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**Portland
Community
College**

Class applies holistic end to asthma

■ HEALTH: Group cites
diet, exercise, stress and
self-management
in restraining the disease

By Jennifer Schmitt
Higher Education Reporter

An asthma support group class, started this spring at the Student Health Center, meets once a week to provide education and encouragement for students suffering from asthma.

"I hesitate to call it a support group because that usually has a negative connotation," said Sharon Harbert, a registered nurse at the health center. "This isn't the type of group where you stand up and say 'Hi, my name is Sharon and I have asthma.' It's more like a class."

The group uses education and a holistic approach to deal with asthma by focusing on all facets of the patients health and not

just the immediate symptoms of the disease.

"We treat the person as a whole," Harbert said. "They aren't just a set of lungs."

The asthma classes cover different topics every week ranging from what it means to have asthma, to diet and exercise programs.

"It was really ironic when I had one student tell me that she would like to come to the class on stress but she didn't have time because she had too much to do for her other classes," Harbert said. "Stress is daily and unavoidable so we have learned to deal with it."

In the past, people with exercise-induced asthma were unable to exercise or participate in sports. But with the help of current treatments, patients with asthma can exercise as regularly as they like with little risk to their health.

"There are Olympic marathon runners who have asthma," Harbert said. "Exercise is important to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Plus, it is great for relieving stress."

The biggest struggles people with asthma face are that they don't understand why they have to take so much medication all the time, and feel they can't lead active lives, Harbert said. Understanding what asthma is, its causes and how certain medications work are the first steps in asthma management, she said.

"We are trying to promote self-management of the disease," Harbert said. "Many people are in a constant cycle of crisis intervention. When they feel fine they stop taking the medicine, then they have a bad asthma attack and have to rush to the hospital."

Allergies: Pollen problem can be combated

■ Continued from Page 1

twenty students at a time to talk about allergy prevention methods. Students fill out medical forms detailing their previous allergy treatments and medications. Following the presentation, the nurse and practitioner meet with the students to establish an effective treatment plan.

"If someone has been on medication before and it isn't working, then they need to try something more," Harbert said. "During peak seasons people may need additional medications to treat their increased allergy symptoms."

An allergist will be at the health center Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings to see students who have severe allergies and who need ongoing treatment, Harbert said.

In addition, a packet to help treat allergies is available at the pharmacy.

The allergy packet includes eye drops, an antihistamine, Kleenex, pollen masks and a list of things students can do to reduce their allergy symptoms, Harbert said.

"The goal is to avoid as much pollen exposure as possible. Avoidance is the number one approach to allergies," Harbert said. "Wearing a pollen mask and sunglasses often reduces pollen exposure and allergy symptoms."

Showering and shampooing at night reduces the amount of pollen someone is exposed to while sleeping. Washing bed sheets frequently — especially pillow cases — also keeps pollen exposure to a minimum, Harbert said.

"We can't walk around in a bubble," she said. "But there are things you can do to lessen the problems."

POLICE BEAT

■ A student walked into her dorm room to find another woman wearing her clothes last Tuesday at 4:35 p.m. in the Walton complex. After the student saw the woman in her room, the woman promptly left, according to police records. Then the student noticed her clothes and credit cards were gone and found the woman in the lobby.

■ A 27-year-old man was held by medical personnel after

he was determined to be a threat to himself and society last Tuesday. He spoke unintelligibly, frightened a student and pushed an unknown person. According to police reports, he told the person, "I created it all. Pain is love. Love is pain," after stealing juice at the Knight Library.

■ A 24-year old male student was charged with first degree forgery after he used his friend's name, date of birth and

social security number to buy a car. The friend told police he knew something was wrong when he received a \$160 ticket in his name for the 24-year-old's car.

■ Three men were arrested at 715 E. 16th last Thursday for growing marijuana. After they submitted 23 pictures of the plant-growing operation to the University Bookstore for developing, the police were notified.

— Brian Womack



Mandatory Meeting

Wednesday, May 8th • 6:00 p.m.
Casanova Center at Autzen Stadium
Applications available at this meeting

Tryout for the DUCK MASCOT is on
Wednesday, May 15th • 7:00 p.m.

Contact Laraine Raish at 346-5485
for more information

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