

**NOTICE!
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE MAJORS**

Cooperative Education in Biomedical Science Has Arrived! Beginning in the Spring semester of 1978 Cooperative Education will be available to Biomedical Science students. If you would like to find out more about the Cooperative Education Program, attend one of these meetings at your convenience. Meetings will be held in the College of Veterinary Medicine as follows:

Monday	November 21, 1977	11:00 AM	Room 331 VMA
Monday	November 28, 1977	4:00 PM	Room 210 VMS
Tuesday	November 29, 1977	4:30 PM	Room 331 VMA
Wednesday	November 30, 1977	3:00 PM	Room 330 VMA



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Venereal disease

Think you're love sick? A&M, county offer help

By KATYE KOWIERSCHKE
The state of Texas isn't No. 1 in everything, though it still ranks among the top 10 in some things.

For example, in the 1976 national venereal disease (VD) survey, Texas was fifth in the number of cases of syphilis and ninth in gonorrhea (GC). These percentages, according to the "VD Fact Sheet by the Center for Disease Control (HEW)" show 82,304 cases of gonorrhea and 2041 of infectious syphilis — an eight percent annual increase in the first and 29 percent increase in the second.

And what of 1977? Based on statistics for the first six months of the year, projections are good and bad.

Bad for syphilis, whose anticipated total is 4932, more than double last year, and good for gonorrhea where the figure is expected to drop to 78,754, says Joe Pair, administrator for the venereal disease division of the Texas Department of Health in Austin.

But Pair is not as concerned about the persons represented in the statistics as he is for the estimated quarter of a million cases of VD walking Texas' streets undiagnosed and untreated. It is estimated that each of these persons will infect at least three more.

Pair says the quarter of a million figure doesn't mean much when you see it on paper, "but when you think of it as a 240-mile single line of people," then it becomes more of a problem.

And the problem isn't one that affects "those other people and not me," because it exists in Brazos County. Dr. George McIlhenny, acting director of the Brazos County Health Department, says local figures correlate with the state's showing syphilis on the rise and gonorrhea on the decline.

The switch in status is somewhat surprising to clinicians who have known for years about the high con-

It is estimated that a quarter of a million cases of VD are walking Texas' streets undiagnosed and untreated.

tagion ratio or contagiousness of both diseases, but much more for gonorrhea. A female exposed to a GC-infected male has a 90 percent chance of contracting it unless she is on birth control pills, say authorities. The pill raises her chances to 100 percent because the hormone makes the pH (acid-base balance) of the vagina right for growing the diplococci known as Neisseria gonorrhoea. The other six venereal diseases (so named for the love goddess Venus) are also infectious, but not like gonorrhea.

GC and syphilis lead the contagion list of VD, although all seven diseases are transmitted the same way: close skin-to-skin contact with an infected person. The pamphlet "Venereal disease education is not sex education" makes it clear that old wives' tales of cases resulting

from dirty toilet seats or infected door knobs are just that — tales.

The treatment for both gonorrhea and syphilis is penicillin, taken in large doses. At one time in recent history, a quirk of fate almost eradicated both. Immediately following the discovery of penicillin nearly every infectious condition was treated with it and many persons who never knew they had VD were cured accidentally. Then bacteria became resistant to the antibiotic, patients developed allergies to it, and other antibiotics came into being, says Dr. Clyde Caperton, a Bryan dermatologist. At that time gonorrhea and syphilis began a triumphant resurgence.

Today, venereal diseases are among the nation's most frequently occurring illnesses, some reaching epidemic numbers throughout the United States. "VD — Answers to the most frequently asked questions about venereal disease" consistently ranks VD ahead of mumps, rubella and hepatitis. In Texas, GC ranks second and syphilis third in infectious diseases. But does that make them epidemic? Possibly.

"How many cases constitute an epidemic?" asks Dr. Leonard Ponder, president of the Venereal Disease Action Council of Texas and coordinator of Allied Health Careers at Texas A&M University. "Even if we have two cases, we shouldn't," he says. It's a problem that should not exist, here or anywhere.

