

Dangers of TB explored

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of columns of student health concern. It is written by three graduate students who work at the Student Health Center. If you have a question, send it in care of the health center or the Emerald.

Dear Student Body,

I received a tuberculin skin test when I entered the University. What is the cause of tuberculosis and what are the chances of getting it?

Tuberculosis is caused by the mycobacterium tuberculosis or tubercule bacillus. It is usually carried on an airborne droplet nucleus produced when persons with active pulmonary tuberculosis sneeze, cough, speak and sing. The upper lung zones of the body are particularly susceptible to the invading tubercule bacilli. Puberty to age 30 is a very susceptible period for progressive disease to develop.

Sixteen million Americans have live tuberculosis germs in their bodies and are the prime candidates for breaking down tuberculosis. A tuberculin test will tell a person if he or she is in this group.

There were 168 cases of active tuberculosis in Oregon in 1977. On the University campus, we found 150 positive reactors in the student population, but no cases of active disease in 1977. However, we did find 21 active cases in 1976.

Detection is the first step in the control of tuberculosis in the community. The Mantoux test is one of the many skin tests used to assess tuberculin sensitivity. It is an intracutaneous (between skin layers) injection of purified protein derivative (P.P.D.) tuberculin and is administered into the skin of the forearm. The reaction should be read 48-72 hours after administration. A positive reaction shows a swelling, usually accompanied by

redness, of 10 millimeters or more. Any reaction of less than 10 millimeters is questionable and the person should be retested at a later date.

A positive reaction to the tuberculin skin test indicates that the individual has been in contact with the tuberculosis organism, but it does not signify disease.

It is customary for the individual with a positive Mantoux to have an X-ray examination of the chest. Both tests together help in the early detection and management of tuberculosis.

A positive tuberculin reaction tends to persist throughout the individual's life, but may wane with age. Therefore, once an individual has a positive reaction, there is usually no need to repeat a tuberculin skin test. However, if one has been exposed to active tuberculosis, one should take the necessary steps to be properly assessed. Sometimes when a tuberculin test history is indefinite, the test may be repeated to establish the need for the prophylactic medication.

A prophylaxis of Isoniazid tablets (INH) is usually administered for one year to selected positive tuberculin reactors. Anyone having a positive tuberculin skin test and who has been placed on INH prophylaxis should take his medication as directed for the time prescribed. Other instructions given along with the medication should also be followed.

Although the tuberculin test is no longer required for entrance to the University, students are strongly urged to have one if more than a year has elapsed since the last test. It is available at the Student Health Center. The positive reactors are followed by the Student Health Center with medication if indicated and by periodic chest films.

A negative reaction to PPD tuberculin does not exclude the diagnosis of tuberculosis. If the individual tested has been in contact with active tuberculosis,



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follow-up procedures should be done to establish a routine for contacts. One should be aware of the possibility of contracting tuberculosis infection present in the population.

This disease continues to pose a major challenge to preventative medicine. Continued monitoring of sound public health measures is the key to a safe, healthy community.

Women's group votes to support rape team

By DINA MILES
Of the Emerald

By a unanimous vote, the Eugene Commission on the Rights of Women approved a motion to support Associated Lane Interagency Rape Team (ALIRT) funding to become part of the regular city and county budgets.

Marcia Morgan, rape team community information officer, told the commission the current federal funding under which the rape team operates will run out in

June, at which time the city can "decide to pick up the program" by funding it through the regular budget.

The team works in cooperation with the Eugene Police Department, the Lane County Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Office.

The nine-member commission voted to write letters in support of the funding to the Lane County Sheriff's department and the Lane County Commissioners.

Before the vote, the commis-

sion heard statements from Morgan and from Susan Schuster from the Rape Crisis Network, a group of counselors and volunteers which offer advice and moral support for sexual assault victims.

Since the rape team first began in April of 1975, Morgan said the group has delivered some 723 informational lectures. Morgan also said she has spoken to children in several grade schools as some victims of sexual assault come from this group.

The team distributes copies of a new coloring book, designed by

the team staff, which warns youngsters about playing outside alone and accepting rides from strangers, in addition to other precautions. Morgan also said a special number of almost full-size rag dolls, made by a local woman, have been used successfully to help very young rape victims and mentally retarded individuals describe the assault in court.

Schuster told the commission of the Rape Crisis Network's role in providing support for the rape team. She said the network has volunteers as well as counselors

to help both assault victims and the victim's family.

Some commission members questioned the effectiveness of a governmental agency concerned primarily with assault prosecutions, such as the rape team, and a group concerned mostly with counseling such as the Rape Crisis Network.

Members questioned whether any friction may exist between the two functions, but Morgan said the groups have worked well together and they do not compete for major funding.

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Civic center bond issue ok'd

An \$18.5 million bond issue to finance construction of a downtown civic center will be placed on the ballot June 27 after the Eugene City Council unanimously voted to put the measure to the voters at its Tuesday noon meeting.

The project includes a 500-seat multi-purpose theater and rehearsal center, a 2,500 seat concert

hall, underground parking and a plaza.

In approving the recommendation of the Civic Center Commission, the council agreed:

- To apply for federal Economic Development Assistance funds for use in financing the project.

- To encourage private development of a hotel near the west

side of the center site, and to arrange for issuance of bonds to be used in construction of a community/conference center.

- To encourage establishment of a "Eugene Foundation for the Arts" to solicit contributions for the center.

- To pursue other possible sources of funding.

Although the commission recommended the \$18.5 million figure, commission chairman Les Anderson said it was nearly impossible to pinpoint an exact figure until exact plans are developed. However, he noted there are possible sources of funding in addition to issuance of bonds. Anderson also stated that for every month the vote on the project was delayed, \$135,000 in inflationary costs were added.

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