

OPINION



“Sexing Under the Influence of Intoxicants”

“When you're drunk, you'll have sex with someone who normally you wouldn't even have lunch with—”
—Richard Keeling, M.D.

Dr. Richard Keeling, past chair of the American College Health Association AIDS Task Force visited the University of Oregon campus this past October with some interesting news on college life, sex and alcohol. Normally, we wouldn't associate AIDS with a Friday night happy hour phasing into a party or a night at the bars, but there's good reason to begin keeping this connection in mind.

AIDS is no longer a headliner on the newsstand. The issue has grown news weary but the disease is still rampant. Consider this: the average age of a person first discovering s/he has AIDS is 32. It can take up to 10 years for the HIV virus to incubate before symptoms manifest. . . **ten years!** Statistically, then, people are potentially becoming exposed in college or during college, carrying the virus and passing it on to others.

Consider these 1988 statistics from a national survey of college students:

- 81% had intercourse during college (were sexually active),
- 60% didn't use condoms;
- 97% understood condoms prevent the spread of HIV.

One might argue “if you know your partner then you won't need a condom.” In regard to the importance of knowing your partner, another 1988 survey indicated that it is extremely common for partners to lie about their sexual history and practices. Furthermore, unwanted sex on campuses is a major problem that includes more than rape. Dr. Keeling showed startling statistics where a majority of surveyed students (both male and female)

reported at least one experience of unwanted sex. To explain this, he needed only one word—alcohol. “Let's face it, when you're drunk you'll have sex with someone who normally you wouldn't even have lunch with.” He strongly emphasized that mixing sex and alcohol is extremely dangerous because alcohol greatly impairs sensible judgment.

Advertising plays heavily on sex to sell alcohol (as well as numerous other products) making it difficult not to mix sex and alcohol. But with these messages, what cultural morals are presented? Can we simultaneously value abstinence (or at least sexual sensibility) and the sexual nuances of the steamiest ads?

Basically, relates Keeling, to reduce the spread of HIV we need to change behaviors by building skills. This means more than “just say no to sex.” We need to build assertive communication skills, sex without intercourse skills, sex without alcohol skills and skill in using condoms; planning ahead so they are available. Like any skill these take practice to master.

Finally, students on college campuses, like anyone, must be responsible for their own health and future. We must value our bodies more than any single relationship or one night of wild abandonment. We must also work toward building esteem of ourselves and our peers so that healthy behaviors—not sexing under the influence—are respected, not ridiculed.

By Annie Dochnahl
GTF, Health Education;
Out Reach Coordinator

HIGH = HIGH RISK

How many times have you read a newspaper, an article or a pamphlet where the emphasis of the information cites a statistic? Or, turned on the television and heard those percentages reiterated with each news station you turned to. . . and what happens to your thought processes when you hear those percentages again, and again, over and over? Do they have an impact on you or hold any meaning? Or do they become scrambled with all the previous percentages heard last year? What do they mean and how important are they?

Well, once again here is another article citing statistics; but, read more carefully and hopefully their meaning may have an impact.

- On most college campuses, between 87 and 93% of all students drink alcohol.
- By 1991, the National Centers for Disease Control (CDC) predicts AIDS will be the number one killer on college campuses.

So, why should those numbers hold meaning for you? First, you are part of a college campus. Look around and you can see that drinking is a central activity. Decisions regarding the use (or relative abuse) of alcohol can affect your life. Alarming high numbers of students are treated for alcohol overdose on college campuses each year. Next, college is a time when many individuals develop their knowledge and values regarding sexuality. And U.S. campus life is a center for non-monogamous sexual activity.

Various studies throughout the country estimate that between 40 and 70 percent of students are sexually active. Your choices to be sexual, not to be sexual and who your sexual partners are, are important. AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases are becoming more prevalent among people 20-24 years old and on college campuses today. According to Dr. Richard Keeling, past chair of the American College Health Association AIDS Task Force, thousands of students are carriers of the disease. Others estimate that between 30,000 and 80,000 students on American college campuses carry a contagious form of the AIDS virus. If U of O is included, approximately 60-100 students here, potentially carry the virus. These people have or carry the AIDS virus in the blood but are asymptomatic (without symptoms) and in good health.

So what is in the meaning of the statistics previously cited? College students need to become aware of the connection between alcohol, other drugs and AIDS. High = High Risk. Alcohol impairs judgment, therefore lowering your ability to make decisions you might otherwise not make. Mixing alcohol with sex distorts your judgment in choosing to be sexual, and with whom you will have sex and whether or not precautions will be taken. The combination of these two behaviors puts you at a high risk for HIV infection and other STD's along with unplanned pregnancies, pressured sex and/or acquaintance rape.

Perhaps you might not like to pay attention to statistics or to think about their meaning. . . but do not lull yourself into denial either. Think about your behaviors which create the statistics. . . think about your behaviors.

Joanne Frank,
Director of Health Education
Student Health Center

MOCKTAIL: A simply splendid drink that you can drink and drink and still count your fingers forwards and back and awaken refreshed and clear-headed the next morning.

Strawberry Smoothie

1 cup of fresh strawberries or strawberry concentrate
¼ blender of ice
1 cup of either: milk, buttermilk, plain or vanilla yogurt.
Blend until frothy
* add a dash of sugar if needed

Spritzers

Mix 7-up with orange juice, pineapple juice or a juice mixture.
Add a splash of lemon juice or sweet and sour to citrus-based spritzers.
Mix in a blender with ice to form a frozen punch.

Fruit Spritzers

¼ blender of ice, orange juice concentrate and 7-up.
Blend until bubbly. Pour into a punch bowl and garnish with orange sherbet (vanilla ice mild also makes this delicious!)

Fruit Frappe

Fresh strawberries (or frozen) or bananas
¼ blender of ice
½ cup milk and ¼ cup half and half
Blend until frothy.
* For a low fat version, use buttermilk or plain yogurt.
* Add a dash of sugar to taste.

Nada Colada

¼ blender of ice
¼ cup coconut syrup
¼ crushed pineapple
½ cup orange juice
½ cup milk
Blend until frothy

Yogurt Shake

Choose your favorite frozen yogurt flavor.
Fill blender ½ full and add milk to thin.
Throw in blueberries, strawberries or bananas and blend until smooth.



Mocktail essentials:

Mix and match these basic ingredients and create your own frothy, fruity beverages.

- ✓ Fruit juice concentrate: grape, grapefruit, orange.
- ✓ Ice cubes or shaved ice.
- ✓ For creamy drinks: sherbet, ice milk, frozen yogurt, plain yogurt, buttermilk, vanilla yogurt and lemon yogurt, milk, half and half.
- ✓ Basic mixers: collins mix, 7-up, lime juice, lemon juice and margarita mix.
- ✓ Don't forget fruit garnishes: orange slices, cherries, lemon slices, and lime squeezes.