

If soluble, drug can be misused easier

Scientist, addict say Darvon dissolves

United Press International
CALVESTON — A heroin addict's claim the commonly prescribed pain-killer Darvon can be injected into the bloodstream has been verified by two toxicologists, who fear the previously unreported use may be widespread.

Dr. Walter J. Decker, a professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology at the University of Texas medical branch, "The word travels very quickly among the members of the drug cult and the fact that people have been known to inject substances such as mild peanut butter and ice water into their veins indicates some

people are willing to try almost anything for a thrill or pain relief," he added.

Darvon, a drug usually taken orally for pain relief, has been under attack by Ralph Nader and is being investigated by the Food and Drug Administration. Nader's research

The University of Texas medical researchers said they duplicated the dissolution in the lab, which supported the addict's contention.

Decker and Green said their only contact with Lilly was to inform the coating of Darvon, chemically known as propoxyphene natsylate, drug manufacturer about their research and ask what composed the

They also said undissolved particles of darvon could clog arteries.

Decker and Green said they hoped the FDA would look into their report, to be presented to a meeting of the Society of Toxicology in New Orleans next month.

Darvon, a drug usually taken orally for pain relief, has been under attack by Ralph Nader and is being investigated by the Food and Drug Administration.

group claims the drug is the cause of many accidental deaths.

The belief among scientists, and supported by Eli Lilly & Co. of Indianapolis, has been that Darvon cannot be dissolved.

But Decker reported Monday he and Mike Green, director of the poison control center at UTMB, have proved that theory wrong.

Green said a heroin addict contacted him last September and reported being able to circumvent the non-dissolving properties of the tablet and inject it into his veins, producing an immediate high.

The Texas researchers said more than 30 million Darvon prescriptions

Texas researchers said injection into the bloodstream carried a higher potential for misuse.

were filled in 1977 with 528 deaths attributed directly to misuse. They said injection into the bloodstream carried a higher potential for misuse.

TEA sets Hopson question hearing

The Texas Education Agency has set a March 13 hearing date concerning the school board's termination of A&M Consolidated Superintendent Fred Hopson's contract.

The hearing, which was requested by College Station resident Oran Jones, will be at 9 a.m. in Austin. It is open to the public.

Jones, in a letter to the TEA, contends that the school board owes district taxpayers a detailed explanation of Hopson's termination.

The board terminated Hopson's three-year contract on Nov. 20, citing "disagreements concerning educational policy and policy implementation." A new contract, which ends June 30, was negotiated.

In a Jan. 19 letter, TEA staff attorney David Ryan requested the school district to send to all of its records concerning the matter.

The district sent the minutes of three board meetings, a copy of Hopson's original contract, a copy of the new contract, the board's policies concerning citizen appeals and a copy of the resolution announcing Hopson's removal.

Jack Woods, school district attorney, wrote in a cover letter included with the records, that the matter should be handled by the school district since no law was broken.

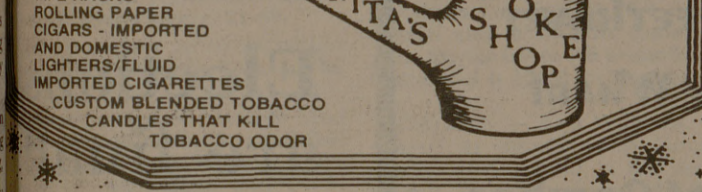
He also contends that Jones has no legal interest in the matter and that neither Hopson nor the board is contesting it.

Woods also argues that the matter is not within TEA jurisdiction and should be dropped.

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