



Hepatitis C Caring Ambassadors Program Newsletter

May 2007

IN THE NEWS

Nautilus Biotech Begins Phase I Clinical Trial in the USA for Subcutaneous Belerofon(R), its Long-Lasting, Interferon-Alpha Drug

<http://www.prnewswire.com/cgi-bin/stories.pl?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/04-02-2007/0004557722&EDATE=>

“Nautilus Biotech has announced that it has initiated a Phase I clinical trial for subcutaneous Belerofon(R), its long-lasting human Interferon (IFN) alpha. Belerofon has therapeutic potential for the treatment of a number of conditions, including chronic Hepatitis C.”

Hepatitis C Virus Can Block Other Hepatitis C Variants from Infecting The Same Cell

<http://www.news-medical.net/?id=23160>

“There's infection and then there's superinfection - when a cell already infected by a virus gets a second viral infection. But some viruses don't like to share their cells. New research from Rockefeller University shows that the hepatitis C virus, which infects cells in the liver and can cause chronic liver disease, can block other hepatitis C variants from infecting the same cell.”

Altered Immune Response to Viruses Like HIV And Hepatitis C Found By New Study

<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/medicalnews.php?newsid=67510>

“After a viral infection, a small percentage of the T cells generated to kill virus-infected cells remain on guard to establish long-term immunity. These so-called memory T cells, which derive from a family of immune cells known as CD8 T cells, engage in a self-renewal process that is essential to their persistence. This ongoing process ensures effective protection against any repeat infection by the same virus, even decades later.”

Prisoners 40% More Likely Than Others to Carry Hep C: Study

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/newsitems/200704/s1894917.htm>

[Australia] “A study of hepatitis C carriers in South Australian prisons has revealed that new prisoners have a 40 per cent higher likelihood of carrying the virus than the general population. Female inmates have a 65 per cent higher rate. Epidemiologist Doctor Emma Miller says the high rate is because 70 per cent of people entering the state's prisons are injecting drug users.”

Methadone Patients: Modern Day Lepers

<http://www.huntingtonnews.net/columns/070411-hammond-comment.html>

“The legislature has passed - and the governor has signed - a bill making it virtually impossible for methadone treatment centers to open in new locations in West Virginia. That means more than 500 Mercer County residents - addicted to opioids - will continue to get up at 4:00 am every morning and begin a fifty mile pilgrimage to either Beckley, WV or Cedar Bluff, VA to get their much needed medicine, which by the way, will cost them anywhere from ten to fifteen dollars a day.”

Novelos Therapeutics and MUSC Present Two Posters at AACR 2007

http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20070416005280&newsLang=en

“Novelos Therapeutics, Inc., a biopharmaceutical company focused on the development of therapeutics to treat cancer and hepatitis, today announced that the company, in collaboration with Dr. Kenneth Tew and Dr. Danyelle Townsend of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), is making two poster presentations at the ongoing American Association for Cancer Research annual meeting.”

Hep Team Kicks Off New Campaign

<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=14632>

“Summer is approaching, which means (among other things) that Chicago’s Hep Team—in partnership with the Chicago Department of Public Health and various community-based organizations—is going to hit the season’s LGBT-related events in an attempt to make sure that the area’s men who have sex with men (MSM) are protected against hepatitis A and hepatitis B.”

Jill Porter - Hero paramedic gets her pension, but City Hall still doesn't get it

http://www.philly.com/dailynews/local/20070420_Jill_Porter_Hero_paramedic_gets_her_pension_but_City_Hall_still_doesnt_get_it.html

“THE BATTLE began seven years ago on the cold, hard floor of City Hall, where paramedic Mary Kohler slept for two weeks to call attention to the plight of rescue workers with hepatitis C. She was weak, sick from the blood-borne disease she knew she'd contracted somewhere along the way - delivering babies, giving mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, bandaging wounds - during 11 years on the job.”

Vigil to Mark Hep C Awareness Month

<http://www.pgfreepress.com/portals-code/list.cgi?paper=26&cat=46&id=969833&more=>

[Canada] “May is Hepatitis C Awareness Month. On May 1, the Prince George New Hope Society marks the occasion with its first annual Hepatitis C Candlelight Vigil in Prince George. Alison Paul of the Hepatitis C Council of B.C. says the statistics – scary as they are – speak for themselves. Our province has been hard hit by the devastating disease, said Paul.”

Upping the Ante: SLU Liver Center Leads Record Number of Hep C Research Protocols

<http://www.slu.edu/x15193.xml>

“While many research institutions are suffering from funding cuts, Drs. Bruce R. Bacon and Adrian M. Di Bisceglie are chugging away with their usual tenacity. As co-directors of the Saint Louis University Liver Center, Bacon and Di Bisceglie are overseeing one of the biggest influxes of research dollars in their tenure as SLU hepatologists - totaling more than \$1 million. All of the research protocols have one thing in common: They're investigating new ways to treat -- and hopefully cure -- hepatitis C, called the "silent killer" because patients display no outward symptoms, allowing the disease to worsen over time, eventually leading to cirrhosis and premature death.”

More UK Gay Men Getting Hepatitis C

<http://www.gay.com/news/election/article.html?2007/04/27/3>

[UK] “More gay men are getting hepatitis C through sex every year, the 13th BHIVA Conference heard in Edinburgh, Scotland. Between 2002 and June 2006, there were 389 cases of recently acquired hepatitis C in HIV-positive gay men seen in 15 HIV clinics, said Dr. Murad Ruf of Britain's Health Protection Agency. The clinics serve 85 percent of London's HIV-positive population. There were also six cases in HIV-negative men seen in London genito-urinary medicine clinics.”

The Fear That Can Haunt Police on Our Streets

<http://www.sunshinecoastdaily.com.au/localnews/storydisplay.cfm?storyid=3731764&thesection=localnews&thesubsection=&thesecondsubsection=>

[Australia] “ONE of the Sunshine Coast's top police officers recently spoke candidly about her concerns many people had lost their respect for members of the service. Acting Superintendent Anne Macdonald said she could see a worrying change in attitude, which was putting her officers in more danger than ever before. Today a local policeman tells how his life was turned upside down after a brief but explosive confrontation with one man whose attitude and actions were indicative of that lack of respect.”

A multivariable model of clinical variables predicts advanced fibrosis in chronic hepatitis C. Alsatie M, et al. J Clin Gastroenterol. 2007 Apr;41(4):416-21.

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