

HEALTH

Agency For Health Care Policy And Research Issues New Guidelines For Diagnosis, Treatment of Sickle Cell Disease

A federally-sponsored panel today issued new guidelines for diagnosis and treatment of sickle cell disease, an inherited disorder that makes children susceptible to infections and other potentially fatal complications.

The guidelines include recommendations for universal screening of newborns, protective doses of penicillin to ward off infection and follow-up medical care. Universal screening is currently performed in 34 states and jurisdictions and targeted screening is done in others.

Sickle cell disease is marked by crescent-shaped red blood cells. The most common form, sickle cell anemia, affects one out of 375 African-Americans, causing jaundice and abdominal, muscular and joint pain, skin ulcerations and gallstones.

But the disease also occurs in people whose ancestors came from areas such as the Mediterranean basin, Arabian Peninsula, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The new guidelines are part of a series of medical advisories being developed by independent expert panels, with the support of the Agency of Health Care Policy and Research, to help improve the effectiveness of medical care.

The guidelines call for screening of all newborn babies for sickle cell disease. Panel co-chair Jeanne Smith,

M.D., associate professor of clinical medicine at Columbia University and director of the Comprehensive Sickle Cell Center at Harlem Hospital, said screening programs targeted to a specific racial or ethnic group will not identify all infants with sickle cell disease. "Because of mixing of the gene pool, it's not always possible to be certain of an individual's racial or ethnic background by physical appearance, surname or self-report," Smith said.

"Universal screening is the best and most reliable method of casting the broadest possible net to identify affected infants," Smith said, "and it ensures that all babies benefit equally from state and federal funding for neonatal screening."

The test can be done in conjunction with other neonatal screening tests that are also performed universally for conditions such as phenylketonuria—a relatively rare disease that causes mental retardation—and hypothyroidism, a thyroid condition.

The guidelines also call for infants whose initial test reveals sickle cell anemia to be given prophylactic penicillin within two months of birth, even if the diagnosis has not been confirmed.

Administration of penicillin can significantly reduce the number and

severity of infections and pneumonia-related deaths," said the panel's other co-chair, Thomas Kinney, M.D., professor of pediatrics at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C.

The guidelines also recommend improved genetic counseling for couples with the sickle cell trait, which increases the risk of offspring being born with sickle cell anemia. Eight percent of all African-Americans—2.5 million individuals—carry the trait; when both parents have it, their offspring have a one in four chance of being born with sickle cell anemia.

Furthermore, the guidelines call on screening laboratories to relay test results promptly to the infant's physician and hospital of birth.

The infant's physician should promptly establish a definitive diagnosis, and the parents should be taught about the disease, routine child care (including body temperature measurement and signs of life-threatening complications, such as fever, unusual sleepiness or irritability, rapid respiration or vomiting) and how to reach medical help quickly.

The guidelines also emphasize the importance of regular visits to assess the child's medical status, administration of age-appropriate immunizations and the provision of other infant-specific health services.

Call Me Anything But Crazy

Garlington Center and Mental Health Services West successfully kicked-off the Call Me Anything But Crazy campaign on May 5 for National Mental Health Month.

City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury read the proclamation for Mayor Vera Katz at the press conference. The public service announcement featuring the commissioner was shown and is being aired on local television stations.

Call Me Anything But Crazy offers profiles of... Sue... who had animal like behavior; lived on the streets for 10 years and was repeatedly raped. Due to mental health services West she is a successful community resident.

Bill... who was often homeless; an alcoholic since age 10 and lost his eye because of it. Due to Mental Health Services West, Bill has been sober for one year.

Leslie... who because of her mental illness has experienced prejudice from family as well as society. Leslie's family won't even allow her to be alone with her grandson. Due to Garlington Center, Leslie can come to a place where people respect her.

Mark... who developed mental illness from a stroke 12 years ago. Due to Garlington Center, Mark has achieved self-esteem through partially regaining his speech and tutoring other mentally ill clients in reading.

Those with mental illness feel society would rather they not be seen nor heard. In spite of this, these citizens want to be heard to dispel myths and falsehoods -- so people won't be afraid.

Take the time to listen. For story information call Sylvia McDaniel at 249-0066 and Kathleen Hartshorne at 273-8433.

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Marshall High Prompts Focus On Traffic Safety

Dangers of drunk driving and not "buckling up" when riding in a car are targeted May 17-21 -- the week before the school prom -- during LifeSafety Awareness Week at Marshall High School, 3905 S. E. 91st Avenue.

Students arriving at the school parking lot with their safety belts fastened will receive a package of mini-Lifesavers, courtesy of Planters-Lifesaver, during the awareness week. An all-school assembly Friday at 10:30 a.m. features Deputy Chief Charles

Moose of the Portland Police Bureau and Nancy Henning of the Victims Impact Panel. Both speakers will focus their remarks on the importance of traffic safety.

