

Caffeine

continued from page 4B

balance school with a social life. Steve Karner, manager of Discount Sports and Vitamins at 255 E. 18th Ave., said he sees a lot of students looking for caffeine and weight loss supplements.

"I see a lot of UO customers," he said. "And I question you the first dozen or so times you come in."

Karner said he asks his customers why they want to take the supplements, warns them about their effects, and gives instructions on how to use them effectively. He asks how old his customers are and whether they have heart problems, high blood pressure or are taking other medications. Most product warning labels advise people under age 18 to avoid the product.

Karner recommended drinking a lot of water with caffeine pills because these products have stimulatory effects that can cause consumers to sweat a lot. They have the potential to enhance physical performance, increase mental alertness and stimulate fat-burning metabolism.

"People buy it just for the effects," he said. "When you are young and invincible, you think nothing is going to hurt you."

But these products can also deprive users of sleep, cause irritability or keep the heart pumping constantly, leading to high blood pressure if used along with soda, coffee or other caffeine fixes. He said they can wear down a person's kidneys and reduce appetite or sex drive. He suggested taking a supplement for up to three months and then taking a month off from it.

Karner said he sees at least 20 students a week who spend an average of \$20 to \$30 on these

stimulants. And while there are more than 15 brands out there, they all mostly offer the same results. Karner said if used in conjunction with the proper exercise and diet, these products can have dramatic results.

"A lot of people do great on these," he said, pointing to the wall of pills in his store. "But sometimes it's obvious if you are on these."

He also said sometimes he sells his products to students who primarily use them while studying for midterms and finals. The products often contain ingredients such as ginkgo, a herb that acts as a "brain activator."

"These could be dangerous," he said. "But if you don't have the health concerns, and you use them the way they are intended for short periods of time, they can be very effective products for losing body fat."

Business major Sarah Stark said she takes Hydroxycut by Muscle-Tech, a thermogenic diet formula, which contains ingredients that help to burn body fat and suppress the appetite. But she said she only takes the supplement every once in awhile, when she feels down and wants to work out.

One reason for this is that when she takes Hydroxycut, she can't drink coffee, and since she enjoys drinking coffee every day, Stark doesn't take the stimulant very often. Coffee is another easy way to obtain that adrenaline rush, said Karner, a coffee addict himself. To cut back on his "acquired taste," Karner said he has started drinking his coffee half-decaf and half-regular.

"I wake up dreaming about a cup of coffee," he said. "That's the first thing I'm thinking about."

E-mail reporter Lisa Toth at lisatoth@dailyemerald.com.



Russell Weller Emerald



Is your body image positive?



The problem with calorie restrictive diets.

- They don't work: 95% of all dieters regain their lost weight in 1 to 5 years.
- Dieters miss out on **vital nutrients** necessary for basic daily functions, including learning.
- They reinforce **body dissatisfaction**.
- They can lead to **more severe** eating disorders.

Be part of a solution: Come to the Positive Body Fair

TODAY 11:30-1:30
EMU Fir Room

- How to help a friend with eating and body image issues.
- Media watchdog table, give the ad execs a piece of your mind.
- Barbie's 42 year history.
- Nutrition tips from The Health Center's registered dietitian.
- Stimulate your senses with hands-on activities.

Eating Disorders Awareness & Prevention Week

Sponsored by UO Health and Counseling Centers. Call 346-2794 for more information.

UNIVERSITY
HEALTH CENTER

We're a matter of degrees