

## Researchers discouraged by newborn HIV cases

CHICAGO—The number of cases of mothers passing the AIDS virus to their newborns has leveled off to about 1,600 a year in the United States, but government researchers remain discouraged at the numbers.

"What it really says to me is that there is a continuing problem with HIV infection in children," said Dr. Susan F. Davis of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

More than 15,000 babies were born with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, between 1978 and 1993, Davis and her team reported in Wednesday's issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*.

Twelve thousand of those children were still alive at the beginning of 1994, all needing medical and social care, and many destined for foster care because their mothers will die of AIDS, Davis and her team said.

In 1993, about 6,530 HIV-infected women gave birth in the United States, and about 25 percent passed the disease to their babies, producing 1,630 HIV-infected newborns that year, the researchers said.

That's fewer than in 1992—when 1,750 infected infants were born. In 1991, 1,760 were born. In 1990, 1,690 were born. And in 1989, 1,590 were born.

The reason for the leveling off after 1989 is unknown. Researchers said it's possible that fewer women of childbearing age are being infected with HIV, or that infected women are less fertile or are having more abortions.

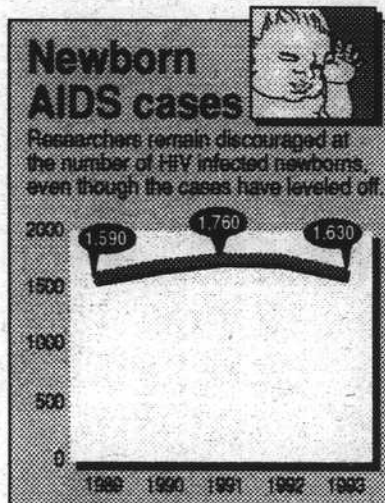
The researchers noted that a recent study showed treating infected women during pregnancy and their newborns afterward with the drug zidovudine, also known as AZT, reduced the rate of mother-to-child transmission by two-thirds.

They also called attention to recently issued CDC guidelines urging that all pregnant women receive HIV testing and counseling so that treatment can be started when necessary and newborn infections averted.

Dr. John L. Sullivan, who studies newborn AIDS as a pediatrics professor at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, said the research is consistent with trends in his state.

"We know that a majority of (infected) women are not getting access (to treatment) because they don't know they're HIV infected, and that's because they haven't been offered HIV testing," said Sullivan, who was not involved in the CDC study.

Sullivan supports mandatory screening and also a resumption of the CDC's nationwide data-gathering effort to track the infection rate among



Source: *Journal of the American Medical Association*

newborns. The agency suspended the tests, which were done anonymously and without consent, this spring after mothers protested that they weren't told their babies were HIV positive until after they became sick.

"I think it's incredibly important that it continue," Sullivan said. "It's the only way we're going to find out if we're doing our job."

Davis said the possibility of resuming the testing newborns is being debated within the CDC, and she doesn't know when or if the statistical sampling would resume.

## Trader charged with hiding bank's \$1.1 billion loss

NEW YORK — In a scandal strikingly similar to the one that brought down Britain's venerable Barings Bank, a bond trader at Japan's Daiwa Bank was charged Tuesday with doctoring records to hide \$1.1 billion in losses.

Federal prosecutors said 44-year-old Toshihide Iguchi lost the money through 30,000 unauthorized trades over the last 11 years at Daiwa's New York branch.

"Something this size is unprecedented," said U.S. Attorney Mary Jo White.

The debacle was the latest in a recent rash of cases against traders accused of single-handedly concealing huge losses from bank superiors.

But the scope and size of Daiwa's loss left some financial market experts wondering how it could have gone unnoticed for so long in one of the world's biggest banks—particularly so soon after Barings' collapse.

Daiwa, however, said it is in no danger of collapse and expects to report a \$70 million first-half profit despite having to write off the losses. It also said that no depositor or customer lost any money.

Iguchi, a permanent U.S. resident, was arrested over the weekend in New Jersey, where he lives, and ordered held without bail Tuesday. Appearing somber and wear-

ing blue jeans and a striped sweater, he made no comment. His lawyer also declined to comment.

Iguchi could get up to 30 years in prison and \$1 million in fines. He could also be ordered to make restitution.

In February, Barings was brought down by the nearly \$1.4 billion in losses blamed on Nicholas Leeson, a rogue trader in Singapore. Like Leeson, Iguchi was in charge both of trading and of the backroom operations that monitor trades, meaning he was policing himself.

Risk management experts said it was unusual for a trader to have oversight for accounting of his own trades.

"The fact that someone could hide all these trades is nearly impossible" at most banks, said Heinz Binggeli, managing director at Emcor Risk Management Consulting in Irvington, N.Y.

Daiwa said it learned about the trading loss when Iguchi wrote a confidential letter, dated July 13, to Daiwa's president in Japan confessing to wide-ranging unauthorized trades.

In addition to losing about \$1.1 billion, Iguchi made unauthorized sales of the bank's government securities to cover up his losses, authorities said.

## News in a Minute

### Judge refuses female lawyer wearing pants

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A judge refused to let a female lawyer enter a plea for her client because she was wearing pants.

"If a man were to come to court without a tie, I'd ask him to put on a tie," Circuit Judge Joseph Wilson said after calling off Monday's hearing.

Heather Smith's client, who faces firearms charges, will have to enter her plea at a later date. Smith declined to comment Tuesday.

Her colleagues were surprised by the judge's move.

"I've seen plenty of women in courtrooms across the state wearing pantsuits," said Sue C. Erwin, president of the South Carolina Women's Lawyers Association.

