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Timothy Lai — THE BATTALION

A&M baseball players shaved their heads on Saturday to raise awareness for cancer. So far they have raised \$17,000, half of which has gone toward MD Anderson.

AWARENESS CONTINUED

Vs. Cancer Foundation, was an 18-year-old freshman at the University of North Carolina when he was diagnosed with stage IV brain cancer, but has been cancer-free for eight years.

Jones said he reached out to head coach Rob Childress on a whim and it all took off from there.

"It was kind of a pipe dream, honestly," Jones said. "I'm from North Carolina, played baseball at UNC but knew the legacy of A&M and pretty much shot an email, phone call and a prayer to coach Childress and he responded. He embraced the idea and obviously the players embraced the idea because we've raised over \$17,000 to date."

Jones said the money raised would be split, with half of the proceeds going to National Child Cancer Research

and the other half to MD Anderson Cancer Center.

"Within the Cancer Center, we're funding things in pediatric oncology that are going to help kids just be kids while they go through treatment," Jones said. "Like Nintendo Wiis in kids rooms, just things for kids to feel better while they go through treatment."

Childress said the decision to pair with Vs. Cancer Foundation was an easy one.

"We were approached by Chase and just felt that when anyone gives you the opportunity to help beat childhood cancer, it's an opportunity you can't pass up," Childress said. "And Chase, you know, being a former baseball player at a great program like North Carolina, and seeing his fight and his courage — it was something that was easy to grab ahold of."

Assistant coach Justin Seely said the

most rewarding part of this event was knowing the team is helping make a difference.

"Our guys have a lot of the best of what goes on in college athletics," Seely said. "It's nice being able to give back to people that are not maybe having as easy a time as some of our guys are having, or maybe some of our guys are having that go on in their families. It's just a great way to respond and help out. That's been the best part of it."

Baseball player and agricultural leadership and development sophomore Lee May Gonzalez said it is great seeing the outpouring of support from the fans and community.

"I came from a junior college last year where there weren't many fans," Gonzalez said. "Just to see this many people out at an event before the season even starts is really cool."

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BIRTH CONTROL CONTINUED

targeting the woman's body.

"Which is easier to control: One egg per month or 200 to 700 million sperm every time you ejaculate?" Rahn said. "It's easier to control the one egg per month, so that's why the birth control has been mainly geared toward women. It's more difficult to control that many sperm."

Rahn said the question of how open men are to playing a role in protecting himself and his sexual partners from pregnancy is one that is not well received.

"I've asked that question to whole classes that I've taught and a lot of the men in those classes are like, 'There's no way I'd ever take a birth control, especially if it's going to affect my sperm count,'" Rahn said. "I think in order for that to happen, there has to be a lot of education. We'd have to educate men and women on their sex, their ability to have children, it's not going to affect their masculinity, it's not going to affect anything like that."

Associate sociology professor Sarah Gatson said although there may be a contingent of men who are ready and willing to have this procedure, there is more of an incentive for women to use birth control because of how much more it benefits them than it would men.

"I think if it was a shot that would keep men from contracting sexually transmitted diseases, I think they would

be right there," Gatson said. "Especially in places where those things are endemic. But women still physically take on a higher risk if it's pregnancy that's on the table."

Because Vasalgel is a multi-year injection, men would need to have it administered every few years as opposed to, or in addition to, women using birth control on a more regular basis.

"A shot every five to 10 years is not the same psychologically as a vasecto-

"Which is easier to control: One egg per month or 200 to 700 million sperm every time you ejaculate?"

Rhonda Rahn, instructional assistant professor in health and kinesiology department

my," Gatson said. "And this is as if it were permanent, but you can reverse it. And so I think as an option, I think it would be more popular than a vasectomy."

Gatson said the introduction of this product to the market would call for a sociological adjustment on how people view gender roles because of the way people associate parenthood more to

motherhood.

"Try to think through it more in terms of what does fatherhood actually mean in public discourse, in the law and in people's everyday lives," Gatson said. "And until you know those things and the way that they connect and disconnect in particular situations, I think it's really hard to predict whether men are going to be beating down the door for a birth control."

Leigh Szucs, health and kinesiology graduate teaching assistant with an emphasis in sexual health, said the risks that a man would face if this product were to be successfully released for use would be similar to the risks that women take when using contraceptives.

"There's always going to be a risk in terms of your reproductive health when you're putting anything artificial in your body, whether it be hormonal or non-hormonal product, whether it be an injection, a pill, an IED," Szucs said.

A worry some birth control users face is having the freedom to reverse the effect when they're ready to reproduce. Szucs said this concern will still be felt by some if a form of male birth control is approved.

"Every person's body is going to react a little bit differently, unfortunately there's not a 'If you take the pill then x amount of years later you will have no problems with infertility' or 'If you do this form of birth control, you're guaranteed to always be pregnant or not be pregnant as a result,'" Szucs said.

BEUTEL CONTINUED

"Our staff can help consult women with things such as polycystic ovarian syndrome, hormone abnormalities and even help couples who are students who are having difficulty getting pregnant."

Dannenbaum said the growth has enabled the clinic to provide female students with consultations of various women's health concerns including the recommendation and prescription of birth control contraceptives.

The center now includes two specialist nurse practitioners, two specialist physicians and one family medicine doctor.

"Our staff is dedicated to provide education on all options of birth control," Dannenbaum said. "All have experience with helping women to become aware of forms of birth control and have the knowledge to select a form."

Dannenbaum said the forms of birth control discussed include natural family planning — a non-hormonal form of birth control that involves the monitor of a woman's ovulation cycle — hormonal birth control pills, intrauterine devices or IUDs, Nuvaring, Nexplanon — a hormonal implant inserted into one's arm pit — and depo provera — an injectable birth control.

Rhonda Rahn, assistant professor of health and kinesiology and professor of women's health education, said of the forms of birth control, the most effective

form is either the IUD or the depo provera shot. The most commonly used form is the oral contraceptive.

Dannenbaum said this common use can be attributed to patients' familiarity with the product as well as its low cost.

At the Student Health Service's

"Barriers such as privacy [are] also a factor that some women face. Health is such a personal issue that some women just don't trust healthcare providers."

Rhonda Rahn, instructional assistant professor in the health and kinesiology department

pharmacy, women can purchase oral contraceptives for as little as \$13 per month for certain brands of prescription contraception.

Kevin Randolph, chief pharmacist at the SHS Pharmacy, said the pharmacy tries to offer students the lowest prices possible for medications. Randolph said students are able to purchase lower-priced contraceptives because

SHS does not seek as much profit as off-campus pharmacies. The operation and maintenance of SHS is maintained through student fees of \$72.50 per semester.

Dannenbaum said these fees do not pay for any individual's particular medicines or visits and only pay for the service's operations and maintenance. Though the SHS has low prices for contraceptives and a comfortable environment for women to obtain information and medical care, there are still factors that prevent women from seeking treatment or medical advice.

"Barriers such as privacy [are] also a factor that some women may face," Rahn said. "Health is such a personal issue that some women just don't trust healthcare providers."

Dannenbaum said there are still women on campus who are unaware of the services that the SHS can provide.

"We have programs and informationals offered at the New Student Conference and other such sessions, but many people can tend to tune out unless it directly applies to them at that moment," Dannenbaum said.

Rahn said one way the SHS could promote awareness of services is to reach out to faculty.

"Having been on the faculty side for three semesters now, I can honestly say I have heard nothing from the health center about their services," Rahn said. "I think they could definitely advertise with the faculty more and then, hopefully, the faculty will inform their students."