



spotlight on health

Progress Against Pain

About 800,000 Americans suffer the pain of cancer. For many of these people, researchers believe that pain can be managed by strong drugs without risk of addiction—if the drug dosage is properly controlled.

Today, it is widely accepted that morphine is the drug of choice for managing the chronic pain of advanced cancer for such reasons as:

- It is effective orally.
- Tolerance, addiction, and breathing problems are uncommon, provided it's used correctly.

Many doctors are finding that the best way to administer morphine is in an immediate-release form like that provided by morphine tablets, morphine solution, or morphine concentrated solution (Roxanol™). Immediate-release morphine has an important role in helping the doctor determine the specific dosage needs of a patient. Around the clock dosing (ATC) is recommended for managing pain



Doctors today can control severe pain without having to worry about causing drug addiction.

control. On the other hand, physicians say, if the drug is given in sustained-release form, the patient may be getting more than is needed. Another advantage of immediate-release morphine is that it is useful if larger doses or regular changes in dosage are needed.

These facts can be a relief to people in pain and to the people who care for them.

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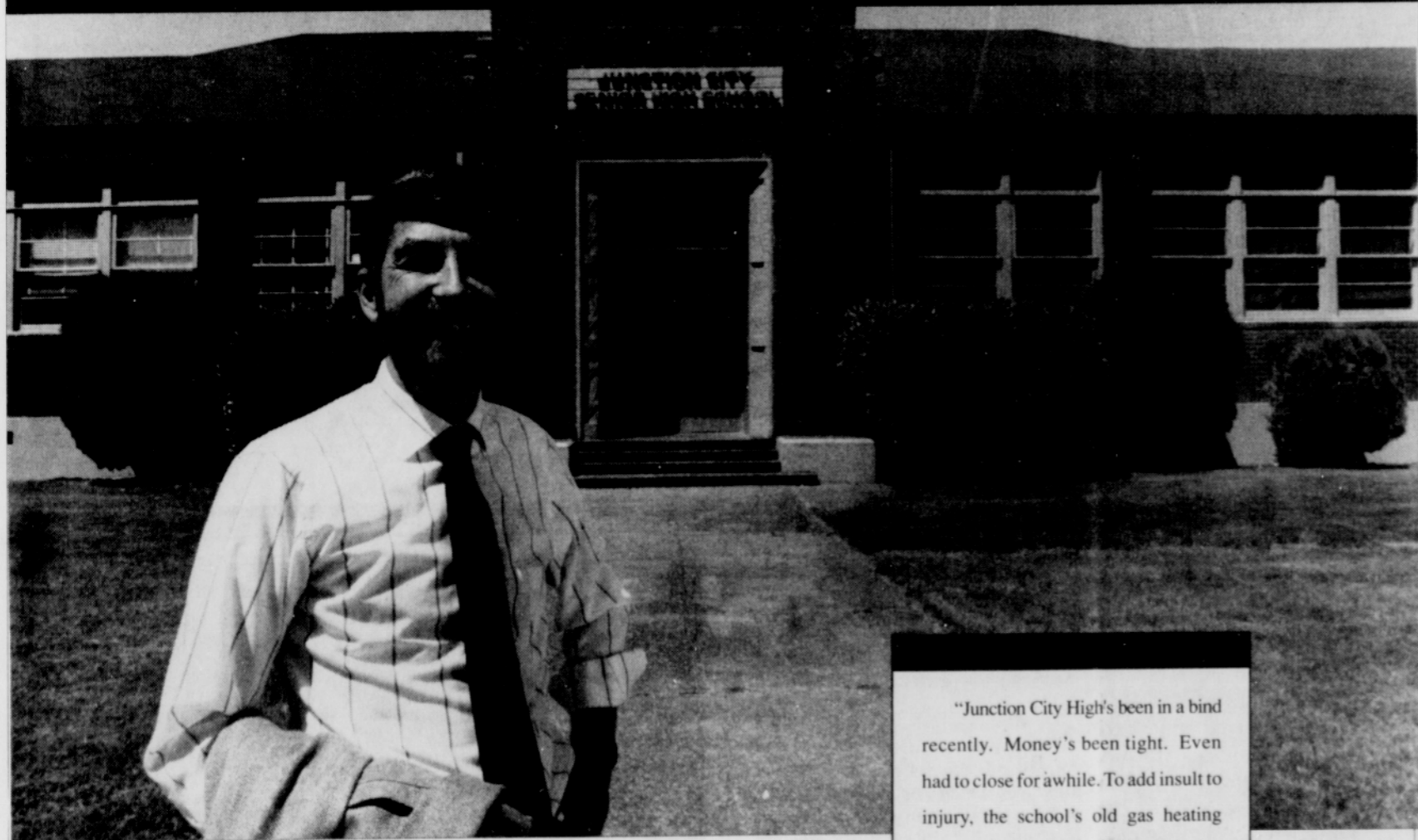
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"I was happy we could lend a hand, and solve their problems. It made a difference for our community, and our kids."



