

# Living With Cancer

Jewish Family Service of New Haven is offering a support group for family members of cancer patients this fall. If someone in your family is being treated for cancer and you would like to meet with other people to give and receive support, and to talk about the stresses associated with living with this illness, please call the Jewish Family Service at 777-6641. The group will hold its first meeting Thursday, October 16th at 7:30 p.m.

interferon, a naturally-occurring substance in cells that some believe acts to destroy virus and cancer growth. Producing interferon in any quantity has proven difficult. According to an article in *Omnis* magazine, a millionth of an ounce would sell for \$1,500—or \$22 billion per pound.

Drug companies are investing millions in interferon development—it represents a marketable product. Results from interferon testing on humans is so far inconclusive, but one Swedish oncologist reports impressive findings on osteosarcoma (bone cancer) patients. ACS is solidly behind interferon testing—the largest grant in its history, \$2 million, was awarded in 1978 to buy interferon for clinical testing.

Not all cancer therapies involve physical treatment. Dr. Bernard Siegel, a New Haven surgeon, conducts a once-weekly therapy group for what he calls "exceptional patients," cancer victims trying to effect a cure through an improvement in mental attitude.

Siegel was trained in psychotherapy by Carl Simonton, a Fort Worth-based physician who believes that there exist "cancer-prone personalities," people with poor self-images who in effect "will themselves to get cancer." According to *Psychology Today*, Simonton has evolved a therapy based on "imaging," picturing one's radiation or chemotherapy as an invading army killing weakened cancer cells. He claims a high rate of success with even terminal cases, has written a book (with his wife), and opened a high-grossing counseling center.

Siegel says the therapy adds a new dimension to medicine. "Doctors are trained as mechanics," he says, "it's the patients themselves who heal." He pointed to cases of apparently spontaneous remission as signs of a change in mental outlook. "They want to get well." Siegel says the therapy gets the patients involved in his or her own treatment, helping overcome a feeling of powerlessness.

The mental approach is not without its

(Continued on next page)