

# National

## Virus may be link to cancer

United Press International  
BOSTON — Researchers reported Thursday they have strengthened the link between the virus that causes hepatitis and liver cancer, the number one cancer killer worldwide.

The researchers at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City, with the help of two other institutions in Greece and South Africa, found DNA from the hepatitis B virus had worked itself into the tumor cells of 12 liver cancer patients.

DNA, the building block of genes, carries codes that enable the virus to reproduce itself. The virus causes a disease that can range from liver inflammation to complete failure, accompanied by

fever, nausea and other symptoms.

"That strengthens the link between hepatitis B virus and liver cancer," said Dr. David A. Shafritz, author of the report in the New England Journal of Medicine.

"It doesn't prove that the virus itself is oncogenic (cancer-causing). Other types of work will be necessary to prove or demonstrate what ways hepatitis B virus can participate in or cause liver cancer."

Liver cancer causes only about three in every 100,000 deaths per year in Western countries, the study said, but in the Mediterranean, Africa below the Sahara, Southeast Asia, China and Japan,

it ranges from 25 to 100 cases.

"Worldwide, it is the leading cause of death from cancer," the study said. Lung cancer is the No. 1 one cause of cancer deaths in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society.

Shafritz, a professor of medicine and cellular biology at Einstein, said it is not known how the hepatitis B virus' DNA becomes a part of the liver tissue. Nor does it mean that people who contract hepatitis will develop liver cancer, he said.

However, past studies showed people with liver cancer were five to 10 times more likely to have been victims or carriers of hepatitis B than others.

Previous research also showed hepatitis B carriers — those who

had the virus in their blood and could transmit it to others, but were unaffected by it — were 22 times more likely to contract liver cancer.

At least a small indication of the presence of hepatitis has been found in up to 35 percent of patients with primary liver cancer in the United States and in 75 to 95 percent of patients in areas of high hepatitis incidence.

Other causes of liver cancer include pollution, steroids and alcohol, the study said.

Shafritz said the link between hepatitis B and liver cancer could eventually help in finding new ways to treat the disease. Other groups have been researching a hepatitis B vaccine, he said, which might help prevent cancer.

## Man accused of murder asks for death penalty

United Press International  
JACKSON, Miss. — Within hours of leading lawmen to the body of Peggy Lowe, accused killer Marion Pruett told reporters Wednesday he killed three other people and wants to die for his crimes.

Against the advice of his court-appointed lawyer and the local district attorney, Pruett met with reporters for nearly an hour at police headquarters.

Pruett said he killed bank officer Peggy Lowe after the Sept. 17 robbery of Unifirst Savings and Loan in Jackson. He also said he killed two people in Colorado and one in Arkansas during recent robberies.

Pruett, 32, said he was high on cocaine when he committed the crimes but now hopes he will be executed.

"I want the death penalty," he said in a steady, unemotional voice. "I have imposed some judgment on some people and now I want to be my own judge and jury."

He said he will resist any attempts to delay his trial or execution. He has been charged with capital murder in the Lowe case.

He asked the people of Mississippi to help him get his death wish.

"I think the people of Mississippi want to see me dead as much as I want to die," he said with a trace of a smile.

Pruett, smoking cigarettes and dressed in a blue jumpsuit, appeared tired but spoke coherently throughout the interview. Authorities watched and asked reporters not to talk about the Lowe case, but Pruett made several references to it and in-

criminated himself numerous times.

He drew a picture of himself as an unhappy but unremorseful man who was born in Gastonia, N.C., lost an eye in an accident at the age of 2, faithfully attended West Mecklenburg High School in Charlotte, N.C., had a scrape with the law at 17, and spent most of his 20 years in prison.

He aided authorities in their investigation into the killing of his cellmate, William Zambido, and was given a new identity of Charles Sonny Pearson under the federal witness program in New Mexico, he said. He got out of prison in 1979 and turned sour on the witness program when he felt federal officials betrayed him.

