

University Health Center Health Education Program



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Fall 2002

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O UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Let's Talk About Sex...

By Sariantra Kali

Baby. Let's talk about you and me. Let's talk about all the good things and the bad things that may be. Let's talk about sex. Ahhhh, and so the song goes. It's in the ads, it's in the movies, it's talked about all the time but what exactly is good sex?

Communication is definitely a key to unlocking the hot 'n heavy. Sure we all see those gorgeous hard bodies fall into bed night after night from the power of one sexy stare. What TV doesn't often show us, however, is realistic communication or the consequences of these behaviors. There are currently non-profit research groups working with daytime and primetime television executives to create stories that are a little more reality based. But until then you'll be wise to do your fact finding elsewhere.

The American Social Health Association reports 2/3 of all Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) occur in people under 25 years of age (www.ashastd.org) so it is important to learn actions you can take right now to keep you and your partner healthy. Let's take a look at some common sexual health misconceptions. After that...well, your fantasy life is up to you!

To obtain some accurate information I went to a veteran in the field. The UO Health Center's own Jolene Siemsen has been in nursing for 23 years and a Nurse Practitioner for 10. She has counseled patients about contraception, STIs, and has conducted presentations on lesbian health. Here she answers some of the most common question about sexual health.

Q: A friend told me to double up on condoms for extra protection. Is that the best way to increase safety?

Jolene: No, they are not meant to be used on top of one another. This increases the likelihood of breakage. It is better to limit your sexual partners and know your partner's history. The two most important things are to use condoms all the time and have those discussions of sexual history. Of course, it is easier to say and much harder to do.

Q: What is the most common STI among college students?

Jolene: Herpes and HPV (Human Papilloma Virus - genital warts) are the most commonly diagnosed (by exam and culture). There are occasional Chlamydia cases. Rarely do we see Gonorrhea or HIV here although recent Lance County Public Health information indicates increasing gonorrhea and syphilis among men who have sex with men.

Q: My doctor gave me a clean bill of health but my partner contracted an STI. How is that possible?

Jolene: A lot of people have this misconception. It is difficult to tell if someone has an STI because of asymptomatic infection and transmission. Specifically, Herpes (HSV) and warts do not have good screening tests. Approximately 20-30% of genital HSV are HSV 1 and are often caused by oral genital contact.

Q: My partner has cold sores from time to time, do I have to be concerned?

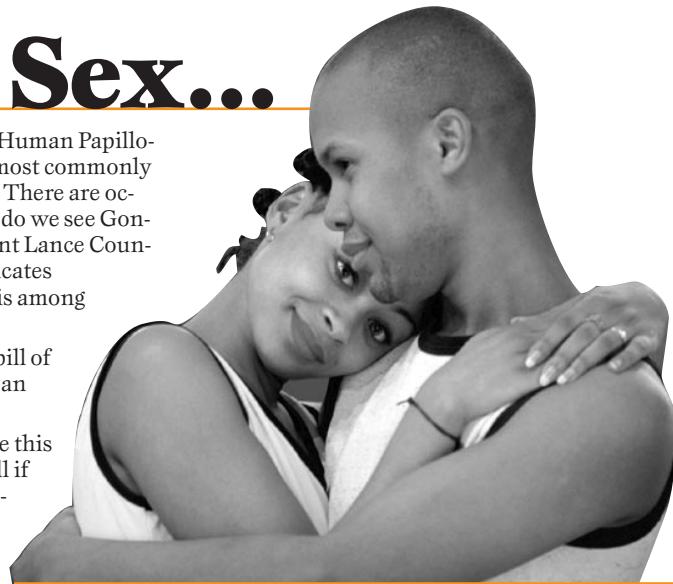
Jolene: Yes, unfortunately. More people are aware of the risk these days but some people still do not realize Herpes can be passed by oral to genital contact. It is important to avoid oral sex and kissing during a cold sore outbreak. Also, taking an antiviral medication like acyclovir and using barrier protection (i.e. condoms and dental dams), reduces the risk of viral shedding.

