

Halts guard from cancer

Sun hinders immunities

United Press International
Sunlight may hinder the human immunity system from responding to irritating allergens and guarding against cancer.
Exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) light rays causes profound systemic changes, according to National Cancer Institute immunologist Margaret Kripke.
Her research, reported in the July issue of Science Digest, may soon make it possible for physicians to use UV light to analyze the immune system and eliminate undesired reactions.
UV radiation is a known carcinogen that induces skin cancer. But Kripke's experiments with mice seem to show that in addition to inducing cancer, the radiation prevents the body from fighting against it.
Kripke found that after exposure to only two six-hour doses of summertime Mary-

land sunlight, mice's immunity systems were too weak to muster normal allergic reaction to chemicals. And when mice were implanted with skin cancers after repeated exposure with UV, their immunity systems did not reject the tumors.
Also from Science Digest:
•At least 144 Southeast Asian refugees have died in their sleep since 1977. In every case the cause of death is still unknown, former speculation was that the strain of coping with life in a new land simply stopped their hearts.
That view is now being challenged. Roy Baron of the Centers for Disease Control, and Rober Kirschner of the Chicago Medical Examiner's office, say that sudden nighttime death claims young males in Japan and the Philippines, as well as in Southeast Asia. They think the condition may be distributed among all male Asians. Stu-

dies of sleep patterns and bodily electrical activity conducted on three Asian refugees in this country who were resuscitated after nocturnal cardiac arrest may shed some light on the mystery ailment.
•Microwave ovens are a common kitchen-counter appliance. They cook foods with dazzling speed. How exactly do they do it?
A device called a magnetron, using electrical energy from the wall socket, generates microwaves, a form of radiation. These are directed by an antenna to a hollow tube called a waveguide. The tube then channels the waves to a fan that stirs and disperses them around the oven's interior. Finally they are absorbed by water molecules in the food.
The waves, as they are absorbed by the food molecules, oscillate billions of times per second. This agitates the

water molecules, altering their position and creating the friction and heat that cooks the food.
Because microwave ovens produce heat directly inside the food — where the water molecules are — heating occurs more quickly than in conventional ovens. However, if food is very thick, the microwaves will not penetrate completely and the food's inner layers will cook by conduction.
Human tissue, of course, contains water, and high doses of microwaves can cook our bodies in the same way they cook our food. So the ovens must be carefully designed and used so that only the food, and not the chef, gets roasted.
•Although the atmosphere protects Earth from large meteors, we're not saved from all cosmic flotsam. Each day, the planet's weight increases by tons as meteoric dust wafts in from nearby space.

Number of Salvadorans crossing border rising

United Press International
BAYVIEW — The number of Salvadorans sneaking into the United States has doubled this spring. The debate is over whether the United States is sentencing some of them to death by routinely sending them back.
The Border Patrol said it is catching twice as many Salvadorans along the lower 238 miles of the Rio Grande this spring as it did last year, 785 in March and 638 in April.
Assistant Border Patrol chief James H. Selbe of McAllen, predicts his men will be catching 1,000 Salvadorans a month before summer is over. He says this south Texas sector catches the highest percentage of Salvadorans of any Border Patrol area along the 2,000-mile U.S.-Mexico border, probably because it is located on a traditional route taken by Central Americans into the United States through Matamoros and Reynosa, Mexico.
The Immigration and Naturalization Service, in turn, says it flew 153 Salvadorans back to San Salvador from its Bayview Processing Center, which critics sarcastically refer to as "a concentration camp."
Officials estimate that 60 percent of the 5,000 held at the former Naval Air Station at Bayview are Salvadorans. The facility is filled to capacity, causing many aliens to be bused or flown to the Krome detention facility in Florida.
Lisa Brodyasa, an attorney who founded the non-profit Projecto Libertad (Project Li-

berly) to provide legal services for the Salvadorans who get caught sneaking across the border, contends that the U.S. Government, by denying political asylum in all but a few cases, is wrongfully condemning many Salvadorans to their deaths.
That is why, she said, increasing numbers of U.S. church groups have gotten involved in "the sanctuary movement," an underground pipeline that is harboring numerous Salvadorans and helping them in their attempts to gain asylum in Canada.
"There's a very high likelihood they'll be killed if deported, even if the INS won't take responsibility," said Brodyasa, 42. She says she was driven to help the Salvadorans as a "graduate" of McCarthyism of the 1950s, the anti-Vietnam War protests of the 1960s and 1970s, and of the feminist movement.
"El Salvador is Spanish for Vietnam," says a bumper sticker on Brodyasa's car which she parks daily in front of the Bayview Center.
INS officials argue that Brodyasa and well-intentioned officials are making the job of protecting U.S. borders against illegal immigrants much more expensive.
"It would haunt me to think I

was sending someone back (to his death)," said INS District Director Hal W. Boldin of nearby Harlingen.
Boldin makes it clear that he does not believe that the Salvadorans are coming hundreds of miles to the United States for fear of their lives, as many of them claim when asking for asylum. Immigration judges, by refusing to grant asylum, are backing up Boldin's argument.
Boldin contends, and Selbe agrees, that the largest proportion of the Salvadorans tell arresting agents on arrival that they came looking for work, like the thousands of Mexican and other aliens that are deported each year without claiming asylum.
However, after talking to attorneys and "jailhouse lawyers" at the detention facility, many of the Salvadorans decide to file application for asylum, Boldin said.
"When they are asked for what purpose they come, far and away the greatest percentage of Central Americans give economic reasons," Selbe said.
Boldin said if the Salvadorans truly came for asylum, they could go to any U.S. embassy in any country and request it, without traveling to the United States in person.

