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\*\*\*AIDS cable television  
program to feature viewer  
calls

DALLAS -- The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas and area cable television systems will present a live discussion of AIDS, Dec. 13, 8 - 9 p.m. The program, the first of its kind in the Dallas/Fort Worth area, will feature a panel of experts and an opportunity for viewers to call in their questions about AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome). The panel will include a Texan who now is a key national health official. Dr. Edward H. Brandt Jr., assistant secretary for health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be in Dallas to participate in the "AIDS Update" program.

"The 'AIDS Update' program offers a unique opportunity to share with the community the latest sound scientific information on this serious health problem," says Charles C. Sprague, M.D., president of UTHSCD. "Viewers will not only hear from experts in the field, but they will also have a chance to question them directly about AIDS. Discussion of AIDS has been colored by emotion that at times has bordered on hysteria. We at the health science center hope to clear the air on AIDS by bringing to the public the best data from the most reliable sources."

To discuss the many social, political and medical ramifications of the AIDS mystery, UTHSCD will assemble a panel of experts for "AIDS Update." The panelists include: Brandt; Dr. Kevin Murphy, UT Southwestern Medical School; Joann Schulte, medical writer, Dallas Morning News; Mike Stewart, president, Dallas Gay Alliance, and moderator Jamie Friar, Office of Medical Information, UTHSCD.

Acquired immune deficiency syndrome is one the most serious and most mysterious health problems ever to face our nation. AIDS has claimed the lives of 917 Americans and has stricken 1,342 more. Since the disease entity known as AIDS was identified two years ago, the number of cases of AIDS has been spiraling upward. Through 1981, 289 cases were diagnosed, 883 were discovered in 1982, and 1,087 more cases were diagnosed to date this year. At this rate, the number of known AIDS victims has been doubling every six months.

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For some reason, the immune system of AIDS victims fails to function normally. Their bodies are easy prey for a host of opportunistic microscopic invaders. AIDS patients frequently succumb to a pair of previously rarely seen diseases:

Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia and Kaposi's sarcoma, a form of skin cancer.

The outlook for AIDS victims is bleak. To date, 41 percent of AIDS victims have died. No patient has ever recovered normal immune response.

While the prognosis for the AIDS patient is dim, the outlook for the rest of the population is brighter than some may have thought. Fears that an AIDS epidemic would spread among the general public have proved to be unfounded. The vast majority of AIDS can be categorized into several high risk groups. Seventy-one percent are homosexual or bisexual men; 17 percent are intravenous drug abusers; five percent are Haitian-born immigrants to the U.S., and one percent are hemophiliacs. The remaining six percent do not fall into any of the recognized risk groups, but many are thought to have had sexual relations with an AIDS victim perhaps before there were recognizable symptoms of the disease. There has not been a single AIDS case that has been traced to casual social or household contact with an AIDS patient.

Researchers theorize that a virus found in body fluids, perhaps only in blood, transmits the disease.

The Warner Amex cable system will carry "AIDS Update" live on Channel 9. Other area cable companies will offer the program to their subscribers as well. The viewer call-in telephone number will be (214)688-3691. For more information on the "AIDS Update" program call UTHSCD Office of Medical Information, (214)688-3404.

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