

## Medical News

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### OSHA Announces Plans for a TB Standard

Robert Reich, Secretary of Labor, citing the well recognized hazards of TB in the workplace, announced that OSHA will initiate the rulemaking process to develop a TB standard.

In response to a petition from Service Employees International Union (SEIU), on October 12, 1993, OSHA has issued nationwide enforcement guidelines for occupational exposure to TB. Under this approach, OSHA will enforce applicable General Industry Standards (eg, 29 CFR 1910.134 respiratory protection), and under the General Duty Clause Section 5 (a) (1) of the OSHA Act, enforce compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines for TB control. However, OSHA has denied a request by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) for an Emergency Temporary Standard (ET'S). Reich, in a letter to SEIU President John Sweeney, stated that "although there may be sufficient evidence that there is grave danger from occupational exposure to TB, there is not sufficient evidence that an ETS is capable of being implemented and achieving health benefits with the 6-month ETS time period."

### Free Access to AIDS Databases

All online charges were eliminated for searching AID&-related databases and an online directory of information sources at the National Library of Medicine (NLM) in Bethesda, MD, effective January 25, 1994. The change to free access to AIDSLINE, AIDSDRUGS, AIDSTRIALS, and DIRLINE is the result of recommendations made at the U.S. National Institute of Health (NIH) HIV/AIDS Information Service Conference held in June 1993.

AIDSLINE is an online database with more than 90,000 references to AIDS-related journal articles, books,

audiovisuals and conference abstracts. AIDSTRIALS contains current information about more than 500 clinical trials of drugs and vaccines that are being tested by the NIH and private organizations. AIDSDRUGS contains detailed information about the 190 agents being tested in the clinical trials and DIRLINE is an online listing of 15,000 organizations and information services that provide information to the public about HIV/AIDS and other health-related topics.

FROM: *AIDS Weekly* February 7, 1994.

### First Case of Hantavirus Reported in Northeast

A 22-year old college student from Long Island died last month in Providence, RI, from infection with the hantavirus. This is the first known case of infection in the Northeast. Officials from the CDC believe that the student acquired the infection in Rhode Island or New York and that the viral isolate will turn out to be the fourth new variant of the hantavirus that they have identified since the first cases were recognized in May 1993 in the Southwest. Nearly all of the 60 cases that have been confirmed in the United States since the disease was first recognized have involved contact with the feces or urine of infected deer mice. The CDC has sent experts to work with health officials in New York and Rhode Island to trap animals to determine the source of the infection and search for any additional cases.

FROM: *New York Times* February 24, 1994.

### Nosocomial Outbreak of TB in Renal Transplant Unit

The CDC recently reported an investigation of an outbreak of tuberculosis in a renal transplant unit of a