Q: Any last words of wisdom?

Jolene: It is important for people to come in with their partner and talk about these things with a health care provider. Everybody has a life story that effects his or her situation. You just can't generalize. Another important thing to keep in mind is that alcohol and other drug use has a negative relationship in terms of risky sexual behavior.

Other Resources

The University of Oregon Health Center is an excellent resource. As a student, you can receive services for \$6 per visit. Currently a federal grant program, FPEP, allows you to receive free contra-



“ A friend told me to double up on condoms for extra protection. Is that the best way to increase safety? ”

ceptive counseling and supplies as well as STI testing. This is a great deal! Many Health Center staff focus on sexual and reproductive health and several have worked on gay and lesbian issues. Jolene Semsen, Colleen Jones, and Benjamin Douglas are available for general and sexual health appointments.

There are also a number of websites, which offer clear and current information on these topics. While you are surfing the net check out the Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov) and The National Herpes Association (www.herpes.org)

If you favor old fashioned book learning check out the Physician's Reference Book at the Health Education Office along with other books sporting inspiring titles such as: "How to get your Partner to Wear a Condom", "Heterosexuality", "Lesbian Passion", "An Intimate Geography" and "And the Band Played On". Come stop by for free dental dams, condoms, and check out all we have to offer. The office is located by Area B on the first floor of the Health Center.

a Book Review

Woman: An Intimate Geography

by Jessica Hougen

Natalie Angier's book *Woman: An Intimate Geography* is a beautifully written biology lesson. The subject of this lesson is the female body. A wonderfully challenging book, Angier discusses topics ranging from breast milk to hormone replacement therapy, anatomy to anthropology. If you, like me, are not so experienced with science, this proclamation might make you run screaming from this book. However, Angier is a Pulitzer Prize winning science author, yet she writes with such poetic flair that you hardly notice that you are reading about chromosomes, hormones, and synapses. Angier uses this book as a basis to speculate on a number of subjects, all having to do with the female body. Through this speculation, she tears down ideas from old stereotypes and myths of women, and simply bowls over a lot of questionable science.

The range of topics in this book is astounding. Some of her chapter headings include Unscrambling the Egg: It Begins With One Perfect Solar Cell, The Well-Tempered Clavier: On the Evolution of the Clitoris, Holy Water: Breast Milk, and Wolf Whistles & Hyena Smiles: Testosterone and Women. As you can imagine, this barrage of information can be a little overwhelming, but the book is organized so that one could read a chapter, then not pick it up for months, then read another chapter.

Angier's style also makes this book so accessible. She writes as if conversing with the reader, and throws in a lot of humor. She writes from a thoroughly feminist point of view, without crossing the line into complaining or male-bashing. As you read this book, you can all but hear her discussing these topics

with friends, laughing over their opinions, and the opinions of so-called "experts."

The book describes female biology almost independent of male biology. As opposed to the standard texts that up-hold the male biology as the norm, or the example to which female biology should be measured, she treats female as a separate entity from that of males.

In short, Natalie Angier has written a fabulous book on the hows and whys of the female body. In a time when our society seems to worship girls with eating disorders, it is refreshing to finally read a book that explains why women get fat deposits how we do, what it means to have large breasts, and includes the reasons why these things are good. She is calling for an all-out celebration and acceptance of the female form in all of its shapes and sizes,

and I say she has arrived just in the nick of time. Angier herself calls her book "...a celebration of the female body-it's anatomy, it's chemistry, it's evolution, and it's laughter...it is a book about rapture, a rapture firmly grounded in the flesh, the beauties of the body." This is a great description of what will be a staple on my bookshelf from now on. This is the sort of book that, once read, should be shared with friends and relatives with abandon. This would be the perfect gift for any girl or woman, from pre-pubertal to post-menopausal. For everyone wanting to learn more about the female body, I highly recommend this book. It is available to check out in the resource room at the Health Center, along with many other great books.

