

SUN NEWS

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL SCHOOL AT DALLAS

5323 Harry Hines Boulevard, Dallas, Texas 75235
Contact: Bob Fenley

DALLAS--A three-year grant of \$135,964 from The John A. Hartford Foundation has been awarded to The University of Texas Southwestern Medical School at Dallas for the comprehensive study of antibiotics in newborn and young infants. Dr. George H. McCracken Jr., associate professor of Pediatrics, will be the principal investigator.

Announcement of the grant was made jointly by Harry B. George, president of the Foundation, and Dr. Charles C. Sprague, dean of the medical school.

"Until recently there has been a relative void in our knowledge of the pharmacology of antibiotics in newborn infants," Dr. McCracken explained. "In the past, information obtained from adult volunteers was used to estimate dosages and effects of antibiotics in infants. This resulted in toxic reactions to some drugs because the infant's mechanisms of handling these drugs were relatively immature." The importance of these studies is further emphasized by the fact that antibiotics are the most frequently administered of all drugs to newborn and young infants.

The UTSWMS researcher said that the grant will allow for continuation and expansion of existing studies designed to evaluate the pharmacology, effectiveness, and safety of antibiotics in newborn and young infants. The complete studies of some antibiotics may take as long as two years to be certain that there are no long-term toxic effects.

Closely related to this study will be another investigation coordinated by Dr. McCracken which involves 14 medical centers in North and South America. Different antibiotics will be evaluated under controlled conditions to determine their effectiveness in infectious diseases too rare to be studied by any one institution. The role of antibiotics in meningitis of newborn infants is currently under investigation.

The John A. Hartford Foundation is a non-profit organization which supports a number of biomedical research projects throughout the United States.