

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

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UT SOUTHWESTERN NEUROMUSCULAR CLINIC TESTING NEW DRUG FOR ALS

DALLAS — September 27, 1993 — Research neurologists at The University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas have begun clinical trials of a new drug for treatment of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), often known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

Screening studies are being conducted at UT Southwestern. Eligible patients are enrolled in a six-month, placebo-controlled study of ciliary neurotrophic factor (CNTF).

UT Southwestern is one of more than 25 medical centers in the country conducting clinical trials on CNTF. The studies are funded jointly by Syntex Laboratories and Synergen, manufacturers of CNTF.

ALS is a progressive, fatal neurologic disease for which there is no known cure or effective treatment. It is called Lou Gehrig's disease after one of its most famous victims.

Animal studies on CNTF indicate that it may be of benefit in slowing the progress of ALS, said Dr. Wilson Bryan, assistant professor of neurology at UT Southwestern and medical director of the study.

To qualify for the study, patients must have a confirmed diagnosis of ALS with symptoms that began within the past two years. After reviewing their medical records, Bryan or Dr. Richard J. Barohn, co-director of the clinical trial, will evaluate patients in person to determine eligibility for the study.

Expenses are covered by the drug company for participants who are enrolled in the study, but there is no compensation for participation. Participants will be responsible for their own travel to UT Southwestern for evaluation, screening visits and clinic visits during the study. If tests are required to confirm a diagnosis of ALS, potential participants are responsible for charges incurred, Bryan said.

For information, contact Lisa D. Davis, R.N., study coordinator, at (214) 648-8668.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL CENTER

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