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Feel better. Learn how breathing more effectively can increase your overall well-being.

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Are you interested in becoming a nurse. Health Center professionals answer questions about nursing.

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Learn how to diagnose and cope with anxiety.

Clip & Save

O UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Hours:

Mon., and Wed.-Fri.: 8am to 6pm
Tuesday: 9am to 6pm,
Saturday & Sunday: 10am to 2pm

Phone:

Appointments: 346-2770
Dental: 346-4432
Pharmacy: 346-4454
Physical Therapy: 346-4401
Insurance: 346-3702
Urgent Care: 346-2770
Peer Health Education: 346-4456
General: 346-4441

On-line:

<http://healthcenter.uoregon.edu>

Factoids

✓ Marijuana smoke contains as much or more of the cancer-causing chemicals found in tobacco smoke.
—Oregon Prevention and Treatment Resource Clearinghouse

✓ Flu season is November to April. Flu shots are available to UO students at the Health Center starting today, October 14th, for \$6.

✓ The best way to ease uncomfartability due to nursing is to nurse more frequently.

✓ Allergy shots have been shown to reduce a person's asthma symptoms and reduce the need for asthma medications.
—WebMD.org

✓ Allergy shots are not as effective against allergies to molds, and they are not recommended to treat food allergies.
—WebMD.org

✓ 31 % of men and 35 % of women in the United States are obese.
—Merck Manual, 2002

✓ By 2002, 10 % of the US population will have diabetes.
—Diabetes Forecast, May 2002

✓ 40 % of people with social anxiety never get married
www.pslgroup.com/dg.fcl22.htm

✓ College students spend \$5.5 billion on alcohol each year, more than they spend on soft drinks, tea, milk, juice, coffee, or books combined.

✓ Women who have 2-5 drinks daily have a 1.5 times greater chance of getting breast cancer than women who don't drink.

✓ "Breastfeeding has some contraceptive effect, but only in the first three to four months—even then, it isn't 100 percent effective. Don't assume that because you're breastfeeding you can engage in intercourse without contraceptives—unless you want to be breastfeeding again in nine months."

—Dr. Susan Love's Breast Book, Dr. Susan Love

✓ UO Students who have type I or II diabetes can consult with diabetes nurse Mary Jean Jacobson for advice on self care and medication. Call 346-2735 to schedule.

✓ 26 studies found that smoking cigarettes increases stress levels, even though most smokers claim that cigarettes help them cope with stress.

—Health Magazine, October 2002

Pregnancy

and the University Health Center



By Carrie Zogoros

Gabriela is a student on campus who is studying anthropology. She is also sexually active with her boyfriend of two years. This latter point is presently a concern to her since she should have started her menstrual period one week ago. She admits that she and her partner have been a bit careless lately and she could possibly be pregnant. She is very much in love and envisions having children some day, but is unprepared to be pregnant at this time in her life. Gabi is unsure of where to begin, who to turn to, and whether she should first consult a physician or use an over the counter pregnancy test. She is stressed out, cannot concentrate in class or at work. She feels tense when around her boyfriend. Gabi knows she needs to take action soon or she will drive herself crazy with the uncertainty.

Although fictitious, this is a situation that many heterosexually active women on this campus have either experienced, knows a friend who has, or can at least imagine themselves in.

First things first. Gabi would benefit from taking a deep breath because her fears may certainly be a false alarm. After a few relaxing breaths, she can begin to take action. A good place to start is an over-the-counter home pregnancy test. This is a urine test that detects human chorionic gonadotrophin hormone (hcG) present in a woman's urine. If this test is administered one week following a missed menstrual period, it is about 99 % accurate and reliable. The Health Center Pharmacy offers an at-home test called Quick Check Plus and it is sold without prescription for five dollars.

