



## Gaucher's Disease Awareness Week, 1989

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

Gaucher's disease is the most common of a group of inherited disorders known as lipid storage diseases, in which the body fails to produce a sufficient quantity of an enzyme crucial to the breakdown and removal of fatty substances. These substances, called lipids, are key structural components of living cells. However, their buildup in the body tissues of Gaucher's victims can lead to an enlarged spleen and liver, as well as bone pain and fractures. In rare cases, severe neurological complications may occur.

Gaucher's disease is usually diagnosed during childhood. It most commonly afflicts individuals of Eastern European Jewish descent—one in every 2,500 persons in this group has the disorder. Currently, no cure exists for the more than 20,000 Americans suffering from Gaucher's.

Scientists do know that Gaucher's disease results from a defective recessive gene. Children who inherit a defective gene from each parent develop Gaucher's; those who inherit only one defective gene do not develop the disease, but become carriers and threaten their offspring in turn.

Although a cure remains elusive, remarkable progress has been made in understanding the cause of Gaucher's disease. Investigators at the Federal Government's National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) have discovered the enzyme that is absent in victims of Gaucher's disease. This finding has led the way to the development of diagnostic and carrier tests for the disease. Scientists working in the field of genetics have also gained valuable insight into the nature of Gaucher's disease.

While these advances offer great hope to the victims of Gaucher's disease, much work remains to be done. Cooperating with the NINDS are voluntary health agencies such as the National Gaucher Foundation. These agencies not only conduct valuable research but also provide helpful information and services to Gaucher's patients and their families. This week, as we call attention to this mysterious disease, we also recognize and salute the many dedicated men and women who are working to find a cure for it.

To enhance public awareness of Gaucher's disease, the Congress, by Senate Joint Resolution 73, has designated the week of October 29, 1989, as "Gaucher's Disease Awareness Week" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of that week.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the week beginning October 29, 1989, as Gaucher's Disease Awareness Week and call upon the people of the United States to observe that week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this first day of November, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

*George Bush*