

Atomic Blasts to Relieve Brain Tumors Under Study

BOSTON, March 28.—(AP)—The American Cancer Society today reported scientists are devising methods of destroying brain tumors with powerful atomic blasts which do not damage normal brain tissues.

The methods are being devised by scientists at Massachusetts general hospital and the Harvard University School of Medicine, it was reported in an announcement on society-supported research by Neurosurgeon William H. Sweet.

The Cancer Society said that Doctor Sweet and associates at the Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island, N. Y., "have worked out methods which theoretically would improve irradiation by direct exposure to the atomic pile.

"Extensive tests, however, must be made before hopeless patients will be considered for experimental treatment," the society said, adding:

"Doctor Sweet with Dr. Lee Farr of the Atomic Energy Commission three years ago treated a dozen dying brain tumor patients by injecting them with boron and exposing their heads to direct rays from the atomic pile.

"The boron concentrated preferentially in the growing brain tumors. And its atoms were struck and split by slow neutrons emanating from the pile. The miniscule atomic blasts destroyed a great deal of brain tumor without extensive damage to the normal brain. But the dose could never be raised to the point which gave hope to complete tumor destruction and possible cure."

The Cancer Society added that "all these patients eventually died of their disease, but temporary improvement in their condition was such as to impede research along these lines."