If the home test gives a positive result, a sensible next step would be to set up an appointment at the Health Center with a medical practitioner. Keep in mind the practitioner will ask the date of the last menstrual

period and date of unprotected sex. The practitioner would administer a urine test and give counseling and education regarding pregnancy. For example, because the Health Center offers no prenatal care, Gabi would be given references of local physicians, nurse practitioners and nurse midwives who provide pre-natal and obstetric care as well as pregnancy termination clinics in both the Eugene/Springfield area and Portland. The Health Center provides no recommendation regarding pregnancy termination, merely offers options to the pregnant woman so she can make an educated and thoughtful decision about her future as a possible mother.

For those who want children in the future, not now, and are heterosexually active there are many ways to prevent finding ourselves in the same situation as our fictional student, Gabi. Good news for most students is that many qualify for free contraceptive services at the Health Center, through the Family Planning Expansion Project (FPEP). If Gabi qualifies for this plan, she could receive the pregnancy test for free.

Through the FPEP grant, eligible men and women may receive birth control free of charge such as;

- Oral contraceptives
- Depo Provera
- Emergency contraception (Plan B)
- Cervical cap
- IUD
- Female condoms
- Vaginal spermicides
- Lunelle
- Condoms
- Ortho-Evra
- Diaphragm

For more information about whether you qualify for FPEP or to schedule an appointment at the Health Center, call 346-2770.

Through the FPEP grant, eligible men and women may receive birth control free of charge such as:

- Oral contraceptives • Emergency contraception (Plan B) • Cervical cap • IUD • Female condoms • Vaginal spermicides • Ortho-Evra • Lunelle • Condoms • Depo Provera

Ephedra *Considering the risks*

By Katie Collins

A few months ago, I began experiencing some health problems. The symptoms were fairly mild; it began with trouble sleeping and a vague feeling of anxiety.

Chalking it up to being a busy college student, I wasn't too worried. When it progressed into fits resembling panic attacks with my heart always pounding, I finally decided to go to the University Health Center and see a physician. I learned I had brought it upon myself.

About a month before my visit I began taking MiniThins, an over the counter drug to help me concentrate and stay awake to study. They also decreased my appetite, so if I also lost a couple of pounds that was fine with me. I knew they contained caffeine, but I knew little about the other main ingredient—ephedrine—which turned out to be the cause of all my problems.

Ephedrine, the active ingredient of the ephedra plant, is very widely used for weight loss, as an energy booster, and to supposedly enhance athletic performance. It's found in many common dietary supplements, such as Easy Trim, Metabolife, Metabolite, and Ripped Fuel. Like myself, many people taking these pills have no idea of the harm they may be causing themselves. Similar to am-

phetamines, ephedrine targets the central nervous system and heart, leading to a wide range of physical side effects- some mild, some deadly. The most common are elevated blood pressure, rapid heart rate, anxiety, and insomnia, but more serious effects include: nerve and muscle damage, memory loss, strokes, and heart attacks.

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If you are taking these supplements, the FDA has published guidelines for their use. They suggest the intake of no more than 24mg of ephedrine per day, in 8 mg increments every six hours, and to

discontinue use after no more than one week. It is also recommended to consult a physician, as pre-existing conditions, such as high blood pressure, heart disease or pregnancy can greatly increase one's risks. I would suggest asking yourself if dropping a few pounds, studying for a couple more hours, or having a great workout is really worth risking your life.

For more information, make an appointment with a practitioner at the University Health Center (345-2770) or drop by the Peer Health Education Office for more information on supplements, energy and fatigue, sensible weight loss, and stress-management.



Got Stress?

Dealing with the stressors in your life

By Rebecca Wagner

As we take this voyage, also known as college, there are bound to be small bumps in the road. As if school weren't bad enough, these day-to-day hassles can build up over time and leave us feeling overwhelmed and exhausted. This is where I step in to provide you with some encouragement about handling stress. As a co-student and Peer Health Educator, if anyone knows stress, it's me!

