

## Health Education offerings

### Vegetarian Cooking Workshop

**Mondays 4:00-5:30 P.M.**  
**February 4<sup>th</sup> - February 18<sup>th</sup>**  
University Health Center, Cafeteria  
Free to UO students, call 346-4456 to sign up.  
Partake in the preparation and enjoyment of simple, fresh and delicious vegetarian meals. Expand your repertoire of recipes and cooking skills.

*"One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."*  
—Virginia Woolf

### Quit Kit

Quitting tobacco is the healthiest move you can make! Pick up a "quit kit" from a Health Center practitioner or from the Health Ed Office.

### CPR Certification

**Tuesday, January 22, 5:00 - 8:00 P.M.**  
Health Center Cafeteria  
American Heart Association course.  
Register at 346-2770.

### Free Cholesterol Screening

**Every Tuesday 9:30 - 11:30 A.M.**  
UO Health Center, Health Education Office  
Simply drop by, no appointment necessary

To register for or to learn more about these workshops, check out the University Health Center's Web site at <http://healthcenter.uoregon.edu>. You can also call **346-4456** or stop by the Peer Health Education Office on the first floor of the University Health Center.

### Winter 2002

#### Health Information Tables at the Rec Center

**Wednesdays**  
**3:00-5:00 P.M.**

**January 23:**

Healthy Resolutions

**February 6:**

Compulsive Exercise

**February 20:**

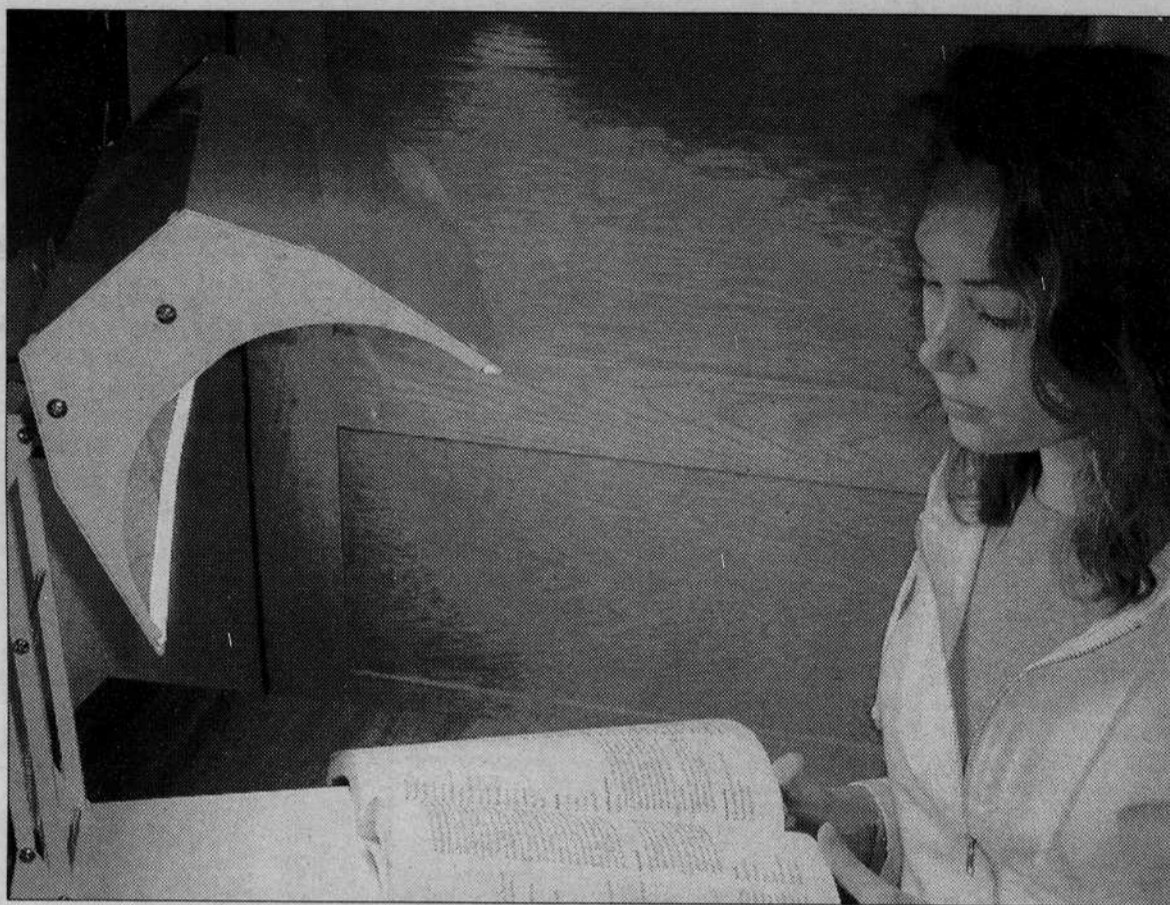
EDAP

**March 6:**

Spring Thing

# Brighten Up Your Days

## Treating Seasonal Affective Disorder



By Kate Mahaffey

It's January and another dark, rainy, gloomy day lurks outside your window. You don't want to get out of your warm, cozy bed and face the day. All you want to do is sleep. You feel lethargic and apathetic towards everything. Without realizing it, you could be dealing with a form of depression known as S.A.D. (Seasonal Affective Disorder).