"I started out holding up banks to embarrass the federal government," he said. Then, he said, a cocaine habit turned him into a "mad-dog killer. I don't mind telling you I killed the two people in Colorado and one in Arkansas too."

Pruett is wanted for questioning about two robbery-homicides at all-night grocery stores in Loveland, Colo. and Fort Collins, Colo. Arkansas authorities want him for the Oct. 12 killing of a convenience store clerk in Fort Smith.

Pruett, who bears a tattoo "Mad Dog 20-20" which he said is his nickname, is also wanted for the strangulation murder of his wife in New Mexico. He refused to talk about that case.

He said he was "too high" when he held up the Unifirst Savings and Loan in Jackson and abducted Mrs. Lowe, whose body was found Wednesday in a wooded area in West-

ern Alabama. She will be buried Thursday.

"It was accidental, something that shouldn't have happened," he said of the killing.

He said he liked to rob savings and loans instead of banks because they don't have security guards and the employees and officers are usually women "who do what you say."

He said he wanted to be captured Oct. 20 when he was arrested for speeding near Amarillo.

"I let the police in Texas catch me," he said. "I wanted to be caught. I'm tired of living. I killed four innocent people. I was no longer embarrassing the federal government, I was killing innocent people."

Pruett, who displayed a familiarity with legal jargon and rules of criminal procedure, said he was a sort of "jailhouse attorney" and insisted he would defend himself on the capital murder charge in Mississippi "so I can get my justice. He said he did not want groups "like the ACLU" (American Civil Liberties Union) interfering in his case "so they can't file an appeal for me."

He insisted he wants to be tried in state rather than federal courts because he feels he will have a better chance of being executed. "They (federal courts) might parole me in 10 years. I wouldn't be but 42 then, and I might have been ready to go raise hell again," he said.

Asked about suicide, Pruett said he was not the type who would commit suicide. He added: "I think I would kill somebody else before I would kill myself."

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## Blind man recaptures life by rebuilding machinery

United Press International  
PRAIRIEVILLE, Mich. — Howard Harvey lost his eyesight 30 years ago to a hereditary disease, but he's not looking for sympathy. Harvey's too busy rebuilding and fixing any mechanical item people put in his hands.

In the summer, spring and early fall, he's got his lawnmower repair business. In the winter, there

is always some remodeling or repairs to be done on the house, garage or one of the sheds he uses for storage.

Harvey's 26-by-32 garage, which he built himself, is so filled with lawn mowers during the summer visitors can hardly make their way from one end of the building to the other.

He pushes the brim of his John

Deere hat back a bit and chuckles when a visitor marvels that a blind man could build a garage. He admits he didn't build it all, because the foundation was laid for him. But the roofing, siding and electrical work are all his.

He also remodeled most of his home, which is more than 100 years old. He put in a new bathroom, divided one large room and completely renovated the living room by taking out and replacing all the plaster, removing three big windows and lowering the ceiling.

When visitors come around now, they find him in a shed behind the garage, working on a special project — a 50-year-old tractor, just like the one he drove when he was a boy.

"I can't sit here all day," Harvey said. "I've got to get up and move around. I've been a whole year trying to get a carburetor fixed for it — they want \$100 for a new one."

"Ma wants me to get rid of it, but it ain't hurting nothin'. What the heck, it gets more valuable every day I keep it."

He finds his way around the tractor with ease, just as he does a tiller or a riding mower. His hands move knowingly to the part he's been working on recently, a governor that is not working properly.

He may never have seen the part in his life, but he will soon learn by the feel what it is supposed to do and what it will take to fix it. There is no fear of the unknown or of failure in Harvey, at least when it comes to tinkering with something mechanical.

Unfortunately, the lifestyle Harvey leads may actually keep him from enjoying one of the pleasures available to the blind. He says the callouses on his fingers make it almost impossible to read Braille.



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