

The Office of the Inspector General (OIG), Department of Defense (DoD) announced today that on July 18, 2001, in U.S. District Court, Boston, MA, Dr. Joseph S. Olstein of Lewiston, ME, entered a guilty plea to charges he conspired to defraud Federal health care programs by violating the Prescription Drug Marketing Act.

The Government charged that Olstein was involved in a scheme whereby he accepted free samples of the drug Lupron from the manufacturer, TAP Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Olstein then illegally billed Federal health care programs such as Medicare and TRICARE for the drug. Unlike most drugs prescribed by physicians, due to its status as a cancer treatment, Lupron is purchased by physicians, injected into the patient during an office visit, and then billed by the physician to third parties such as Medicare and TRICARE.

Olstein will be sentenced on October 16, 2001. He faces a maximum penalty of 5 years in jail and a \$250,000 fine.

Olstein is the fourth physician to be charged in the investigation to date. Additional indictments are expected in the near future.