



ACCEPTANCE

from page 9

reasons and I think it's right for me. It's a personal, intimate decision. AIDS certainly gets you thinking about it too."

Dating takes on a different flavor when a student is abstinent. The students interviewed said they avoid situations where they will be pressured or tempted. Whether it was too much wine for dinner, or a long back rub, these students then seek other activities within their

"safety zone."

"When I'm on a date, I think about what my goal is: I'm saving myself for marriage," said Dan Nelson. Dan had made the decision long before high school and he has met with a positive response to his decision, both in high school and since coming to UNLV. He said that AIDS has confirmed that his decision is the right one.

A female dorm resident said, "I can get close to somebody with my words, rather

than my body. Some people use sex as an excuse not to really get to know someone."

Abstinence from sexual intercourse is 100 percent effective in preventing sexually transmitted diseases, the HIV antibody and unwanted pregnancies. Contact Ray Rodriguez at the Student Health Center, 739-3370, for more information on abstinence and Outercourse, an alternative to intercourse.

SAFER SEX WEEK

from page 9

condoms, abstinence, monogamy and communication," said Rodriguez.

With the normal latex condom, a woman is exposed to diseases such as herpes and genital warts and may contract them without knowing. This can lead to serious health problems for women who do not get tested regularly for sexually transmitted diseases (STD's).

While condoms have an effective rate of 90 to 98 percent for birth control, they must be used properly to be that effective.

"Many people do not use a condom correctly," said Rodriguez, "and the correct way is to lubricate the head of the penis and then lubricate the outside of the condom" so that there is less chance of breakage.

Abstinence is constantly misconstrued as absolutely no sex, however it actually means no vaginal, penile intercourse.

"Some people say 'Isn't that all there is?', and if that is what they think then they are missing a lot," said Rodriguez.

Rodriguez teaches a course, Outercourse, which delves deeply into the many forms of sexual expression. The course "is not tame, it is extremely fun" and explores the alternatives to intercourse.

Those who practice abstinence believe their body and sexuality is "something special and refuse to just give up" for trivial reasons.

"Monogamy is a self defined term. Some students come in and say 'Yeah, I'm in a monogamous relationship today and I will be in another monogamous relationship tomorrow,'" said Rodriguez. However, the stu-

dent health center defines it as having one partner, "from now on, period."

Finally, communication is the key to every good relationship. Asks Rodriguez, "How can you get in bed and not know about the other person? We know it happens, we see the results of it in (student health center)."

The first step is to start talking, "better sex comes from communicating" and the second step is that "you've got to be honest. Once you start building up trust, a lot of good things start to happen," said Rodriguez.

"We know way too well what is going on out there," said Rodriguez, and the student health center is there for consultation, testing, and any questions that students may need to ask.

Contraception doesn't have to be a gamble

by Karen Splawn

The big news in contraception is the female condom, which has yet to make its way to the United States. But American students have many other options when it comes to birth control.

Condoms are one of the first choices for sexual contraception. The average condom is made of latex (plastic) which is the most reliable for protection. Lambskin is another alternative, however, it is made of animal membrane and is therefore porous. This makes the chances of the user being exposed to the HIV antibody if it is present. Although they are considered the best protection against sexually transmitted diseases (STD's), according to the American College Health Association (ACHA), condoms are less than 90 percent effective in preventing pregnancy.

If a spermicide is used along with the condom, pregnancy prevention rises to 99 percent. On the downside, some men complain that condoms decrease sensitivity during intercourse, while others may be allergic to latex or spermicides. Recent testing of certain brands showed some leaked more than others. If used improperly, a condom is ineffective and may break.

Contraceptive sponges, containing the spermicide nonoxynol-9 have been popular since the mid-'80s. By inserting the oval sponge to fit over the cervix, it blocks and kills sperm.

The sponge is moistened before being put into the vagina up to 24 hours before sexual activity. Currently, the Student Health Center offers 20 sponges for \$1.

Sponges are 80 percent effective, but when used with a condom, the effectiveness rate is 99 percent. More importantly, they provide some protection against STD's. Like condoms, however, they can cause allergic reactions in some women.

An older form of contraception that's similar to the sponge is the diaphragm and cervical cap. The two are flexible rubber barriers used with a spermicide and work like the sponge. The diaphragm, unlike the sponge, can be left in for a longer period of time. The method is about 80 percent effective, according to the ACHA.

Diaphragms and caps offer protection against STD's. A woman must see a gynecologist for an examination to see if she's compatible, and come back for refittings. Neither the diaphragm or the cap are easy to master, so a backup birth control method is needed until a woman is experienced enough with them.

Both can be dislodged, and may cause allergic reactions or abnormal pap smears. A woman who has menstruated, had abnormal discharge, given birth, had an abortion or miscarried can't use either one for a certain period of time

see **CONTRACEPTION** page 11



photo by Kimberley McGee

Catch the Rebel spirit, not a STD.

Customized condoms come to campus

by Tricia Ciaravino

Condoms in school colors are the latest trend on the prophylactic market.

Keith Greenburg, based in San Diego is marketing condoms which will have packages in the colors of colleges across the United States.

"It's going to be a matchbook," Greenburg said. "Instead of matches inside, it's a con-

dom. The matchbooks will be in the color of the school."

Slogans will be printed on the matchbooks which relate to that particular school. UNLV's customized condoms will feature the logo "Condoms for the up and coming."

Greenburg said the condoms, which he plans to have students sell, will cost about \$1.

Free Condoms Available

Condoms are available at the Student Health Center free of charge. And during Safer Sex Week (Monday - Friday) they will be available on the first floor of the MSU.