The week-long safety celebration was developed by Marshall's Peer Helper Program, according to co-chair Leah Onderdonk. Some 30 student Peer Helpers at Marshall provide peer counseling and work on drug and alcohol prevention skills with fellow students.

facts--the usual dose smaller than a pin head. So even very small amounts of LSD which remain in the system can be quite catastrophic.

After completing the Narconon Detoxification Program, people routinely report that they suddenly can think more clearly. Their IQ generally goes up. They have more energy and begin to enjoy life more fully again. In fact, the changes are sometimes quite dramatic.

"Drugs can reduce a person's ability to learn," said Duff. "They can shut off emotions and dull perceptions of the world around one. Hubbard's research found that there is even such a thing as a drug personality. It is artificial and created by drugs."

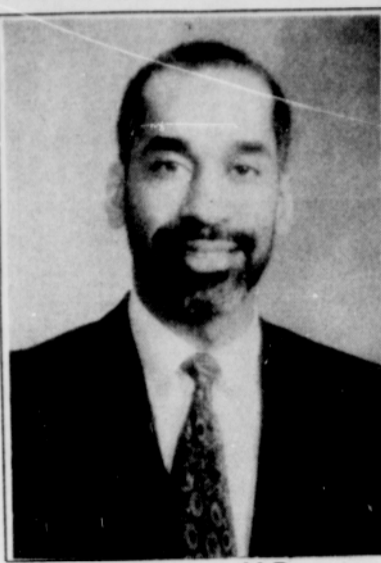
"LSD and other drugs can apparently change the attitude of a person from his original personality to one secretly harboring hostilities and hatred he doesn't permit to show on the surface. And in general, drugs reduce people's natural abilities and make them feel worse. This frequently leads to a craving for more drugs."

Duff says that increasing use of LSD, inhalants and other drugs by school children is directly due to

a widespread lack of effective and complete drug education. "Children need to understand what taking a drug like LSD even once or twice can do to them," said Duff. "When drug use is increasing amongst school children, this tells us at once that we are not effective reaching young people with the full truth about drugs. We are failing them terribly and too many youngsters will suffer for it."

Duff says that LSD is particularly harmful because such a small quantity of the drug has profound mental ef-

High Blood Pressure: A Controllable Enemy



Donald E. Wesson, M.D.

BY DONALD E. WESSON, M.D.

Most African Americans know someone with high blood pressure or hypertension, its medical name. Most do not know that this common disease is a major cause of death and debilitation in the African-American community. Blacks are twice as likely to have the disease compared to other Americans and are more likely to suffer the medical complications associated with high blood pressure. Many people with high blood pressure who have not suffered these complications remain at risk.

Beyond the individual tragedy inflicted by this disease, the African-American community as a whole suffers the lost contributions that these individuals would have otherwise made. This makes high blood pressure an enemy to be faced by the entire community. The encouraging news is that this menace can be controlled and its devastating effects reduced.

High blood pressure usually causes no symptoms until damage to the body is severe. Many hypertensive "feel okay" and so do not take proper steps to control the disease, leading to slow, irreversible damage to body tis-

sues. High blood pressure, even when mild, causes strokes and heart attacks, and is associated with kidney failure. Proper control of high blood pressure reduces the incidence of all three. It is important for all persons, particularly African Americans, to have their blood pressure checked to take action, if necessary.

Everyone with hypertension should be under a physician's care. Once the physician recommends a strategy for blood pressure control, patients should ask questions in order to understand the plan of action and be aware of potential problems. Patients should stay under a doctor's care who will follow their progress and determine whether adjustments in the plan are needed.

Remember, except in rare cases, high blood pressure is a life-long disease that cannot be cured but can be controlled to reduce the chance for its potential complications.

Exciting new information gathered in recent years demonstrates that blood pressure can be lowered in individuals with hypertension by lifestyle changes. These modifications can control high blood pressure in some individuals without medications and reduce the necessary dosage or number of medications in others. They include reducing salt in the diet, stopping tobacco and alcohol use, weight loss in obese individuals, and increased exercise. These non-drug strategies are exciting because they hold the potential to lower the incidence of hypertension when employed community-wide. Such a strategy could be carried out at the "grass roots" level and aimed at not just the individual hypertensive but at an entire community. Such community "empowerment" would not only reduce hypertension, but would improve the health of the African-American community as a whole.

100 Year Celebration Of Public Health Nursing Recognized And Honored In Oregon

The long tradition of Public Health Nursing began 100 years ago when Lillian Wald opened the Henry Street Settlement House in New York City, offering care for mothers and children, the ill and the elderly poor who had no medical care available.

