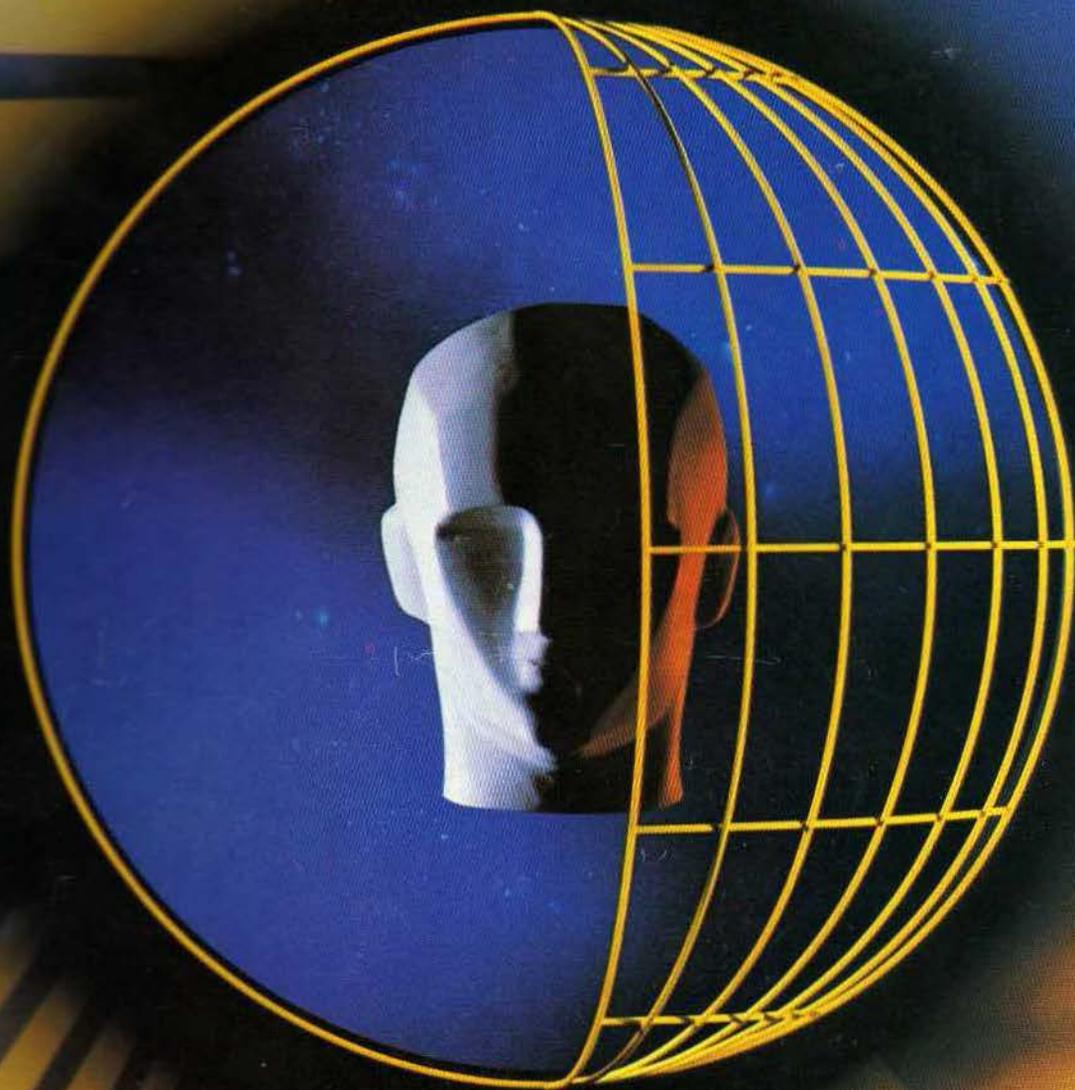


Wired

02484

SEPTEMBER 1984 \$2.50



**BODY TIME: LIVING CLOCKS THAT MAKE US TICK
FASTER-THAN-LIGHT SPACE PHONES
FREEBASING PERUVIAN STYLE
RELICS FROM THE DAWN OF TIME
ALIEN ANIMALS & PSYCHIC POWER FOR HIRE**



•Many of the
drugs used to treat E.T.
were destined
for the cutting-room floor.?