The nature of stress isn't always an unhealthy one. What makes stress become unhealthy is when people do not cope or deal with stressful occurrences, which then continue to compile over time. Stress is an ingrained human reaction to different stressors that life throws at us. Some deal skillfully; others don't. Two people can experience the same stressors like a bad grade, an unexpected car repair, or money issues. Some react as if there is no problem, while others think their world is going to end. Dealing with stressors head on is the key ingredient to not letting stress get to you.

When people continue to let stress build up it can cause many adverse reactions in the body. These reactions can be mental, physical, or emotional, and after time can literally wear out the body's immune system. The relationship between stress and disease is not a new concept to the medical profession. When stress hormones are released they are responsible for many reactions in the body like, elevated blood pressure, which has been linked to coronary heart disease. Stress is also connected with the immune system and being able to fight off infection. In addition, stress can also affect school performance, sleeping habits, eating and digestion, daily energy, and overall mood. When it comes to the connection between health and stress, we would do well to pay close attention to the wear and tear we place on our bodies.

“...stress can also affect school performance, sleeping habits, eating and digestion, daily energy, and overall mood.”



There are four key strategies I can recommend.

1. Identify and recognize the things that stress you out the most.
2. Understand what's most important in your life and keep them in perspective.
3. Make a behavior change. Write out a list of changes you're willing to make and take a step toward correcting one practice.
4. Use creative problem solving skills to stick to a final goal.

You can focus privately on all 4 steps or talk them through with a close friend. Although these four steps might help to reduce stress, you may also want to also try a creative outlet. This can be anything from a personal hobby, running, yoga, meditation, or journal writing. The options are endless. Finding an outlet can drastically decrease your stress level and help to get you focused on other areas of life.

If you constantly find yourself stressed check out some of the UO resources available to enrolled students.

- **Student Recreation Center**- offers recreational sports, aerobic classes, and other special interest activities, (346-4183)
- **University Counseling Center**- located on the top floor of the Health Center, by appointment or walk in, offers free support and counseling programs (346-3227).
- **University Health Center**- offers medical examinations and treatments, Peer Health Education, Therapeutic Touch and massage (346-4441).

Stress happens. We simply need to determine our own unique strategy of how to manage it. Our stress can be helpful indicators of how we want to live our lives.

Breathing

By Sarah Parrish

“Breathing may be considered the most important of all the functions of the body, for, indeed, all the other functions depend upon it.”

—Ramacharaka:
Hindu-Yogi Science of Breath

Ramacharaka certainly knew what he was talking about. Have you ever considered how important breathing is? Breathing affects everything from our mood, to thinking ability, to heart rate, down to even posture. Conditions that compromise breathing - pneumonia, emphysema, colds, allergies- have a tremendous impact on our quality of life. Those who meditate often use breathing exercises as a way of focusing their attention. Breathing plays a great role in Tai Chi, Yoga, singing and all manner of activity. Breath is considered by many to be our primary life force. We can all agree that it at least brings needed oxygen to the brain. The art of breathing properly is one of the most overlooked aspects of optimal health.

Dr. Andrew Weil, author of the books Spontaneous Healing, and Natural Health, Natural Medicine, stresses the importance of breathing clean air. He describes how breathing does more for a person than just expand lungs and add oxygen to the blood.

Try this simple exercise:

- Stand in a well-ventilated area with your feet hip-width apart and parallel.
- Raise your arms in front of you in a circle stretching up as far as you can reach while triggering your yawning reflex.
- Repeat 5 times.
- Switch the direction of your arms and repeat again 5 times.

This is a simple breathing exercise that is designed to leave you feeling more energetic.

Andrew Weil's books are available for free two week loan from the Peer Health Education Office in the University Health Center. Check them out for other ideas on improving this essential aspect of your daily living.