**PACIFIC POWER**  
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**MEDICAL ALERT**  
**STREP PHARYNGITIS**  
**(BACTERIAL SORE THROAT)**

**DEFINITION:**

Strep throat gets its name from the germ which causes it, a bacteria named streptococcus. It is regarded as a septic infection, not because of its sequelae, which include rheumatic fever and glomerulonephritis. Rheumatic fever is a disease manifested by joint pains and heart disease. Glomerulonephritis is a kidney disease.

**SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS:**

The major symptom of strep throat, not surprisingly, is a very sore throat. The lymph nodes in the front of the neck become enlarged and painful. The patient usually feels very ill and the temperature climbs up to 102 F or thereabouts. Unlike with the common cold there is not much involvement of the nose or lower respiratory passages, the trachea, "bronchi," or lungs. Frequently, the tonsils can be seen to be covered with white patches, although this suggests a bacterial infection, it is frequently seen in infectious mono and other virus infections.

**DIAGNOSIS:**

Strep throat is diagnosed by a culture of the throat. After twenty-four hours of incubation the cultured sample is examined. Some clinics use the 20 min. Latex est for rapid screen, but we have not found the test to be reliable in our pediatric practice, e.g. if tested with the latex the test will often be Negative for strep and when cultured, will be positive for strep. The streptococcus has a typical growth pattern and can be identified. Classifying it as to type takes another day.

The serious type of streptococcus which may be followed by rheumatic fever or glomerulonephritis is called Beta Strep, Group A.

Groups B through G need no medication.

**TREATMENT:**

Beta Strep, "Group A," is highly susceptible to penicillin. When strep throat is suspected, many physicians or Practitioners will elect to begin treatment after a culture has been taken but before final identification has been made. Of course, penicillin should not be used in individuals who are allergic to it. If, after twenty-four hours, streptococcus was not found, and the antibiotic which was started appears to be doing to good, it can be discontinued. Eryped, or other medications which are effective against Beta Strep. Group A may be substituted for penicillin when appropriate to do so. Antibiotics should be taken for a full ten days unless the penicillin injection is administered. Treatment of less duration may result in a recurrence of the infection.

**COMPLICATIONS:**

The complications of rheumatic fever and glomerulonephritis occur within two to three weeks of the acute strep throat. They are thought to result from an allergic reaction to complexes derived from the streptococcus and the patient's own body. The symptoms of rheumatic fever includes arthritis, usually of more than one joint, and carditis. One of the valves of the heart may become damaged, leading to failure of the valve to close, and leakage of blood past it.

After many years of inefficient action, the heart may fail.

The symptoms of glomerulonephritis are blood in the urine associated with swelling of the face, hands and of the entire body. The kidneys fail to excrete certain wastes and fail to retain certain needed substances, such as albumin. Acute glomerulonephritis, if not too serious, may go on to heal. If extensive, it may terminate in death.

NOTE: Penicillin does not cures or correct the strep infection (the body does this) it simply keeps the Group A strep from affecting the heart or kidneys.

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