

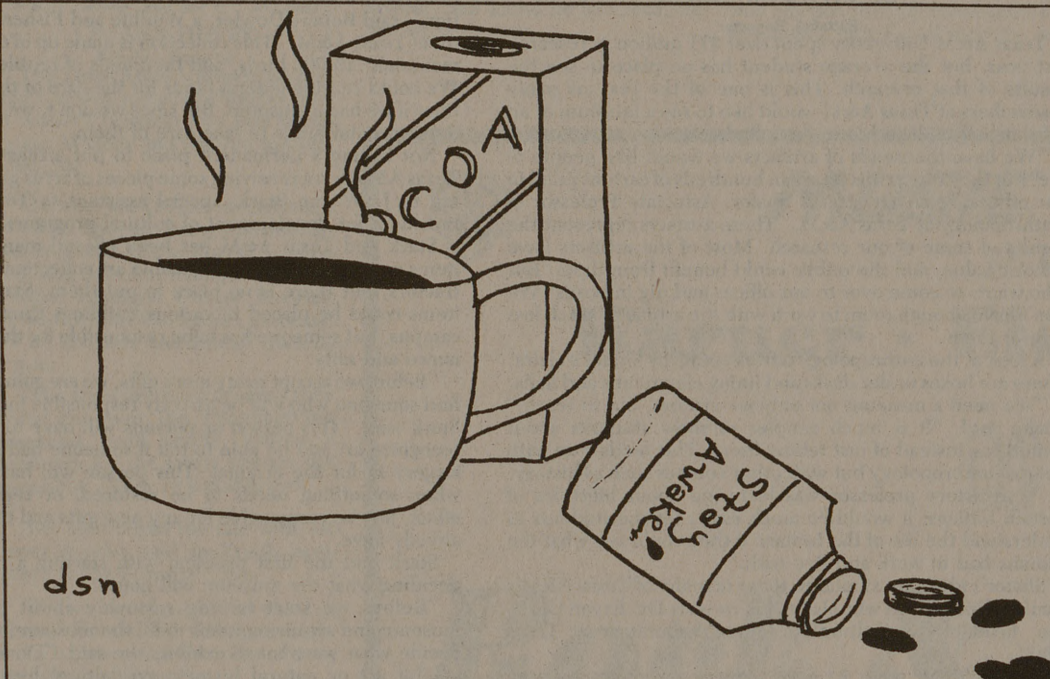
Local

Students often abuse stimulant

Caffeine may be addictive, harmful

By DEBBIE NELSON  
Battalion Staff  
Ring ... an alarm goes off. It's 6 a.m. Oh, your pounding head! You stumble to the kitchen. Heat water, dump sparkling brown crystals into a cup. Pour, drink, inhale. Coffee — first cup of the morning. Your headache slowly goes away. Sound familiar? Maybe you're addicted to caffeine. Evidence indicates that caffeine — contained in coffee, tea, chocolate, cola drinks and even some analgesic and pain-relief drugs — is addictive and possibly harmful to your health.

Dr. Susan Robinson, assistant professor of medical pharmacology at Texas A&M University, said, "I'm afraid if you start putting warnings on things, people won't heed them, unless it's shown to have a clear-cut bad effect. You can't warn people not to overeat."  
The November 1978 Science Digest said a lethal dose of caffeine for a man is 10 grams. Overdose is nearly impossible.  
"An attempt to kill oneself by drinking tea or coffee would be an almost impossible feat requiring the very rapid consumption of 80 to 100 cups (of coffee)," Science Digest said.



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Amounts of caffeine contained in various products are: coffee — 100-150mg per cup — cola drinks — 35-55 mg per bottle — tea — 100-150 mg per cup — cocoa — 50 mg per cup — certain analgesic or allergy tablets — 15-30 mg per tablet.  
Robinson said, "Caffeine isn't an extremely harmful drug, though it's a stimulant, a legal stimulant."  
Dr. Kelly Hester, also an assistant professor of medical pharmacology at Texas A&M, said, "Any caffeine is not good for your system, even in moderation."

But he added, "The majority of people consider that caffeine is not bad."  
People with heart trouble or ulcers should limit caffeine intake, Robinson said, as it can raise blood pressure and produce acid in the stomach.  
Pregnant women should also be wary of caffeine, she said, because tests with rats have linked caffeine use with birth defects in the offspring.  
Hester said caffeine use is "just like being stressed — just like a stressful situation. If you are under stress and do drink caffeine, then

what you're doing is compounding the situation."  
Coffee and other foods are not the only source of caffeine. Over-the-counter stimulant tablets contain the drug, typically consumed by students trying to stay awake to study for exams.  
Dr. C.B. Goswick, director of the University's A.P. Beutel Health Center, said he sees two or three students each semester around finals time who have taken too many stimulants.  
"We see a fair amount, nothing serious," Goswick said. "They're awfully jittery, nervous and high. We let them down gently," he said.  
"Letting them down," means administering a mild sedative or

simply waiting for effects of the drug to wear off.  
"Sometimes they end up missing the test they stayed up to study for," Goswick said.  
Caffeine within the body is metabolized within three to five hours, the World Press Review said. So most of its effects are gone overnight.  
Hester said of student stimulant-takers: "A lot of people do really well in those situations — habitual crammers who work well under pressure."  
"It's better than an amphetamine," he said.

Goswick said of the tablets, "Some people have the idea that if one is good, two is better. And if two is better, four is wonderful."  
He added, "It's a case of people taking one or two, not getting the desired effect, so they take a couple more and it slips up on them."  
World Press Review said 20 percent of North American adults take in 500-600 mg of caffeine daily. Ten percent may consume 1,000 mg per day, which could have damaging results.

Liddy defends 'kill' intent

United Press International  
ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. — Former Watergate figure G. Gordon Liddy said he conspired to kill Jack Anderson because the columnist had written "people killed" by exposing the name of a U.S. intelligence agent working abroad.  
"There is responsible public discourse and there are irresponsible public acts," Liddy said Tuesday night at the University of New Mexico. "It is one thing to have a difference of opinion. It's another thing to have people killed."  
Liddy spoke about 90 minutes to a mostly student audience as part of a national tour promoting his autobiography "Will."  
He spoke only briefly of his Watergate activities in 1972, saying the break-in was a political intelligence-gathering operation and had nothing

to do with national security. He said it was "something that had been done in this country every four years for a very long time."  
He criticized the military and the all-volunteer army saying the United States' most sophisticated tank per-

forms well "only on the freeway."  
Liddy said, "It is not fair to expect people of that mental ability (volunteers) to be able to perform with modern sophisticated, advanced weaponry."

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