Ten million people in the United States suffer from this disorder.

S.A.D. is triggered by decreasing exposure to sunlight and is most commonly experienced any time between September and May. It is accompanied by changes in mood and behavior. Nine out of ten people experience decreased energy and enthusiasm in the dark days of winter. The diagnosis of S.A.D., however, is made when the symptoms are severe enough that the individual's life is disrupted and considerable distress is experienced over a period of

three separate seasons, with mood disturbance occurring in two consecutive seasons. The seasonal pattern of symptoms that are unexplained by other situational stressors is a key factor in the diagnosis of S.A.D.

The main symptoms of S.A.D. are as follows: irritability, fatigue, avoidance of social interaction, poor memory, oversleeping (but also sometimes insomnia or disturbed sleep), feelings of guilt, hopelessness, low self-esteem, weeping, inability to cope with

stress, decreased sexual desire, and abusive behaviors, as well as seasonal alcohol or drug abuse or seasonal disordered eating. The main difference between S.A.D. and clinical depression is the noted seasonal pattern that exists.

S.A.D. is triggered by decreased exposure to sunlight, which creates a change in the brain chemicals melatonin and serotonin. Melatonin is a hormone associated with cyclic body process of being awake and asleep. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that regulates mood and hunger. There may also be an inherited susceptibility for S.A.D.

Some current available treatments for S.A.D. include light therapy with special florescent bulbs, herbal remedies and prescription drugs. Herbal remedies include St. Johns Wort and Asian and Siberian ginseng. Antidepressant prescription drugs such as Prozac (fluoxetine) or Paxil (paroxetine) can also relieve symptoms. Each of these therapies is available at the UO Health Center. Call 346-2770 for an appointment.

Coping strategies for minimizing symptoms of S.A.D. include keeping your home well-lit, managing stress, getting regular exercise (preferably outdoors when possible), establishing a regular sleep pattern and maintaining a healthful diet. If you feel you are experiencing S.A.D., it is important to discuss your symptoms with a counselor or medical practitioner. The effects on a person's life with S.A.D. can severely disrupt their education, careers and relationships. Visit the UO Counseling Center (346-3227) and/or Health Center (346-2770) to get the help you need. Services are confidential.

## Helping A Friend in Need

By Andrea Hart

*"If I just keep going for three more minutes I will be at 400 calories and I won't have to come back tonight. Three...two...one. Off the treadmill she goes. After an hour of agonizing pain she returns to her room and sleeps through her afternoon classes. She wakes to the sound of the girls in her hall leaving for dinner. She pretends to be asleep so that her roommate will not ask her to join them. When they are gone she gets up, stretches her aching muscles and reaches for tonight's dinner—diet soda, a piece of toast, and two celery stalks. She opens a book and tries to concentrate on homework, but there is no ignoring the constant churning in her stomach. She e-mails her teachers and explains today's absence as another bout with the flu. She lies down and starts to do some reading, but falls asleep going over today's calorie count...again."*

Could someone you know be suffering from the physical and psychological pain of an eating disorder? Would you even know if they were? 91% of women recently surveyed on one college campus had attempted to control their weight through dieting, 22% dieted "often" or "always" (Kurth et al., 1995). There are numerous and varied signs that reflect disordered eating. These include, but are not limited to, a preoccupation with food, calories, and fat content, withdrawal from activities because of weight and shape concerns, and excessive and rigid exercise programs that focus on burning off calories. If you think you know someone who shows one or more of these signs, you can do something to help.

The University Health Center has a great deal of information to offer, if you know where to look. In the Peer Health Education Office (346-4456) on the first floor of the Health Center, you

will find books, pamphlets and friendly peers to facilitate your search. The Health Center also employs a registered dietitian. Kristin Olmos (346-2794) is available through practitioner referral and self-referral. She can assist students in planning a healthy diet. The UO Counseling Center (346-3227) provides group therapy for individuals suffering from an eating disorder as well as for individuals with some kind of problematic food issue. The Counseling Center also offers individual counseling.

If you think that a friend is suffering from an eating disorder, realize that you can't force them to change. Professional help is available on campus and often the most helpful thing you can do is encourage your friend to seek help. These same resources are also available for friends to learn how to be most helpful. Don't hesitate to educate yourself.

## Winter 2002 Contributing Writers and Peer Health Educators



Peer Health Educators: Nikki Fancher, Kenzin Fultz-Wahl, Aloma Guthrie, Andrea Hart, Yusuke Kurihara, Kate Mahaffey, Matt Nelson, Amy Papé, Jess Peters, Lisa Rowe.

Photos: Annie Dochnahl

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## health hi-lights

Health Hi-Lights, Winter 2002

### FPEP

The University Health Center is participating in a federal program FPEP, Family Planning Expansion Project. This program allows the Health Center to provide men and women FREE family planning services, birth control and reproductive health care.

For more information on how to qualify for this program, stop by the Health Center or call 346-2770 or check our website at <http://healthcenter.uoregon.edu>