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NEWS

ASPRIN RISK

Researchers have revealed that there is a link between Reye's Syndrome, a rare disease that affects children, and the use of aspirin during the flu or chicken pox. Reye's Syndrome typically occurs four to seven days after a child has the flu or chicken pox. Rather than recovering, the child begins to vomit and becomes delirious. In severe cases, the child lapses into a

coma and 10 percent die. A pilot study by Boston's Public Health Services concludes that if a child develops the disease there is a 93 percent chance that the child received salicylates, an aspirin ingredient during a previous illness. Such children are 16 times more likely to get Reye's than those who do not.

BREAKTHROUGH IN LIVER CANCER CURE

Researchers at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore (USA) say they have found the first effective treatment for advanced liver cancer, which until now has almost always been fatal.

The treatment involved the use of antibodies with drugs and radiation treatment to increase chances of

curing the disease.

The treatment using radioactive isotopes attached to antibodies — proteins that bind to cancer cells to deliver radiation directly to the tumour has shrunk tumours by at least 30 percent in almost half of the patients tested.

NEW TEST FOR EARLY DIABETES DETECTION

Researchers say that screening tests that pinpoint tell-tale antibodies in the blood could help identify those who risk getting diabetes.

One newly developed test reveals the presence of antibodies that attack islet cells, specialised cells within the pancreas that produce insulin; when these cells are destroyed, the body can no longer make its own insulin, an essential hormone, and the result is Juvenile diabetes which is a devastating disease with many side effects including blindness and kidney failure.

The latest research shows that people with islet — cell antibodies risk getting the disease. And doctors

can estimate how soon it will strike measuring their insulin production.

Juvenile diabetes runs in families, but doctors do not fully understand the underlying defect that causes it. However, they suspect that it results from an abnormality of helper 'T' cells, a variety of white blood cells that control antibody production.

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