

Ruby's Condition Appears Stabilized

Jack Ruby's condition appears to be stabilized, and doctors reported Friday that he is "quite comfortable."

"We'll know more about the course of the disease in two to four weeks," one of the doctors attending Ruby commented. A more accurate judgment of the effectiveness of the drug being used can then be made, he said.

The drug being given the convicted slayer of Lee Harvey Oswald, 5-Fluorouracil, has achieved long-term remission in other, similar cases.

Patients have received as many as 9 to 54 courses of therapy, over a period of years. (The course of therapy varies with the case but it is usually given during a period of several weeks.)

The drug, introduced in 1961, was well-publicized as one of the drugs chosen to treat the then House Speaker Sam Rayburn. Rayburn fell victim to cancer in November, 1961.

The form of cancer which has stricken Ruby is an uncommon one, the doctors — from the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School — point out.

While the primary tumor mass in Ruby may never be

located, the precise cell type has been confirmed with "some evidence" that it began in the air sacs of the lung. However, it's origin may have been in a "distal duct" of the pancreas, which secretes a "juice" vital to digest on.

In either case, Ruby's cancer is an unusual form of its family of cancer, known as adenocarcinoma. Of 100 cases of lung cancer, this type would probably be the cause of five cases, the doctor noted.

The drug's effect is to literally trick the cancer cell.

"The cell doesn't recognize that it is an abnormal nutrient and by incorporating the abnormal nutrient it makes the cell unable to divide normally" and thus head off its multiplication.

No other form of therapy is being given, although doctors have left in his chest the drainage tubes to carry off the fluid that continues to accumulate at a decreased rate, in his right chest cavity.

Much of Ruby's day Friday was spent reading, doctors reported.

The bulletin issued late Friday afternoon by Parkland Hospital through the sheriff's office, was a simple one: "No change in status."