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Jack Ruby's Illness Cancer, Doctors Say

It's Spreading Through Body

By **BILL McADA**, Staff Writer

Jack Ruby, charged slayer of accused presidential assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, is the victim of spreading cancer.

Surgeons at Parkland Hospital determined a malignant tumor is somewhere inside Ruby's body after examination of a marble-sized lymph node they removed from his neck.

"He is a very sick man," Dr. Jay Sanford, professor of internal medicine at Southwestern Medical School, told a press conference Saturday afternoon. Dr. Sanford heads a team of physicians working on Ruby.

Dr. Watts Webb, a professor of surgery at the school, removed the enlarged node and subjected the tissue to microscopic examination.

The presence of cancerous tissue in the lymph system signals the presence of a malignancy elsewhere in the body, Dr. Sanford said.

"The primary malignancy could be in any number of places," he said.

Ruby may be too ill to face a retrial on the charge of murdering Oswald which has been tentatively scheduled in February in Wichita Falls.

"From our present information," Dr. Sanford said, "I do not expect he will be able to go to court."

Dr. Webb said the treatment for Ruby's illness "is a long-term thing—weeks anyway."

SANFORD SAID extensive testing will be undertaken beginning Monday to "determine the source, type and extent" of the primary malignancy.

Until the primary source of the malignancy is pinned down, Ruby's future remains an unknown factor.

"His chances of recovery de-
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Ruby Diagnosed As Cancer Victim

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pend on the location of the primary site," Dr. Sanford said. He refused to assign any odds to Ruby's survival outlook.

However, Dr. Sanford's discussion of the case could not be characterized as hopeful.

"Discovery of a cancerous tumor in the lymph system is an indication that the cancer cells have spread to some other parts of the body," Dr. Sanford said.

THE NODE removed Saturday "was pretty well replaced by a tumor," Dr. Webb revealed.

"His long-term condition is serious," Dr. Sanford said.

The node was removed during an operation during which a tube was inserted into Ruby's right chest cavity to drain an unusually large amount of accumulated fluid.

It was this accumulation of fluid which originally led physicians to diagnose Ruby's illness as pneumonia. Ruby complained to Sheriff Bill Decker Friday afternoon of tightness in his chest. He was examined by County Health Officer Dr. J. M. Pickard, then transferred from the county jail to Parkland Hospital.

Dr. Webb said a little over four quarts of fluid was drained from Ruby's right chest cavity, an internal chest area between the rib cage and the lungs and other vital organs.

"That was about all the fluid that could have been put into this space," Dr. Webb said. He said late Saturday that the cavity continues to drain well.

It was this fluid which kept physicians from determining whether the primary tumor is located anywhere in the right chest. "We couldn't get a good picture of the lung," Dr. Sanford said.

THE PHYSICIANS said per-

mission to perform the surgery was obtained from Ruby's sister, Mrs. Eva Grant, and his brother, Earl Ruby of Detroit.

Ruby did not appear unduly upset by the prognosis, Dr. Sanford said. "He took the news very well," the doctor said.

Ruby was able to take nourishment shortly after being returned from surgery to his closely guarded room on Park-

land Hospital's seventh floor, doctors said.

"There is a little bit of discomfort at the site of the tube insertion and at the incision at his throat," Dr. Sanford said. "But when we left him he was watching a football game on television."

DR. JOHN W. CALLAHAN, assistant county health officer responsible for treating prisoners in the county jail, said he had been giving Ruby penicillin shots since Monday.

He said that Ruby had complained of coughing and chest pains but that he had not been running a fever.

The physician said he examined Ruby as usual Friday and planned to give him another penicillin shot.

"He said he didn't want a shot and asked for baking soda," Dr. Callahan said. "We planned to give him a shot anyway, but he was taken to the hospital first."

RUBY'S PERSONAL security and the nature of his illness have kept his visitors to a minimum since he was admitted about 5 p.m. Friday.

His sister, Mrs. Grant, visited Ruby in his room Friday evening and told newsmen that her brother "looked terrible—like a corpse."

"For three weeks, he's been deathly sick," she said, "That

guy's dying."
Following another visit late Saturday morning, Mrs. Grant said she "is going to call somebody down from Washington to see what made Jack sick."

ASKED IF SHE were implying that Ruby's illness might have been induced by his prosecutors, Mrs. Grant said she did not know.

"But there is no history of cancer, diabetes or heart trouble in my family," she said. "All of us live to be 90 and then you have to shoot us to kill us."

She carried a paper bag containing a pillow for her brother.

Ruby was given a new lease on life Oct. 5 when the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals ordered a new trial for the convicted killer of Oswald. He was convicted by a Dallas court in

March, 1964, and sentenced to death.

The appeals court ruled that certain inadmissible evidence had been allowed into the trial.

Only this week, prosecutors and defense lawyers met with Judge Louis T. Holland of Wichita Falls to set a definite site for the trial and to pick a date. The higher court had ordered that the new trial must be somewhere other than in Dallas County.



—Staff Photo

Jack Ruby's sister, Eva Grant, talks with newsmen at Parkland Hospital.