

STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE, Friday, March 28, 1975

## Peritonitis blamed for youth's death

A mentally retarded youth who died in the Willowbrook Developmental Center earlier this week was suffering from an acute abdominal disorder, the medical examiner's office said yesterday.

The youth, 19-year-old Jose Toro of Brooklyn, complained of stomach pains Sunday afternoon and was prescribed penicillin after a Willowbrook doctor failed to find evidence of abdominal trouble. He died 13 hours later.

The medical examiner's office said Toro had acute peritonitis, an inflammation of an abdominal membrane. Further studies have been ordered.

Toro, profoundly retarded and blind since infancy, was found gasping for breath as he lay in bed at 5 a.m. There was no nurse in the building. A nurse arrived from a nearby building and administered mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, but Toro died before a doctor arrived.

The youth had been examined by a doctor the previous afternoon and was found to have a temperature of 102. The physician, Dr. William Fleischer, prescribed penicillin.

Toro, who resided in Building 9, is believed to be the first resident of the institution to die on the grounds this year.