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*Student Life 2003 Pizza Taste-Off

Progress being made in quest for male version of The Pill

By Malcom Ritter
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

More than 40 years after The Pill hit the market for women, scientists are still trying to come up with a version for men.

"Why?" some women might ask. Men don't get pregnant.

Men do account for nearly a third of all contraceptive use in the United States and worldwide. And right now, they're basically limited to condoms and vasectomies.

So experts see a market for a male Pill, even if it's not actually a pill, and some large studies to develop one are in progress. In China, hundreds of men are getting injections once a month. In Europe, more than 300 men are signing up to get 2-inch rods implanted in their arms and take injections every three months.

The research quest is hardly new but it could get its own shot in the arm later this year. The federal government plans to gather researchers, representatives of drug companies and federal regulators to figure out where the research should be going.

"We're pushing to move it forward," said Robert Spirtas, chief of the contraception and reproductive health branch of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD).

New contraceptives for men would be welcome, experts say.

"The more options that are available, the more likely a couple will find an option that fits very neatly into their particular lifestyle," said Dr. Vanessa Cullins, vice president for medical affairs of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America.

The focus for developing contraceptives has been on women for some time, she noted, but "men are partners in heterosexual sexual activity, and in heterosexual attempts to prevent pregnancy. So it's only right that there be more options that men can consider."

"The shocker for most people is that men are interested in contraception, are actually using a lot of contraception," said researcher Dr. John Amory of the University of Washington in Seattle.

Noting that men provide nearly a third of all contraceptive use despite "pretty limited options," Amory said, "I think there's a market there."

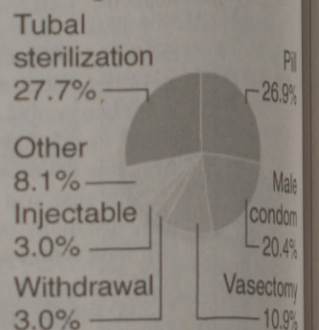
Besides condoms and vasectomy, men recently gained another contraceptive option: the "Vasclip," a device about the size of a grain of rice that a physician can install in the testes to block the flow of sperm. It's considered permanent. Of course, there is also abstinence.

Researchers generally envision a male version of The Pill being used by men in committed relationships. Other couples should be using a condom anyway to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, the experts say.

Foiling fertility

In 1995, the most recent year of a national survey on contraception use, more than one quarter of women using birth control relied on tubal sterilization.

Contraception use among American women



NOTE: Women relying on more than one method (about 9 percent of women using contraception) are classified by the more effective method.

SOURCE: National Survey for Family Growth

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B-CS

Continued from page 1A

Houston and Austin, the Bryan-College Station are has a lot to offer, Wood said.

"We have two well-run cities, the presence of Texas A&M University, a good school district, a low unemployment rate and continuing job growth," he said.

Wood said the Bryan-College Station has been ranked highly several times in the past.

The area was ranked No. 1 by Southern Business and Development in the category "Top Southern Metro Business Climates Regardless of Size," and was No. 1 in the "Small Markets" category.

Southern Business & Development ranked Bryan-College Station No. 1 in the category "Top Southern Metro Business Climates Regardless of Size." It also ranks No. 1 in the "Small Markets" category, areas with populations less than 200,000. Business Week listed Bryan-College Station as one of 12 "Pockets of Prosperity."

College Station was ranked ninth by Men's Journal in the 50 Best Places to live, Wood said.

Roland Mower, president and CEO of the Research Valley Partnership, said

Bryan-College Station was ranked 14th, one place behind communities that make up the "research triangle" in North Carolina.

"This kind of publicity can only enhance

our image," Mower said. "Most people probably never heard of us unless they're to a Big 12 university."

The Research Valley Partnership is a private nonprofit organization founded by Brazos County and Bryan-College Station that seeks to encourage businesses to expand or relocate to this area to create and expand the tax base. Mower said he ranked as the top Texas community will be helpful in recruiting companies to the area.

"As the University is in the process of hiring 450 new professors, hopefully the fact that this is a good area to live in and raise a family will assist the University in hiring these new faculty," Mower said.

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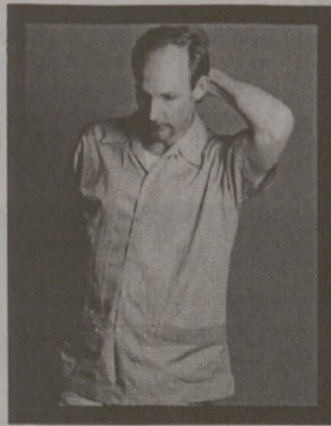
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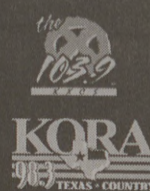
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