

SALISBURY PATHOLOGY SERVICE

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GENERAL INFIRMARY
SALISBURY
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HFP/LMD

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

To: David Waters.
ACHIL.
[GRO-A] → * NAME WAS REMOVED
THIS WAS THE FIRST COPY

As you know, [GRO-A] is a mild haemophiliac under our care. I gather that [GRO-A]'s mother has recently informed you of the finding that he has antibodies of the virus HTLVIII. As you may know, in a very few individuals who have been infected with this virus this can be associated with a condition called Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

There has unfortunately been an enormous amount of mis-information presented by the media during the last year or so. In particular, that patients with antibodies to this particular virus are synonymous to patients with AIDS. This is of course not true, in fact, only a very small proportion of our HTLVIII positive haemophiliacs will go on to get AIDS, probably of the order of one in 1-200.

It is very difficult indeed to transmit this virus to uninfected individuals. The only recorded mode of transmission is through transfusion of blood or blood products and through sexual intercourse. It has never been known to be contracted by casual contact even within people who live in close contact such as members of the same family. We therefore feel completely safe in recommending that haemophiliac children with antibodies to HTLVIII should have entirely normal schooling and present absolutely no risk or hazard to other children or to teachers.

There has been a certain amount of understandable hysteria in view of misleading press reports about the infectivity of these children. In the USA this has reached the extent that certain states have had to pass legislation preventing job discrimination and ensuring that children continue with normal schooling.

I feel very strongly that our haemophiliac children should not be disadvantaged any further than they already are by virtue of their blood disorder. Having said that, nothing would make me recommend schooling in a normal environment unless I felt that was entirely safe for all concerned. I would be very happy to discuss the implications of this with you. Should you wish to do this would you please get in contact with my secretary.

[GRO-C]

H. F. PARRY,
Consultant Haematologist.