

State

Pot pills to fight nausea

United Press International
HOUSTON — M.D. Anderson Hospital Wednesday received its first shipment of synthetic marijuana pills to be used by cancer patients to combat nausea caused by chemotherapy treatments, officials announced.

Dr. Fred Conrad, vice president for patient care, said 1,200 capsules arrived from the National Cancer Institute and will be available to patients who sign a consent form indicating they understand the possible side effects of the laboratory-produced pot.

Conrad listed the side effects of the synthetic tetrahydrocannabinol — the principal and most active ingredient in marijuana — as "mostly drowsiness, probably a headache."

"There may be some uncoordina-

tion," he added. "A patient shouldn't drive within 24 hours. Their eyes will probably get somewhat red and they may get a 'high' which may be a feeling of happiness, everything seems fine, an inappropriate interpretation of what's going on around them. They also can become depressed or hallucinate, the usual toxicities that go along with marijuana, anxieties, fear and so on."

He said the average dose for women will be about 7.5 milligrams and the average for men will be about 10 milligrams. Patients will receive five or six doses per chemotherapy treatment. Dosage is determined by body surface, or size.

Conrad said the recipients of the synthetic marijuana will be chosen this week from patients on che-

motherapy who have been using the standard anti-nausea drugs.

"When the patients come back starting this week we will ask if they are getting sufficient relief," he said. "If they say no, that they are still vomiting, we will ask if they are willing to try the experimental drug THC. If they say yes, we will give them the prescription and tell them about the side effects, tell them it might be ineffective. They have to sign a consent form and can pick up the prescription at the (hospital) pharmacy at no cost."

Conrad said a course of chemotherapy usually causes a patient to suffer nausea for 18 hours. M.D. Anderson doctors and the hospital pharmacy were approved for the program last month by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

NAACP to probe black shootings

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — The NAACP will establish a task force to investigate the shootings of four blacks by police officers because it feels the police should not be trusted to investigate themselves.

"We're here to see that the truth comes out," New Orleans NAACP chapter president Shirley Porter told reporters Tuesday. "We feel other, outside people investigating the police is better than police investigating the police."

Many blacks have questioned police explanations of the four shootings last week in Algiers, including at least two witnesses who said Sherry Singleton, 26, was pleading for her life when she was shot.

One man, Reginald Ferdinand, was shot during an attempted drug arrest. Miss Singleton and two men, James Billy Jr. and Reginald Miles, were killed in separate raids while police tried to arrest Billy and Miles

on charges of murdering patrolman Greg Neupert.

Porter and Alison Chapital, NAACP chapter vice president, said they had not decided who would serve on the task force or how many members it would have.

It will conduct its investigation by "going to the people" and turn its findings over to District Attorney Harry Connick, they said.

"We know we will not get all of the information from the police department," Chapital said. "Their track record is poor."

The NAACP said it had no specific evidence of police wrongdoing and urged residents to remain calm, despite an "enormous increase" in murder.

"This present climate of suspicion and hysteria could degenerate into an atmosphere that could only be likened to the Old West, where the law of the jungle prevailed, even among those dedicated to enforcing the law," Porter said.

Plans to support legislation

PTA battles drugs in schools

United Press International
EL PASO, Texas — The 710,000-member Texas Congress of Parents and Teachers has joined businessman Ross Perot in his support of legislation aimed at reducing the distribution of illegal drugs to school students.

Perot, who gained national attention last year for organizing the successful extradition of two of his employees from Iran, Tuesday told an estimated 1,600 delegates attending the organization's 71st annual convention that he and his advisers have arranged for the introduction of a state legislative program "that will take major drug dealers in jail forever and take their money and put it in the state treasury."

The program will be introduced during the session of the Legislature that begins in January, he said.

"If we get our way," he said, "we will see the end of drug problems in this state."

Perot said support from the state PTA organization would aid in passage of the program.

"How would you like to be a member of the Legislature voting against

something that the mothers of Texas want?" he said.

Some items included in the plan are a minimum five-year prison term for adults convicted of selling drugs to children, minimum jail terms of 15 years for those convicted of selling drugs in mass quantity, seizure and forfeiture of all transportation vehicles found to be involved in the transportation of illegal drugs and outlawing the sale of drug paraphernalia.

Additionally, the legislative proposals encourage permanent suspension of the professional license of a physician found guilty of a drug-related felony. One provision of the plan calls for the reporting by physicians and pharmacies of names and addresses of patients receiving prescriptions for narcotic drugs.

The proposals were developed by the Texans' War on Drugs Committee, created two years ago by Gov. Bill Clements. Perot chairs the committee.

In other action, convention delegates approved a measure seeking state reimbursement to school districts for revenue lost in state-

approved tax exemptions. Delegates also approved a proposal calling for competency testing of student teachers.

The three-day convention concluded Wednesday.

Two killed in Victoria plane crash

United Press International
VICTORIA — A single-engine plane did a nose-dive into a north-west Victoria County pasture, killing the two men aboard, the Department of Public Safety said.

The victims of the Tuesday crash were identified as Gene Arthur Mooney, 49, the pilot, and Henry Calvin Simpson Jr., 31, a student pilot. Both were from Victoria.

The crash occurred between noon and 3 p.m. It was not known what caused the single-engine Bellanca to crash.

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