

Health & Science



New Drug Test for Respiratory Disease

Morehouse School of Medicine (MSM) is participating in nationwide Phase III clinical trial for a new drug treatment for Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS), a condition with a 40 percent death rate and no proven effective drug treatments.

"ARDS develops in patients who have suffered serious injury, such as burns, severe trauma from a car accident, or serious infection," said Mark Walker, M.D., ARDS principal investigator and program director, MSM Department of Surgery. "It affects approximately 150,000 Americans per year."

MSM aims to recruit 30 to 40 ARDS patients from the Atlanta area over the next 18 months to test TLC C-53, a drug that has shown

considerable promise in Phase II clinical trials in patients with ARDS. The drug is manufactured by The Liposome Company, an independent biotechnology company in Princeton, N.J., that develops liposome and lipid-based pharmaceuticals for the

treatment, prevention and diagnosis of life-threatening diseases. Liposomes are microscopic fat bubbles that can be used to encapsulate drugs. When combined Liposomes are microscopic fat bubbles that can be used to encapsulate drugs. When combined with TLC C-53, they can control the activity of neutrophils and macrophage's - cells that contribute to lung injury in patients with ARDS.

According to Dr. Walker, patients who sustain serious injuries, such as trauma patients, have an overabundance of overactive white blood cells fighting to help the body recover. In patients with ARDS, the overactive white blood cells and chemical mediators cause blood vessels in the lungs to leak, filling the lungs with fluid and causing the patient to have difficulty breathing. If severe enough, the condition can lead to ARDS.

"TLC C-53 binds with infection-fighting cells in the body to reduce the severity of ARDS by limiting these cells' activity," said Ignatius Akpele, M.D., co-investigator for the

ARDS study and assistant professor, MSM Department of Surgery.

"We suspect that TLC C-53 binds with key receptors on the surface of neutrophils to control their activity and, hence, stops the disease process from getting worse," said Marilyn Foreman, M.D., co-principle investigator for the ARDS study and chief of pulmonology, MSM Department of Medicine. "If the results of Phase III trials follow those of Phase II, this treatment could represent a breakthrough in ARDS and help us save more lives."

In the Phase II, randomized double-blind, placebo-controlled study of 25 patients, investigators found that eight days after treatment had started, all eight patients who had received no medication still required assisted ventilation. In contrast, 76 percent (13 of 17) of patients receiving TLC C-53 had at least a 25 percent improvement in lung compliance or had been removed from the ventilator by day eight. Nine of the TLC C-53 patients still required as-

sisted ventilation.

"Morehouse School of Medicine's goal is quality care," said Iva Katon, SA PA-C, ARDS study coordinator, who has been with MSM since the Department of Surgery was established at Grady Hospital in 1990. "The tremendous growth in our Departments of Surgery and Medicine over the past decade has enabled us to extend the medical school's reach beyond education and health promotion, to the ability to treat more patients and participate in significance research studies that will benefit the community in the long run."

MSM's Department of Surgery and Medicine are at Piedmont Hall, 22 Piedmont Ave., S.W., Atlanta, across the street from Grady Hospital.

Morehouse School of Medicine's mission is to recruit and train physicians and biomedical scientists who are committed to the health care needs of the medically underserved. More than 80 percent of MSM alumni in practice serve in underserved communities.

Non-smoking Vs Weight Gain

Oregonians attempting to quit smoking must determine which is more important, gaining a few pounds or risking lung health problems.

To most people, the decision to quit is quite easy, but actually doing it is not. In fact, quitting smoking can be more difficult with the additional concern of putting on unwanted weight. Health experts at the American Lung Association of Oregon advise potential quitters that a modest weight gain is common, but should not be used as a rationale to continue to smoke.

"The first three months after quitting smoking are the most difficult," says Bill Smith, Health Manager for the Lung Association. "A person not only has to contend with constant urges to smoke, but also with putting on 5 to 7 pounds. But, the truth is you're never better off smoking. And there are ways of coping."

According to the American Lung

Association of Oregon, an estimated 22% Oregonians over eighteen smoke cigarettes and more than 75% would like to stop. Each year, 34% of smokers actually attempt to quit. While the short-term consequences of quitting smoking is gaining approximately 5 to 7 pounds, the long-term consequences of continuing to smoke are the increased risk of lung cancer and chronic lung disease.

"Although the prevalence of smoking among adults has decreased overall since 1965, the rate of decline has begun to wane in recent years," says Smith. "With increased access to proven cessation programs, such as counseling support programs, self-help materials and the availability of over the counter nicotine replacement therapies, such as Nicorette gum, smokers have yet another aid to easily turn to at the moment they're ready to quit."

Protein responsible For Heart Failure

The protein, CUG-BP, was found in the gene responsible for myotonic dystrophy, a heart muscle disorder that runs in families. The disease occurs when the heart muscles fail to relax normally, usually leading to heart failure and death. Previous studies have reported discovering the genetic abnormality on chromosome 19.

"A father or mother with this defective gene can pass it on to their children," said Dr. Robert Roberts. "When these children reach their 20s, 30s, or 40s, the

disease has already developed."

