

**PROGRESS IN TREATMENT OF CHRONIC SCALP DISEASES OF BLACK MEN**

Many black men suffer from annoying, often painful and embarrassing, chronic diseases of the scalp and neck. Progress in the treatment of two of these diseases is discussed in the June, 1989, edition of the *Journal of Dermatologic Surgery and Oncology*, the official journal of the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery.

Acne keloidalis is a chronic inflammation of the hair follicles in the back of the head and nape of the neck producing ugly plaques (hard raised areas) and nodules (lumps or knots). Itching or a burning sensation are common. In severe cases, oozing abscesses form, and the disease can be physically and psychologically painful.

There is probably not one single cause for the disease. One prime suspect, however, according to dermatologic surgeon Sheldon V. Pollack, M.D., co-author of the article on acne keloidalis, might be grease pomades which at least make the acne worse. The coarse hair found in black patients might itself be a contributing cause. Close shaving and chafing shirt collars probably also aggravate the condition.

Dr. Pollack, associate professor of dermatology at North Carolina's Duke University School of Medicine, and his co-authors note that treating the condition medically and with various minor surgical approaches has been extremely frustrating.

Dr. Pollack's co-authors are Arlene J. Herzberg, M.D. and B.J. Kems, M.T. (both of the Duke school) and Scott M. Dinchart, M.D. (University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences).

"Conservative treatment has not worked," says Dr. Pollack. "Whatever causes the disease, we now know that reaching surgically past the deepest level of the follicles to remove them and the surrounding abnormal tissue is necessary to cure the problem. This can be done with the carbon dioxide laser, electrocautery or traditional surgical methods".

The authors do not believe general anesthesia is normally necessary to perform the surgery and recommend that Mother Nature be allowed to heal the wound naturally, taking 6-8 weeks, without skin grafts.

Successful treatment with the carbon dioxide laser of another chronic scalp disorder characterized by inflamed hair follicles is reported by a team of dermatologic surgeons at the University of California School of Medicine, Davis, California. The condition (perifolliculitiscapitis abscedens et suffodiens) is seen almost exclusively in black males.

In advanced stages, the disease is characterized by large painful, oozing lumps at the top and back of the head.

Co-author David Laub M.D., says, "The condition is infamous for its resistance to therapy with limited success being achieved with conservative local treatment alternatives. As a new approach, we employed the carbon dioxide laser.

Dr. Laub's co-authors also include Brian Berman, M.D., Ph.D., and L. Frank Glass, M.D., all of the Department of Dermatology, University of California School of Medicine, Davis California.

The team operated on a 36-year-old black man suffering from several painful knots and sausage-shaped ridges on the top of his head. They chose to remove the most troublesome knot.

There was no loss of blood and little postoperative pain. The wound was allowed to heal naturally, and hair grew back in 6 weeks. No recurrence of the lump was found 6 months later.

"The early results are very promising," says Dr. Laub. "We are not suggesting at this point that we have cured this patient, but the carbon dioxide laser worked very well in this case. Further work needs to be done with the laser alone and in conjunction with other forms of therapy."

To obtain fact sheets on various conditions of the skin calling for surgery and the names of dermatologic surgeons in their area, people may call ASDS toll-free at 1-800-441-2737, 9am - 5pm, Central Time, Monday - Friday.

Don King Productions announced today that National Black Network Sports will have the exclusive English language radio rights to broadcast the world heavyweight championship bout between reigning champ Mike Tyson and Carl (The Truth) Williams.

The fight -- Mike Tyson's first since his bout with Frank Bruno -- will be broadcast on Friday, July 21, 1989 live from Atlantic City's Trump Plaza and will be beamed by satellite to NBN's 152 affiliates across the country.

In making the announcement, promoter Don King said, "The time has arrived for radio to reclaim the glory of yesteryear. I am totally committed and dedicated to being part of the return of the fascinating, informative, exciting, and entertaining medium of radio.

Who knows the unparalleled excitement, the drama, the suspense that will reveal itself to the sports and entertainment fan...listen to the radio and find out!!!"

National Black Network broadcast the Tyson vs Holmes fight in 1988 to 2.8 million households and 1.3 million armed forces personnel across the globe through the Armed Forces radio outlets.

