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Student Health Services opens new women's clinic

By JIM MOCK Staff Writer

n July, Student Health Services spent about \$12,000 to open the Dysplasia Clinic, which was created to supplement services provided by the popular Women's Health Clinic. Peggy Norton is a family nurse practitioner at Women's Health who works in the new clinic.

"Dysplasia Clinic was set up for care of women with abnormal Pap smears," says Norton.

The Pap smear is a screening test performed during a pelvic examination. To get a Pap smear, a doctor gently scrapes a cell sample from a woman's cervix; the cells are then With proper use of this test, physi-

"Over the past three years, the

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ted disease which affects both men and women. In women, warts may be found on the external genitalia, in the vagina or on the cervix. When warts affect the cervix, they often transform cervical cells into cancerous cells. For this reason, warts are the most common cause of abnormal Pap smears.

"There are over 100 types of wart viruses, and at least three of these may cause cervical cancer," says

Norton.

"Of all Pap smears that come back abnormal from the lab, 50 percent will revert back to normal within six weeks. Of the half that does not revert, almost all remain abnormal because the patient has warts," Norton said.

The rise in incidence of venereal warts among UNC women is occurring independently of the other sexually transmitted diseases which, according to Norton, have not increased. Norton also says that chlamydia (the most common venereal disease) is still affecting about

18 percent of the sexually active women, and probably more men at UNC.

Women who have two consecutive abnormal Pap smears are referred to the new Dysplasia Clinic where a special microscope, called a colposcope, is used to visualize and guide biopsy of the cervix. This instrument costs about \$9,000 and makes up the bulk of the money spent to start the new clinic.

"Biopsy results are used to decide if minor surgery (i.e. freezing) is needed to remove the abnormal cells," says Norton.

"Dysplasia Clinic sees about five patients each week at UNC," says Norton. "Since the clinic has only been operating since July, many women at UNC with recent history of abnormal Pap smears are now being treated by private physicians. These women need to know that Student Health now provides these services cheaper than community doctors."

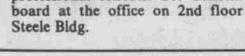
According to Norton, all women should have Pap smears done regardless of whether they are sexually active. Non-sexually active women should have a Pap smear as

part of a good gynecological checkup and should have follow-up tests every two to three years.

"All sexually active women should have routine yearly Pap smears," says Norton, "because studies have shown an increased incidence of cervical cancer among sexually active women."

Dysplasia Clinic is held every Wednesday on the first floor of the Student Health Service in the Women's Health section. Appointments are made by referral from either a Student Health doctor or a nurse practitioner in Women's Health.





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