

Office of the Vice-President for Research
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BUFFALO
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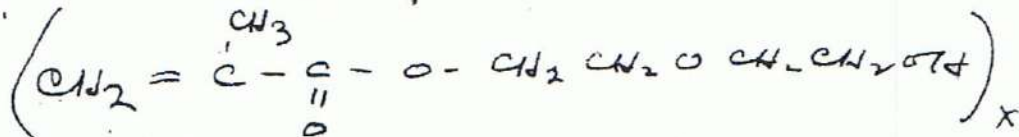
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February 8, 1964

Dear Dave -

I understand Al Tren has sent you some of the Wichterle contact lenses from Prague. When I returned from Prague I gave Al all the lenses Wichterle had given me so Al could make a professional appraisal of the lenses and send you this appraisal. This I believe he has now done. There is still a lot we don't know about these lenses. They have plenty of drawbacks but they have enough promise that Al is going to Prague next week to try to find out more about them. He will pass on to you any info he picks up there. Wichterle wears the lenses himself so he knows their good points and their bad points.

The chemical nature of the plastic is poly dioxy-ethylene methacrylate. The chemical formula looks like this:



The presence of the three oxygen atoms + one OH group in each molecular unit makes the polymer hydrophilic instead of hydrophobic like Lucite is. Lucite is polymethyl methacrylate $\left(\text{CH}_2 = \overset{\text{CH}_3}{\underset{\text{O}}{\text{C}}} - \text{C} - \text{O} \text{CH}_3 \right)_x$

↳ hydrophilic character causes them to absorb water like a sponge and become soft and flexible. This has advantages and disadvantages. For one thing, the hydrophilic character does not give as optically clear a product as lecithin is.

There are apparently many problems to be worked out before there could be made into a saleable product in U.S.A. Although Nichterle claims they are selling a lot of them in Europe, the lenses have to be molded in place in an accurate mold, but I did not see this being done.

How do you stand in the stock market now? If you have much invested in stocks I would advise you to get out. The market is very high and seems to me to be bound to have a big drop one of these days.

Keep an eye on Dad. He will be 83 in a couple of months. I suppose we will have a death of Dad or Mom or both within the next 2 or 3 years so be thinking about what you and Wm and Nancy will do to cope with the situation.

With best wishes to you and Edith and the children.

Sincerely,

Ray