

Drug impedes cancers' spread

United Press International
SAN DIEGO—Scientists at three medical centers are testing a drug that shows promise in preliminary studies of being able to stem the spread of some cancers.

The compound nafazotrom has produced such promising results in experiments on mice, rats and other animals and in preliminary tests on humans that it will be put to wider use this summer at several U.S. and British clinics, said Dr. Kenneth Honn of Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit.

Honn, who began testing the experimental drug in 1981, said in an interview the compound has had "very dramatic effects on tumor growth during the Phase I (preliminary) trial, expected to be completed in about two months."

In addition to Wayne State, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Institute in New York and Dartmouth Medical School in Hanover, N.H., are also conducting preliminary tests of the drug on patients suffering from breast, colon and lung cancers.

"Phase II clinical testing is scheduled to begin this summer at numerous institutions in the United States and in London," Honn said.

"What's exciting is that the compound has especially significant effects on metastasis—the process by which cancer cells leave the original tumor

and establish new tumors in other parts of the body—and that to date no toxicity has been found in any of the patients."

Honn, associate professor of radiation oncology, presented his findings at a recent seminar sponsored by the American Cancer Society.

Metastasis, or the spread of cancer, is a major cause of death among cancer patients, he said.

"Successful cancer treatment is almost impossible when the cancer cannot be contained at its primary site," he said.

"Early detection followed by surgical removal and radiation have good results. But the fact is—though most surgeons don't like to hear it—that tumor cells are released during surgical manipulation and sent on their way to invade other parts of the body."

The critical step in the cell's travels following its release from the original tumor, he explained, is its attachment to a blood vessel wall, where its growth flourishes. If left to float through the body's circulatory system without being able to attach to the wall, the tumor cell could not survive.

The drug prevents the attachment apparently by stimulating the body to produce prostacyclin, the most potent agent known to work against the clustering of platelets.

Student loans followed closely

Uncle Sam after defaulters

United Press International
In Philadelphia last year, U.S. marshals impounded a dozen cars, including a snazzy new Dodge and a recently purchased jeep, owned by people who had defaulted on federal student loans.

A few months later in Los Angeles, the U.S. attorney's office filed suit against 90 student loan defaulters, many of them doctors and lawyers.

Nationwide, the government is in the process of warning 47,000 federal workers that, unless they soon start repaying defaulted loans, Uncle Sam will pocket a hunk of their pay.

The federal government, after years of ineffective prodding for repayment of student loans, now is conducting open warfare against defaulters.

Impounding cars, filing suits and garnishing wages is part of the multi-faceted attack against the estimated 2 million people who owe \$2.5 billion in de-

faulted student loans.

"Deadbeats" is the word Sen. Charles Percy, R-Ill., used to describe them last year in successfully pushing legislation that

"We're trying to apply pressure from all directions. We're out to collect for Uncle Sam." — Frank Krebs, Student Loan Collection Task Force.

gave the government added collection muscle.

The Debt Collection Act 1982 allows the government to withhold 15 percent of a federal employee's pay as a means of collecting a defaulted student loan. In the past, garnishing federal wages was prohibited.

Another major provision

allows the government to send the defaulter's name, Social Security number and the size of his debt to national credit bureaus, thus applying pressure on him to pay or get bad credit ratings.

This winter, notices sent to defaulters warned that unless they make arrangements to repay the government, a letter will be sent to credit bureaus.

Percy's legislation combined with a 1981 regulation that turned the screws on colleges. This measure cut off loan money to institutions with default rates above 25 percent and reduced loans to those with rates of 10 percent to 25 percent.

"We're trying to apply pressure from all directions," said Frank Krebs, a member of the Education Department's three-year-old Student Loan Collection Task Force. "We're out to collect for Uncle Sam."

As of June 30, 1981, the most recent date for which figures are

available, the overall default rate on \$5.7 billion of matured National Direct Student Loans was 15.37 percent, down 2 percent from five years earlier.

By getting the money back

into the available student loan pool, collection efforts are seen as a way to ease cutbacks in the student aid being imposed as part of President Reagan's overall austerity program.

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Robots don't mind doing 'dirty jobs'

United Press International
SOUTH KINGSTOWN, R.I.—A bright orange robot arm holding a 40,000-degree plasma torch cleans grey iron automotive castings; a long metal arm, bossed by a computer, picks and places machine parts for stamping.

Both do their jobs faster and more efficiently than humans. They are part of a growing effort in American industry to use robots to duplicate or surpass performance of human workers in tasks that are repetitive and unpleasant, hazardous to health, or just plain fatiguing.

The University of Rhode Island got in on the ground floor of robot development 11 years ago. Its Robot Research Group has been designated by the National Science Foundation as a one-of-a-kind national research center.

Thirty-two private companies support it with \$25,000 annual contributions which entitle them to proprietary information on experiments conducted with computer-controlled mechanical arms and other robotics techniques.

Robert W. Kelley, group director, said there are about 6,000 robots now in place in American factories, and he expects the number may increase to 150,000 by the end of this decade.

Rather than build ready-to-market devices, URI's research is oriented toward "developing a knowledge base for engineering," Kelley said.

The group has created software systems that allow a robot

arm to perform a particular task, such as binpicking, through a machine vision technique involving computers and video cameras, and patented design and fabrication of a variety of hands for special purposes.

In addition, URI is studying the economics of robots, revising cost-accounting methods for robot systems and including machine labor as a fourth cost of manufacturing.

"These are born numb, dumb and blind," Kelley says of robots. "There are a lot of applications where that is not sufficient. We are just beginning now to find easy and cheap solutions to basic problems. We're trying to develop the knowledge that says it is worth the effort."

Kelley disagrees with critics of robotics who contend the field will take jobs away from skilled workers.

"There will be a negligible impact on the workforce. In fact, it will create jobs because each robot will need someone to take care of it; it will mean job changes, not job eliminations," he said.

For example, the Robot Research Group currently is using a brawny, orange Swedish-built ASERA robot arm with a 40,000-degree plasma arc torch to clean "grey iron" castings used in the automotive industry.

Grey iron, the form of metal after it comes out of the casting process, is presently cleaned by foundry workers in a tedious, noisy and dirty process using air hammers and files.

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Notice dates: Commons will be open for cash business on Registration day, May 30. Meal plans will begin on the first day of class, May 31.

Fees for each plan are as follows:

7-Day	\$195.00	May 31 through July 1
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Meal plan validation will begin at 7:30 a.m., May 31, in the Commons Lobby. Fee slips will be required.

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