suspected that intestinal ileus may also be associated with hypothermia. After rewarming to 37°C and in the presence of normal electrolytes, glucose, and acid/base status, the infant developed abdominal distension and bilious vomiting at 48 hours.

At an exploratory operation the whole alimentary tract from stomach to sigmoid was found to be distended and no peristalsis was seen. After decompression and intravenous alimentation the ileus recovered in 72 hours.

We do not know whether this was due to a temporary neuromuscular abnormality or disturbance of some other metabolic parameter of which we were unaware, but we believe the ileus and hypothermia to be causally linked.

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Are sex chromosome abnormalities a factor in speech delay?

Sir,

Garvey and Mutton (*Archives*, 1973, **48**, 937) reported that sex chromosome anomalies have a role in the aetiology of speech delay.

We studied 21 patients (13 boys and 8 girls) with speech delay after eliminating mental retardation, hearing defects, and other well-known causes of delayed speech. Ages varied between 3 and 9 years and most children were between 5 and 7. In each patient we analysed a pedigree, buccal smear, peripheral blood chromosomes, and amino-acids. The Peabody picture vocabulary test was generally used as the psychological test, and in patients in whom the intelligence level was uncertain, the

Goodenough and LM form of Stanford Binet tests were additionally given. Each patient also had a hearing test.

Our study population was similar to that of Garvey and Mutton (1973). Although the number of cases was larger in our study we could not find any minor or major chromosomal abnormalities. The studies which investigated the early development of children with sex chromosome aberrations (Leonard *et al.*, 1974; Robinson *et al.*, 1974; Tennes *et al.*, 1975; Nielsen and Sillesen, 1976) showed that the language development of these children was usually within normal limits, but was slightly retarded compared with their normal siblings or controls.

There are no similar reports on the analysis of amino-acids. In our series no amino-acid abnormality was found; however, we knew that the chance of finding a very rare metabolic disease, such as histidinaemia, in a series of 21 patients was slight.

The results of our study show that sex chromosome aberrations are not an important cause of delayed speech. It is obvious that similar studies with more patients are needed.

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