

'Super-glue' could save tumor sufferers

By Marilyn Dunlop Toronto Star

A chemical cousin of Crazy Glue, inserted into blood vessels in the brains of patients with a certain kind of tumor, can shrink the tumor, a team of doctors from London, Ont., reported today.

Dr. John Girvin told the Congress of Neurological Surgeons at the Sheraton Centre the tumors consist of a mass of tangled blood vessels in brain tissue. Previously surgery was undertaken to remove them but, he said, for many patients the surgery carries a high

TORONTO STAR, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1982 / A11

risk of extensive bleeding and damage to surrounding brain tissue. Their tumors are in regions of the brain where surgery is difficult.

In those cases, a fast-setting glue is injected into small blood vessels leading to the tumor, he said. The surgeon operates using a microscope to see the tiny blood vessels. The glue hardens, plugging the vessel and shutting off blood supply. The blood vessels die and shrivel.

Girvin, with Doctors Charles

Drake, A. J. Fox, Fernando Vinuela and Sydney Peerless, all of London, and a team from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, also reported that in a number of cases, small plastic tubes are directed through larger blood vessels of the brain through an artery in the neck or the groin, to the tumor.

The glue is injected through the tube closing off the blood supply route and starving the abnormal tissue. In some cases a shrunken

tumor can be safely removed later by surgery. The tumors are called arterio-venous malformations.

A California doctor said 25 such malformations have been seen in children at the University of California, San Francisco neurosurgery unit. The youngest was 5-year-old.

Dr. Neil Martin said in half the children the problem had first shown up as sudden severe headaches and in another quarter the first symptom was a seizure.