

Spring Break 2002

The highs, lows of designer drugs

NICK BARRON
Business Manager

She can feel the drug taking hold, her energy level is reaching euphoric proportions and her normal inhibitions are giving way to reckless abandonment.

It has been nearly an hour since "Mary," a Clackamas student who doesn't want to be identified, first took the Ecstasy, and her psyche is feeling the beat of the music that fills her ears. Mary's body begins to move in stride with the rhythm, her mind becoming lost in a cloud of haziness.

She is at a friend's house, and the basement has been transformed into a make-do dance club, complete with techno music, gyrating bodies and numerous club drugs, such as Ecstasy and GHB.

What is a club drug?
Barbara Ryan, editor for the "Prevention Pipeline," the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's bi-monthly magazine, explains what a club drug is.

"A club drug is a vague term that refers to a wide variety of drugs, and uncertainty about the drug sources and pharmacological agents and the chemicals used to manufacture them and possible contaminants make it difficult to determine toxicity."

Some examples of club, or designer, drugs are Ecstasy, GHB, Ketamine, and Rohypnol (better known as "roofies").

Ecstasy can be taken orally through a tablet or capsule, and generally lasts 3-6 hours. X, as Ecstasy is commonly known, boosts the taker's energy level, temporarily enhances their self-confidence, and allows them to "let loose."

On the flip side of Ecstasy, the user's heart rate increases along with their blood pressure. They may become dehydrated, nauseous, paranoid and suffer from rapid eye movement.

"The source of these drugs is often times not known by the people taking them," Ryan states.

But Mary knows exactly who her suppliers are, they are doctors with Ph.D.s who know exactly how to concoct club drugs the proper way. As for cost, Mary has the kind of connections an avid user would love to have, which is never having to pay for her drugs. This avoidance of a cost, along with her desire to try new things, are the two biggest factors behind Mary's choice to use club drugs.

Mary says, "It's just to get the feel. And I got them for free, and as long as you can get them for free, it's kind of...fun. It's experimenting, and you're not paying for it, so you're not going to waste your

money if you screw up your high by doing something."

Although Ecstasy is more prevalent as a designer drug than other illicit drugs, GHB, or "G," is becoming increasingly popular. Mary has toyed around with GHB, combining it with Ecstasy.

"It (GHB) a different kind of high, the 'E' just makes you feel really good, and it gives you this energy and you're just really happy. The 'G' doesn't do anything like that, it is physical. It feels really good. You tingle, the tips of your fingers are all tingly," Mary says emphatically.

With the use of club drugs comes the risk of damage that they may cause to one's body, both mentally and physically. The long-term affects of Ecstasy on humans remain virtually unknown, but it's been shown to cause brain damage in laboratory animals.

Ecstasy is a neurotoxic that could cause long lasting, if not permanent, damage to the memory capabilities of the human mind. In GHB, the user runs the risk of death or slipping into a coma, as the drug slows down the user's breathing and heart rate.

Mary doesn't worry about the hazards involved in taking club drugs, though.

"I know a little bit more than I think most people do about them, and I know how to prevent it, and I know what it's doing to me," Mary says.

When it comes to taking designer drugs during the week, Mary shies away from that kind of behavior. In actuality, the only time she does use club drugs is during the summer, or perhaps random weekends.

During Spring Break, Mary doesn't plan on using club drugs, but not due to lack of desire.

"To get it, I would have to go through sources I don't want to go through," she said.

Other college students will not be as intelligent, or perhaps lucky, as Mary when it comes to their Spring Break plans. Some 18-25 year olds will no doubt be enjoying designer drugs during their parties and vacations, most of them not knowing the creator of their drugs.

While Mary believes it is "a personal choice" to use club drugs, and she feels that the drugs have not harmed her in any way, we are unable to see the future. Mary plans to discard the use of designer drugs eventually, but methadone clinics and drug rehabilitation centers are full of individuals who always planned to quit taking illegal drugs.

For Mary's sake, let's hope she sticks to her commitment to quit, sooner rather than later.

To reach Nick Barron e-mail barronru@hotmail.com or drop by B-104.



CANCUN, MEXICO
WWW.REALCOLLEGE LIFE.COM

VISITOR INFORMATION NUMBERS

Mexican Govt. Tourist Office in L.A.:
(310) 203-8191

Lake Havasu: (800) 242-8278

Daytona Beach, FL.: (386) 255-0415

San Diego, Calif.: (619) 236-1212

Six Flags: (661) 255-4136



SPRING BREAK SITES

www.yahootravel.com

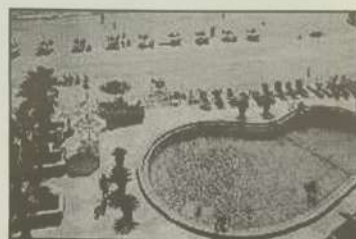
www.swatup.com

www.mexicotravelnet.com

www.allaboutcabo.com

www.golakehavas.com

www.sixflags.com



DAYTONA BEACH, FL.
WWW.REALCOLLEGE LIFE.COM

Spring Term begins April 1. Register for classes if you haven't already. Until then, have a slammin' Spring Break.

TACHO'S

Mexican Restaurant and Cantina
515 Molalla Ave
Oregon City, OR 97045
503-655-5562

Open Seven Days a Week

Monday - Friday 11a.m. - 12a.m.
Saturday - Sunday 10a.m. - 11p.m.

HAPPY HOUR

Monday - Friday
3p.m. - 8p.m.
Monday - Thursday
9p.m. - 12a.m.

CHECK OUT
Los Tachitos
Authentic Mexican
Food to go
*next to Tacho's
6:30a.m. - Midnight
(503) 723-7881
open 7 days a week

\$1.00 off \$4.95 lunch SPECIAL w/ Clackamas I.D.