

Report of measles reinforces need for vaccination

By STACEY GARNER

Special to THE BATTALION

No one likes to begin a new semester missing classes and feeling miserable. Contracting measles your first semester at school could put you behind while you recuperate. Measles has been reported in the Bryan School District for the first time since 1989.

It is preferable to be vaccinated than to risk getting measles. The vaccination recommended is the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), which vaccinates you against three diseases at once.

Each disease may have potentially serious complications. Measles can cause encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), pneumonia, spontaneous abortion and death. Mumps may be especially serious in adults, and can cause meningitis (inflammation of the membranes covering the brain and spinal cord), encephalitis, deafness and inflammation of the testes,

which may cause sterility in men. Rubella (or German measles), during the first three months of pregnancy, can cause miscarriage or serious malformations in the fetus. It is very important that all women of childbearing age are sure of their immunity to rubella.

These diseases are very contagious and may be spread by casual contact. You may be infected by sitting near, touching or talking to someone with the disease.

Measles has an incubation period of 10-14 days, and is contagious before symptoms appear. The symptoms of measles include tiredness, fever, chills, runny nose, dry cough, watery eyes and a skin rash after several days. Symptoms may last 7-10 days. Swollen salivary glands, increased temperature and headache are symptoms of mumps. Rubella may cause a fever and a reddish-pink rash.

Students born on or after Jan. 1, 1957 must show proof of immunity to measles or two doses of measles vaccine adminis-

tered on or after their first birthday and at least 30 days apart.

Students who can provide proof of having had measles or a vaccination after 1980 may not need another vaccination. A blood test can determine if you have antibodies to the disease. You can be re-vaccinated if you are unsure about when you were vaccinated and/or whether or not you have had measles. It takes approximately two to three weeks after vaccination for your body to develop immunity to the disease.

All Texas A&M students must provide documentation of immunizations against measles, mumps, rubella and tetanus/diphtheria; or, they will be blocked from registration until proof is provided.

A.P. Beutel Health Center offers both the MMR vaccine and a measles-only vaccine. The MMR vaccine costs \$26 and the measles-only vaccine costs \$12. No appointment needed between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Local measles outbreak nears end

By KAREN BROYLES

Special to THE BATTALION

Although a 17-year-old Bryan High School student was diagnosed with measles last August, the scare of an outbreak of the disease seems to be over.

According to the Bryan High School Nurse Mary Vincent, none of the other students have caught the disease and none are expected to.

"The two week incubation period has passed and it looks like we're in the clear," Vincent said.

From 1989 to 1990, 38 cases of measles were reported in the Brazos County. Of the 38 cases reported, 22 were from students at Texas A&M University.

The origin of the outbreak has "never actually been pinpointed," said Shirley Kostohryz, head nurse with the Brazos

County Health Department. "It's possible the measles were brought into the county."

One case was, in fact, found to have come from a person from another town while two other cases were from people who had recently been in Mexico.

At the time of the outbreak, students at A&M were not required to have a second vaccination against measles, mumps or rubella, and were therefore more susceptible to getting the disease.

"The last time they'd been immunized they would have been a year to eighteen months old," Kostohryz said. The vaccine can lose effectiveness after 16 or 17 years.

Students are encouraged to make sure they are current on their vaccinations. For more information call the Beutel Health Center at 845-1511.

Congress allocates \$1 million for A&M transportation study

By JULI PHILLIPS

Reporter of THE BATTALION

The U.S. Congress gave Texas A&M, and its transportation institute, a one million dollar go-ahead last Friday.

Congressman Joe Barton, R-Texas, awarded the grant from the U.S. Department of Transportation for the continuation of the Southwest Region University Transportation Center's (SRUTC) research and education programs.



Barton

"This grant was made because Texas A&M is one of the premiere transportation research centers in the nation," Barton said. "This grant means that A&M will continue to lead in this important field."

The funding comes on the back of a re-competition effort for the grant that helped open the center in 1988.

The grant will give the center \$1 million a year for the next six years as long as the center qualifies for the money each year by matching the funding at least dollar for dollar.

The Texas Energy Management Center is in charge of seeing that the money is matched every year through non-federal state money.

The center is a joint venture between Texas A&M University, the University of Texas and Texas Southern University.

Texas A&M is the lead institution with the headquarters located within Texas A&M's Texas Transportation Institute.

Dr. William Harris, chairman of the transportation center's executive committee, said the project is a wonderful example of research cooperation.

