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Director: Nursing program to help cut death toll among Texans from cancer

By Beverly Click
Reporter

Laying out by the pool and catching a few rays between classes is great if a bronze body is what one wants. But those rays can be doing harm to the skin.

Nurses around the state realize this, and they are taking steps to detect not only the cancer that can be caused by the sun, but other kinds of cancer as well.

Barbara Holmes, MSN (master of science and nursing), RN and the director of the newly created Nurse Oncology Education Program, says that the main cancers nurses see are breast, cervical, oral, testicular and skin cancer. Oncology is the medical branch dealing with tumors, particularly malignant ones.

The nursing program is a five-year project that started in February to train nurses in the prevention and detection of cancer, Holmes says. The Texas Cancer Council, which was established by the 69th Texas Legislature, funds the program with state money, the nurse says.

Even though the program is projected to be in existence for only five years, it probably will continue if the survival rate of cancer increases, she says.

Holmes says that originally there was a nursing committee, which she chaired, that looked at the overall amount of cancer in Texas and realized the need for a statewide cancer program.

"Cancer is very prevalent in Texas, more so than in other states," Holmes says.

The Texas program already has

"We want to cut down on the number of Texans dying each year."

— Barbara Holmes, program director

been praised by the American Cancer Society, American Medical Association and American Cancer Institute, Holmes says. If the program does well it will give other states the incentive to initiate the same kind of program, she says. Only two states, Pennsylvania and Illinois, now have cancer prevention programs for nurses and theirs are smaller, Holmes says.

There are several goals of the program, Holmes says. One of them is to make sure that the nursing

schools are teaching oncology, which she hopes will be achieved by working with the deans and directors of each school, she says.

Another goal of the program is to provide increased continuing education to nurses serving cancer patients and their families, Holmes says. The program will present seven one-day workshops around the state on the subject of cancer prevention and physical, as well as psychological, treatment of the patient, she says.

The program also will train every nurse to be a cancer prevention and detection nurse, she says. The goal, Holmes says, is to have every nurse talk to the patients about cancer and then check them for the disease, even if they came to the clinic or hospital for hemorrhoids or strep throat.

The public needs to have knowledge of the advantages of early detection because the disease can be cured if found in the early stages, she says, but it might not be if it is advanced. Checking patients whenever they come in will help in this, Holmes says, and so far, the public seems open to the idea.

The program also hopes to discover why the public doesn't use early cancer detection measures,

such as breast self-examination, how to teach the public to use measures, she says.

And the members want to be able to learn what is going on around the state in cancer prevention, Holmes says.

The nurses will get the cancer prevention training need at workshops around the state, she says. Every nurse, practicing student, will have the opportunity to learn about cancer prevention, Holmes says.

Financial assistance for transportation to the workshop and meals to them for time away from work, will be available, she says. No fee will be charged to the student who attends the programs.

"Since most nurses are uneducated because of the severity of them," Holmes says, "the more we get nurses to go is to support them."

The nurses interact more with patients than the average nurse does, so it is to the advantage of the public for the nurses to be able to detect cancer in the early stages, Holmes says.

"The bottom line is that we want to cut down on the number of people dying each year," she says.

Companies sell parasitic wasps; livestock owners swat fly problem

By Ty Walters
Reporter

A solution to the problems caused by one of nature's peskiest members, the fly, may be just a swat away.

Several companies have started selling parasitic wasps to livestock owners across the country to combat the problems brought on by the fly. The wasp is the natural enemy of the fly.

The wasps, which are about the size of a gnat, prey on the pupal stage of the fly.

The small predators attack the pupae and either devour it or lay their own eggs inside of it.

Cliff E. Hoelscher, a Texas Agricultural Extension Service entomologist, says the wasp can be an effective extermination device in the proper environment.

The tiny wasp is most effective when used inside a relatively closed

barn, Hoelscher says, because tight quarters cause it to attack the flies in a more concentrated area, making the results more noticeable.

The most popular use of the wasp has been in large poultry barns, Hoelscher says, where the animals are closely confined and flies can cause major problems.

Hoelscher says barns containing the insects have experienced about a 75 percent to 80 percent decrease in the fly population, compared to the 95 percent kill rate normally associated with today's pesticides.

"But you don't have to put out any toxic chemicals into your barn," he says.

This is the advantage manufacturers hope will convince livestock owners to switch to biological fly control.

Colorado Insectary, a company that's researching biological pest control, sells two species of wasps.

One species is for arid climates and another for cooler, drier areas.

The company says its biological method costs 40 percent to 60 percent less than chemicals and can be administered with very little effort.

The program recommended by Colorado Insectary requires a barn operator to make an application, which involves sprinkling the specially-packaged wasp eggs onto infested areas about once every week. The adult wasp hatches within 16 to 18 days, depending on the species.

Hoelscher says the only problem involved with this type of fly control is the amount of time required before an owner can see results.

"It takes time," Hoelscher says. "They have to go through about three life cycles before they become effective."

He adds that the wasps might be sensitive to some brands of insecticides.

Murder trial set to begin on Monday

HUNTSVILLE (AP)—Arguments are set for Monday in the capital murder trial of a man accused in the 1986 slaying of a paramedic from Commerce.

Prosecutors claim Dwayne Jacobs, 36, was paid \$10,000 to murder-for-hire scheme the death of Eta Urdiales, 23, was killed in February 1986.

Last September, Jacobs was buried in a shallow grave in Montgomery County where the body was found. State District Judge James Keeshan denied a mistrial Wednesday.

Also charged in the case is Jacobs' sister, Bobbie Jean Jacobs, who has not been tried yet.

Montgomery County grand jurors declined to indict Urdiales in connection with the death of his wife.

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