

MRSA

By: Jordan McAllister

MRSA is a type of infection caused by bacteria that is resistant to some common antibiotics. Most cases have involved athletes but, there have been cases that included non-athletes.

"MRSA could be potentially dangerous," said Mrs. Regina McCoy-Davis, Health director at Elizabeth City State University.

MRSA first killed a Virginia teenager and more deaths have happened from MRSA than Aids in the United States.

"Usually it starts with what looks like a spider bite," says Mrs. McCoy-Davis

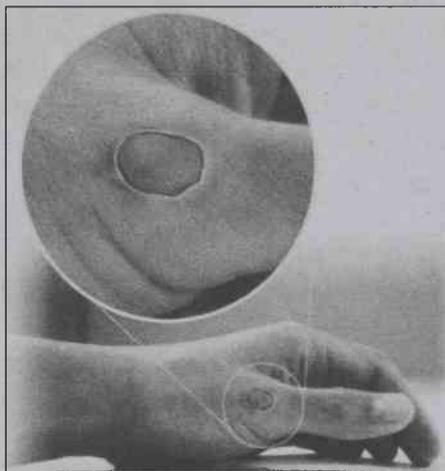
The red sore is usually full of pus and develops drainage. If it advances more you may develop a fever with it.

"MRSA is usually transmitted through contact with others," says Mrs. McCoy-Davis. Athletic equipment such as wrestling mats is a big transmitter. Athletic towels also transmit MRSA, especially if someone uses them and the individual has an open sore.

"To date we have thirteen cases reported here at ECSU," said Mrs. McCoy-Davis

Ten of the cases were regular students and four were student athletes.

"People on the football team have gotten MRSA," says Andrew Henning, Kicker for the Elizabeth City State University football



team.

All of the athletes have been cleared who are on the football team. They were taken to a local hospital and proper medical treatment was given following the discovery.

"We have done thorough cleaning of our buildings and educated students about MRSA," says Mrs. McCoy-Davis.

The University health department posted flyers in some of the major residence halls, and classrooms. E-mails were sent out to warn students about the epidemic and information is on the school's website.

"I just do basic things to prevent me from getting MRSA, like washing my hands," says Blake Cooper, a freshman at Elizabeth City State University.

Hand washing is the single most important way of preventing MRSA.

Birth Control Pills- Harmful or Helpful?

By: Tasha Pippin

New studies show that birth control pills (BCPs) have been linked to artery-clogging plaques that greatly increase risk for heart problems. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 12 million U.S. women take BCPs. For decades, most of these women have been aware that BCPs can increase blood pressure, cause migraines, and raise their potential for blood clots, especially if they are over 35 and smoke, or have a history of blood clots or other heart problems.

However, these women were probably not aware of their pill's link to a plaque that could greatly increase their risk for cardiovascular inflammation. Ernest Rietzschel, of Ghent University of Belgium, reported to an American Heart Association meeting that the recent study done on 1301 women ages 33 to 55 found that for every 10 years of BCP use, the probability of finding plaques in key arteries increased by an alarming 20 to 30 percent.

This news is disturbing to women who take BCPs, but may be confusing when compared with another recent study that shows that birth control pills can help protect women from ovarian cancer.

British research, stemming from the Oxford Scientists and the Cancer Research UK and Britain's Medical Council found that women taking the pill for 15 years cut their risk of developing ovarian cancer in half. The study also showed that the BCPs continued to protect for 30 or more years, although the protection does decrease over time. Gloria Brown, a registered nurse at the Elizabeth City State University Infirmary, says "I think that [the protective qualities] is a good thing, but, even though other risks, like blood clots, may not sound as dangerous as the word 'cancer', they still are."

From a study covering 23,257 women with ovarian cancer, 31 percent of whom were on the pill, to 87,303 without ovarian cancer, 37 percent of whom were on the pill, experts have concluded that the pill has prevented an estimated 200,000 cases of ovarian cancer and 100,000 deaths from the disease, which has a very low survival rate.

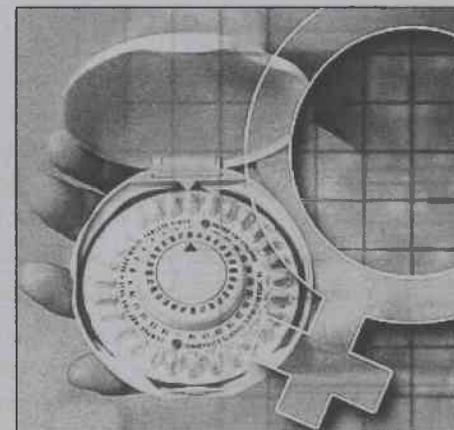
So what's the verdict?

