



Meredith student on Cipro alternative

☐ Anthrax puts a whole new spin on internship duties for one Meredith student interning in D.C.

CHRISTINA HOLDER
Editor in Chief

Meredith junior Kendall Byrum is supposed to be at work right now.

Three weeks ago she was interning at Congressman Richard Burr's (R-NC) office in Washington, D.C., responding to constituents' phone calls and running from one committee hearing to another.

But she also opened the mail.

So when anthrax spores were found on the sixth floor of the Longworth building--just one floor below Burr's floor--she was sent home.

Now she is taking doxycycline--one of two generic alternatives to Cipro--and waits for clearance to return to work.

However, weighty on the minds of Byrum and the nearly 20,000 students who flock

to Washington each year for internships is this: It is a scary time to be an intern.

Byrum had moved to D.C. for the semester after being accepted into the Washington Semester program, a credit program that includes classes and seminars at American University and an internship in the city.

While working in Burr's office, she opened a minimum of one hundred letters and packages a day but never smelled or saw anything suspicious.

"When anthrax first started popping up around D.C., I have to admit that I started feeling anxious about going to work," Byrum said. "In the back of my mind I didn't believe that I could be directly affected by it."

However, Byrum said that anthrax did not begin to affect her significantly until the powdery substance was found in a letter in Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle's (D-SD) office. Daschle's office is located in the Ford building, a building she said is significant because "all mail that comes to the Longworth office building

goes through Ford first."

So Byrum's father, who is a doctor, prescribed the doxycycline for her just in case she was unknowingly exposed to the anthrax in Longworth.

Byrum says that it seems everyone in the D.C. area has been on edge since the citings.

Several of her friends have been tested, and people became more cautious of travel destinations. The Metro transportation system even stopped running one day because of a suspicious cardboard box beneath a seat.

"You just never knew where it would pop up the next day," said Byrum.

Meanwhile, only fifteen minutes away from Byrum's dorm at American University, *USA Today* editorial intern Laura Vanderkam sits in her swivel chair on the eighteenth floor researching information for editorials and editing reader mail--all without fear of anthrax.

She is absent fear despite an anthrax alert at *USA Today* in early October when a staff person in the Life department opened the edge of suspicious letter and "thought she saw a powdery substance."

All of the staff relocated to the Money department and the FBI came to take the letter away.

"Eventually the tests came back negative," said Vanderkam.

Despite the fact that most of the letters the editorial department receives are sent via fax or email, it has not thwarted staff attempts to heighten precautionary methods.

"We're actually not reading snail mail much, because of the general level of concern," said Vanderkam. "Only a few 'real' letters are opened and read these days."

Vanderkam has not considered going on Cipro or any similar antibiotic. She feels that despite working closely with mail, she still is not at risk.

In fact, she thinks that the anthrax scare has really turned into a case of "anthrax envy" for the news media.

"There's some general anxiety, but really it's just background noise," said Vanderkam. "I mean, come on, why does the *New York Post* get targeted before we do? You

know someone over at the *New York Times* is pulling their hair out over that one."

Yet Vanderkam's lack of fear has not rubbed off on the Center for Disease Control's estimate of 10,000 Americans currently on Cipro.

The rush to the doctor's office has placed the drug in high demand. In fact, according to the National Institutes of Health, the American Medical Association encouraged physicians to stop prescribing Cipro with leniency.

Like most antibiotics, Cipro loses its ability to work effectively when overused. The drug, along with its generic cousins doxycycline and penicillin, can have severe side effects if taken unnecessarily.

For example, Cipro can cause dizziness, depression and tendon rupture, while doxycycline can permanently stain children's teeth.

Many physicians, according to the National Institutes of Health, switch patients from

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Three cases of plagiarism on campus in 2001

LEESHA AUSTIN
Features Editor

During the 2001 academic year, three students at Meredith have been tried before the Honor Council for plagiarism accusations.

These students are not alone.

"Almost 80% of college students admit to cheating at least once," according to The Center for Academic Integrity, affiliated with the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke University.

In fact, Meredith Honor

Council Chair Rebecca Rawl explains that many students accused of plagiarism or cheating cite feeling pressured or overwhelmed as their excuse for academic dishonesty. Many decided that it would be okay to cheat just once.

According to Rawl, Meredith's Honor Council has heard three plagiarism cases this semester.

"A lot of times people don't realize what they're doing," said Rawl. However, she added, "Even if [plagiarism] is accidental, it is not excused."

Not knowing what constitutes plagiarism is not an excuse."

Rawl explained that the rules on plagiarism are outlined on page 81 of the *Student Activities Handbook* and that "students are responsible for know-

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