Ponder, along with authorities from the American Medical Association and the Texas Department of Health, believes education can

the student health service, says students are welcome to come to the center for diagnostic cultures for gonorrhea or serologic blood tests for syphilis and then treatment if needed. He confirms VD exists on the campus, adding that all cases are treated in strict confidence.

"We see more gonorrhea than syphilis," says Goswick, adding there have been a few cases of other forms besides the leading two, but none of the newer one known as Herpes Simplex.

The director says students are eligible for services at the County Health Unit if they would rather go there. McIlhenny says several students have come during the last few months. Both doctors say the examination and diagnosis are relatively painless, and treatment only a little inconvenient. They also stress that testing and treatment are free at each facility.

So why don't people come forward? Symptoms often last only four to five days, going away spontaneously and are unrecognized as a threat. Victims might notice a urethral or vaginal discharge or a slight rash, but recover quickly and forget it.

And health officials say the old social stigmas of disgrace and uncleanness make some hesitant to seek diagnosis.

Workers at the Brazos County Health Unit report the increase in student patients came about after they abandoned the system of calling them by name and adopted a

number code instead. As persons come into the unit they are given number and their name is not spoken in the waiting area.

Another reason is simply that it is a basic fear and everyone tries to avoid as much as possible. But they do not realize how much pain they can avoid in four, five or even 20 years for VD is no minor illness. It can cause blindness, sterility, insanity, arthritis, paralysis and heart damage. Many persons are rendered hopeless, helpless cripples as late as 20 years after having untreated VD. In addition, both syphilis

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gonorrhea cause infant blindness, deformation or death.

Doctors emphasize all the conditions can be prevented with treatment. Primary and secondary syphilis victims are medicated two weeks; the third stage takes weeks or longer, says McIlhenny, adding that damage develops through the years can never be repaired. It's a big price to pay because of not wanting to take a swallow pill.

For these reasons VD goes despite the wonder drugs of the

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Venereal diseases are among the nation's most frequently occurring illness. They are consistently ranked ahead of mumps, rubella and hepatitis.

help. Therefore, the coordinator has written a teaching and resource guide for use in schools throughout the state.

A more solid solution to the problem is early treatment. If medication had been around during the first syphilis epidemic in Europe in 1530 (believed to have been started by Columbus' returning crew), history might have been changed.

And if today's medication is put to use properly, epidemics in this generation could be avoided. After all, VD treatment is available free from state agencies, county agencies and local facilities like the Texas A&M University health center.

Dr. Claude Goswick, director of

Campus activities

Friday
Aggie Players, "Waiting for Godot," 8 p.m., Rudder Forum
Aggie Cinema, "Marathon Man," 8 p.m., Rudder Theater

8 p.m., 201 MSC
Aggie Cinema, "Marathon Man," 8 p.m., Rudder Auditorium

Saturday
Aggie Allemanders Square Dance, guest caller Kevin Bacon,

Sunday
Recreation and Parks, "Men in Recreation," 12 noon p.m., 230 MSC
Aggie Cinema, "Little Man," 2 p.m., Rudder Theater

Seminar scheduled for women in rec

Some of Smokey the Bear's friends are coming to Texas A&M to discuss current career opportunities.

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and problems, especially those of young women.

A luncheon-seminar on "Women in Recreation," sponsored by Recreation and Parks Department is set for noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 20, in the Memorial Student Center. Cost is \$1.50.

"Any woman interested in being a professional can come," Deb Cleland, a senior in the department. "Men should come because they will deal with women when they get out."

Speakers include representatives from the Interior Department, Washington, D.C., several national parks and the agencies which work with them.

Topics range from the "gender boy syndrome" and how to fight women as managers and the role of women in the field and force. Marriage and/or career need for leisure and discrimination will also be topics for panel discussion and smaller group discussions.

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