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# E-mail small part of Information Age

While soaking up some sun, I turned on the sprinklers in my parent's yard, ordered a new jacket and had a conversation with a friend from high school. All this done with a laptop computer from the comfort of the beaches of Cozumel.

OK, so it all cannot be done yet, but commercials assure us that we soon will be able to communicate with anything electronic with a computer, interactive television or cellular phone.

The "information superhighway," dubbed such by Vice President Al Gore, is a term used to describe the technological methods through which we will be able to communicate.

Plans for the highway include the Internet, which is an adapted form of a Defense Department system. Via the Internet, users can communicate and exchange information. Over 20 million people already have access to the Internet, and that number is growing rapidly.

An important feature of the Internet, electronic mail, is already widely used. Texas A&M President Ray Bowen (when

asked through an E-mail message) said he receives about 40 E-mails everyday. E-mail allows people to communicate in an informal and timely way.

"[E-mail] does augment greatly our ability to communicate with each other on a timely basis," Bowen said.

Also included on the highway route is expanding the interactive television network, which will include video on demand channels. Home shopping is also part of this.

The home shopping scene has exploded in the past few years. Communications corporations hope to allow consumers to shop from the comfort of their homes.

The idea of a purely technological society sounds great to some but scares others. Those who cannot figure out the card catalog in the library will have to adjust to the Information Age.

Others worry that the superhighway will detract from personal interaction. The capacity to communicate through computers will discourage the typical business meeting or personal phone call.

Though technology draws us away from personal interaction, it will not be totally replaced. Computer conversations cannot replace meetings or phone

calls simply because they are important to conducting business.

Small business owners also worry about their future when the information age forecasts buying clothes or home furnishings through a computer.

These small businesses will be saved by those who have not learned how to maneuver on the information superhighway. Shopping is a national pastime and the idea that retailers will be put out of business by home shopping is not an adequate prediction.

One worry companies should have however, is the control of the entire network. Like anything else, technology is a competitive industry. If corporations do not secure their future with a strong hold in the market, then the entire communications network will be owned by a handful of companies.

We have seen a lot of changes in our lifetime, and the idea that we will be able to renew a driver license at a car machine or see our loved ones on a video phone is exciting. As long as everyone still loves to get letters in the mail and "shop 'till you drop" never dies, the information superhighway will bring new and exciting opportunities to every household.

## HEALTH TIPS

# STD's pose risk for everyone but abstinent

**By Kindell Peters**  
A.P. BEUTEL HEALTH CENTER

Approximately 12 million people acquire a sexually transmitted disease (STD) each year in the United States. Two-thirds of these occur in people under age 25. Given the prevalence of STDs in this age group, having some working knowledge of STDs in general is essential for college students.

There are two main types of sexually transmitted disease, bacterial (this includes chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis) and viral (genital warts and HIV/AIDS). Bacterial STDs are easily treated with antibiotics. Once you get the disease, you can get rid of it. Viral STDs, on

the other hand, are not curable. Sexually transmitted diseases have the potential to affect anyone. Therefore, knowing your level of risk is important. If you do not engage in any sexual activity including oral, vaginal and anal intercourse, you have virtually no risk of getting an STD. Having sex with one partner is low risk. However, this is provided that you and your partner have never had an STD in the past. You are at risk for getting an STD if you engage in sexual activities with more than one partner (and they have had more than one partner), if you use alcohol or other drugs and if you do not use a condom. The good news is that there are ways to

prevent getting a STD. If you have engaged in unprotected sex, these indicators will help you detect a possible STD and therefore prevent transmission. General signs and symptoms that could indicate a possible STD include pain or burning during urination, abdominal pain, and itching in the genital region. There may also be an abnormal discharge. This could be yellow, green, gray, streaked with pus or blood, watery, foamy, or have a foul odor. Look for blisters or warts in the genital region. Some sexually transmitted diseases may also occur in the mouth, these include gonorrhea, genital herpes and warts.

The most important thing is

to prevent transmission altogether. In order to do this, there are a few key points to remember. Prevention occurs with protection. The best way to protect yourself is to abstain from sexual activity. However, if you choose to be sexually active, wearing a latex condom in addition to using a spermicide like nonoxonyl-9 is the most effective way to prevent transmission of STD.

There are also some additional precautions you can take. These include washing after intercourse, not sharing personal articles, not using alcohol or other drugs and not having multiple partners. These are helpful tips that, when used together, help prevent STD transmission.

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7 - 9 PM	CHEM 101 CH 10	CHEM 101 CH 11	CHEM 101 CH 12	CHEM 101 Prac Test
9 - 11 PM	CHEM 101 CH 10	CHEM 101 CH 11	CHEM 101 CH 12	CHEM 101 Prac Test
11 PM - 1 AM	PHYS 218 CH 12, 13	PHYS 218 CH 16	PHYS 218 Prac Test	

	Mon. 11/14	Tue. 11/15
7 - 9 PM	FINC 341 PART 3	FINC 341 PART TEST

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