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## Factor 8 Aids threat

By Andrew Vettch,  
Medical Correspondent

The Government's chief medical officer denied yesterday that haemophiliacs faced a new threat of Aids from supposedly safe Factor 8 from the US.

Dr Donald Acheson criticised Dr Peter Jones, director of the Haemophilia Centre in Newcastle upon Tyne, for disclosing that four men in the Netherlands and the US had developed Aids after taking Factor 8 which had been heat-treated to kill the virus.

"It was an error of judgment for him to go public on scanty and slender evidence," said Dr Acheson. The thousands of haemophiliacs who needed the life-saving treatment could be confident that they were receiving safe supplies.

A Department of Health spokeswoman said the Netherlands case could be discounted. Dr Jones, she added, had admitted that there was doubt about the three US cases.

Dr Jones has stressed that heat-treated Factor 8 from the NHS Blood Products Laboratory is almost certainly safe, but 60 per cent of the Factor 8 used in Britain comes from the US.

## 'Extend GMC ruling to Aids'

By Colin Brown

The General Medical Council ruling allowing doctors to breach patient confidentiality with those under-16 seeking contraceptives should be extended to the families of Aids sufferers, a former Health Minister, Dr Gerard Vaughan, said yesterday.

Dr Vaughan said it was vital that doctors who diagnosed Aids should tell the spouses of their patients to avoid the disease being spread.

He is pressing the Health Minister, Mr Barney Hayhoe, to advise GPs that they should warn spouses of Aids sufferers about their condition following the GMC ruling.

The ruling, opposed by the BMA, created a new principle allowing individual GPs to inform parents of girls under-16 seeking contraceptives if they believe a breach of confidentiality will be in the interests of the patient.

He said: "I think the ruling was a tremendous step towards better medicine and should now be applied to Aids, VD and other serious infection diseases."

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