

# Hepatitis Advance at NYU

An NYU scientist reported today the successful immunization of humans against the most serious form of hepatitis, a major step toward the development of a vaccine.

If a vaccine is developed, perhaps within five to nine years, the disease—serum hepatitis—could be controlled much the same way that polio vaccine has virtually

eradicated polio in this country.

The report of the achievement came from one of the leading researchers in the field, Dr. Saul Krugman, chairman of the pediatrics department at the NYU Medical Center.

"We do not yet have an effective vaccine," Krugman said in an interview, "but the door is being pushed ajar. Hopefully, a vaccine would be as effective as the polio and measles vaccines."

The immunization was tested on 14 children at Willowbrook State School for the retarded on Staten Island where a mild form of hepatitis is always present. Ten children got one inoculation of a boiled serum containing MS-2 hepatitis virus then were exposed four months later to that form of the disease. Four did not contract it; the other six had symptoms that were significantly modified from normal expectations.

Four children who got two inoculations four months apart apparently were completely protected when exposed four months later.

Hepatitis is a virus-caused disease, attacking the liver and causing jaundice, nausea, weakness and other symptoms.

Generally, there are two kinds of hepatitis, serum and infectious. Serum hepatitis



Post Photo

DR. SAUL KRUGMAN

can be transmitted in blood transfusions or from contaminated needles. Infectious

hepatitis is generally spread through infected food or water or person-to-person.

But these traditional distinctions are now being found to overlap, with some serum hepatitis spreading through direct or indirect contact. Serum hepatitis is usually more serious, especially in adults. It can be fatal.

Krugman has been directing a major research effort for 15 years to isolate hepatitis causes and devise preventives. This significant gain was reported in an Honors Lecture at NYU Medical Center here today.

His co-workers on the project are Dr. Joan P. Gilles, NYU research pediatrician, and Dr. Jack Hammond, director of Willowbrook.