Discovering the World of Yoga



By Cass Skinner

As a single mother of three young children, going back to school full time and trying to juggle all of our crazy schedules, I realized that I needed an hour just for me or I would end up in a padded room. It also happened that I needed that one little credit hour to bump me up to full time status. So, I looked into Physical Education courses offered at the Student Recreation Center and nailed down two possibilities that fit within my class schedule: Step Aero-

bics or Hatha Yoga. Now, as you may imagine, my everyday life is not without its share of aerobic activity: just getting the kids woken up, fed, dressed and into the car is a two hour process every morning, so the idea of doing more running in place was not too appealing. Hatha Yoga became the default choice and I am ever grateful that it did.

Little did I realize at the time, however, that I would end up in a padded room anyway. The Mat Room used for this class had padded walls and a padded floor to make Yoga, meditating, or stretching much more comfortable. As I

walked into the room for the first time, with soft music playing and the lights out, I felt as though I had entered my personal stress-free haven. Donna O'Neil, the instructor for my class, indicated that quiet introspection and a darkened room were ideal to appreciate the benefits of Yoga fully. One of the dictates she had for the class was that all superficial chatter be left at the door (along with your shoes and socks) so that you could rely on peacefulness and serenity in the room. I listened, paid attention, and learned how to breathe.

Even after just one class, I could really tell the difference between how flexible I was, how I handled stress, and how I felt about myself in general. The overall sense of peace and tranquility that I got by just slowing down and breathing was amazing. Consider that it is done without drug consumption, without exercising like mad, and with virtually no equipment. I knew then and there that Yoga would be a lifetime practice of mine.

I asked Donna about long-term benefits she has experienced from her practice of Yoga. She began the discipline in the 1970's and has been teaching Hatha Yoga since 1995. Along with an overall sense of peace, she has found Yoga to help with “pain management, balance, posture, [and] strengthening” and it has also given her “general vitality to face the day”.

If you are among the many whose schedules are already packed to the breaking point and are not able to take a Yoga class, Donna suggested checking out beginning Yoga videos or other forms of media from the library. The Peer Health Education Office in the Health Center also has Yoga books available to you for check out. I strongly urge you to consider signing up for a class, even if you think you don't have time for it. Depending on the school term, there are between ten and thirty-six Mind and Body (PEMB) classes offered by Physical Activity & Recreation Services, so you should be able to find one that would fit within your schedule. When it comes time to register, do so quickly, as they are among the most popular of PE classes and fill up quickly. You will only have yourself (and me) to thank later on. Now, if you don't mind, I need to get to my padded room and BREATHE.

Health Education offerings

Boiling Water 101: An Introduction to Cooking

Wednesdays 4:00-5:30 P.M.
Oct 30th - Nov 13th
University Health Center, Cafeteria
Call 346-2794 to sign up.

Learn basic skills to prepare quick, nutritious & delicious meals! If you feel you have no time, money or creativity, then this is the workshop for you. Class is limited to seven students. Cost is \$15.

Quit Kit

Quitting tobacco is the healthiest move you can make! Pick up a "quit kit" from a Health Center practitioner or from the Health Ed Office.

Smoking Cessation Workshop

Tuesday, Nov. 4
4:00 - 5:30 P.M.
University Health Center Medical Library
Gather information & resources to help you quit for good. Aids such as the patch, zyband, gum and behavior strategies will be discussed.

Best Dressed Breast

A Breast Cancer Awareness Fashion Show
Mon. Oct 28
7pm EMU Ballroom

CPR Certification

Tuesdays, Oct. 22, Nov. 5
5:00 - 9:00 P.M.
Health Center Cafeteria
American Heart Association Course.
Register at 346-2770.

Free Cholesterol Screening

Every Tuesday 9:30 - 11:30 A.M.
UO Health Center, Health Education Office
Simply drop by, no appointment necessary! To register for or to learn more about these workshops, check out the University Health Center's Web site at <http://healthed.uoregon.edu>. You can also call 346-4456 or stop by the Peer Health Education Office on the first floor of the University Health Center.

