and endoscopy are retrospective. In the earlier years of endoscopy if you look very carefully at the subject index you will find one prospective study with surgical and post-mortem control by my group. I am sure you will find some others in the American and Japanese literature.

Very truly yours,

Leonidas H. Berry, M.D.

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