

Manmade plastic becomes hip joints

United Press International

NEW YORK — Materials used in a plastic composite replacement for bones sound like jawbreakers to pronounce but, when used correctly, they help save jaw and other bones by filling in defects caused by disease or trauma.

Dr. Arthur Ashman, co-inventor of the material known as Hard Tissue Replacement, or HTR, said the filler is a combination of polymethylmethacrylate and polyhema. He said polyhema has been used as a cement in hip joint replacement for years.

"The HTR is a composite of biocompatible plastics which deceives living bone into accepting it as its own," Ashman said in an interview.

HTR comes in granular and molded forms. The granular form looks like a white powder and feels like sugar. It comes sterile and ready to be packed into an area of defective bone by a physician or dentist. The molded form starts out as a liquid and must be baked.

Ashman said a teaspoon of the granular form — less than three-quarters of an ounce — costs \$60 and provides enough material to pack around the roots of 60 teeth

loosened as a result of bone loss due to periodontal disease.

Ashman said HTR has four major dental applications — the immediate replacement of extracted tooth roots, building up ridges to improve denture fit, and repairing periodontal defects caused by gum disease.

"What happens is bones and soft tissue will grow into the pores of the material and cause fixation," he said.

Said another way: the plastic particles of the granular HTR act as a scaffolding and eventually bone cells infiltrate them, forming new bone.

The molded form of HTR is formulated in minutes by the practitioner at the time of use — in constructing a tooth root, in building up a dental ridge, chin or cheek bone, he said.

When using the molded form, the doctor or dentist first must take an impression of the part to be replaced, fashion a mold, fill it with the composite and then bake it for a few minutes in a 475-degree oven.

The Food and Drug Administration last month granted approval for marketing of HTR.

Ashman, formerly head of dental research at Mount

Sinai Medical Center, said he worked out the formulation with Dr. Paul Bruins, an engineer and polymer chemist at Polytechnical Institute in Brooklyn, N.Y.

Now in private practice, Ashman is president of the Northeast District of the American Academy of Implant Dentistry.

He said the molded form of HTR has been used in replacement of bone in chins and potentially can be used in skull plates, cheeks, and in the hips and spine. Ashman said HTR has had a 98 percent success rate and has been used in over 1,600 patients by 150 dentists.

Dr. Norman Cranin, who has used HTR, said it is important dentists and doctors using the material follow manufacturer's directions exactly, particularly with respect to maintaining sterile conditions.

Cranin is director of dental and oral surgery at Brookdale Hospital Medical Center in Brooklyn, N.Y., and professor of oral and maxillofacial surgery at New York University College of Dentistry.

He said if handled incorrectly, the material can cause tissue loss and infections.

Farm hands' claims heard

United Press International

AUSTIN — A state judge issued a temporary injunction Tuesday ordering the Texas Industrial Accident Board not to reject farm workers' injury claims solely because they are farm or ranch laborers.

The ruling by District Judge Harley Clark, which reaffirmed a temporary restraining order he issued a week ago, was hailed as a "stunning victory" by an attorney for the state's farm workers.

"This is a great milestone in this fight of ours," said Jim Harrington, a lawyer working in be-

half of the of United Farm Workers of Texas, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO. "It's a stunning victory after you have been kicked around for eight years like we have."

Clark's order prohibits the Texas Industrial Accident Board from rejecting a worker's injury claim "on the basis that the employee is a farm or ranch laborer."

Under current statutes, farm and ranch laborers are excluded from the Texas Workers' Compensation Act. Texas is the only major agricultural state that has not extended workers' compen-

sation coverage to farm laborers.

The IAB currently receives injury claims from farm and ranch workers because some employers voluntarily carry the insurance coverage. However, the agency must reject the claim if the employer has not voluntarily purchased the insurance.

Clark's ruling arose because of a class-action lawsuit filed by 10 farm workers and 20 political

leaders that alleges Texas' workers' compensation laws unconstitutionally exclude farm workers.

Clark's ruling will stay in effect while the lawsuit is pending. A trial on the case has been set for Feb. 21.

Harrington said he considered Clark's ruling an indication the judge eventually would overturn the Texas statute.

Awarded for enjoying life

Landry makes list

ROCHESTER, N.Y. — Ed McMahon of TV's Tonight show and humorist Erma Bombeck topped the annual list of "Ten Dullest Americans" released Wednesday by International Dull Folks, Unlimited.

The organization's chairman of the board, J.D. Stewart, annually rouses himself from his job as a statistical analyst to compile the tedious tally.

"Basically, these are people who know how to relax and enjoy life while at the same time doing an honest day's work for an honest day's pay," he said.

Also listed were Tom Landry, David Hartman, Judith Martin (Miss Manners), Bert the Muppet of Sesame Street, Perry Como, Howard Cosell, Edwin Meese and John McEnroe.

The top 10, Stewart said, are intuitively aware of IDFUN's philosophical motto: "Enthusiasm wanes, but dullness is forever."

The release of the list is the highlight of International Dull Week, which Stewart kicked off by lighting a brown candle in his garage.

For each winner, Stewart compiled the following boring bios:

McMahon: "By our calculation, his 'Here's Johnny!' intro has been uttered 6,864 times — he's our all-time favorite dull guy, and we love him."

Bombeck: "America's mistress of the mundane, Erma expounds on such prosaic topics as cesspools, pits, husbands and good old-fashioned motherhood."

Landry: "Ole Frigid Face is coming off one of the flattest finishes he's ever had, during which his Dallas football team

was almost as boring as the weekly TV sw."

Hartman: "The laid-back host of Good Morning America is the epitome of all good, sedentary males — when he asks one of his probing questions and the camera pans away to his responding guest, we often wonder if David has dozed off."

Martin: "The reigning ghost of Emily Post, Judith says that by no means should we ever wear jeans; she's America's current champion of the Victorian age."

Bert: "The unobtrusive sage of the Sesame Street stage, Bert comes right out and tells Ernie he enjoys watching pigeons and goldfish, prefers plain seltzer water sodas, loves oatmeal, and is an avid paper clip and brick collector."

Como: "The duller the lor, the better the sweater — TV's all-time Mr. Casual, Perry made relaxation a national pastime during his television heyday."

Cosell: "For old middle-mouth, this is actually a lifetime achievement award — during 1983, Mr. Cosell fumbled his way through another TV baseball season and then continued to strike out on Monday night football."

Meese: "Mr. Meese's repulsive repudiation of hunger in the U.S. exhibited his own mammoth malnutrition of intellect."

McEnroe: "The menace of tennis — watching John perform is like visiting a pre-school nursery, except that the 4-year-olds have a little more class."

In response to "flak from a lot of folks in Canada" because last year's list did not include any dull Canadians, Stewart offered a Special Group Award to the Toronto Police Department for arresting New York Yankee outfielder Dave Winfield after his toss of a baseball proved fatal to a low-flying seagull.

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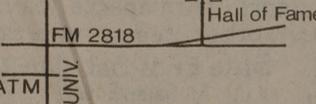
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