Fall 2002 Health Information Tables at the Rec Center

Wednesdays
3:00-5:00 P.M.
Oct 9: Vegie Cooking/cholesterol
Oct 23: Breast Cancer
NOV 6: Diabetes
NOV 20: Tobacco

Diabetes

What to know, What to do

By Emily Garling

If you were on the show "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" and you made it to the million dollar question, could you answer this: What exactly is diabetes? Just in case that opportunity ever comes up, or you simply want to understand this increasingly common disorder, read on.

There are two types of diabetes, referred to as Type 1 and Type 2. Type 1 diabetes is most commonly diagnosed in children or young adults and occurs when the cells in the pancreas either no longer produce insulin or do not make enough insulin. According to Mary Jean Jacobson, registered nurse and diabetes educator at the UO Health Center, here at the UO, 85 % of the students with diabetes have this form of the disease. Type 2 diabetes, on the other hand, generally develops later in life and occurs when the pancreas doesn't make enough insulin and/or the cells in the body cannot use the insulin properly. Whereas Type 1 diabetes is usually a result of genetic irregularity, Type 2 diabetes can be a result of outside risk factors, such as obesity, and not getting enough exercise.

College life can be stressful and compromise your health. Maintaining positive habits now can keep you healthy today and help prevent diseases in the future. Here are some tips for staying healthy during college and preventing development of type 2 diabetes.

1. Follow a meal plan. Even with classes scattered throughout the day and being at the library all night, it is

still important to eat at regular intervals to keep your blood glucose level steady and insulin production in a desirable range. This will also help you maintain an ideal body weight. Kristen Olmos, the Registered Dietitian at the UO Health Center, can help you to develop a meal plan that fits into your lifestyle. She can be reached at 346-2794

2. Exercise regularly. Aerobic and strength building exercises are great for anyone. In addition to helping you maintain a healthy weight, exercise will give you more energy for those late night study sessions.

3. Limit your alcohol intake. Drinking too much alcohol can result in hypoglycemia (low blood glucose levels) and be very harmful to every organ in the body.

4. Take a snack. Packing a nutrient dense snack like an apple and some cheese to class or the library can often help prevent large fluctuations in blood sugar levels.

5. Visit the Health Center. You can have your blood glucose level checked for free on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 in the Health Education Office. Also, the Health Center has a diabetes education team consisting of a registered dietitian, a pharmacist, and several doctors and nurses who can provide diabetic students with the best possible care while here at school.

6. Don't stress the small stuff, relax and enjoy college while you're here! You'll want to look back at all the good times that you had.

Wondering about Nursing?

Talk to the experts at your Health Center

By Claudia Le

Are you curious about the field of nursing? Have you ever wondered what the differences are between a Physician Assistant and a Nurse Practitioner? Like many other Pre-Nursing students at UO, I am still on the quest to find out if Nursing Practitioner (NP) is the right profession for me. To help me gain more insights about this profession, I interviewed Wendy Lang and Anne Mattson, two of the 5 NPs that work at the University Health Center.

I asked Anne what she thought was the most important thing to look for when searching for the right nursing school. In her opinion, "students should look at the school and see if their standards reflect your standard and expectations of yourself." She recommended that students get a lot of clinical time while in nursing school because it will prepare you for the working world.

I asked Wendy how she knew that she wanted to become a nurse. She stated, "It is hard to know until you get

some experience working with people - either volunteering or working in clinics or hospitals. It helps if you really enjoy people and medicine and are not just economically motivated."

The common question most pre-nursing students are faced with is whether to pursue physician's assistant (PA) school or become a NP. Both Wendy and Anne agreed that being a NP gives you more autonomy. A NP has their own license to practice independently, whereas a PA is connected to a medical doctor. Wendy added that a NP can independently operate their own clinic, do their own billing and receive reimbursements.

