

Caffeine Pills

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effect and harsh effects on the stomach lining, causing indigestion.

The current maximum strength of caffeine in alertness aids is 200 mg per serving. Most coffee contains 50-150 mg, while Coca-Cola contains 45.6 mg, Mountain Dew contains 55 mg, and Jolt holds the title with 100 mg.

Thus, it is not difficult to achieve the same effects of caffeine pills like No-Doz and Vivarin with mainstream beverages. It is often said that the caffeine content of each tablet is about equal two cups of coffee. Indeed, it the ease of intake and not the quantity of caffeine that makes caffeine pills so exceptional.

An overdose of caffeine, also known as caffeine intoxication, is usually in excess of 250 mg. Some symptoms include restlessness, nervousness, excitement, insomnia, muscle twitching and convulsions.

A toxic dose of caffeine varies according to the weight of the individual, but is usually about 10 grams by oral administration. This much caffeine causes heart and breathing problems and death from convulsion.

Tolerance to caffeine increases with use. In this way, chronic caffeine usage is an everlasting hunger. The more one uses, the more one needs to achieve its effects.

It's no surprise that there is a higher estimated usage of caffeine pills at NCSSM than at most other high schools. Nevertheless, there are no punitive policies for usage of caffeine pills. School nurses attempt to educate students about effects of caffeine pills rather than punishing.

Students who resort to this drug are driven by a fervent quest for perfection and fueled by the racy connotations of "caffeine pills". Because those motivations are eternal, caffeine pills are and will remain a problem among students.

Community Service

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the spring, and Becky said she hopes many more people will sign up to work on that day. Also, there are many opportunities to participate in all kinds of community service activities around Durham via service clubs and organizations within our school. Clubs at NCSSM such as Habitat for Humanity, Key Club, and Helping Paws all send volunteers into the community to do diverse kinds of work. Also, E. K. Powe Elementary School, located a block away from NCSSM, accepts volunteers for tutoring

and mentoring children throughout the school week. Candis Watts, a volunteer at E. K. Powe, said, "Tutoring has been a really positive experience for me, because it has shown me how important it is to be a good role model for those who are younger than me."

Wherever your talents or interests lie, there is a community service opportunity here at NCSSM with your name on it. For information about service clubs, check the At-A-Glance page for meeting times; you can attend meetings and sign up to work in your free time, such as afternoons, free periods, or weekends.

Sports Update

Lovejoy, Tingler lead Second Beall to Softball Title

CASSIDY COBBS

Sarah Lovejoy was 3-3 with 4 RBIs and 2 runs scored including a grand slam in the second inning and Moriah Tingler was 2-2 with three runs scored in November 29's Intramural Softball Final. Fourth Bryan, after a close semifinal victory over First Beall, couldn't summon the

offense to win one more time. They managed only 1 run over four innings. Meanwhile, Second Beall had no such difficulties. They scored 12 runs in three innings to dominate the diamond. Fourth made it hard on themselves, though, committing 6 errors in their three innings in the field. Of the six players to reach base on an error, four actually scored.

IM Softball Final	1	2	3	4	R	H	E
Fourth Bryan	0	1	0	0	1	5	6
Second Beall	2	8	2	x	12	9	1

Review: Windows XP A Brave New World of (Really) Big Buttons

ALBERT REN

In October, Microsoft released the latest component of their Windows monopoly: Windows XP. It comes in Home or Professional edition, and the upgrade can be purchased at stores for about \$99 or \$199, respectively. With this new version, Microsoft claims many new features, including increased stability and a new interface.

As far as stability goes, XP builds on the Windows 2000 core, which was itself built on the Windows NT core. Because XP now enjoys stability previously unseen in Windows 9x, it's finally possible to leave your computer on for days and not experience even a single crash.

As one of the most obviously new features, the interface has really big buttons, similar to MSN Explorer. The default look changes the title bars and taskbar to blue, and the Start button is now twice as large and green. Almost all icons that were previously on the desktop have disappeared, leaving only the Recycle Bin, placed in the

lower right corner (anyone remember the Trash Can?).

Overall, it seems as if Fisher-Price designed the interface. XP looks like a toy, with its blue color scheme and large buttons in warm colors. It is possible to revert to a "Classic" look that is similar to 2000, but it is still different enough to feel strange.

While CD burning is integrated into Windows XP, it is highly simplified and very limited. In addition, the upgrade to XP disables popular CD-burning programs, like Easy CD Creator 4 (ECDC). To burn CDs, ECDC must be upgraded to version 5, which costs \$99.

Additionally, Microsoft has now integrated Windows Messenger into XP. It is not compatible with AOL Instant Messenger or ICQ, and requires enrollment into a service Microsoft calls ".NET Passport." It cannot be uninstalled and is set to load with Windows by default. Most of Windows Messenger's features are available in MSN Messenger.

Windows Media Player 8

has a redesigned interface. It looks smoother and not as ugly as version 7. However, features like MP3 creation and DVD playback cannot be unlocked without the purchase of an additional pack.

The Java Virtual Machine (JVM) has also been removed from Windows XP, now only available as a separate download. However, the version available for download from Microsoft is outdated and does not take advantage of the latest Java technology. Fortunately, Sun Microsystems provides a new JVM for download from <http://java.sun.com/getjava>.

Should you upgrade to Windows XP? If you're using Windows 95, 98, or ME and want the stability, Windows XP just might be worth it; as long as the computer can handle the extra power it requires. Windows 2000 users probably don't need to upgrade, as they already have the stable core that is the main feature of XP. If you are an NCSSM student strapped for cash, don't bother paying for Windows XP at all.

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