

VITAMINS FOR TOMMY ATKINS

British and Indian troops who in future eastern campaigns may have to fight in areas where there is no fresh food will be issued with a new kind of vitamin tablet. It is a combination of several existing forms of concentrated vitamins and the army medical authorities in India have high hopes for it.

But now comes a new problem - how to get the conservative tommy and sepoy to eat it.

"The soldier is notoriously chary about taking any form of tablet", said a senior medical officer at G.H.Q., India. "It is difficult to convince him that it is not some new kind of medicine. Indian troops are particularly dubious about anything like this.

"The new product provides that little bit of extra nourishment which is essential to maintain health in the absence of fresh meat, fruit and vegetables. By taking one tablet a day the soldier can keep fit almost indefinitely on non-fresh foods like bully beef and biscuits. This means that he can operate for long periods in isolated areas and the supply of food in the jungle will be much simplified.

"The tablet looks like an ordinary medical pill. That is just the trouble - the soldier is immediately suspicious of it.

"We are trying to popularise the tablet among the troops; C.O's will be asked to talk to them about it and impress on them the fact that it is a real battle aid. If the worst comes to the worst we shall have to order special pill parades".

The tablet is the result of many months of experiment by Allied scientists. Millions of the new tablets have just arrived in India from England.

India is now producing many specialised food products for the army, such as yeast extracts and shark liver oil. The oil is extracted in Indian factories which are supplied with sharks caught by fishermen. Vitamin powders brought from overseas are being tabletised at Indian factories.