With the pill's sexual freedom allowances, some women do not want to think about possible health risks. But should women worry about BCPs risks or be comforted by their protective qualities? ECSU's Brown says about college-aged women: "It's not that they're not concerned, but I think this age group doesn't know to be concerned. When you're

young you feel some things will probably never happen to you."

A registered nurse from Currituck County High School who wished not to be named, says that although the school's policy is to strictly teach abstinence, she is not sure that teenage girls who take the pill are aware of the possible side effects, and she stressed that physicians need to explain those risks to them before they subscribe to any medication.

As studies continue to define and re-define the health effects of birth control pills, women will ultimately have to weigh the facts on their own. The only fact that is conclusive is that almost any risk can be lowered by changing lifestyle habits such as smoking, high cholesterol, and poor dieting.

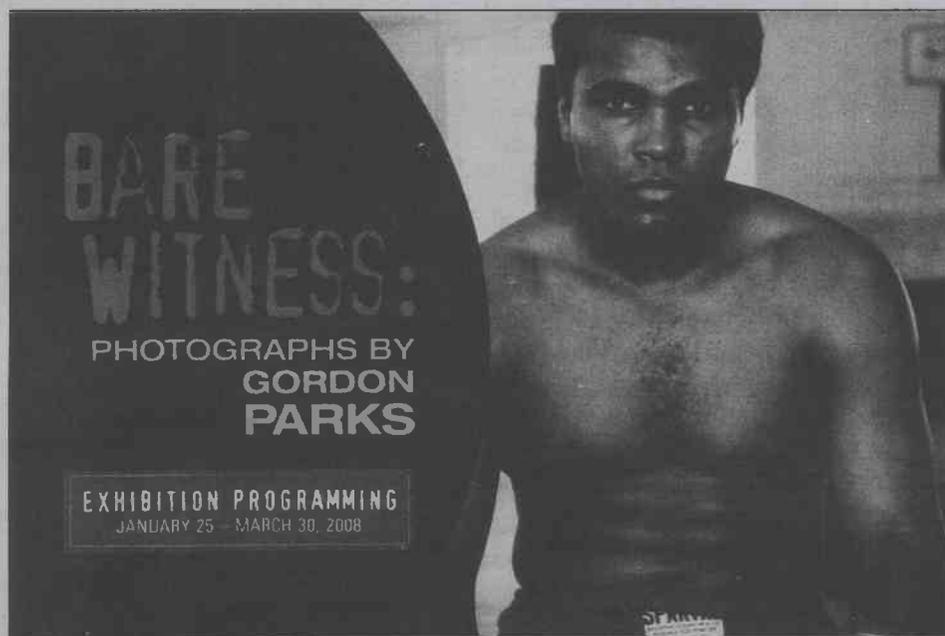


Cost of Cadence

By: Tasha Pippin

Steel strings press hard
into hot fingers,
nestling in,
pushing the soft flesh down
and around them
then pulling back a little and feeling
the purple fingertip valleys
slowly
fill back out,
the white bloodless circles around
them fading
back to pink,
and leaving them only with
flat tingling pads
that will soon callus;

won't be so smooth
and pink
and
yielding
next time.



Work Out, Drink Up

By: Allan Holmes

Are you tired of going to the gym and eating healthy foods to stay healthy? Well, a new study of cardiac health has given a new formula that adds alcohol consumption to your routine.

Dr. Morten Gronbaek, is an epidemiologist. His research shows that if you don't want to exercise much, you can trade it in for 1-2 drinks per day. This method is for those who are in their mid 40's to early 50's who are at high risk of heart disease. Dr. Gronbaek and his colleagues at Denmark's National Institute of Public Health researched and published it in the European Heart Journal.

Alcohol and exercise affects your heart health in a variety of different ways. It increases your cholesterol, or high density lipoproteins (HDL), and cleans the circulatory system's pipes. This was stated by Dr. Arthur Klatsky, cardiologist of North Carolina. HDL helps remove fatty deposits created by bad cholesterol, the higher the HDL, the less likely vascular disease becomes. This is good for people with heart problems or health problems. Sometimes drinking is healthy. Females should drink a glass a day, whereas males up to 2 a day.