**THE BLACK VOTER MOBILIZATION PROJECT**

One of the lessons that should not be lost from the 1988 Jackson for President campaign is the critical role that the Black vote can play in shaping the future of African-Americans in this country. Rev. Jackson often referred to African-Americans as "giants with grasshopper mentalities". That is to say we have a political potential that we are either unaware of or simply fail to utilize to our full advantage. This is particularly true during party primary elections, but it is also true in general elections as well.

In 1988 Jesse Jackson won more votes than any Democratic runner-up in history. His 7 million votes was more than Walter Mondale won the nomination with in 1984 (6.7 million). But despite this brilliant success, an analysis of the vote is very troubling from the perspective of Black political participation and empowerment. Jesse Jackson received 2 million white votes, 1 million votes from other minorities and 4 million votes from African-Americans. The astounding fact is, however, that there are 14 million registered African-American voters in the United States. Put another way there are twice as many registered African-American voters as the total vote Jesse Jackson received in his presidential bid!

Equally amazing is the number of African-Americans who remain unregistered to vote. There are 8 million unregistered African-Americans in the United States today. Again, putting it in different terms, there are more African-Americans unregistered to vote than the total number of votes Jesse Jackson received in 1988! More than 500,000 African-Americans are unregistered in Georgia, more than 450,000 in states like Texas and North Carolina. In the State of New York, "up south," 1 million African-Americans are unregistered to vote. In the crucial New York Primary Michael Dukakis won with 900,000 votes to Jesse Jackson's 500,000 votes. In New York State there were more unregistered African-Americans than Dukakis' total vote in capturing the election!

All across America critical primary and general elections are lost by the margin of low Black voter registration and / or low Black voter turn-out. Though voting and electoral politics are not the only means by which we as African-Americans can advance and protect our interests, this arena is certainly a crucial area for Black empowerment. Electoral politics determines what policies prevail which in turn determines who gets what, and how much in terms of the allocation of tax dollars resources and opportunities.

African-Americans cannot afford to ignore, neglect or underutilize our potential power in the electoral political arena.

Every African-American community in this nation should have a non-

partisan VOTER MOBILIZATION PROJECT. We should strive for general agreement among our diverse organizations and forces that there is a great deal of respect and leverage to be gained from maximum voter registration and maximum turn-out. If for example we as African-Americans could get 90% of our people registered voters on a consistent basis, the powers that would be forced to take notice. This 90/90 African-American voter participation formula is a goal that we should adopt and work with strenuous effort to achieve.

The VOTER MOBILIZATION PROJECT, like the United Front, should be a coalition effort. indeed such a project could be sponsored by the United Front, since it is a non-partisan program. The critical factor is that communities should raise the monies necessary to fund voter mobilization projects on a permanent basis. The goals of the V.M.P. are quite simple, but essential; voter registration; voter education; and get out the vote.

In terms of VOTER REGISTRATION a strong emphasis needs to be placed on mobilizing massive support for national, state and county/municipal legislation which would make voter registration much easier. A maze of unnecessary barriers now exist which tend to discourage large number of people from registering. Post card or mail-in registration registration at motor vehicle bureaus, and AUTOMATIC registration at agencies which serve the public - schools, libraries, welfare offices, food stamps, offices, public housing, health care centers etc - should receive priority attention. Door to door canvassing and registration should also continue until we have achieved our registration goal.

As it relates to voter turn-out, the V.M.P. should deploy canvassers to conduct pre-election literature drops. On election day there should be a full non-partisan election day get out the vote set-up complete with a phone bank, canvassers, sound trucks and transportation to provide rides to the polls. Church congregations, on a voluntary basis, should take responsibility for getting every registered voter within their congregation to the polls and work to turn-out the vote in precinct(s) immediately adjacent to their church. All of this should be undertaken with funds raised on a self-support basis by the community for the Voter Mobilization Project.

The 90/90 formula for Black voter participation and empowerment can work. Its time that we as African-Americans become deadly serious about the power of the ballot in the electoral political arena. We MUST ORGANIZE Voter Mobilization Projects all across this land.

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