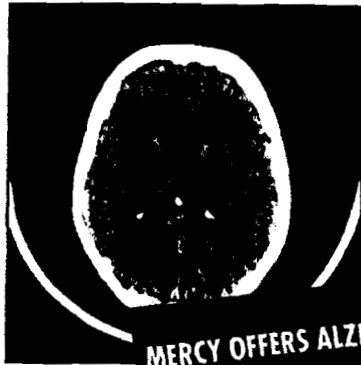


# Mercy Offers Families Hope

Mercy Hospital and Medical Center

Alzheimer's disease can be cruel. It frustrates and embarrasses victims who can no longer remember how to do simple things such as tying ones shoes or finding the bathroom in their own house, and can be a great burden on family members and caregivers who must deal with this regression and loss of capabilities.



### Early Detection Important

While there is no known cure for Alzheimer's disease, its progress can be stopped or slowed by some treatment methods. Patients' brains are characterized by "plaques (protein deposits) and tangles (dead neurons caught in the plaques)" which cause dementia or a decline in functioning.

### MERCY OFFERS ALZHEIMER'S PATIENTS NEW DRUG

One of only two sites in Illinois, Mercy Hospital and Medical Center's Alzheimer's Disease Center is the location for a new clinical study - "A long-term, tolerance and safety study of (drug) HPO29 in patients with Alzheimer's disease."

To qualify participants must be diagnosed as having Alzheimer's disease, and they must have someone to accompany them for each visit and supervise their medication. Candidates are rigorously screened and will undergo an EEG, CT (computerized tomography) scan, chest X-ray, MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) study, EKG and physical examinations. For more information about this study, please call Mercy's Alzheimer's Disease Center at (312) 567-7900.

Affecting one out of every ten people over the age of 65, Alzheimer's disease has no known cause. Its symptoms may include: memory loss, a personality change, problems with understanding what people say and loss of coordination skills; and its debilitating effects can progress to the point where the victim may no longer care for him/herself.

same symptoms, but require completely different treatments. Alzheimer's can be a really incapacitating disease and its rate of progression is extremely variable."

Mercy has developed an Alzheimer's Dis-

ease Center to offer patients and their families a comprehensive program, including: short and long-term therapies, support and the opportunity to participate (when appropriate) in small scale clinical studies with new medications. Dr. Plioplys oversees a team of researchers who are working to locate disease markers and to define the cause. He is "very optimistic that we will be able to intervene in the near future."

### Relieving the Burden

Families and caregivers face particularly difficult burdens, they have seen a loved one change and have had to assume responsibilities which can be very frustrating at times. Understanding this, Mercy offers an Alzheimer's disease support group to aid them. "Trying to understand dementia is very difficult and frustrating," says Shirley LoBianco, Eldercare Advisor/Information and Referral Coordinator. "I encourage caregivers to get respite for themselves. It can open doors to unknown resources and allows caregivers to see that they are not alone in their situation." Members meet monthly at Mercy Medical on Pulaski (first Wednesday of the month from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.) and share experiences and helpful suggestions.

For more information about Alzheimer's Disease Center or Alzheimer's Support Group, please call Angela Britten, Study Coordinator, - (312) 567-7900.