Rules that used to specify what was considered appropriate courtroom attire no longer exist, Erwin said. Judges have the power to control their courtrooms and differ in what they think shows disrespect, she said.

"As long as people are neat and clean... I don't think it should make a lot of difference," said Lee Robinson, president of the Charleston County Bar Association. "It's kind of a silly issue."

### Irish government overturns ban on Playboy

DUNDALK, Ireland — Government censors have ruled that Playboy magazine can be sold in Ireland, overturning a 34-year ban that had sent its fans hopping over the border to Northern Ireland to buy it.

In this town a few miles from the border, the news got some commercial pulses thumping. Gerry and Margaret Molloy said they were eager to sell Playboy in their Dundalk shop, even though some neighbors disapprove.

"They say I'm an idiot (idiot), but I'm here to make money. There's a clear demand for the stuff, and it's harmless," said Molloy, noting that other shops had sold Playboy under the counter for years.

The Censorship of Publications Board, which bans a range of periodicals and books from this predominantly Roman Catholic country of 3.5 million, approved Playboy's appeal for distribution rights on Monday. The magazine had been banned from the Irish Republic since 1961, but could go on sale here as soon as next week.

"We were conscious of the fact that Playboy was very widely available internationally," said board chairman George Birmingham. "The only other country in what could be described as the West that banned it as well as Ireland was Turkey."

## Steal-me Levi's ads yanked in NY

NEW YORK — An ad campaign expected to encourage looters to break bus stop shelters to yank out a pair of Levi's khakis was itself yanked Tuesday after complaints from the mayor.

Levi Strauss & Co. began putting actual pairs of the \$50 pants in bus shelter ads in New York City and San Francisco this week, with the full expectation that people would steal them.

In fact, the company was so sure that the crowbar-and-brick crowd would stoop to vandalism to get at the pants, it designed the ads for pre- and post-theft presentation, and paid in advance for repairs.

The khakis were placed between the same hard plastic panels used for conventional two-dimensional advertisements, with ad copy that reads, "Nice Pants." Once they disappear, an outline of the khakis remains with the words, "Apparently they were very nice pants."

New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani was not amused at the thought of New Yorkers shopping with crowbars on city streets. He condemned the ads as "a terrible mistake... exactly the wrong message to be teaching to people."

By the end of the day, New York's Department of Transportation, which regulates bus shelters, and Gannett

*"The thought did cross our mind that some pairs might be stolen. But we think that adds to the talk value of the ads."*

**BRAD WILLIAMS**

senior marketing specialist with Levi Strauss & Co.

Outdoor Advertising, which sells the ad space in both cities, decided to pull the ads in New York.

"We both agreed these ads will be pulled," said Transportation Commissioner Lee Sander. "They will all be down by tomorrow night."

James Reyes, a spokesman for the San Francisco Municipal Railway, said Gannett hadn't been asked to pull the ads there by midafternoon, but they were getting plenty of phone calls asking what they would do.

The controversy surrounding the ad campaign was just what Levi's wanted: free publicity.

"The thought did cross our mind that some pairs might be stolen," Brad Williams, senior marketing specialist with the San Francisco-based company, said Tuesday morning, before the ads were pulled in New York. "But

we think that adds to the talk value of the ads."

Later Tuesday, Williams did not return a call seeking comment on the city's decision to remove the ads.

At least one pair of pants was already gone from a West Coast ad and another pair was missing from a shelter in Manhattan, Sander said.

"We factored the vandalism into their contract," Doug Watts, a vice president at Gannett, said earlier. Gannett charged Levi's an extra fee, anticipating the replacement of shattered plastic (\$300 a sheet) and twisted panel boxes (\$2,000 apiece).

The New York Police Department had announced a harder line: Anyone caught pants-napping could be charged with vandalism and theft, said Officer Sara Carpenter, a police spokeswoman.

## Congress, Clinton seek middle ground

WASHINGTON — Agreement appeared near Tuesday on keeping the government operating for six weeks while congressional Republicans and the Clinton administration battle over what federal social programs will look like next year.

But Democrats demonstrated that the long-range budget dispute will be hard to resolve as they declared that GOP cuts in three big 1996 spending bills were so drastic that they would simply let the measures move to the White House by week's end — for a presidential veto.

"They're extreme in every way," Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., said of planned Republican reductions in education, job training and other programs that are part of the GOP drive to balance the budget by

2002. "They devastate families, they devastate workers, they cripple the economy."

With fiscal 1996 to begin Sunday, Congress sent to President Clinton on Tuesday the first two of the 13 annual spending measures needed to keep agencies operating. They're likely to send him one or two more, at best, before Sunday, necessitating a stopgap measure to keep agencies from sending some workers home.

But fearing blame by voters weary of stalemate in Washington, both sides were working toward an agreement that would keep the government operating until Nov. 13 at lower spending levels than this year's. Officials from both sides said they were moving toward a compromise on a financing formula, and a deal seemed imminent.

"We see no reason for any kind of layoffs," House Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., told reporters. "We see no reason for any problems at the beginning of the fiscal year. We've taken rational steps to make sure that the government can continue over the next six weeks, while we complete" work on the remaining spending bills.

House leaders planned to bring the stopgap measure to the floor Thursday, with the Senate acting as early as that day, too.

As the two sides sought middle ground on spending bills, the Senate Finance Committee commenced writing the biggest chunk of the GOP balanced-budget package: legislation cutting projected growth of Medicare and Medicaid.

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