Author wary of advice books with simple answers

United Press International
NEW YORK — Be wary of self-help books that offer easy solutions to the sexual problems men and women face, says Dr. Alan B. Rubin.
"People are talking each other to death and the real meanings are passing right on by," she said. "They need to instead reach underneath at the inside problems so they can have a chance at controlling them."
She said some self-help books fill people's heads with ways to deal with the symptoms of problems instead of the causes.
"You might read somewhere you aren't expressing this emotion or that emotion, like anger," she said. "So you go to a therapist and beat on pillow to express

anger. It doesn't help with real problems, like how to cope with your kids."
Rubin said people need to realize the complexities of human relationships. True change is not as easy as one thinks.
The only thing wrong is hoping for an easy remedy for a host of maladies, she said.
As for her new book, "Intimate Strangers: Men and Women Together" she said it is not intended to be a guide to trouble-free relationships in simple steps.
The book is aimed more at men than women.
Too often, she said books on marital relations deal only with the problems and emotions of

women. They simply pass over those affecting men.
"I'm trying to do what hasn't been done before. I want to explain men, not as male chauvinist pigs but as comprehensible individuals," she said.
It's the differences between men and women that make it hard for them to understand each other.
"Intimacy without words for most women is small comfort," Rubin said. "For men, they may feel very comfortable and close just being in the same room with their wives, without speaking at all. The woman feels neglected, the man doesn't even realize there is a problem."

Some books, she says, can slip in terms of advice.
But, she said, "Oversimplified answers found in the score books on the market are only giving people in more despair. They think to themselves, what's wrong with me?"
"Everyone is big on the word 'communication' these days — as

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Memories prompt 'Geech'

United Press International
DALLAS — Grimace is a fictional west Texas town, the name of a smart-mouthed waitress who dishes out meatloaf and a displaced Easterner who years for culture — but mostly bagels — and a confused mouse monkey who is apt to dig through sour cream and chives looking for a dipstick. By name they are Ruby, Artie and Geech, characters in the comic strip Jerry the Heber Springs, Ark., native, 33, admitted he does most of his work in his backyard swimming pool, where gags seem to come more easily.
"I write in the pool. I float out there in one of those big old chairs with a glass of iced tea," he said. "I'm funnier in the summer."
Geech, the namesake of the strip, works at Merle's gas sta-

tion even though he cannot tell a fan belt from a fandango.
"The Merle character, the guy Geech works for, is as close as any of the characters to a person in real life," Bittle said. "He's a guy I know in Denver. He could smell your car and tell it's a quart low. I'm Geech to his Merle."
As for Ruby, the waitress who is as crusty as the custard she serves, Bittle said she is a composite of two diner waitresses he met while going to college at Wichita State University in Kansas.
"Ruby is based on two waitresses named Ruth and Charlotte," Bittle said. "She looks a lot like Ruth, but she acts a lot like Charlotte."
Bittle said Charlotte took a shine to him. She even showed him the tattoo on her thigh.
"Right there in the diner she

hiked up her skirt and showed me her tattoo. It was a heart with 'Cisko' written inside," he said.
Charlotte later ran off with a trucker. Ruth was found dead in her apartment.
"I don't know if it was an irate customer or the food," Bittle mused.
The strip is still in its first year. Geech began appearing in newspapers in July and now plays in 105 papers.
Bittle, a former political cartoonist in Albuquerque, said he walked into the comic strip business backwards. A friend at the syndicate goaded him into trying a comic strip.
"I said all right more or less to get him off my back," Bittle admitted, but he said drawing the trial strips was fun. And more importantly they sold.
"They (Universal Press Syndicate) got them on a Monday, and

that Friday they said, 'Yeah, they wanted them,'" Bittle said.
The success is little short of a miracle in a business where the odds against making it are overwhelming.
Bittle said Universal Press receives 8 to 10 comic strip submissions every day and accepts only two or three a year.
Bittle said doing the strip is fun, but adding, "It's real hard, too. There's the pressure of trying to be funny every day for 20 years." That is the length of his contract with the syndicate.
"The drawing part isn't nearly as hard as the writing," he said. "There are dry periods when I don't do anything. Then sometimes I can do eight in a row."
Bittle said although he tries, not every strip he does is funny.
"Some cartoonist once said if he did four a week that are funny, that's a good batting average."

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Torch starts fire in plastics plant

United Press International
MINERAL WELLS — The Centron plant outside Mineral Wells was destroyed by fire Monday when a torch an emulsion was used to install an exactly fan ignited the insulation, the Marshall Z.A. Calhoun said Tuesday.
Calhoun said the building was totally destroyed and estimated the damage at between \$3 and \$4 million.
The fire started at 3:32 p.m. Monday, and firemen were not

able to control the blaze until 9:30 p.m.
Calhoun said about 50 firemen from the surrounding communities helped fight the fire. Nine firemen were hospitalized when they were overcome by heat and toxic fumes. Six had been released by Tuesday morning.
Centron Fabricators manufactures a variety of plastic products and currently has several government contracts.

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