Oregon began its Public Health Nursing efforts in 1990 by hiring Mrs. Lucy Morgan with donations from the community to establish the Visiting Nurse Association. With prevention the primary focus, Public Health Nursing has made a significant contribution to our society in the past by advocating for access to health care for the poor, immunizations, communicable disease control, school nursing, family planning, home health care, prenatal care and infant occupational health, Indian health, and child care in well child clinics.

Today Public Health Nurses continue to work in our communities by providing the more traditional services and by expanding to meet the needs of today's populations with programs for the homeless, AIDS, Hepatitis, violence, rape and homicide and teen-age pregnancy.

In Portland, a celebration was held at the "Old Library" of Oregon Health Sciences University with a monologue by Clare Coss, noted New York playwright and actress, entitled Lillian Wald at the Henry Settlement House and a presentation entitled Public Health Nursing-Looking Forward to the Next 100 Years by Marla Salmon, SCD, RN, Director, Division of Nursing, Bureau of Health Professions, HRSA in Washington DC.

AND

SCHOOL CHILDREN

by Ron Harris

vitamins, nutrition, exercise and periods of time in a sauna to sweat out the drug residuals, we could at last test and observe how these drugs had been affecting people," explains Duff. "People never realize the effects these drugs continue to have on them until they get them back out of their system."

Duff says that LSD is particularly harmful because such a small quantity of the drug has profound mental ef-

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And The Winner Is...



Cynthia Southwell (L) and Eddie Gennis (R), Parent Raina Beavers with her prize, a 25" Zenith color television. Cynthia and Eddie are members of the Committee For Minority Bone Marrow Donor Awareness.

Members of the Committee for Minority Bone Marrow Donor Awareness held the drawing for its first fund-raising raffle and presented the prize to an elated Raina Beavers. Eddie Gennis and Joil Southwell presented the 25-inch Zenith color television with remote controls to Raina at her home as excited family members looked on.

"I bought two tickets at the Black Womens' Gathering last Saturday," Raina said. "I wasn't exactly sure what it was all about, but it sounded like a good cause."

The cause is a good one: The Committee is dedicated to raising funds to assist local African-Americans who are in need of bone marrow transplants. Children and adults are diagnosed every day with leukemia and other blood-related diseases. For many of them, the only hope of survival is a bone marrow transfusion.

The Committee's first recipient is a Portland man who is currently in Seattle at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Treatment Center with his donor, undergoing tests and awaiting surgery.

The Committee is also dedicated to making more minorities aware of the need to become bone marrow do-

nors. Often when people are stricken by these diseases, they are unable to find a suitable match within their families. These individuals need to find unrelated donors, people willing to come to the assistance of someone they likely will never meet.

"Of the more than 10,250 registered donors in Oregon and Southwest Washington, only 120 are African-Americans," said ShaRee Rhone, another committee member. "More minority donors are desperately needed, nationally as well as locally." According to Rhone, when no matching relative is available, the best change of finding a matching marrow donor is someone from the same racial background. This means that only an African-American can be a perfect donor match with another African-American.

"The Committee's first recipient is lucky that he was able to find a good candidate with his younger brother," Rhone went on to say. "The next person may not be as fortunate. This is why more of us need to register to become donors."

For information on becoming a bone marrow donor, contact the American Red Cross, the Oregon Trail Chapter, at 284-4040.

Things are gain' on at Lee Owen Stone.



Lee Owen Stone Preschool is registering students for fall. We'll be closed for summer, so now's the time to register. There's art, dance, gym and music, for kids age 2 1/2 to 5. Register now for some serious fun!

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The latest surveys show that LSD use by high school students is increasing. In grade schools, so is the use of inhalants--the breathing of poisonous solvents and other chemicals in order to get high.

"This should not be regarded as anything less than a national disaster--a catastrophe in this and every other community in America," said John Duff, president of Narconon International, an organization which operates more than two dozen drug education and rehabilitation centers in America and Europe.

Duff calls LSD the most insidious and devastating illegal drug flooding our streets and schoolyards. "In the 1960s, when little was really known about the long term effects of LSD, many people believed the drug offered mind expansion and enhanced creativity," he explained. "That turned out to be a complete myth, a lie."

"Yet, today, children are being fed the same kind of misinformation--that a person can use these drugs or chemicals and get something from them without being seriously hurt by their use. Scientifically, we now know that this is not the case. LSD and other illicit drugs all have long-term, adverse effects that can plague a person for the rest of his life."

Duff is referring to the discovery that residuals of LSD and other drugs and toxic chemicals remain in the system, getting caught up in the tissues and remaining there, unsuspected, even after they have supposedly been eliminated from the body years earlier.

American author and humanitarian, L. Ron Hubbard, not only was the first researcher to uncover this fact,

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