Nursing can be a rewarding experience if you like to help people and there are many different areas in nursing to focus on. Students interested in the nursing fields can contact any of the nursing staff at the UO Health Center and ask to set up an informational interview. Call Sharon Harbert, Assistant Director of Nursing at 346-2760 for more information.

Anxious About Anxiety?

by Erica Tucker

A man finds it difficult to attend a party because he's self-conscious and feels that people are watching from every direction. Another person sits in front of the telephone and agonizes because she's afraid to pick up the receiver and make a call to someone she doesn't know.

Many of us can remember times when we felt uncomfortable being the center of attention, but this brief shyness is not a psychological disorder. Social Anxiety (previously termed Social Phobia) exceeds normal shyness when it leads to excessive social avoidance, occupational/academic impairment, and/or significant distress. So why do people have this disorder, how common is it, and can it be cured?

Following are a list of common questions and answers about Social Anxiety chosen from a book called *The Anxiety & Phobia Workbook* by Edmund J. Bourne, Ph.D. You can find this book and others on anxiety in the Peer Health Library located in the University Health Center.

Q: What exactly is social anxiety?
A: Social anxiety is a persistent and unrealistic fear of being observed and evaluated by others. These feared situations are avoided or endured with intense distress.

Q: What are the symptoms?
A: Behavioral symptoms include: gaze aversion, avoidance of social situations, and slumping of the shoulders. Cognitive symptoms include: fear of evaluation, humiliation, and embarrassment. Physical symptoms include: blushing, sweating, nausea, dry mouth, tremor, panicky feelings, increased heart rate, and blocked speech.

Q: How is it diagnosed?
A: Unlike some other psychological disorders, social anxiety is not well understood by the general public or some medical professionals. In fact, people with social anxiety are misdiagnosed almost 90 % of the time. Because few socially anxious people have heard of their own problem, they think they are the only ones in the world who have these terrible symptoms and fail to seek help. When the idea is brought up, doctors use a set of questions focusing on fears and anxieties surrounding social situations to help determine the

diagnosis.

Q: I've never heard of social anxiety, so it must not be very common.

A: Social anxiety disorder is a lot more common than you think. It is actually the most prevalent of any anxiety disorder and is the third most common psychiatric disorder following depression and alcohol abuse. Social anxiety affects 15 million Americans in any given year and occurs in women twice as often as men.

Q: What causes social anxiety?
A: Some research implicates a small structure in the brain called the amygdala in the symptoms of social anxiety. It is believed that this structure is a central site in the brain that controls fear responses. Others have evidence to suggest that social anxiety can be inherited. And of course there is research investigating the environment's influence on the development of social anxiety. This disorder typically begins in childhood or early adolescence and rarely develops after age 25.

Q: Can social anxiety be treated?
A: Yes! Medications include antidepressants such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) and monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs). Psychotherapy involves helping patients gradually become more comfortable with situations that frighten them.

Social anxiety is serious and has debilitating effects on those who suffer from it every day. If you feel you have symptoms of social anxiety or would like any further information about diagnosis/treatment, there are resources available for you on campus. Check out the Peer Health Education Office in the Health Center for articles, pamphlets and books like *Women & Anxiety*. You can also call the UO Health Center at 346-2770 to set up an appointment with a psychiatrist or other medical practitioner. The UO Counseling Center, 346-3227, offers free drop in consultations and counseling.

Other Resources:
<http://www.socialanxietyinstitute.org/examples.html>
<http://degnanco.com/anxiety/who.html>
<http://www.pslgroup.com/dg/fc122.htm>

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health
hi-lights

Best Dressed Breast

Breast Cancer Awareness Fashion Show

Monday, Oct. 28th 7 pm
EMU Ballroom
Free and open to the public

Learn about breast cancer risk and prevention thru beautiful and funky fashion.