

# Test to reveal immunity to hepatitis almost ready

By ELAINE HESS

Dr. Saul Krugman of New York University School of Medicine yesterday announced that a new screening test will soon be available to determine a person's immunity against viral hepatitis.

He said related findings to be published in the medical journals indicate the test is a preliminary to the eventual vaccine estimated to require a minimum of four or five more years of intensive research before a vaccine can be licensed.

Based on successful animal studies, the vaccine will soon be tried out on humans, he said.

The professor of pediatrics with Dr. Mier Yoeli, a professor of preventive medicine also from New York University School of Medicine, spoke at a hepatitis conference yesterday in Willowbrook Developmental Center before 100 physicians, health experts, administrators and parents.

Dispelling worries about an epidemic, Dr. Yoeli said that an epidemic would have occurred a long time ago as the disease had been known since the time of Hippocrates. He explained that the "avalanche of recent data" require public education. He said that general cleanliness is important as a prevention.

Dr. Yoeli reported that viral hepatitis was classified in 1926 in Sweden into the two types, hepatitis A and hepatitis B.

Transmission occurs only through intimate or sleep-in contact.

The sharing of classroom material at school, sharing cookies or playful light kissing will not transmit the virus, Dr. Krugman declared.

Two new medical breakthroughs were further announced.

It was found that each type of hepatitis has its own causative agent.

It was discovered that the inside core of a certain antigen in the blood releases antibodies resistant to viral hepatitis A. The outer surface or coat supplies antibodies against viral hepatitis B.

These findings will be in the May 29 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine.

It was further revealed that the community at large is generally safe from contagion.