The Kaposi's Sarcoma Research and Education Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized in response to the outbreak of Kaposi's Sarcoma and Pneumocystis pneumonia in the Gay community. The Foundation is dedicated to conducting or supporting efforts which accomplish the following:

1) **Patient Services:** To help assure that adequate financial resources are available for necessary diagnosis and treatment.

2) **Patient Support:** To help coordinate appropriate referrals or provision of services for emotional and psychological support for Kaposi's and Pneumocystis patients.

3) **Physician and Community Education:** To help practicing physicians recognize the symptoms of these diseases to be able to initiate appropriate therapy or to make appropriate referrals, and to educate the community at large in prevention and detection.

4) **Basic and Clinical Research:** To study the spread of these diseases and to bring new research techniques to bear to investigate the factors which may be contributing to these diseases.

The Foundation works closely with other organizations and agencies in the Bay Area and around the country which are also making contribution to the study and elimination of these diseases and which are also seeking to meet the needs of affected patients.

We need your participation and we need your support.

Marcus A. Conant, M.D.
President
KAPOSI'S SARCOMA
What It Is And How To Recognize It

Kaposi's Sarcoma is a cancer, rare in the United States, which has been recently diagnosed in numbers of Gay men and heterosexual men and women.

The first signs or symptoms of the disease are usually spots or lesions on the skin which may be pink, purple, or blue in color and may resemble bruises. These lesions may appear suddenly and at any place on the body, although they occur more frequently on the feet and legs. The lesions are usually not painful and do not itch. The disease may also affect the intestinal tract and the lymph nodes, and in the latter may cause swelling or tenderness.

Pneumocystis Carinii Pneumonia
What It Is And How To Recognize It

Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia is also a rare disease, sometimes called a "scavenger" because it appears in persons who have been sick from other serious disease or diseases. In some of the recently reported cases among Gay men, however, there is evidence that this pneumonia may be appearing without any other or previous infection.

Signs or symptoms of this pneumonia which may appear include lowgrade, persistent, and unexplained fevers, dry cough, and shortness of breath with exertion.

Warning Signals That One Should Watch For

Most victims of either of these diseases are people who have impaired immune functions.

In such people, ordinarily mild infections may be more severe and long-lasting, and a slight cut which would ordinarily heal quickly may become infected and remain so for longer periods.

Other signs of impaired immunity may include unexplained fevers, sudden and unexplained weight loss, persistent swelling in lymph glands, and susceptibility to many bacteriological and viral infections with which one may come into contact.

Persons who have frequent or persisting yeast or herpes infections, recurrent hepatitis or repeated infections with enteric parasites may also be suffering from immune deficiency.

Preventive Measures You May Take

As with any immune deficient condition, the best preventive measures are those which generally help to keep you healthy: good diet, proper rest, appropriate and adequate physical exercise, and abstention from drugs which may aggravate immune deficiency.

For example, if you are a heavy cigarette smoker and you notice symptoms indicative of immune deficiency, stop smoking. Alcohol and marijuana used excessively may also exacerbate immune deficiency. Hard drugs (including speed, LSD, MDA, PCP, mushrooms, cocaine, etc.) may make immune deficiency worse. Injecting such drugs into your veins increases your risk of getting infections and serious diseases, whether or not you are immune deficient. Poppers may also make the problems of an immune deficient person worse.

If you have reason to suspect that your immunity is weak, see your doctor. You should also avoid sexual contact until you get a clean bill of health and your symptoms disappear, as you are more susceptible to any disease with which you come into contact when your immunity is impaired.

If you notice persistent swollen or tender lymph nodes that cannot be readily and reasonably explained, again you should see your doctor.

Be aware of your body, and check it regularly to see if any of the symptoms mentioned here are appearing. If any disease symptoms persist beyond a period that can normally be expected, see your doctor.

You should see your doctor or one who regularly treats gay related illnesses. Your doctor may be unfamiliar with Kaposi's Pneumocystis, or any of the diseases which may appear concomittantly with them. If so, bring your suspicions to your doctor's attention, and if he or she does not feel competent to evaluate and treat you, seek his or her help in being referred to another doctor. Diagnosis and treatment of these illnesses are very expensive. Keep your health insurance up to date. If you do not have health insurance, you should investigate possible coverage plans. Ask your doctor, or call the Foundation.