

Radioactive Isotope Study Starts at Women's Hospital

By JOHN LYNCH

Opening of a new research division where radioactive isotopes will be used in study and treatment of disease was announced today by Mrs. Arthur Getchell, president and the trustees of the 71-year-old Massachusetts Women's Hospital on Parker Hill avenue.

HEAD OF THE NEW research division is Dr. Saul Hertz, Harvard-educated physician - investigator credited with instituting use of radioactive iodine in studying and treating thyroid disease.

The laboratory and facilities of the new radioisotope research division have been inspected and approved by representatives of the Atomic Energy Commission, the trustees reported, and shipments of radioactive substances already are on their way here from Oak Ridge for use in initial projects.

ESTABLISHMENT of the new division in a field which promises much in the field of cancer research and treatment is a continuation of the hospital's long-standing interest in cancer.

For many years the hospital, supported by the Women's Charity Club, has cared for many cancer cases, most of them receiving surgical treatment. With establishment of the radioisotope division, this new tool will be employed as a supplement to X-ray and surgery in treatment, and as a potent source of new knowledge.

ALREADY SET UP in the radioisotope division's quarters at the hospital is a specialized instrument devised by Dr. Hertz and associates to provide a much more exact measurement of the amount of radioactive substance taken up by such an organ as the thyroid gland than previously has been possible.

The standard method of measur-

ing radiation from radioisotopes which have been administered to a patient for treatment, diagnostic, or research purposes is to use a single Geiger-Mueller tube which, connected to a counting device, indicates the level of radiation.

Research of Dr. Hertz led to development of a system of using four Geiger-Mueller tubes mounted on a framework encircling the patient which make possible a much more accurate estimate of the radiation dosage emanating from an isotope within the body.

Initial projects at the hospital will include study and treatment of goiter and thyroid cancer, and of such blood diseases as polycythemia, caused by massive overproduction of red blood cells, and leukemia, resulting from similar overproduction of white blood cells.

Isotopes to be used initially will be radioactive iodine and radioactive phosphorus, the former demonstrably effective in treating toxic goiter and some cases of the rare thyroid cancer, and the latter used with some success in polycythemia especially.

MAY AID HEARTY ILLS

While cancer will provide the main field of interest, an indication of the potentialities of radioisotopes is given, Dr. Hertz noted, by research in which some patients with the heart ailment called angina pectoris have been relieved by use of radioactive iodine which can inactivate the thyroid, apparently a potent factor in high blood pressure and in certain heart ailments.

Dr. Hertz said some 30 patients with thyroid disease, two of them with thyroid cancer, will be placed under treatment at the hospital as soon as possible.

Everett Man Burned In Fishing Boat Fire

Gus Marascaca, 56, of Main street, Everett, was burned on the face and neck today when the motor of his fishing boat backfired and caught fire as he was starting it at Commercial wharf.

The fire, which was quickly extinguished by firemen, was attributed to a short circuit. Damage was slight and was confined to the stern of the 20-foot boat. Marascaca was taken to Massachusetts General Hospital.

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