"The combination of this group of people is the most experienced and recognized in this field of research," he said. "The project, then, is a very useful and very effective program, and we are very happy to continue it."

Dock Burke, director of the SRUTC, emphasized that one of

"This grant was made because Texas A&M is one of the premiere transportation research centers in the nation."

-Joe Barton, congressman

the goals of the center, along with researching the transportation industry, is to educate people about transportation factors.

"We are given the opportunity to educate people so that they can take a responsible role in the transportation community," he said.

"One of the unique aspects of this grant is that we can use parts of it to draw people from other disciplines and interest them in a career in transportation," Harris said.

Positions in the transportation field are opening up even in the higher administrative positions, he said.

Flu shots blow away potential for virus

By WILL HEALY

Special to THE BATTALION

The medical community prepares as the 1992-93 flu season approaches.

According to the Baylor College of Medicine, the flu strains expected this year are A/Texas, B/Panama and B/Quinodo.

Dr. W. Paul Glezen of Baylor's Influenza Research Center said that each of the three strains of influenza are covered by this year's flu virus vaccination.

The formula for the flu serum changes each year based on the expectations of researchers at the Centers for Disease Control, said Don Freeman of the A.P. Beutel Health Center.

Stacey Garner, Health Education Specialist at the A.P. Beutel Health Center said the virus is spread when an infected person sneezes or coughs, or when healthy people touch items that have been handled by an infected person.

The flu begins with aches, chills and cough

and may cause sneezing, runny nose and a feeling of fatigue for up to three weeks, said Garner.

The flu vaccination can substantially reduce a person's risk of contracting the flu virus, but the best precaution is avoiding infected people.

Other precautions, such as washing hands frequently, can help reduce your risk of getting the virus.

Freeman also recommends those who cannot afford to miss a week of school should get a vaccination.

The Health Center will vaccinate students Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for \$5. Since the flu vaccination takes several weeks to take effect, Health Center officials recommend students get their shots by the end of November.

"People in high risk groups should get vaccinated soon, in case the season's outbreak occurs early," said Glezen.

Shots are highly recommended for people in the following high risk groups:

- Asthma sufferers
- Persons with immune system disorders, anemia or renal dysfunction
- Persons with chronic cardiovascular, pulmonary or metabolic disorders, including diabetes
- Over 65 or a nursing home resident
- Children with chronic respiratory disorders
- Health-care personnel
- People in contact with the previously mentioned high-risk groups
- Providers of community services, such as police or fire department employees

Voter registration for national election approaches deadline

By MONIQUE LUNSFORD

Reporter of THE BATTALION

Voter registration ends Oct. 3, and keeping a few things in mind can make the process much easier, said the Brazos County Voter Registration Office.

There are a few locations on campus where students can pick up voter registration applications, or they can contact the Voter Registration Office to have an application mailed to them.

Rosemary Gongora, deputy registrar for Brazos County, said students need to be registered to vote at only one residence.

"College students either register and vote in the county in which their university is located, or in the county of their parents' residence," she said. "It's illegal to be registered to vote in two coun-

ties at the same time."

If a student is already registered to vote in another county but wishes to register and vote in Brazos, the process involves the Brazos Registration Office sending the student's name to the

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county of previous residence where it is then cancelled off the registration list.

For students who will need to vote early this year, absentee votes will be taken from Oct. 14-30 at a few locations around Bryan-College Station.

These locations include the Brazos County Court House, Arena Hall on Tabor Rd. in Bryan, the Memorial Student Center on campus, Galilee Baptist Church in Bryan and the College Station Independent School District Build-

ing. Wal-Mart and the Learning Center of Post Oak Mall.

Mary Ann Ward, the County Clerk at the Early Voting Clerk's Office, said this new mobile system would allow more convenient voting. It was proposed by a Brazos County citizen and approved by the County Commissioner's Court.

The state and federal governments have allowed for individuals to vote early without having a particular reason, such as travel or illness, and Ward says that voting does not have to be a hassle for students.

"When they go to the polls to vote, it's a much easier process if they would take the Brazos County Voter Registration Card," she said.

"If they want to vote here, they have to register here."

The Battalion

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Class of '93

Committee member applications are now available in the Student Programs Office in the Class of '93 cubicle.

They are due Friday, September 18 by 5:00pm

AND

Class of '93 Awareness Week September 14 - 18!! Check the What's Up column for daily events!!