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## Flu threatens UNCW campus

**ALISHA GORE**

STAFF WRITER

The influenza virus affects millions around the world each year. During this recent flu season, there have been elevated concerns about the health risks the flu virus may pose to Americans in particular.

Fears of dangerous strains of the flu virus initiating a deadly epidemic have led to many people taking measures to protect themselves from the virus.

"Taken together with the fact that influenza virus is readily accessible and may be causing more deaths than previously suspected, the possibility for genetic engineering and aerosol transmission suggests an enormous potential for bioterrorism," scientists at the University of Texas said.

Getting a flu vaccination is one of the most popular methods that Americans implement to avoid the possible consequences of contracting the flu.

"It is our hope that because strains were included in the vaccine that was developed, there will be some protection against that strain," said Rhonda Smith, a spokesperson for the Center for Disease Control on their Web site.

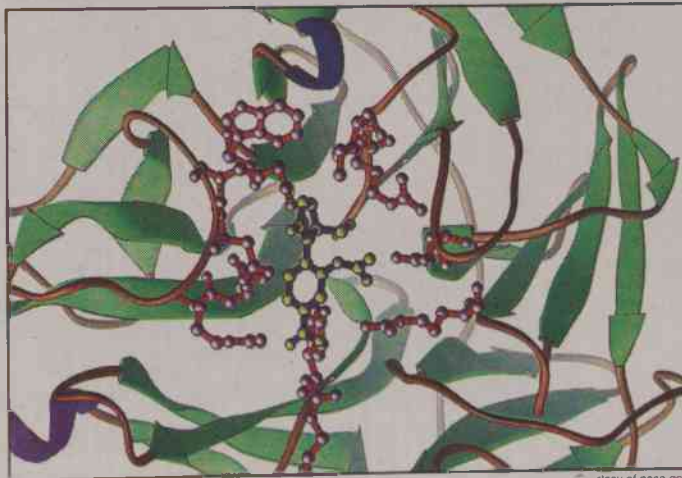
Smith was referring to the Fujian strain of influenza, a strain that researchers say can potentially cause devastating outbreaks in the United States and Europe. The strain gets its name from the Fujian province in China where it originated.

The CDC recommends that the

elderly, young children and women in the late stages of pregnancy should receive a flu vaccination. The aforementioned groups are at greater risk of suffering serious complications as a result of having the flu.

However, the CDC recom-

also decrease the chance of contracting the flu. Decreasing or eliminating the consumption of antibiotic fed meat, refined sugar and bleached flour can help promote a healthier immune system. Increasing intake of foods high in vitamins and minerals, particu-



Courtesy of nasa.gov

Since a virus causes the flu, taking antibiotics will not make it go away.

mends that people who may have allergic reactions to hens' eggs or those who have developed Guillian-Barre syndrome (GBS) after getting flu vaccinations not get vaccinated.

Health officials also recommend implementing "common sense" methods to prevent contracting the flu. Avoiding contact with those who have the flu virus and washing hands frequently can help prevent contracting the flu. Since a virus causes the flu, taking antibiotics will not make it go away.

Altering dietary habits can

larly vitamin C, can also have beneficial effects on decreasing a person's chance of getting the flu.

"We have seen students with the flu- I can't tell you how many," said Charlene Pence, a nurse with the Student Health Center. "We started seeing people for the flu in November, but most providers have not seen the flu since (we got back from break)."

The public health department has a free injectable flu vaccine as well as the flu mist vaccine for \$40.

For more information call 343-6508.

## Lost items given away

**ASHLEY PARKER**

**SARAH BRODERS**

STAFF WRITER & NEWS EDITOR

developing countries where people cannot otherwise afford them.

There is also a collection box in

UNCW's lost and found is implementing new policies to see that unclaimed items go to good use instead of to waste.

Currently, there is a period of 30 days during which lost items may be claimed. If they are not, they will be given to programs that can use them.

"I think it's a great idea. I'd rather see the stuff go to a worthy cause instead of just sit there," said recent UNCW graduate, Amy Kline.

Starting this semester, UNCW is hoping to give unclaimed cell phones to a local domestic violence shelter where they will be distributed to high-risk mothers. The phones will not be equipped with service, but they will enable the mothers to call 911 in case of an emergency.

"The groups that we're working with are very pleased that we as a university are taking an interest in what they're doing," said reservations coordinator Tina Strickland. "If we can help them in some way, that's what we're trying to do."

Lost calculators, particularly graphing calculators, will be given to Roland-Grise Middle School, to be distributed to children who are unable to afford them.

In conjunction with the Lions Club, unclaimed prescription eyeglasses are gathered and sent to



Heather Curtis/the Seahawk

Unclaimed lost and found items are donated to local charities such as Good Will Industries.

the University Union to donate old prescription glasses.

Clothing and jewelry will be given to the local Good Will Industries.

The lost and found is located at the University Union information desk. The hours are Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 1 a.m.; Friday, 7am-1am; Saturday, 10 a.m.-1 a.m.; and Sunday, 1pm-midnight. Flyers will be available at the desk for more information on these programs.

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Editorial: 962-3229

Ads: 962-3789

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