



Student Health Center encourages students to have safer sex

by Tamia L. Dow

Many activities can affect the health and well being of the body. Having sexual intercourse is one of these.

Choosing to have sexual intercourse should be immediately followed by taking measures to reduce the risk of unwanted pregnancy, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).

UNLV has a high-risk population because many students choose to have sexual intercourse with more than one partner.

"A lot of students are

experimenting with sex for the first time in their lives," said Ray Rodriguez, health educator. "We understand that."

Rodriguez added that experimenting is fine as long as students are careful and take the proper precautions to cut down on risks.

The Student Health Center has developed a safer sex education program in hopes of better educating and protecting sexually active students.

"When we talk about safer sex we have to deal with the understanding that the only thing that is truly safe is abstinence," Rodriguez said. "Since we

understand this is unrealistic for many people, we say safer sex to imply there is still a risk."

"Although we see 40 to 60 students a day, I feel the education end is more important. We take the time to explain the pros, cons and use to the student, in hopes that through education many problems related to sexual activity will be prevented," said Lori Winchell, director of the Student Health Center.

The program is a pre-pap seminar which all women are required to attend before receiving contraceptives. It begins with educational counseling,

conducted by staff R.N.'s, about available birth control, proper use and safer sex.

Another appointment is then scheduled for a pap smear and routine physical. The examination determines if the student is healthy, pregnant or currently has an STD (which must be treated prior to prescription of birth control).

The American College Association recommends that any person starting a new monogamous sexual relationship use condoms for a minimum of six months and be tested for the AIDS virus. If both partners test negative they may stop using condoms. It can take

anywhere between six weeks to six months in 98 percent of those infected to test positive

Rodriguez said many students don't realize the importance of using condoms in every new sexual relationship. Choosing to have a monogamous sexual relationship today does not erase previous sexual relationships.

"We have the serial monogamy going on," he said.

The center also performs urine and serum (blood) pregnancy tests. The urine test can indicate pregnancy after one missed period. The serum test can

determine 10 days after intercourse if the student is pregnant. Pregnant students are referred to community counseling. Free student counseling is also available at the Student Development Center located on the second floor of the James R. Dickinson Library.

The Clark County Health District offers testing for STDs and AIDS at the Student Health Center on the last Wednesday of each month. These tests are free and anonymous.

Safe sex kits, which include condoms, are available free of charge at the Student Health Center.

Fainting goats may aid research of muscle disease

(CPS)—It sounds odd but Tennessee fainting goats one day may provide crucial information about muscle disease in humans.

Just what are fainting goats and why would university researchers want to study them?

Although myth has it that they faint, the goats really just fall over. Their muscles freeze, causing the ungraceful ones to hit the ground sideways. The rest just stand rigid for a few seconds.

According to Tennessee folklore, fainting goats were discovered when a farmer went out to shoot a goat for his dinner and the rest of the herd fell over too.

Scientists are a bit more skeptical. They've been trying to figure out the real cause of the goats' muscle defect—called myotonia—for more than 30 years.

Primarily as a result of inbreeding, the goats developed a condition that causes delayed relaxation of muscles. The same condition exists in humans in various forms. The ailment most closely related to myotonia is Thomsen's Disease.

Scientist Shirley Bryant of the University of Cincinnati said myotonia is sometimes linked to muscular dystrophy because some myotonic muscles also show signs of dystrophy or weakness.

An example of myotonia (without dystrophy) in humans is shaking someone's hand and not being able to relax your grip for about 20 seconds.

Bryant has studied myotonia in humans and in the goats since 1957. In his years of research he has found that the myotonia in the goats is caused by an inability of the muscle fibers membrane to absorb chloride.

This lack of chloride causes the muscle to become extremely sensitive to electrical charges. Overstimu-

lation leads to repeated firing by the muscle.

So, Bryant said, the fainting goats fall over because a sudden stimuli, like

a loud noise, causes the muscles to receive a charge, but that the charge contin-

see GOATS page 8

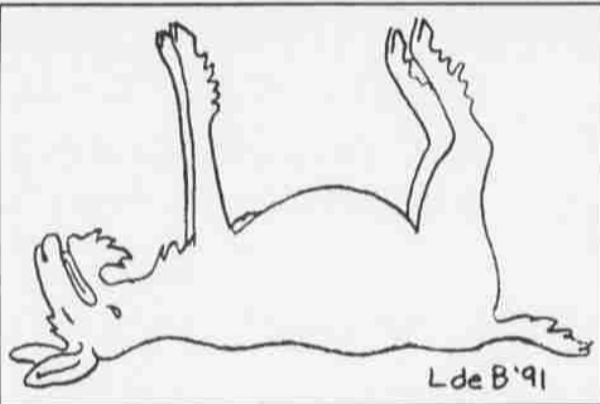


Illustration by Leslie deBeauchamp



Photo by Bonar Tucker

Brett Dyke, junior, gives blood with a grin at the United Blood Services blood drive in memory of Richard Johnson. Beatriz Camacho, sophomore, smiles as she rests after giving blood.

The Student Health Center offers the following kits, free of charge, to students:

Cold Kit: Includes tablets. Also included is a Guaiac DM, a cough fact sheet detailing recovery tips, symptoms and which is like a generic when to contact the doctor. **Robitussin, decongestant tablets and non-aspirin tablets.** Also included is a fact sheet explaining treatment do's and don't's, medication tips, prevention, symptoms and when to contact the doctor.

PMS Cramps Kit: Includes approximately 10 individual ibuprofen packets and a fact sheet which explains what premenstrual syndrome is and how to alleviate symptoms.

Flu Kit: Includes a bottle of Kaopectate and non-aspirin pain reliever

Safer Sex Kit: offers condoms and information on safer sex.



Photo by Bonar Tucker