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Jack Ruby Has Cancer; Tests Incomplete

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DALLAS—Two medical specialists revealed Saturday that Jack Ruby, the slayer of Presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, has cancer but that the extent of the malignancy is not yet known.

The doctors said a cancerous tumor about the size of a thumb tip was removed from just above Ruby's right collarbone in a 45-minute operation Saturday at Parkland Memorial Hospital, the same hospital where Oswald and President John F. Kennedy died.

Drs. Jay Sanford and Watts Webb told a news conference in the Dallas County sheriff's office that the extent of the cancer probably would not be determined until numerous tests and further examinations are completed.

Taken From Cell

Ruby, 56, was taken to the hospital Friday from his jail cell where he had been treated for a cold for about three weeks. Jail officials said he had been suffering short breath, pains in his chest and a dry cough.

The doctors said Ruby, his sister and brother were informed that he had cancer and that "he accepted this very well" and approved of the operation.

Ruby has spent more than three years in jail here. He tentatively was scheduled to go on trial again in mid-February but doctors said they doubted he would be able to do so.

On Oct. 5 the Texas State Court of Criminal Appeals reversed his conviction for killing Oswald.

The doctors, asked if they were satisfied that Ruby was hospitalized soon enough, paused before responding and Sanford only stated "he was in need of medical attention."

Sanford is a specialist in internal medicine and infectious diseases and Webb is a chest surgeon. Both teach at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.

Condition Improved

The doctors were reluctant to pinpoint Ruby's immediate condition except to say that he was improved over Friday. However, Dr. Webb, who performed the operation to remove the tumor, added that Ruby's condition was

...the long-term was serious and that his hospitalization would be a rather long-term thing.

The doctors said the tumor was found in a lymph node just above the right collarbone. They said the operation was performed under local anesthesia.

The medical specialists said Ruby was suffering some slight discomfort but that when they had left his room he was watching a football game on television. They described his spirits as good.