ANTI MATTER

Back in 1982, a cute little creature named E.T., the extraterrestrial, was accidentally marooned on Earth and almost died at the hands of a government medical team. But now a group of physicians is arguing over just where E.T.'s doctors (and director Steven Spielberg's offscreen medical consultants) went wrong.

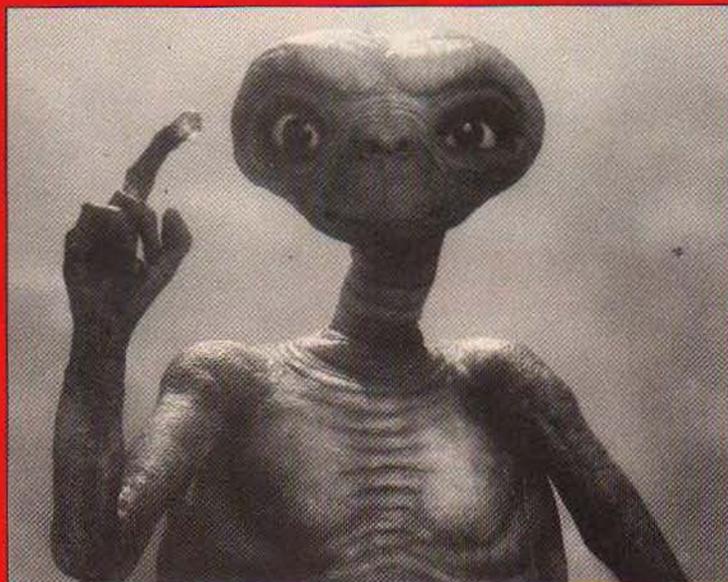
For one thing, the doctors neglected to learn that E.T. had polished off a six-pack of beer, which contains enough alcohol to induce severe hypoglycemia in a creature so small. Thus, say physicians Jonathan Wasser-

berger and Gary Ordog, of the Charles R. Drew School of Medicine, in Los Angeles, the medical team never administered glucose to correct what was most probably a waning blood-sugar level.

Even more serious is a charge from Dr. Richard S. Weisman, director of the New York City Poison Control Center. E.T.'s constricted pupils and bluish skin were early signs of cyanosis, or oxygen deprivation, Weisman notes, and should have alerted the extraterrestrial's physicians to the likelihood of a narcotic overdose.

E.T. was no junkie, of course. But all mammals produce morphinelike chemicals called endorphins, and E.T.'s body may have overproduced these natural opiates to compensate for the psychological trauma of being abandoned far from his home. The proper treatment, he adds, would be a narcotic antagonist like naloxone to block the action of the internally generated drug.

The doctors in Spielberg's film, on the other hand, ad-



UFO UPDATE

ministered only cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the standard treatment for heart attack. The technique does *not* include administration of glucose or naloxone. But Spielberg's chief adviser, Alexander R. Lampone, director of the emergency department at St. John's Hospital, in Santa Monica, California, did muster a defense. "E.T. received every drug known to our specialty in our resuscitation attempt," including glucose and naloxone, he wrote in a recent issue of the well-respected *Annals of Emergency Medicine*. "Unfortunately, many of the drugs used, the correct dosages administered, and the procedures performed on E.T. were destined for the cutting-room floor."

Lampone also admits some uncertainty. "Please understand that we had no idea as to how our pharmacological agents would interact with E.T.'s photosynthesizing enzymes," he says. "And one look at his telescoping neck only confirmed our fears that inserting an esophageal tube would be difficult, to say the least."

Despite the complexities, Weisman concludes, extraterrestrial patients resembling Earthlings can probably be given many current drugs without too much of a risk. If the alien is a truly unfamiliar life form, however, "we would try to follow basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation guidelines until new data were collected. But if the creature were in imminent danger, we'd have to treat it with drugs and techniques similar to those used on Earth beings and hope for the best."—ROBERT A. FREITAS, JR.