Roberts, who collaborated with a team of researchers in Baylor's pathology department and Merck Research Laboratories in West Point, PA., discovered that the protein binds to the gene which the team believes causes myotonic dystrophy.

"Although the protein has been identified, we want to understand the actual mechanism that causes heart disease," Roberts said. "Discovering this protein is a major step toward learning more about this potentially fatal disease."

Study Seeks Participants

Calcium channel blockers or beta blockers are used to treat nearly half of the over 6.3 million Americans that suffer from coronary artery disease. The use of these drugs in combination with nitroglycerin, for angina or chest pain, allows many people to lead relatively normal lives. A significant number of individuals taking calcium channel blockers and beta blockers, however, experience side effects from the medication. Common side effects include headaches, ankle swelling and constipation.

Physician investigators at 25 medical centers in the United States are testing a new type of calcium channel blocker that may have fewer side effects. In addition to possibly reducing side effects, this new drug may also reduce the number of angina attacks individuals experience, allow for greater physical exertion without pain and reduce blood pressure. The name of the drug is mibefradil.

People that decide to participate will receive comprehensive cardiovascular testing for their angina. They will also receive the investigational drug and nitroglycerin for use during the study at no charge.

Before considering participation in the study, angina sufferers are encouraged to discuss the study with their treating physician. Call 800-393-9866.

LOSE 20 POUNDS IN TWO WEEKS!

Famous U.S. Women's Alpine Ski Team Diet

During the non-snow off season the U.S. Women's Alpine Ski Team members used the "Ski Team" diet to lose 20 pounds in two weeks. That's right - 20 pounds in 14 days! The basis of the diet is chemical food action and was devised by a famous Colorado physician especially for the U.S. Ski Team. Normal energy is maintained (very important!) while reducing. You keep "full" - no starvation - because the diet is designed that way. It's a diet that is easy to follow whether you work, travel or stay at home. (For men, too!)

This is, honestly, a fantastically successful diet. If it weren't, the U.S. Women's Alpine Ski Team wouldn't be permitted to use it! Right? So, give yourself the same break the U.S. Ski Team gets. Lose weight the scientific, proven way. Even if you've tried all the other diets, you owe it to yourself to try the U.S. Women's Alpine Ski Team Diet. That is, if you really do want to lose 20 pounds in two weeks. Order today! Tear this out as a reminder.

Send only \$8.95 (\$9.60 in Calif.)-add .50 cents RUSH service to: American Institute, 7343 El Camino Real, Suite 206, Atascadero, CA 93422. Don't order unless you expect to lose 20 pounds in two weeks! Because that's what the Ski Team Diet will do.

©1995

Brochure Brings Tears To Your Eyes

Most people moisturize their skin, and even their hair, but never think about moisturizing their eyes. Eyes, like the rest of the body, require moisture to stay healthy. Tears are moisturizers for the eyes. They protect, nourish, lubricate and cleanse the ocular surface. A lack of moisture may result in dry, scratchy and irritated eyes.

"Almost everyone suffers from 'dry, irritated eyes at one time or another," says Dr. Alan L. Shabo, Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology, Jules Stein Eye Institute University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). "Unfortunately, the majority of people who have irritated eyes don't realize that the irritation may be caused by a lack of moisture. They blame their scratchy, red eyes on fatigue and, in many cases, just live with the discomfort. Or they use products to reduce redness, which can actually dry eyes out even more."

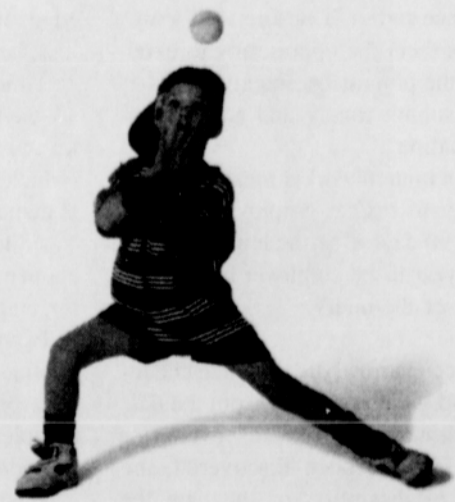
Many eye specialists recommend using lubricating eye drops to keep eyes moisturized. A preservative-free formulation in a sterile, single-use dropper is also recommended, because studies show that frequent use of preserved drops, such as those found in bottles, can lead to preservative-induced irritation.

A new brochure, *Refreshing Tips For Dry & Irritated Eyes*, offers a comprehensive guide to the symptoms and treatment of dry, irritated eyes. For a free copy, call 800/999-1870.

Advertise In
The
Portland
Observer
Call 503-288-0033

The bad news is,
kids will be kids.

The good news is,
it's covered.



If it exists, they will run into it, fall off of it, or swallow it. And when they do, the last thing you want to worry about is whether or not your medical claim is going to be denied.

Well, with Kaiser Permanente, you have one less thing to worry about. That's because at Kaiser, you never even have to file a claim. Just bring them in to your neighborhood Kaiser facility, and they're covered. Just like that.

Because at Kaiser Permanente, we care about making your kids healthy. Not making a profit. So quit worrying. You still have a few good years left before they start driving.


KAISER PERMANENTE
Different from the ground up.