

# MAVERICK HEALTH

A newsletter devoted to student health at Minnesota State University, Mankato

Fall 2006

## Emergency Contraception Soon Available OTC

On August 24, 2006 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced approval of Plan B, a form of emergency contraception, as an over-the-counter (OTC) option for women aged 18 and older. Plan B is often referred to as the "morning after pill." It contains an ingredient used in prescription birth control pills—only in the case of Plan B, each pill contains a higher dose and the product has a different dosing regimen.

As with other birth control pills, Plan B has been available to all women as a prescription drug. When used as directed, Plan B effectively and safely prevents pregnancy if a contraceptive method fails or after unprotected sex. Plan B works like other hormone methods of contraception: by stopping the release of an egg from the ovary. If pregnancy occurs prior to taking

Plan B, Plan B will not work.

The decision to allow Plan B to be sold over the counter includes some restrictions on how the drug will be made available: the drug will be kept behind the counter, the purchaser needs to prove themselves to be aged 18 or older, and the pills cannot be sold at gas stations, convenience stores, or other outlets that do not have pharmacists. Plan B will remain available as a prescription-only product for women age 17 and under.



Barr Pharmaceuticals plans to introduce OTC Plan B by the end of 2006. Minnesota State Mankato

Student Health Services Pharmacy currently sells Plan B as a prescription drug and anticipates selling it over-the-counter in January 2007.

## The "Freshman Fifteen": Fact or Urban Legend?

Many have heard the ominous prediction: all freshman will pack on a hefty 15 pounds during their first year of school. But it is true???

Several recent research studies conducted on campuses around the country found that not all first-year college students gain weight and, for those who do, the average weight gain is about 4 to 6 pounds during their first semester. In fact, about 1/3 of the students in the studies lost weight during the first 12 weeks of class.

Why do students gain? The researchers found that stress, too much choice (also known as the "cafeteria diet"), late-night munching, too little sleep and too little physical activity all contribute to weight gain.

To avoid gaining extra freshman (or sophomore-to-senior) pounds Pauline Genter, Student Health Services Nutritionist, suggests easy strategies you can follow:

- Be active every day.
- Eat breakfast.
- Make your dorm room or apartment a "healthy-eating" environment.
- It's not just the food you eat—drink fewer calories!
- Fill up on colorful fruits and vegetables.
- Eat out less often.
- Cruise the cafeteria before making your choices and don't go back for seconds for at least 20 minutes after you finish your first plate.
- Make eating a pleasurable experience..



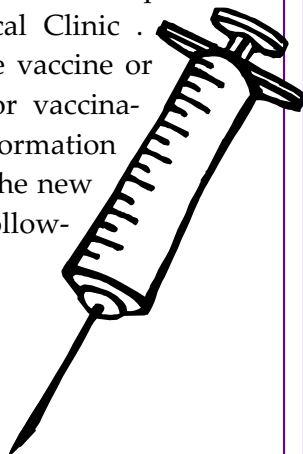
For more information about healthy eating, students can log on to the Student Health Services nutrition web page at: [www.mnsu.edu/shs/healtheducation/nutrition](http://www.mnsu.edu/shs/healtheducation/nutrition)

## Vaccine Now Available to Prevent HPV

Human papillomavirus, or HPV, infects about 6.2 million people every year in the U.S. making it the most common sexually transmitted virus. Most HPV infections don't cause any symptoms and go away on their own but some infections can cause cervical cancer. Each year in the U.S. about 10,000 women get cervical cancer and 3,700 die from it. A vaccine to provide protection against four major types of HPV was recently introduced in the U.S. The vaccine, being marketed as Gardasil®, protects against 2 HPV types that cause about 70% of cervical cancers and 2 HPV types that cause about 90% of genital warts.

HPV vaccine is routinely recommended for girls 11-12 years of age and a catch-up vaccination is recommended for those aged 13-26, which would include many women attending school at Minnesota State Mankato. The vaccination is given as a 3-dose series. Protection against HPV is expected to be long-lasting but vaccinated women still need cervical cancer screening (Pap smears) because the vaccine doesn't protect against all HPV types that cause cervical cancer. The HPV vaccine is available on campus at the Student Health Services Medical Clinic. For more information about the vaccine or to schedule an appointment for vaccination, call 507-389-6276. More information about HPV, genital warts, and the new vaccine can be found on the following websites:

[www.ashastd.org](http://www.ashastd.org)  
[www.gardasil.com/](http://www.gardasil.com/)  
[www.cdc.gov/std/](http://www.cdc.gov/std/)



## FREE 4U AT MSU!

Student Health Services Medical Clinic is currently participating in a federal grant program to prevent unplanned pregnancies and if you are a student there is a very good chance that you could be getting some birth control services absolutely free! Services covered by the grant funding include: annual exams, testing and treatment of STIs identified during an annual exam, birth control methods (such as the pill, the shot, the ring, and condoms), emergency contraception, and family planning education. Students can enroll for these services at the on-campus medical clinic if they meet grant criteria. It takes approximately 5 minutes to complete the paperwork and the staff at the clinic will help. For more details on this new program go to [www.mnsu.edu/shs](http://www.mnsu.edu/shs) and click on "Free 4U at MSU".

## Student Sleep Patterns from Around the World

An article in the September edition of the Archives of Internal Medicine took a look at sleep patterns among university students from around the world. Using anonymous questionnaires, data was collected from 17,634 college students aged 17-30 at 27 universities in 24 countries. Some of the survey findings were:

- 63% of students around the world slept an average of 7-8 hours
- 21% sleep less than 6 hours
- Biggest sleepers: Romania (8.04 average hours)
- Those sleeping the least: Japanese students (6.2 average hours)

**MSU STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES**  
**REAL DOCTORS. REAL NURSES. REAL CONVENIENCE ON CAMPUS.**

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