

sedatives. The decision takes effect in six months. The daytime sedatives generally contain antihistamines, which make people drowsy, but the FDA says there is no evidence that drowsiness helps relieve anxiety. A few also contain scopolamine or bromide, which FDA considers unsafe or ineffective in sedatives.

- The most widely used color additive, Yellow No. 5, must be identified in the ingredient list on the labels of foods and drugs, according to an FDA ruling. Yellow No. 5, also called tartazine, is the first color required to be listed by name.

"Yellow No. 5 poses a particular hazard to some people, but is generally safe for use by the majority of the population. This requirement will enable those who are allergic to Yellow No. 5 to know which products contain it," Kennedy explains. The FDA estimates that as many as 100,000 persons in the United States are allergic to Yellow No. 5; most of those persons are also allergic to aspirin. The ruling takes effect June 26, 1980, for drugs and July 1, 1981, for foods.

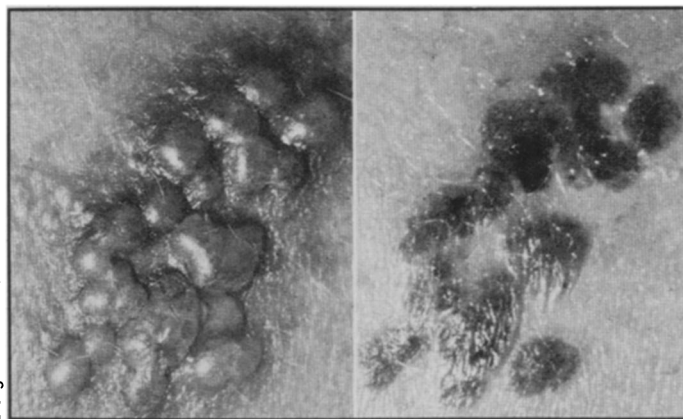
- The FDA proposed a requirement for prescription drugs to be packaged with a pamphlet of information to the patient. The pamphlet would describe proper use of the drug and any dangers and side effects. The agency plans to develop possible wording for the pamphlets for about 50 drugs initially and then to require manufacturers to develop and print the final package inserts. Agency officials expect preparing the written material for common tranquilizers and potent antibiotics to have top priority. They estimate it will take as long as 5 years before pamphlets will be included with most of the 375 basic drugs. The FDA already requires patient package inserts for IUD's, hearing aids, estrogens for menopausal women and birth control pills.

- As of July 1, labels of ice cream and most other frozen desserts must carry a list of ingredients. The desserts had previously been exempted from labeling rules on grounds that their ingredients were standard. The new regulation, proposed months ago, affects covered products sold in interstate commerce. □

Shuttle delay confirmed

The first orbital flight of the space shuttle had been scheduled for March, then June, then September of this year, and for several months the target has been Nov. 9, though even that date has drawn skepticism from inside and outside the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Now the additional delay has become official, as NASA administrator Robert Frosch last week told the House Subcommittee on Space Science and Applications. There is only a 20 percent chance of a launch by the end of next March, he said, and he placed the probability of even an end-of-June launching at 50-50. □

A promising treatment for herpes



Genital herpesvirus sores (left) become dramatically smaller (right) after four days of two-deoxy-D-glucose therapy.

An Alabama allergist recently reported an unexpected yet promising form of treatment for genital herpes, a widespread venereal disease that currently has no cure and that can cause fetal death and may cause cervical cancer. The treatment was under-the-skin injections of commercially available flu vaccine (SN: 6/9/79, p. 375). Now another possibly even more effective treatment for genital herpes is reported in the June 29 *JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION* by Herbert A. Blough and Robert L. Giuntoli of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine in Philadelphia. It is an experimental drug called two-deoxy-D-glucose.

For 20 years this compound has been known to interfere with herpes virus multiplication in laboratory experiments. But no one had explored its antiviral activity clinically until Blough and Giuntoli did so. They selected 36 women with suspected genital herpes infections, proved by viral isolation or viral antibody studies that the patients truly had genital herpes, then gave half of the women two-deoxy-D-glucose topically or intravaginally and the other half a placebo for three weeks.

Patients with initial herpes infections treated with two-deoxy-D-glucose experienced rapid relief (within 12 to 72 hours) of genital pain and pain during urination, the two most common symptoms of female genital herpes. In patients who received the placebo, herpes symptoms lasted from eight to 10 days. Herpes lesions lasted about four days in patients given two-deoxy-D-glucose, but 15 days in patients given the placebo. The drug was similarly effective on patients with recurrent genital herpes.

During a two-year follow up, there were only two recurrences among patients with initial herpes infections treated by two-deoxy-D-glucose (an 89 percent cure rate). Among the two-deoxy-D-glucose-treated patients with recurrent infections, 90 percent showed improvement, such as less-frequent recurrences, fewer lesions or shortened duration of symptoms. None of the patients experienced adverse side effects from the drug.

"Two-deoxy-D-glucose provides a simple and unique approach to treatment of genital herpesvirus infections," Blough and Giuntoli conclude. Blough believes that the Food and Drug Administration might approve the drug for commercial use as early as a year or two from now. □

Winter life under the Arctic ice pack

As conventional sources of oil dry up, human beings are driven to increasingly remote, sometimes dangerous, regions of the earth in search of more crude petroleum. The Arctic ice pack is one of the areas being probed as a potential source of fossil fuels. But to whom — or what — would offshore oil and gas development there pose the greater danger: human or marine life?

Ocean experts have suspected that it is difficult, if not impossible, for undersea organisms to survive the winter months beneath the ice pack, when above-ice temperatures dive to minus 35 degrees F (with wind chill factors to minus 100) in near total darkness. Still, scientists know that some species do survive "because we would find them again every summer," says David Norton of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Assessment Program (OCSEAP).

"But we figured that these stocks could only make it through the winter by retreating to deep, offshore waters in the fall," he says, "where they would not be bothered by the freezing downward of sea ice, or by the disruption from gouging of the seafloor by keels of moving sea ice." If this were so, oil and gas drillers on the ice pack would appear to have relatively few worries about adversely affecting marine life during the winter.

But a study team led by Norton now reports no such winter migration — on the contrary, the scientists found that some organisms not only remain but actually seem to thrive on the harsh winter condi-