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Promising new leads in diabetes research

Two Canadian research teams have made dramatic breakthroughs in the treatment and cure of diabetes.

At Connaught Laboratories near Toronto, researchers have discovered a possible cure for diabetes in the form of plastic-coated animal cells that do the work of a healthy, insulin-producing pancreas.

And, at University Hospital in London, Ontario, researchers believe that diabetes may be arrested if treated early enough by a powerful experimental drug, cyclosporine, developed for use in organ transplants.

Connaught's success

Diabetic rats injected with the plastic-coated cells are thriving at Connaught Laboratories and scientists say there is every reason to believe their microscopic creations will be just as effective in people. They hope to have them ready for widespread use within four or five years.

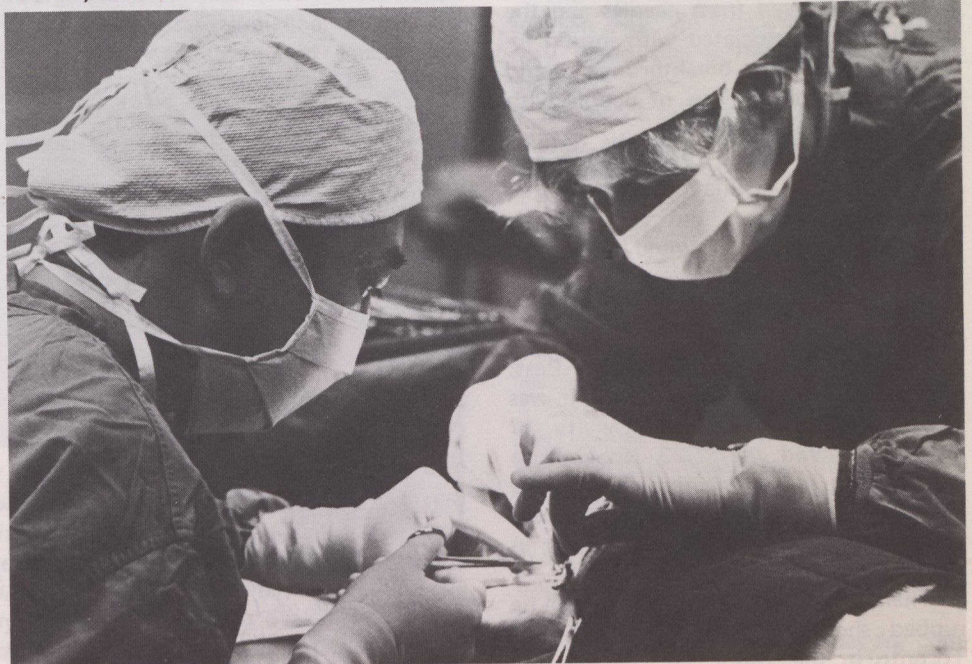
Researchers are also using the coating technique to encase liver, pituitary and kidney cells that could be used to replace failed or ailing organs.

Scientists have long been able to transplant cells, but the receiving patient's natural protection against foreign bodies would destroy them. The coating technique prevents that.

In diabetics, the pancreas stops producing insulin which is needed to regulate blood sugar. Use of the coated cells would be vastly superior to insulin injections. Long-term injections forestall death but do not prevent serious complications, including blindness.

The Connaught Laboratories experiments indicate the cells prevent these complications because whole pancreatic islets — four-cell clusters that produce the various hormones needed to properly regulate blood-sugar levels — are encased.

Research team leader Dr. Anthony Sun says patients thus get all the benefit of the biochemical feats the cells per-



Dr. Anthony Sun (left) of Connaught Laboratories Ltd., at work with technician Helen Van Rooy, is one of the world's leading pioneers in diabetes research.

Connaught Laboratories



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